

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

I have made a commitment, to protect my people. I hope you will support me in my decision to run for a position on our Tribal Council. I am doing this because I do not feel I can just sit back and say how bad things are or "why don't they."

I have spent a considerable amount of my adult life learning about how to recognize and prevent violence and addiction. In my process to learn about this, I have had to make changes in my life.

First I recognized how drugs were hurting our people. I eliminated that from my life in 1989. Shortly after that, I quit playing Bingo when I realized what sacrifices were made because of gambling addiction (1990). Then I looked at my family/tribal history and decided alcohol would have to go too (1995). Lastly, I started to work with kids, in the job of an alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention coordinator. I made a commitment to **only** use tobacco in a **sacred** way (1991).

I have watched with much interest the recent elections, both national and tribal. It's sometimes disappointing to see our tribal members fail. I find it difficult that we have a system that operates in a more punitive (punishes) than reward-based way. I hope that in the future we can make overcoming obstacles a priority for our tribal members.

I know I'm not perfect, **but** I have learned from my mistakes. I don't feel I can sit back and just watch our Tribal Council (TC) overlook the needs and future of our membership. I believe too much power is not a good thing.

I hope that in the future, our TC will not be connected with our gaming enterprise. This board should be a separate entity.

As I look at our TC, I am concerned about the excessive amount that is allocated for travel/per diem. I recall the request to increase their salary, but I also realize that we have no other positions that receive such an excessive travel budget. I would not vote to increase salary and I would hope that our council would look for ways to decrease this expense.

I believe that our TC has shown a history of isolating, rather than collaborating or networking with other governmental agencies and tribal organizations. I would look to change this. I have written suggestions for the past couple years. One was to set up a Web cam to broadcast our TC meetings, and allow questions to be submitted by concerned members, and an answer posted to a Web site.

Please contact me if you have questions or feedback, 541-444-1290 or e-mail nadosh2@yahoo.com.

Respectfully,
Lisa Brown

To the editor:

My name is Derek Simmons. I would like to announce that I'll be running for Tribal Council in the upcoming election.

I have lived in the Siletz area all my life and some of you might have seen me at Chinook Winds Casino Resort. I'm the banquet manager and I've been working there since April 1996.

I apologize for missing the first candidate's fair, but my work schedule changed at the last minute and I'm the father of a new baby girl along with a 2-year-old son.

I do give our current council credit for some of their past accomplishments, but I'm running for council because I believe it's time for a change. We need young blood on the council. Some of our current council have held their positions for so long that they have forgotten their purpose, which I feel should be to obtain as many benefits as possible for all tribal members, not just a select few.

We need someone who will speak for **all** tribal members, not just family members of council. I believe council needs to be more involved with decisions that are made at the casino. The money that comes into the casino is ours and we need to keep a handle on what and where it goes to. We need health care benefits available at all times for all tribal members and the ability to make an appointment at the clinic without having to wait months to see a dentist or eye doctor.

We need to buy land and businesses when they are for sale for future income and employ tribal members in those businesses. We aren't going to be able to rely on casino funds forever.

The land located across from Lakeside should be used as housing for tribal members who work at the casino and live in town, regardless of their income. I currently rent a two-bedroom house for \$880 a month. This money could go to the tribe if they had rentals available.

I'm the father of two but because of my income, I don't qualify for the down payment program. I believe that there should be assistance for **all** tribal members regardless of whom you're related to, where you live, or what your income is.

I'm grateful for my job and proud of what I do at the casino, but we really need more tribal members trained and placed in top management positions. I've worked my way up through various positions until I was promoted to banquet manager. There is no reason to pay high salaries to non-Indian people when we can train our tribal members for management jobs.

It's your right to vote for whom-ever you think will do what is right for all tribal members, so please don't forfeit your right to make a difference - get out and vote.

Sincerely,
Derek Simmons



To the editor:

I read in the newsletter where Arthur Butler said casino workers should get the same help with rent as those living in Siletz. He should live outside the service area. I drive 150 miles for medical services.

When we retired here 16 years ago, there were no services at Siletz. The only thing they had was a double-wide for offices. You went to an apartment to get your I.D.

When the clinic opened, I started going to Siletz as they were talking about closing the clinic here. The services were great there. They had several doctors, but Lisa Taylor has been there through them all, as has the dentist, and you couldn't get better care.

When John was the pharmacist, you could get three months of prescriptions, but now you only get one. Unless my son, who lives in Depoe Bay, can pick them up and mail them to me, I have to drive up there to get them.

I also read that they were going to mail prescriptions to members who live 40 miles from Siletz. But when I called, I was told it was only for those living within the service area. Then I was told after Jan. 1, 2005, they would mail to all tribal members. But when I called, I was told the council said they didn't have the money.

I also read the elders could get one pair of glasses free each year. I had mine for three years. I decided to have my

eyes checked, but was told I would have to pay for the lens and frames because they didn't have any more money (I will say Judy Muschamp was trying to help).

The answer most given is you should move to Siletz, but after 16 years and at our age, it isn't something you jump up and do. My husband and our two sons from Bandon love to fish, so when the weather is good, he gives them a call. He has his boat ready by the time they get here and within 20 minutes, they're at the dock. I can get to the beach in 10 minutes.

It's ironic - this is the area my great-grandmother and tribe were from. I didn't know that until after we were here for awhile (maybe that's why I love it so).

In the time we've lived here, I've seen a great change in the way people think about Native Americans (as I'm sure the runners to the Rogue can see). I've seen many people at the beach and they ask why it's called Battle Rock. I get to tell them about what our people went through and they thank me for taking the time.

I'm just hoping the council will realize there is a need for tribal members no matter where they live. I don't know how much more it would cost to mail outside the service area, but I'd be glad to pay if that's an option.

Sincerely,
Wanda Melton