

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

My name is Bud Lane and I'm responding to a recent letter to the editor that was inaccurate.

As many of you know, I was recently elected to the Tribal Council. I'm also a tribal employee and I successfully challenged the laws prohibiting tribal employees from serving on the Tribal Council.

Loraine Butler in her letter in last month's newsletter said, "Bud Lane challenged the legality of the Siletz Constitution." I have never done such a thing. I did, however, challenge the laws barring tribal employees from serving on the council as violating the Constitution.

I want to publicly thank Loraine Butler for filing a court case in 2002 challenging the exact same laws that I just did. As a matter of fact, I used Loraine's court case as the basis for mine. You don't have to take my word for it; anybody can contact Tribal Court and ask for a copy. It's a public document and the case number is TC02-01. By the way, I consider Loraine Butler a close personal friend.

Since taking my seat on the council in February, I've continued to do my job and the tribe has not collapsed. I continue to work in the same manner I did prior to the election. All of the predictions of gloom and doom have not and will not come to pass.

Because laws have been in place a long time does not mean they are legal.

I hope when the constitutional amendment election occurs, it gets voted down. I agree with Loraine that this issue is not just about me. It's about the rights of tribal members to participate in elective government.

Let's think of the future, about our children, about the expanding pool of tribal employees who will be barred from elective government if the amendment passes. Tribal members employed by any entity of the tribe will be barred. The tribal membership should retain the flexibility it now has to elect any candidate it chooses, as long as that person meets the requirements for candidacy.

I've worked my entire adult life and always provided for my family. I believe that each generation should do what it can to make life better for the next. This proposed amendment will bar many hard-working, successful people from serving in elective government and will restrict the pool of eligible candidates to basically retired or independently wealthy people.

Tribal members, I urge you to vote no on the proposed amendment in the upcoming constitutional election. Let's keep the political process open for all tribal members so we can make the best decision on who will represent our people in elective government.

Sincerely,
Alfred "Bud" Lane III



Opinion, con't from page 4

However, even though we do have very strong feelings about the issue, on Feb. 9 by a vote of 5-4 we did pass a resolution for the BIA to conduct an election regarding this. The membership has the final vote. Only the people can make changes to the Constitution.

In the near future, every tribal member age 18 and older will be sent a ballot to vote. **Everyone** needs to make sure their address is current with our Enrollment Department. The BIA will most likely use our Enrollment addresses.

In conclusion, no matter how you feel or how you vote, please vote. Your vote will count and your voice will be heard.

To the editor:

Thank you to our Siletz Valley School for the table spring ornaments and cards. Thank you to Miranda Strong, Toni Matt, and Darcy Trego from the Siletz Clinic. The health education and the flowers were appreciated by all.

Thank you to our volunteers - Denise Riding In, Jenifer Metcalf, Heather Rivera, Amber Owen, Danielle Billmeyer, Marci Taylor, Little Miss Siletz Ashliegh Ramirez, and Angela Ramirez.

All of the volunteers assisted us with registration. They served our elders dinner, they helped us deliver 475 gifts, and they helped me with errands and messages.

To the editor:

Bud Lane was elected to council this February and is employed with the tribe. He filed with Tribal Court, challenging the law that requires tribal members to quit their jobs if elected to Tribal Council. Court agreed with Bud and ruled that it was unconstitutional for the tribe to have such a policy.

Council has requested the BIA for a constitutional amendment hearing to add this policy to our Constitution. Why does Tribal Council feel they can manipulate the system to get their way?

Since moving here in 1991, I've noticed council/administration has a distinct bias "against" its own tribal members. This is shown by the ordinances it writes, how they are enforced, and whom they are enforced against.

For example, the administration and casino have fired many tribal members. Most tribal members who have been fired haven't been given a hearing, even though it specifies in the policies that it can be done. Tribal Council has determined that even tribal members are "at will" employees who can be fired for "any" reason.

Yet when Jim Kikumoto, the general manager of the casino, was charged with accepting a trip to the Master's golf tournament last year and had his gaming license revoked by the gaming commissioners, Tribal Council allowed Craig Dorsay, the Tribal Council attorney, to represent Mr. Kikumoto at an appeals hearing he requested.



Thank you to Angela Ramirez for the gifts you donated from Title VI for the door prizes and thank you, Angela, for always being there when we need you. The elders asked Lisa Brown to help us. Lisa is always willing to assist an elder with a project. Thank you, Lisa, for coming to our event and for setting up your display of beautiful jewelry.

Thank you to all of the elders who helped make this event such a great success. The table decorations were beautiful, the gifts were original. Thank you to everyone who donated gifts for the door prizes.

Thank you to my brother, Ed, for getting there early and helping out with

He was fined and suspended for 30 days, rather than fired. I represented tribal members who were fired from the casino and they weren't even given a hearing, much less represented by the Tribal Council's attorney! Why should a non-tribal member manager receive a benefit denied to tribal members?

This doesn't even address the fact that Tribal Council utilized tribal dollars to defend a manager from the very agency they created to ensure the casino personnel followed the rules! They did an end-run around a tribal agency they created to protect our gaming enterprise by allowing a lawyer who is not only the lawyer for council, but for the gaming center **and** the regulatory agency! Isn't that a conflict of interest?

They're attempting to do the same with Tribal Court via a constitutional amendment election.

Last year when council was revising the ordinance regarding the homeowners who paid off their homes and were doing so in direct opposition to the recommendations of the Tribal Housing Committee and employees, council was asked "why" they were doing so. One council member replied, "Because we can."

I think it's time for a constitutional amendment election divesting council of executive powers. This would eliminate the need for council to be the "Board of Everything" and reduce such abuse of powers and favoritism.

Ray Blacketer

early registration and guiding us to make the right decisions.

We received gifts from the Coos, Siuslaw, and Lower Umpqua Tribe, Grand Ronde Tribe, and Coquille Tribe, and appreciate their thoughtfulness. Our gifts from other tribes are displayed at the community center.

A special thank you to the casino for the fantastic food and great service we received. A special thank you to our Tribal Council for assisting us in funding the event. We couldn't do this without your support.

If I have overlooked thanking anyone, please forgive me.

Shirley B. Walker
Siletz Elders Chairman