

Community Law Court Moves Forward

Greetings! This article will focus on the Community Law Court and Tax Ordinance community meetings. Most of the meeting time was spent discussing the Community Law Court.

Given recent events, the Run to the Rogue and the hijackings back east, it's especially meaningful to write about an alternative dispute resolution process. This article summarizes the input received from meetings in Siletz, Portland, Salem, Eugene, and with the elders. Tribal Court holds all project files and tapes regarding the Community Law Court available for review by appointment.

The meetings brought out many examples of peacemaking within the Siletz Tribal membership. One family frequently was called together to discuss a dispute. Many people brought their disputes to Wolverton for resolution.

A Tututni tribal tradition required both parties to share the expenses of the peacemaking. And both parties had to have a certain number of dentalium to give up independent of the result. Several tribal members spoke of memories of Art Bensell's store, "We always went to Uncle Arthur." A group of men would sit around the store's stove, talking in different Indian languages.

Different kinds of problems might be resolved. For example, the thefts at culture camp last year, neighborhood dog or noise problems, adults who do not get along with other adults because of some past dispute, problems with youth, etc.

Solutions to the problems can be creative and involve people other than the parties in the results. In a Colorado River Indian Tribe example, police had brutalized a child. It was decided that the police would put on a community dinner and apologize in public.

In one case, the dispute was about a couple who lived together and the woman had received a promise that the couple would marry, but it didn't happen. She wanted to get this resolved, and as promised, they did get married. In Art Bensell's store, kids would get caught stealing food from the store and "those folks in the store would make a decision according to the financial situation of the kids and their families."

Siletz Tribal Court and Code Development

A former Tribal Council member who worked on tribal restoration and the tribal Constitution said this way of using tribal members to resolve disputes was how Tribal Court was originally envisioned – the court acting as mediator.

The draft ordinance states this about the general qualifications: "A Gwe-shvt-naga/Peacemaker must be an enrolled Siletz Tribal member, have the respect of the Siletz community, an ability to work with reservation residents and tribal members, a reputation for integrity, honesty, humanity, and ability to resolve local problems."

Tribal Council is requesting written applications from tribal members who would like to serve as Gwe-shvt-naga/Peacemakers for the Siletz Community Law Court. Applicants may use any form, such as a letter or memo, to apply. The application must contain the following information: applicant's name, Siletz Tribal roll number, address, phone number, the applicant's autobiography as short or long as the person believes necessary, an explanation of why the person would like to be a Gwe-shvt-naga/Peacemaker, a statement that the person has read the Siletz Community Law Court Ordinance, and the applicant's signature and date.

Tribal members also may request a form from Tribal Court (541-444-8228 or 1-800-922-1399, ext. 228) or come in person to pick one up. For more information regarding the Community Law Court, contact Community Law Court Judge Art Fisher via Tribal Court. Meanwhile, look for news on an orientation video we are creating for the Community Law Court.



Top: Craig Whitehead and his daughter, Kateri, start this year's Run to the Rogue. Above: John Roe Jr. (l), Emma Velasco, and Richard Giogy review logistics. Additional photos will appear in the November issue of Siletz News.

CTSI Jobs

Position: BIC Counselor

Location: Siletz, Oregon

Salary: \$12.64 per hour, part-time

Opening date: 9/14/01

Closing date: 10/12/01

**Call the Job Line at
541-444-8296 or
1-800-922-1399**

**for a tribal application
and information
on other job openings.**

General Council Meeting

Siletz Tribal Community Center
Nov. 3, 2001

Agenda

1 p.m.

Call to Order

Invocation

Roll Call

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes: Aug. 4, 2001

1:10 p.m.

Indian Child Welfare Report

Contract Health Care Report

Tribal Member Concerns

2002 Election Candidate Declarations

Chairman's Report

Announcements

Adjournment