

TRIBAL RESPONSE

Tribal Council, con't from page 30

failed 128 to 427. The chart below details the current fringe and other benefits received by Chinook Winds employees, tribal employees, and the Tribal Council.

<u>Chinook Winds</u>	<u>Siletz Tribe</u>	<u>TC/Gaming Board</u>
Dental	Dental	
Pharmacy	Pharmacy	
Vision	Vision	
Life	Life	
Short-Term Disability	Short-Term Disability	
Long-Term Disability	Long-Term Disability	
Accidental Death & Dismemberment	Accidental Death & Dismemberment	
401(k) Retirement	401(k) Retirement	401(k) Retirement
AFLAC	AFLAC	
Prepaid Legal	Prepaid Legal	
Employee Asst. Program	Employee Asst. Program	
Leave: Paid Time Off, Jury Duty, Military, Family Medical Leave	Leave: Annual, Sick, Admin., Funeral, Holidays, Jury, Military, Family Medical Leave, Wellness, Education,	
Unemployment	Unemployment	Previous Council members have been awarded unemployment
Worker's Comp.	Worker's Comp.	Worker's Comp.
Incentive Awards	Incentive Awards	
Meals	Flex time/Altered Schedules	
Uniforms	Uniforms for some medical staff	
Reduced payment child care		

Tribal Budgets

(Sharon Edenfield/Naomi Shadwick)

There have never been any "secret" budget modifications. All Tribal Council/government and gaming budget modifications have always been and still are brought forward by tribal staff in open session at Tribal Council meetings. All modifications are approved by motion of the Tribal Council and are numbered, filed, and available upon request.

It is indeed a fact that the Housing Improvement Program budget was reduced. But this was not done at the direction of Tribal Council or tribal staff. HIP program funds are distributed by a BIA formula that is determined by the "neediest of the needy" throughout the nation, not the neediest of the needy among Siletz Tribal members. For contract year 2000, the tribe had only one eligible applicant under this methodology.

Health Services

The tribe receives a fixed amount of funds to operate its total health program. Inflation adjustments do not keep up with the cost of medical inflation. Placing restrictions on health care eligibility



Participants of the Wellness Walk include Bob Scheidt (front row, center), who included Siletz in his trek down the West Coast to raise diabetes awareness.

and accessing alternate resources to manage health care dollars is a prudent management approach.

The Siletz Clinic recently began restricting pharmacy benefits to other Native American patients. Now they must be seen by one of our clinic providers in order to fill their prescriptions at our pharmacy.

This change was necessary because many tribal health programs have drastically altered their eligibility criteria. For instance, at the Grand Ronde clinic, if you are not a Grand Ronde tribal member or have insurance to pay for prescriptions, you cannot use their pharmacy. The Siletz Clinic pharmacy quickly experienced a sharp increase in former Grand Ronde patients asking to fill their prescriptions.

The requirement to use alternate resources is not a new concept. CHS regulations specify that Indian Health Service funds are the payer of last resort. Through the creation of a patient benefits coordinator position and a new software system, we are capable of screening all patients to effectively access any other resource that may be available.

The tribe does not require members to use their own financial resources or sell valuables or property to qualify for alternate resources and has never communicated that to tribal members. A recent newsletter article urged members to seek alternate resources if available due to depleting CHS funds. In fact, the Oregon Tribal Health Directors recently worked with the state of Oregon Health Division to obtain a waiver to the requirement of placing a lien on property in order to obtain senior and disabled services.

Another CHS cost-saving measure has been the increase of the CHS radius from 25 miles to 40 miles. This process only required a Tribal Council resolution and does not require a waiver of 42CFR Part 36. These regulations govern contract health service eligibility and medical services, but do not contain language setting the mileage radius.

The Council hopes that the information above addresses the questions and concerns that tribal members may have had after reading the various letters to the editor. If you wish further information or have other questions that were not addressed, please contact Tribal Council Executive Secretary Kelley Ellis at 1-800-922-1399 or 541-444-2532.