

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

On Nov. 20, 2004, we celebrated the 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the restoration of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians at Chinook Winds Casino Resort. We were reminded that we are the successor in interest to the historic Rogue River Tribe under the Rogue River Treaty of 1853.

We once owned and occupied a treaty reservation of 1.1 million acres along the Oregon coast, but later fell victim to the ill-conceived federal "termination" policy of the 1950s. This abolished our entire reservation and any connection to the federal government's protection of trust responsibility.

Although virtually none of our original reservation was restored to us, restoration gave us renewed energy and hope. The social, economic, and cultural achievements of the past 27 years are evident all around us as we celebrate the restoration of our tribe.

## Reflections on the National Election

The long, bitter national campaign is over. President George Bush will be our president for another four years – and his continued presidency will have solid Republican majorities and control of both houses of Congress.

What does all this mean for Indian tribes? For one thing, we know that federal programs and funding for them – on which tribes rely – will be in Republican hands and for another, appointments to the Supreme Court that decides critical constitutional issues affecting Indian tribes will basically depend on the Republican Congress.

Another significant change with potential adverse consequences was the defeat of Sen. Tom Daschle of South Dakota, Senate minority leader and long-time advocate of Indian tribes.

All this is not to say, however, that Indian tribes are without friends in the Republican-controlled Congress. We have Republican friends, like Reps. J.D. Hayworth of Arizona and Richard Pombo of California, who have actively advocated for Indian programs and causes.

We must not forget that for many years, Sen. John McCain of Arizona has been a champion of Indian tribes, tribal sovereignty, and Indian gaming. We also have our own Sen. Gordon Smith, who has listened to Oregon tribes and championed and supported Indian legislation. We will count on all of our



Chairman Delores Pigsley

friends to play a key role on behalf of tribes in the U.S. Congress and the administration.

As for the state of Oregon, we are pleased that Reps. Hooley, Defazio, Blumenauer, and Wu were re-elected. They know the Indian tribes and are relatively knowledgeable of Indian issues. We will continue to communicate with them and solicit their help, as appropriate, on specific Siletz issues. At the same time, we will support their efforts in Congress when it's in our mutual benefit.

As chairman, I want to emphasize to our members how important it is for us to be actively involved in state and national inter-tribal Indian organizations.

At the national level, it's organizations like the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) that keep us abreast of current legislative issues and what we must do as a tribe to help prevent or advance the enactment of Indian bills in Congress.

## Governor's Summit with Oregon Tribes

The annual Governor's Summit with Oregon Tribes was held in Pendleton on Oct. 26-27, with all nine tribes represented.

Gov. Ted Kulongoski spoke in very cordial terms about the relationship between the state and tribes. He also had strong words about the state's need to uphold tribal sovereignty.

Officials of the various state departments also had an opportunity to listen to the tribes' concerns, which included issues involving health care, education, natural resources, fisheries, and water.

Although Gov. Kulongoski left before the tribes finished their presenta-

tions, he was present throughout mine. Here are a few highlights of what I said:

"The principle of tribal sovereignty is given substance only when the state **treats** tribes as sovereigns. It is through these annual summits that the tribes and state government departments are able to address concrete tribal issues on a government-to-government basis ...

"Although the Siletz Tribe's casino has been a major asset, the backlog of unmet social and economic needs is far greater than are being met by our gaming revenues ...

"In the area of health, we are in a crisis situation as a result of diminishing federal funding, rising costs of medical care, increased tribal membership, and unexpected, costly, catastrophic cases.

"Regarding higher education, we are funded at the same level that we were

in 1995 by the federal government. If it weren't for casino revenues, Siletz students desiring to go to college would not have had that opportunity. All students who have the desire to attend college must be given the means by which their aspirations can be realized.

"Gaming is the only viable revenue source available to meet tribal needs. But there is no guarantee Indian gaming will be here tomorrow. We are very aware of the need to diversify our economic base so we are not totally dependent on our casino. The Siletz Tribe is actively exploring a variety of economic development potentials. And we look to the state to help the tribe realize those potentials.

"Meanwhile, the Siletz and other tribes are not only using gaming revenues wisely to meet tribal needs, we are contributing significantly to the surrounding non-Indian communities and to the state of Oregon."

## 2005 Standing Committee Applications Due

**Deadline for consideration for 2005 committees is Jan. 31, 2005**

Any tribal member interested in serving on a committee for a **two-year term** must fill out the following form and return it to the address below prior to Jan. 31, 2005, to be considered for the following committees.

Please mail or fax your application to Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Attn: Executive Secretary to Tribal Council, P.O. Box 549, Siletz, OR 97380-0549; Fax: 541-444-8325.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Roll No: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Day ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Choose the first, second, and third choice of committees you are requesting by numbering your preference 1, 2, 3 in the space provided. If you only want to request one committee, please indicate this by inserting the number 1.

**Committee appointments are for a two-year term.**

<input type="checkbox"/> Education Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Pow-Wow Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Budget Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Heritage Committee	<b>(one-year appointment)</b>

Tribal Council will review applications and approve appointments at the Regular Tribal Council meeting in February 2005. If you have any questions, please call Tami Miner or Trish Carey at 1-800-922-1399 or 541-444-2532.