

## VICE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

### Status of the Oregon Gaming Alliance

On July 7, 2003, the Burns Tribe hosted another meeting of the Oregon Gaming Alliance steering committee. This group is strategizing and developing bylaws to take to the full committee as soon as we complete them. It's not easy crafting bylaws that we feel each tribe will be able to support.

Once completed, we feel this group will be a policy group vs. each tribe going alone. Each tribe is unique, however, and will still have its own areas of concern that will be different from the other tribes, but we feel that developing this alliance will help provide greater communication for everyone.

We discussed articles in the paper regarding Multnomah Kennel Club installing 20 "paramutual"-type machines at its racing site. We were wondering how the state was allowing that when we were told that anything more than five machines would constitute a "casino," which the state of Oregon did not allow. Is this a double

standard? We'll look further into this to see if it's true or not.

We also discussed the Cowlitz Tribe just across the river in Vancouver, Wash., which has filed for a gambling license. What impact will this have on the state of Oregon and Oregon tribes? They're rumored to have been approved for 3,000 machines. How many Oregon residents will cross the river to gamble in Washington? These are just some of the questions we discussed.

Considerable time was spent going through the bylaws. Everyone should give their comments to Craig Dorsay by Aug. 7, 2003.

We also received word that the magistrate has approved the request from the Coos Tribe to put a casino in Florence, Ore. From what we hear, the governor doesn't plan to contest this decision.

The committee's next meeting will be Oct. 3, hosted by the Klamath Tribe.

### National Gaming Issues

As a member of the National Indian Gaming Association board, I would like to touch on a number of recent actions



Jessie Davis

of the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) that have been both favorably and unfavorably reacted to by the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA).

NIGC has proposed that Congress reaffirm its authority over Class III gaming. NIGA Chairman Ernie Stevens, however, argued – as the Siletz Tribe also had argued relative to a dispute with NIGC a few years ago, that

the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) created the regulatory system for class III gaming through the tribal/state compacting process.

Stevens expressed the view that the responsibility of the NIGC is to review and approve tribal gaming ordinances as long as they meet minimum statutory requirements. "The reason for (NIGC's) narrow review of tribal gaming ordinances," he said, "was to require the commission to defer to the tribal-state compacting process. Accordingly, the NIGC should not seek additional authority ..."

NIGC has recommended that it be granted statutory authority to license vendors, consultants, etc. Stevens contended that Indian tribes already conduct such licensing. He recommended that any vendor licensing initiative be conducted on a voluntary basis to assist tribes where requested, and "not be used to put in place a new barrier to economic activity in Indian country."

Stevens pointed out that the NIGC "has proved too slow in reviewing management contracts and adding new responsibility of vendors, consultants ... may prove too burdensome for both the commission and tribal gaming operations."

Several tribes across the U.S. have not been able to implement their tribal-state compacting process specifically where states can, and have, raised an 11<sup>th</sup> Amendment defense to enforce good faith negotiations. Stevens recommended that IGRA be amended to address this critical issue.

Introducing federal legislation has been suggested as a means of addressing this issue. Chairman Ben Nighthorse Campbell, R-Colo., of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs cautioned that this is a particularly controversial issue because the issue of "states rights" is involved.

Although the Siletz Tribe has had some rocky negotiation sessions with Oregon officials over the past seven years, we've generally been successful in maintaining constructive government-to-government relationships in the compacting process.

## Group Insurance Plan Changes for Tribal and Casino Employees

The rising cost of health care across our nation continues to spiral out of control and no company or business is exempt from this crisis. In an effort to continue to offer the most comprehensive, competitive, and affordable group health care coverage to our plan members and families, the Group Benefits Committee proposed, and the Tribal Council approved, much-needed modifications and enhancements to our self-funded plan, COHO Benefits of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

**These changes take effect Aug. 1, 2003,** and are both positive and necessary to maintain a high level of service, quality, and cost-effectiveness for the tribe and our plan members.

Plan members can take an active role in the upcoming year to help defray plan costs by wisely choosing health care providers, becoming more involved in their health care decisions, and adopting healthy lifestyles by using preventive care services. This will help ensure that the Siletz Tribe can continue

to provide a valuable health care product for all tribal and Chinook Winds employees.

Information on these changes has been communicated to each plan member. Please don't hesitate to contact the following individuals should you have questions or require additional information:

- **Samaritan Health Services** 541-563-2074 – Jo Reilly
- **COHO Benefits Plan Administrator** 541-996-5809 – Mary Lou Anderson
- **COHO Benefits Plan Staff** 541-996-5806 – Bobbie Salazar-Grider  
541-996-5882 – Amy Rouske  
541-994-1761 – Sharon Nelson

We look forward to providing an outstanding and affordable group benefits plan in the upcoming year and thank each of you for doing your part to make COHO Benefits of CTSI a successful and cost-effective benefit plan for all.

## Artwork Needed for ICWA Conference

If you or anyone you know is interested in creating artwork for the upcoming Indian Child Welfare Association (ICWA) conference in October 2003, please contact Wendi Schamp at 1-800-922-1399, ext. 236, or 541-444-8236.

The conference theme will focus on "Weaving our Cultures and Communities Together for a Stronger Future." The conference will include outside agencies such as the Department of Human Services throughout the state of Oregon.

The artwork may appear on items such as posters, pamphlets, or agendas for the conference. The chosen artist will receive a \$100 Fred Meyer gift certificate.