

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

On behalf of myself (Cheryl Ben) and daughters (Fawn Young and Brook Larabee), I would like to express our sincerest appreciation to so many people for their loving support during the passing of my husband, Rod Ben. I feel so honored and proud to be part of such a wonderful caring tribe.

I'll begin with the first person I contacted on July 22, when I knew it was time for Rod to say good-bye to all his family and loved ones.

Kathryn Dick was so gracious to call family members (I'd run to the hospital, of course, without phone numbers). Kathy, not only for that first response, but throughout the past few weeks. The beautiful floral arrangements you made for our family – what a talent God has blessed you with.

Before I could even request it, your daughter, Jessica Werth, wanted to play *Taps* for Rod. Jeanna Harrington also stepped up and said she'd like to do The Lord's Prayer with Selene and Sam. (It was beautiful as always, Selene. Thanks.)

When the Ben Aunties (Shirley, Vickie, and Maxine), Uncle Raymond and Pam were reached, they started calling all of Rod's cousins, nieces, and nephews to come in. What a great example of a family pulling together for Rod (everyone's favorite cousin). Thank you so much for the love and

support you've shown to me also. Maxine, for requesting that we join hands around Rod's bed for prayer – of course, "thank you" just does not seem adequate.

Kent Kaiser, John Farrar, Martin Wheeler, and Don Kennedy for coming to the hospital.



The "young bucks" (the two older bucks also) who carried Rod and placed him next to his uncle, Robert Rilatos.

Thanks to all the "hon-orary casket bearers." Our "church family" (Logsdan church) for bringing food, flowers, cards, support, and love, and also assisting in the kitchen Saturday night. Ron Hudson for speaking – I knew you could do it. You were a great source of strength and encouragement for Rod and myself over the past 14 years.

The wonderful clinic staff – Erin Hume, my sincerest appreciation, right down to Sara Bell and Kristi Martin, who are always so pleasant and professional. Thanks for your care

of my husband. The Alcohol and Drug staff (George, Janet, Sandy, Walt, and Sue George) for all their encouragement and support. Loraine Butler, your kind and caring guidance through the paperwork.

The Honor Guard (hand-picked) – Heather Walker, it was so special to have you rush up here from California. Stan Werth and the cemetery crew for such good care of the gravesite.

"Ben Family Drum," for singing. "Dancing Again Drum" for Rod's favorite song, *Soldier Boy*.

Juanita Whitebear, Molo, and ShayMan for your songs and prayers Saturday night. All of Rod's work buddies and hunting buddies for all the wonderful words and memories you shared with me. My family from Warm Springs for coming over.

Eldon Tom for speaking on behalf of my Great-Uncle Elmer Tom. For my Grand Ronde cousins (Chips Tom and daughters) for attending. Of course, the beautiful song by Arlissa Rhoan – it was so appropriate for Rod.

My two sons-in-law for their song, Dawn Toomey for her song. Rod had such a wonderful sendoff. The most touching and humbling moment for me out of all this was the kitchen help. Chuvonne Metcalf, Liz John, Kitti Hostler, Judy Imbler, probably more people than just you helping out, but

you ladies seemed to keep it moving and so well organized, going from one funeral right into another.

To see Dino Butler, Robert Kentta, and others cleaning up after **all of us**, and Rosalie Bremner (mopping the floor) – it was just overwhelming. How very, very, touching! All I could think was how wonderful it is to be a member of this tribe.

Everyone who attended and had such fantastic words to share, cards, and flowers. I hope I haven't left anyone out. There were so many people involved, so many wonderful employees who jumped right in and helped. My family, "the Staggs-Tom family" – I really needed you there for your support, strength, and love.

Most of all, I'd like everyone to know that it's been a great honor and privilege to walk with this "warrior above warriors," Rod Ben. Rod fought many battles – physical, mental, and spiritual – and conquered them all, even his illness. His expectancy was two to four-and-a-half years. Rod went five years and four months.

These past 14 years have been a blessing to be there for Rod until the very end.

Thanks, sister Sue, for being there through all my stressing.

God bless all of you!

Cheryl Ben and daughters Brook and Fawn

## Treaty Celebration

Sept. 10, 2003 – Medford, Oregon

To celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Table Rock  
Open to Siletz Tribal members and guests by invitation

To the editor:

I, along with the rest of my family, would like to send a **big thank you** to some tribal employees who have helped make my father, Roy Downey's, struggle with cancer and recently a fractured back easier to work through.

Rhonda Attridge, Judy Muschamp, and Shannon Case in Contract Health have been outstanding! Rhonda has shown an outstanding amount of care and concern and has been most helpful.

Cathy Rasmussen and Rose Kunkel from Community Health have helped us brainstorm ideas for assistance and needed equipment, which was a **wonderful** help to us and is much appreciated!

My father would also like to extend a special thanks to the elders for their monetary gift and card that he received while convalescing. It really cheered him up and made him feel good to see so many names on the card.

My father's medical reports have come back with no signs of cancer and he is healing from his back injury quickly. We are very blessed to have him. To all of our tribal member family, friends, and caring employees, thank you for helping, thinking of us, and sending good wishes and prayers on his behalf.

May good health be returned to all of you for your gifts of kindness to us!

Rebecca (Downey) Williams

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children in Siletz deserve to have a school in their community. We're pleased to lead this community-wide effort to provide a school for our children."

The deadline for individuals interested in applying for teaching and other staff positions was Aug. 15. Registration packets for students are available at the Siletz Tribal administration building, 201 S.E. Swan Ave., in Siletz. Contact Bev Youngman at 541-444-8290 or 1-800-922-1399, ext. 290; or Craig Whitehead at 541-444-8230 or 1-800-922-1399, ext. 230, for more information.

## Tribal Loans Available for Home Improvements

The Siletz Tribe Revolving Credit Program currently offers loans to tribal members for home improvements. Tribal members can use these loans for such things as a new roof, new siding, new carpeting, room additions, a new furnace, and new appliances.

For more information about the Home Improvement Loan Program, call Dave Litchy at the Siletz Tribe Finance Office in Salem, Ore., at 503-304-4064 or 1-888-870-9051 (toll-free).