

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

Native Warriors Guardians of Tomorrow's Youth is a program geared to bring our youth a better understanding of who they are as individuals, as well as making a better world for all to live in.

Real life stories are told from men who have been down that road of self-destruction, gangs, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, sexual abuse, peer pressure, culture clash, and the realities that come with them. We give the youth a different outlook on family values, traditions, and spiritual awareness.

It is an honor for Native Warriors Guardians of Tomorrow's Youth to recognize those who have gone beyond expectations in this world of self-healing.

The following young people are 2002 graduates from our program: **Katie Bowers, Sage Hatch, Heather Melson, Shirley Melson, Charlie Jones, and Kayla McCord.**

Native Warriors Guardians of Tomorrow's Youth wishes to thank Lynn Whitlow and Sylvia Butler for their continuation in making for a better day, and whether you realize it or not, you have touched many lives.

In Spirit,
Francisco Padilla
Director, N.W.G.T.Y.

To the editor:

I just wanted to take a moment to share my experience of being a parent and living with the results of addictions being a part of my family, and how it has affected the past, present, and future.

I struggle to be a good person, admit my mistakes, and show that I'm trying to be a better person, and hope people will see the good I do rather than judging me by past mistakes. I care about the youth in the community because I see their pain and the loss they experience due to abuse, neglect, or just the lack of opportunities or role models.

I hope that others will step forward and share their personal experiences so we might be able to support one another, talk about the pain, and heal together. I truly believe in prayer and the ability to look at ourselves to see what is "not" working so we can ask for help to be well spiritually, mentally/emotionally, and physically.

I struggle with the lack of communication with the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems, and I fear for our young people as well as the adults who will end up in these institutions. Not only will they be subject to abuse and neglect, but they also often are not given the tools they need when they return to their communities.

One gap I see for these relatives is that the community and family also need "tools," or teachings about how to help our relatives when they come "home." If you want to help with this process, please call the tribal office, or better yet put in writing what you want to see happen.

I am only one person, but I believe, **"If the people lead, the leaders will follow"** (eventually). I believe in sharing from the heart about personal experiences, and therefore I want to share a letter that my son wrote about learning. He gave me permission to share his letters, as a way for him to help other young people and families in our community.

Respectfully yours,
Lisa Brown

P.S. If Chris' letter touches your heart, spirit, or mind, please reach out and touch someone else. Talk to a spiritual elder, teacher, or friend, and ask for the healing to begin.

Mitakuaye Oyasin (We Are All Related)

Thank you for listening or reading, also please **thank yourself** for taking the time. Time is the most **precious gift we can give to ourselves, our families, and our community.**

To the editor:

I know you are really disappointed in me and the system. I'm sorry for what happened.

I've learned a lot from this experience and boot camp. I've found spirituality, humbleness, my true inner person, respect, and a lot of other things. I'm truly sorry for all the times I got mad at you and yelled at you. I was a lost soul in a materialistic world.

I had an addiction to marijuana, alcohol – and wasn't ready to admit it to myself or others. "We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction and our lives were unmanageable..." "We came to believe a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." I really do believe that and can make the changes when I get home.

I no longer blame others; instead, I take responsibility for my actions instead of justifying. To first write this letter, I had to admit to myself of these addictions and forgive myself. Then and only then could I ask for forgiveness for my sins. I can ask only for forgiveness, not to change the past, but I can build a brighter future for me and you.

I love you too much to let the mistakes we both committed get between us. I really do. I know you will always forgive me, but it will not be complete until I ask for forgiveness first. You are the first on my list, but not the last.

I just wanted to tell you I'm so sorry and would pour my heart out to make all the illness, pain, and bad memories go away forever. I love you, Mom.

One Love,
Chris

Candidates Fair Coming Up – Who Will You Vote For?

Oct. 9, 2002
6 p.m.

Chinook Winds Casino
See details on page 20.

Be sure to vote on Nov. 5. Study the candidates and know where they stand on Indian issues. Carefully evaluate how these views and the candidates' records can affect your life and that of your family and the tribe, then vote accordingly. Every vote counts!

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
Assistant: Natasha Kavanaugh

Send letters to:

Siletz News
P.O. Box 549
Siletz, OR 97380-0549

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

e-mail: pias@ctsi.nsn.us

Deadline for the November issue is Oct. 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.

Siletz News 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** should call the Enrollment Department at 541-444-8258; all others should call the newsletter office at 541-444-8291 and leave your new address with the editor.