

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

During recent weeks, I have become aware of a troubling development that threatens Indian Country.

It is apparent that the federal government is intent on extending the tentacles of its war on drugs onto Indian reservations. This will be accomplished through monetary grants issued by the Department of Justice, or in other words, federal law enforcement. Along with this money will come trouble for Indians.

In order to perceive why this represents a threat, it is useful to examine the origins and nature of the war on drugs.

The war on drugs is racist to its core. Back in the early '70s, Richard Nixon invented the modern war on drugs as a means to oppress ethnic minorities. The racist manner in which the war on drugs is conducted is the reason that prison is the only place in society where Indians are over-represented.

It is widely understood that the causes of what are commonly described as drug problems are actually poverty and despair. As a tribe, we can deal with these "drug" problems ourselves by making jobs and education available to all members. If we instead choose the federal law enforcement approach to these problems, we will surrender our tribal sovereignty and many of our people will spend large stretches of their adult lives in prison.

The war on drugs is a good business for governments because their power and reach are expanded. Consequently, our own tribal government may be tempted to accept offers of "assistance" that will surely soon arrive.

As concerned tribal members, it is our responsibility to understand that this apparent "opportunity" must be recognized for what it is and rejected as nothing more than the most recent manifestation of the federal government's ongoing policy of genocide against Indian peoples.

The war on drugs has proven totally ineffective at limiting the supply of illicit drugs and their misuse. All it ever accomplishes is locking people up. Now, in a desperate attempt to keep the war going, the government intends to bring the war to Indian Country and turn it into an Indian problem.

As Indian people, we must not allow this. When the Great White Father arrives bearing his gifts of smallpox-infected blankets, this time in the form of federal money for drug enforcement, in the interest of preserving our sovereignty, as well as our freedom, we should just say no.

Frank Bensell Fisher, M.D.



LeAndra Bitsie, NIEA student board member; Joe Garcia, president of NCAI; and and Tiffany Stuart, Miss Haskell 2005-2006

Who is Aaron Hill? Why is somebody from Salem getting involved in Lincoln County affairs? Why should he be "treasurer of the Committee to Recall Bernice Barnett." He is in Salem; it is none of his business.

If he wants to help everybody, have him spend his time and efforts on worthwhile projects that affect everybody in the state – school finance reform, health care, assistance for the elderly.

The petition makes a number of claims that I will not repeat here because I believe they are bogus! These people owe it the people of Lincoln County to produce actual documents, proof of these other charges.

I would urge the people of this county to **not** sign this petition. There is no basis for this. Ms. Barnett has served Lincoln County with dignity and class for the last six years and does not deserve this treatment!

Doug Wills

To the editor:

April was a busy month as Miss Haskell. The American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) Regional 4 Conference at Haskell started off the month. I volunteered with the Haskell AISES chapter in putting on this conference.

Having the duties as an official Haskell ambassador, I had many opportunities to practice my public speaking and leadership skills throughout the year. This included being the MC for the first conference event.

I introduced the keynote speaker, Joe Garcia (San Juan Pueblo), president of the National Congress of American Indians; another speaker, LeAndra Bitsie, National Indian Education Association student board member; and sponsors such as IBM. It was good to spend time with the modern-day warriors of our people.

The Native American art classes have been a blast. Chokers, beadwork, and shawls were sponsored by a Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Fund grant. I would like to thank my cousins, Lynette and Heidi Hibdon, for

helping teach these classes with me. Thanks to the Siletz Tribe for supporting higher education students learning about their Native American culture.

Other events included three pow-wows (Haskell Kiowa Culture Organization/Kansas University Pow-Wow/ Graduation Pow-Wow), Haskell ACCES Club Stomp Dance, Honor Roll and Scholarship Ceremony, Easter Day at Church and Haskell, and Earth Day event.

The Miss Haskell and Haskell Brave Pageant is April 30-May 5. I've been working with Haskell Brave Elliot Bryant all year long on this pageant. We have raised all the money needed to put on the pageant.

We received two donations from local Native groups for scholarships (American Indian Council and Indian Council of Many Nations). That was a goal of mine to start a scholarship for Miss Haskell and Haskell Brave. I have accomplished it – yeah!

I will be crowning the next Miss Haskell 2006-2007 at the Haskell Commencement Pow-Wow on May 12.

I thank God for keeping me together in these last remaining months of my reign and school. Not only did I have these thousands of events, planning meetings, and such, I also had tests, papers, and essays. I hope to be there for the next Miss Haskell to support her because any Royalty needs helpful support in their year of reign.

I encourage anyone to e-mail me if they are interested in Haskell Indian Nations University, offering four-year bachelor's degrees and many two-year degrees. Also, if anyone is interested in my experience as Royalty (pageant chair, my schedules, tribal colleges, etc.) please e-mail me at tiffany.stuart@haskell.edu.

Thanks for taking the time to read my letter and hope you enjoyed my many submissions of articles this year.  
Hvm'chi  
Tiffany Stuart  
Miss Haskell 2005-2006  
www.haskell.edu

To the editor:

Another recall petition. Just what we need. Why is this recall being launched?

It sounds like it is because Mr. White pleaded guilty to assaulting his children. He accepted the plea bargain. I seriously doubt that he was "... threatened" with a jail sentence of eight to 10 years. Mr. White was told that this was the maximum penalty, by law, for what he was charged with.

I also doubt that Ms. Barnett was actually involved in this process. I would think that it was one of the assistant DAs that handled this case. If Mr. White was innocent, he could have gone to court and defended himself.

Plea bargaining is an accepted practice in every DA's office in America. It is a simple process. The accused is offered to accept a lower sentence than what is mandated by law, for a guilty plea. Without this opportunity, it would cost our county a lot more money and we would have to increase the DA's staff by several people.



### Nuu-wee-ya'

(our words)

#### Introduction to the Athabaskan Language

Open to tribal members of all ages

<b>Siletz</b>	<b>Salem</b>
Siletz Tribal Community Center	Salem Area Office
May 9 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	May 15 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
June 6 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	June 12 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
<b>Portland</b>	<b>Eugene</b>
Portland Area Office	Eugene Area Office
May 16 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	May 8 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
June 13 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.	June 5 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Tribal members who need help on cultural projects should contact the Siletz Culture Department. We can assist you prior to the language classes.

For more information, contact Bud Lane at the Siletz Culture Department at 541-444-8320 or 1-800-922-1399, ext. 1320; or e-mail budl@ctsi.nsn.us.