

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

My name is Tracy Molina. I was raised in Siletz since 1978. My parents are Tony and Sue Molina. My son, Nakai, is enrolled (11/64) Tootootney/Chetco in the Siletz Tribe. From my side, he is also (1/4) Mexican Indian (Pascua-Yaqui, Nahua) and he's about half white (English, Irish, Scottish, Spanish). I wanted to thank the **Native American Church of Siletz** for the prayer service that helped heal my son from a sickness that he had.

I've served in the United States Navy combat zone in the Persian Gulf War, graduated from Oregon State University, given birth, survived a lot of racism and teasing. But the hardest thing I have ever done and am the most proud of is to further my relationship with God and remain abstinent from all illegal drugs and alcohol, including tobacco, so that I could be a good role model for the Siletz youth.

Siletz is my home; the least I could do is to give back to the community/tribe that raised me. I have noticed that many Siletz Tribal members have Mexican blood and this seems to be increasing with the next generation. I just wanted to let people know from an educated **indigenous** point of view.

The word Mexican comes from the Nahua language, which means our people or one body together. Mexican is derived from the Aztec tribal name Mexica (May-Shee-Kah); that is why the X is there for the Native people. The Mexican Indians put the X in there to remind people of their tribal history after the revolution. The Ute Aztec language family is spoken in Oregon by the Paiute Nations of the McDermit Reservation, Burns Reservation, and Warm Springs Reservation.

People often seem to confuse Spanish and Mexican. Spanish is referring to that which is **European** from Spain. **Most Mexicans (90 percent) are Mestizo, a mixture of Spanish and Native American.** That information is easily accessible via the Internet or any encyclopedia.

It wasn't that long ago Siletz people couldn't speak English and Siletz people used to work in the fields and they knew the Mexica to be their Native brothers and sisters. I don't know what has changed to hear Siletz people speak of Mexicans/Chicanos in a negative way. I suppose it is too much English on the tongue and mind. The only reason Siletz people are not Mexicans and are Americans is all based on which white people claimed the land.

John Trudell once said, "You know you are conquered when you see yourself through the conqueror's eyes." I chose to mention this so those tribal members who are Mexica can be proud of themselves. We all know too well how self-hate destroys. I am still recovering from that myself. I hope these truths have not offended anyone. Please feel free to contact me.

Love, Faith, Hope, and Charity,
Tracy Molina

To the editor:

My mother's mother is Siletz. When I was old enough to make the decision, I chose the Siletz Tribe. I live in Oklahoma because I was raised here since I was 5 years old. I am now 22.

My educational goal is to graduate in May 2002 with a double associate's degree in political science and public relations. I love to travel, but Oklahoma will always be my home. I would like to support the tribe in the most positive way that I can. If there was any way for me to work for the tribe from here, I would be willing to do so. I currently own my own personal computer with scanner and printer and an Internet connection. In addition to paying for my college education myself so far, I have also paid for short-term vocational training classes to assist me with job skills in the meantime.

I am open to suggestions and ideas about how to improve the way that I support the Siletz Tribe. My location doesn't make it easy to participate in activities, but if I could afford to come up more often to do so, then I would.

I have heard the Siletz Tribe be compared to the Grand Ronde Tribe in a not-so-positive way. It saddens me that someone says to a young person that they should have enrolled in another tribe just because it does better. I don't feel that it's right for a person to think that they should be enrolled in any certain tribe solely for the benefits.

Maybe I don't receive tribal aid for school, but that doesn't change the history of the Siletz Tribe. It doesn't change who I am or what I am proud of. When we were terminated as a tribe, it didn't stop there. I will not allow someone to discourage me from what I believe in.

I believe in receiving an education, so when I was denied federal student aid, it was a little hard. When I started out I had a scholarship, but it wasn't enough to stay in school unconditionally and I did have to have a job. This upcoming spring, some of my high school classmates will be graduating with their bachelor's degrees. There was a time that I thought I would be one of those students. I'm not though, but I am more proud of what I have because of that. When I hear someone try to make the Siletz Tribe sound bad like that, it just makes me want to work harder to make a difference.

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LETTERS, DEADLINES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

New Letters Policy for Siletz News

Siletz News, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon, is published once a month. Our editorial policy encourages input from readers about stories printed in Siletz News and other tribal issues.

All letters **must include** the author's signature, address, and phone number in order to be considered for publication. Siletz News reserves the right to edit any letter for clarity and length, and to refuse publication of any letter or any part of a letter that may contain

profane language, libelous statements, personal attacks, or unsubstantiated statements.

Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Siletz News, tribal employees, or Tribal Council.

Please type or write legibly. Letters longer than 450 words may be edited for length as approved by Tribal Council Resolution #96-142.

Editor-in-Chief: Brenda Bremner
Editor: Diane Rodriguez

Please note: The general manager of the Siletz Tribe is the editor-in-chief of Siletz News.



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Deadline for the July issue is June 11. Photos are encouraged. Everyone loves to see photos of events, tribal members, and especially babies. Don't forget those birthday or anniversary wishes for loved ones.

The newsletter is free to enrolled Siletz Tribal members. For all others, a \$12 annual subscription fee applies. Fill out this form and mail it with \$12 (make check payable to Confederated Tribes of Siletz) to Siletz News.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Change of address: **Tribal members** call Lisa Norton, enrollment clerk, at 541-444-8258; all others, call the newsletter office at 541-444-8291 and leave your new address with the editor.