

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Our Nov. 18, 2006, Restoration speaker will be Forrest Gerard, who is well-known to many of you not only as an authority on Indian affairs, but also as a friend and advocate.

Before his retirement, Forrest served as a lobbyist and consultant for the Siletz Tribe on many national as well as specific Siletz Tribal issues. He fought for Indian tribes in the same spirit he fought as a turret gunner of a B-24 bomber with 35 combat missions over Eastern Europe during World War II.

After his discharge from the Air Force, he engaged in many combat missions on behalf of Indian tribes as a Senate staffer, assistant secretary of the Interior, and lobbyist on critical Indian issues – from health, education, housing, and self-determination to self-governance and Indian gaming.

Forrest always has an important message to impart and does so with eloquence. I am pleased he will be with us again for our 29th Annual Restoration Celebration.

NCAI Receives Harvard's "Honoring Nations Award"

For whatever reasons, statistics have shown that violence against women has become a problem among some American Indian tribes – a problem virtually unheard of during the aboriginal and early historical period. It has been suggested that this tragic social phenomenon is similar in some respects to vets who experience serious psychological problems upon returning home to their families from the horrors of the Iraq and other wars.

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) recently was honored for its "ground-breaking work to protect Native women from the high rate of domestic violence they face." The award was presented to NCAI by Harvard University's Project on American Indian Economic Development at the Kennedy School of Government.

According to Juana Majel-Dixon, chairman of NCAI's Violence Against Women Task Force: "The work we do has brought together grassroots advocates and tribal leaders in a way that has impacted hundreds of Indian tribes. American Indian and Alaska Native women have been given a place for their voices to be heard ... I am honored by this recognition."



Delores Pigsley

Native Leaders Rally Around Native Vote Effort at NCAI Convention

By the time you read my article in this issue of *Siletz News*, the November election may already be over. We already may have decided who will govern our state and local governments and who will serve as our representatives in the U.S. Congress.

We also may have already decided what critical local and state measures have passed or failed. If, however, the deadline has not yet arrived as you read these words and you have not yet voted, I urge you to do your duty and vote!

I have often reminded our members of the importance of understanding the issues and the candidates and to vote accordingly. I hope we all will have fulfilled our citizenship responsibilities by doing exactly that. And good or bad, we will be stuck – or blessed – with the results of this election.

Former Colorado Sen. Benighthorse Campbell, the first American Indian in history to chair the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, said, "Native people are realizing now more than ever the substantive nature of their power at the polls ... Using our vote, we are beginning to define ourselves after 400 years where we were defined by someone else."

ECONorthwest's study has shown that Oregon tribes have had an enormous positive impact on the state's economy. NCAI Chairman Joe Garcia reminds us that with the undertaking

of greater tribal self-determination initiatives, Indian people have a greater responsibility to use their voices and their votes in the electoral process.

According to NCAI: "Native VOTE 2006 was about making candidates aware of tribal issues and getting Indian voters involved in the political process. In off-presidential election years such as this, those votes can resonate even more. This year every member of the House of Representatives is up for re-election in some races. The Native Vote could very well decide the outcome of those races."

So if you have not yet voted and there is time, I urge you to exercise your right and **vote!**

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Finally, I would like to alert our members to an upcoming constitutional election.

The present Siletz Constitution provides that constitutional elections can only be conducted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. As summarized by tribal attorney Craig Dorsay, at the present time, "amendment elections ... completely separate from tribal elections, require separate voter registration, are held at a time set by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and are conducted pursuant to federal rules and regulations."

The Siletz Constitution, like the constitutions of many other tribes, was adopted under the provisions of the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934, which requires constitutional elections to be conducted by the BIA.

Many tribes have liberated themselves from this obsolete system. Our tribe has initiated a process to do the same. Under the proposed amendment, the Constitution may be amended "by a ma-

majority vote of the qualified voters" of the Siletz Tribe ... pursuant to tribal law."

The proposed amendment states that, "It shall be the duty of the Election Board to authorize an election on any proposed amendment by Resolution of the Tribal Council or upon presentation of a petition signed by at least one third of the General Council." The proposed amendment goes on to spell out the Election Board's responsibilities, including the specific time frames of the election.

Another important proposed amendment involves attorney contracts. The Siletz Constitution, similar to many other tribal constitutions, provides that all attorney contracts must be approved by the Department of the Interior. This is pursuant to an old law passed by the U.S. Congress in the late 1800s to prevent unscrupulous attorneys from exploiting Indian tribes.

According to Dorsay, "The provision was included in the Siletz Constitution when it was adopted in 1979 as a limitation on the power of the Siletz Tribal Council."

Dorsay states, however, that, "In the modern era of tribal self-government and Indian self-determination, this federal authority becomes obsolete, and in 2000 Congress amended the IRA and Section 81 removed federal approval of tribal attorney contracts. The BIA no longer reviews and approves such contracts, but the requirement still appears in the Siletz Constitution."

The Tribal Council has initiated the process of amending the Constitution to eliminate this unnecessary and obsolete requirement.

The other most important amendment is to document/recognize the tribe's historical treaties in our Constitution.

Siletz Tribal members will be provided with further details of these proposed constitutional amendments.

Cut Wood for the Elders Day

Nov. 10, 2006

Old log yard on the tribe's Toledo Mill property
Lunch, drinks, and snacks provided

Meet at the tribal administration building at 8 a.m. to caravan to the mill.

If you can haul wood to elders outside of the Siletz area, contact Elders Coordinator Angela Ramirez at 1-800-922-1399, ext. 1225, or 541-444-8225.

Most Often Requested Numbers

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	1-800-922-1399
Salem Area Office	503-390-9494
Salem Finance Office	1-888-870-9051
Portland Area Office	503-238-1512
Eugene Area Office	541-484-4234
Springfield Siletz Tribal Head Start	541-747-0161
Contract Health Services (CHS)	1-800-628-5720
Siletz Community Health Clinic	1-800-648-0449
Siletz Alcohol and Drug	1-800-600-5599
Chinook Winds Casino Resort	1-888-244-6665
Chemawa Health Clinic	1-800-452-7823
Bureau of Indian Affairs	1-800-323-8517
Web Site	www.ctsi.nsn.us

General Council Meeting

Nov. 4, 2006 – 1 p.m.

Siletz Tribal Community Center – Siletz, Oregon
Agenda

Call to Order	Tribal Member Concerns
Invocation	Declaration of Candidacy
Roll Call	for 2007 Election
Approval of Agenda	Chairman's Report
Approval of Minutes	Announcements
Reports: Tribal Council	Adjourment
Committee/Activity Reports	