

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

My name is Shyla A. Simmons, roll #862. I recently inquired about using the emergency funding. I had used this one time before when I was expecting and needed help with a deposit so I could get into an apartment in Lincoln City near my employment. I have worked at Chinook Winds Casino for five years. I thought it was great that our tribe was willing to help me out in my time of need.

The casino offers a great benefit of paying you 60 percent of your wages when you take maternity leave, but you have to be unemployed for 30 days. I did not worry about this. Much to my surprise, when I again asked for help I was turned down because you are only allowed to use this funding once every two years.

I have a good job and I am not on welfare. I figured since I was an enrolled member of the Siletz Tribe, I could rely on them always when I needed help. I

should have known better. I look at all the other tribes that put their members up in nice housing and provide them with **complete** medical/dental/eye care.

I have been to the clinic only a rare few times. **Twice** I was left waiting and missed my appointments; once was for my newborn baby who was sick and ended up going to a doctor in Newport. I was never given an apology. The employee who did this to me twice and had done this to several other people was never reprimanded and should have been terminated.

I will always wonder where all of the revenue from the timber and the casino go to. All I know is that it is not going to the tribal members when they need it most. Anyone else who has had similar experiences, please speak up for the sake of everyone else.

Concerned and disappointed tribal member,

Shyla A. Simmons

To the editor:

I am compelled to respond to Mary "Dolly" Fisher's letter. She accused me ("P.D.") of "personal attacks, libelous statements, and non-substantiated statements." I have **never** personally attacked anyone, and the questions I raised have only been to increase awareness of what I believe to be overspending and misuse of our tribal dollars. In every democratic government, a citizen has the right to question decisions made by "elected" officials.

Every question I have raised about our tribal finances has been after review of published documents. For example, I reviewed the 1999 Tribal Council timesheets published in the newsletters. Although the article in the September 2000 issue of Siletz News, submitted by Bonnie Petersen, then-vice chairman, stated "the total cost of wages for Tribal Council members was \$81,217.16," the Tribal Council (Gaming Board of Directors) spending from gaming dollars was not included. I had estimated that more than \$2,000,000 was used to run our tribe while tribal member services were being cut. Without full disclosure, we don't know.

During the last Tribal Council election campaign, Mary "Dolly" Fisher publicly accused me of initiating the complaint to the National Indian Gaming Commission, even though she had been aware in August 2000 of the proof that I had no involvement whatsoever.

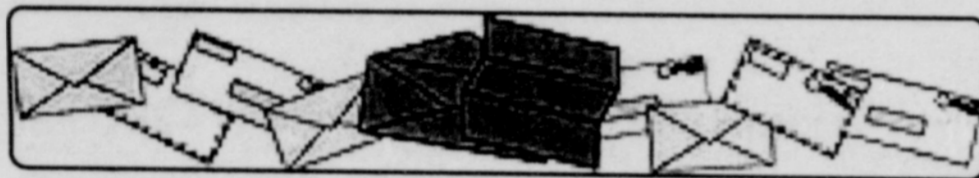
Mrs. Fisher questioned my service as tribal chairman. I am proud of the fact that I voted to replace an attorney whose advice cost our tribe millions of dollars. I am proud of the fact that I voted to hire a qualified tribal member with a degree in business administration to serve as the general manager. And, I am especially proud of the fact that every one of my decisions was based on what I believed to be in the best interest of our tribe as a whole.

As for the recall (of four, not five), it was successfully challenged in tribal court, but was overturned by a panel of non-Indian judges, which included Calvin Gantenbein, our current chief judge. These decisions are available from the court so you can decide whether they were legally or politically motivated.

I challenge Mrs. Fisher to prove there were "secret meetings." There were none! Conversely, I had tried to initiate better communication and an open form of government. I made sure that issues raised by tribal members at General Council meetings had timely responses.

Serving on the Tribal Council does not mean you are "above the law," yet I have been a victim of many personal attacks by members of the Tribal Council. Without legitimate elections and adherence to constitutional provisions, especially the protection of tribal members' rights, there is no democracy.

Sincerely,  
Pat Duncan



**Don't forget to turn in your applications  
for hunting tags.  
See applications on page 12.**

## LETTERS, DEADLINES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

### Siletz News Letters Policy

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.



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

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

Send letters to:

Siletz News  
P.O. Box 549  
Siletz, OR 97380

541-444-8291  
1-800-922-1399, ext. 291  
Fax: 541-444-2307

e-mail: [pias@ctsi.nsn.us](mailto:pias@ctsi.nsn.us)

**Deadline for the September issue is August 10.** 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: \_\_\_\_\_  
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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.