

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

So, the Tribal Council has **finally**, what little tradition we have left, has thrown it right out the window.

By tradition, I am the lifetime whipman. When the duties became too much for me, I passed these on to my cousin, Qaama Sirria. After my cousin left us, it became my **duty** to again pick up these duties. In August 2005, it will be up to the Whitehead **family** to choose the next whipman. This position of authority **must** stay in this family.

Chief Enselsun, a Macanotin war chief, is how I am enrolled as a 3/4 Tututni. He, and Noch Nos Cia, the very roots of my family. And full bloods, back to the beginning of time. Only my father's mother was not from the Rogue River. She was 4/4 Hupa. And her father was Billy Beckwith, 4/4 Hupa.

I have always tried to follow my people's ways, just as all the old people were, in their Tututni language. Most people my age were **ashamed** of who they were.

So now, we are learning another tribe's language and ways because our young people were never exposed to our own language. And if they **were** exposed to it, they laughed at it and did not want to learn. An elder lady was ashamed to speak our language in public.

And we see another brazen act of our Tribal Council, disregarding part of our culture, in their decision.

They say, in a letter to me, that I made a **gesture** to pick up the whip. I

say that it is not a **gesture** on my part, but it is my lifetime **duty** and **responsibility** to uphold the traditions of Chief Enselsun and Noch Nos Cia.

Saying that they, the Tribal Council, have the authority to pick a whipman, is in total error. It will be up to the family alone.

Enselsun  
Gilbert Towner



To the editor:

I was very surprised and grateful for the size of our checks we got this year and just wanted to let those working so hard keeping us growing that not everyone is so ungrateful. I'm sure sometimes they must think what are we going through these headaches for people who do nothing but find fault.

Someone was complaining because we didn't buy some service station and build a motel there. Well, we have one now and it couldn't be in a better location. I have stayed in the Shilo Inn and the only fault I found is it needed a good cleaning, which I'm sure has been done. Those who think we should have torn it down and started from the ground up, I don't think they have priced lumber lately.

To the editor:

I work at Northwest Indian College in Bellingham, Washington. I am in contact with hundreds of people from different tribes from all over the country. As far as I can tell, not many tribes give back to their people, as our tribe does.

Working within the Indian community, I know they may provide health care, help with college tuition or housing, but as for the extra benefits our tribal members receive, that is pretty much unheard of with other tribes.

From gifts and help to our elders, computers, gaming distribution, over-

income grants, and college tuition – these are just a few things my family has received. We all should feel fortunate for these benefits. I know we do.

My grandparents, Charles and Helen (Nellie) Orton, were proud of their heritage and our tribe. And now I know why. Because I too am proud to be a member of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon.

Please accept our thanks for the opportunities that you, our tribe, have provided to our family.

Sincerely,  
Wendy Swedelius



As for those who are complaining about having to pay part of their insurance, I wish I could afford **any insurance**. I live outside the service area and yes, I wish my county was covered. I have to drive 3-4 hours to get to the clinic and am glad I am able. I have had to go to some doctors in my area and believe me, we have the best.

Those wondering how come the clinic is running out of money must not have had to pay for medical (treatment) in awhile. My husband had to have heart bypass and his bill was \$85,000 and \$10,000 for the ambulance. Medicare paid 80 percent of the hospital, but would only pay \$2,000 on the ambulance. Try paying that on Social Security.

My son was a hospital administrator in the Air Force and he said several times they ran out of money and had to run on credit until the next pay period. He went to his general and asked if they couldn't start charging each patient \$5 for each visit and maybe it would stop the ones who came in for every ache and pain, but was told he couldn't because it was the law. All medical was free, so it isn't just our clinic.

It sounds like we are on the right path and I'm sure many think the same, but it seems the complainers are heard from more often.

Wanda Melton

## 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.

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Please type or write legibly. Letters longer than 450 words may be edited for length as approved by Tribal Council Resolution #96-142.

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