

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

By now, I'm sure you've heard about, or may have actually read, the articles about Indian tribes and Indian gaming that appeared in the Dec. 16 and Dec. 23 issues of *Time* magazine.

Much of what the reporters said in the more than 20 pages *Time* devoted to Indian gaming was based on a lack of information, misinformation, or the reporters' preconceived biases against Indian tribes and Indian gaming.

With a circulation running into the millions and with copies in thousands of public and school libraries and in the waiting rooms of doctors' and other offices across the nation, these *Time* articles must have been read by millions, with great negative public impact.

I immediately responded to the *Time* articles by writing a letter that appeared in a December issue of the Newport, Ore., *News-Times*.

During the week of Jan. 6, I attended a meeting of tribal leaders who convened in Washington, D.C., to address what has become a serious national public information and public relations issue for tribes, triggered by the *Time* articles.

Unfortunately, *Time* magazine is not the only source of anti-Indian propaganda. The media, including *The Boston Globe*, *The Wall Street Journal*, CNN,



Chairman Delores Pigsley

and nationally syndicated columnists like William Safire, have been disseminating their opinions about Indian tribes based on half-truths and false information.

U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R.-Va.), whom you may remember attempted to introduce legislation detrimental to Indian tribes last year, saw to it that the *Time* articles were circulated among members of the U.S. Congress.

It's important to keep in mind that although the current furor is specifically directed against Indian casinos, I'm afraid the real intent is to undermine tribal rights and sovereignty itself.

As tribal chairman, I'll continue to be involved with the National Indian Gaming Association and the National Congress of American Indians in helping to develop and implement a national strategy to address these critical public information and public relations issues.

While these issues are being addressed at the national level, they also must be addressed at regional, state, and local levels. Vice Chairman Jessie Davis is, and will continue to be, actively involved in this effort.

The *Time* reporters sought out disgruntled individual members of gaming tribes who complained they were getting little or no benefits from their casinos. It wouldn't be difficult to find such persons in any tribe.

A few tribes cited by *Time* provide hundreds of thousands of dollars to their individual members. The fact is many

tribes don't provide any per capita at all. Their casino revenues instead are invested in priority tribal programs such as education, health, and economic development. Tribes differ economically just like state governments, a fact misunderstood or disregarded by the *Time* reporters. How much or whether tribes provide per capita at all depends not only on the amount of revenues their casinos generate, but also on their tribal priorities.

I believe the Siletz Tribe has struck a wise and reasonable balance between the use of gaming revenues for tribal purposes and the amount of per capita payments distributed to individual members. It's a set formula based on the recognition that we must provide for the needs of our individual members while being mindful of allocating funds for the future of the tribe.

When the Siletz Tribal Council decided to engage in gaming as a tribal enterprise, we viewed it as a means, not an end. Recent events should help make us acutely aware that the threat to Indian gaming is real and our plan for the use of gaming revenues is a sound plan.

Tribal Council's decision to provide computers for Siletz households was made with this in mind. The long period of termination was an educational setback for our people. Our members tell us how much the computers are helping their children in school and how eager many of them are, as adults, to learn this new technology.

The computer distribution program is an example of how our gaming revenues have helped enhance our education programs and services as well as health, housing, and other tribal programs.

In just a few years, the Siletz Tribe will have paid off the debt service for the construction of Chinook Winds, which could make more funds available for tribal use, including per capita. The actual amount of revenues available, however, will depend not only on market conditions, but also on the future of Indian gaming.

This brings me back to what I started this column with – the *Time* article and the forces at work against Indian tribes and Indian gaming. The Siletz Tribe must, and will, work cooperatively with other tribes at the national, regional, and state levels to vigorously fight to preserve tribal sovereignty and to protect the right of tribes to engage in gaming.

2003 Charitable Contributions Advisory Board

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon has established a Charitable Contributions Advisory Board to distribute profits from Chinook Winds Casino. The advisory board will consist of:

- 1 Siletz Tribal Council member
- 3 Siletz Tribal members
- 2 non-tribal members from Lincoln County
- 1 member of the general public from the tribe's service area

Term of office is three years. Siletz Tribal members interested in serving on this committee must fill out the following form and return it to the address below by Feb. 12, 2003. Please send your application to:

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon
Attn: Christine Williams
P.O. Box 549
Siletz, OR 97380-0549
Fax: 541-444-2307

Name: _____ Roll Number: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
Telephone: (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

Tribal Council will review applications and approve appointments at the regular Tribal Council meeting on Feb. 14-15, 2003. If you have any questions, please call Christine Williams at 1-800-922-1399, ext. 200, or 541-444-8200.

To the editor:

I would like to thank everyone for the lovely birthday party held for me on Dec. 15, 2002.

I deeply appreciate my relatives and friends who braved the stormy weather to attend. A very special thanks to the following people for making it possible – my son, Ronald Hudson and family; my sisters, Rosalie Bremner and family, Delores Pigsley and family, and Donna Woods and family; and my dear brother, Alfred Lane Jr. and family. Alfred and Clarice traveled from National City, Calif.

Thank you so much, you are all loved.

Sincerely,
Gladys Bolton

A special thanks to my son, William Hudson and family, in Salem who gave me the surprise birthday party. You are loved.

Mom, Grandma, Great-Grandma,
Gladys Bolton