

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

Thank You

Thank you to our tribe for all of the help we received in our time of need, as our little Aaron left us to go to be with Creator. Losing a child or grandchild has got to be one of the hardest things to ever have to experience.

Just as Aaron brightened our lives with his positive attitude and contagious laughter, he is now making Creator smile and brightening the heavens with that special "Aaron" personality.

Thank you also for all of the prayers and cards. So many beautiful people. We appreciate all of you.

Dianne McLeod and family

To the editor:

I wish to extend my utmost respect and gratitude to those who came to support me and my cause (my fight for my son, Jeremy) at this last council meeting: my illustrious mom, Arliss Chatterson, the Ben ladies (Victoria Nelson, Maxine Rilatos, and Shirley Walker), Pete Downey, Angela Martin, Marcos Muniz, Phil Rilatos Jr., Wilma Strong, and those who were there in spirit: my grandmother, Marie Klamath, Selene Rilatos, and Babe Simmons; and the council members who **heard** what was spoken there that day. Also, Sandy Gordon for her glowing letter of reference.

Thank you.

Ikt Tillicum

Levi Simmons

To the editor:

We, the family of Evelyn M. Larsen, wish to thank the Park Department (guys, we appreciate you) for the help they gave us in putting Mommy to rest with Daddy in the Paul Washington Cemetery on Feb. 24, 2007. Also, thank you to the family members who came in the storm.

Robert Kentta, we are so grateful and we wish especially to thank you for taking time even though you were not feeling so well. We appreciate the facts and knowledge you shared with us.

Sincerely,

Pat and Evie's family

To the editor:

I would like to respond to an article in last month's newsletter: "Youth Show Up in Force for Elders' Woodcut."

First off, I think the parents of those youth should too be acknowledged, for if not for their insistence, their youth would not have been involved.

Secondly, some of the youth listed were not part of the "Prevention" crew. My son, Jeff Sweet, and his friend, Aden Perkins, rode with Marcos Muniz – and were among the last to leave, even after the rain came.

Further, it is necessary to recognize the adults who participated in this event: Angela Martin, Reggie Butler, etal ... as their support and perseverance truly made this year's project a success! Thank you.

I also feel the need to respond to another letter written by Cindy Jackson. Selene (Marita) Rilatos is the daughter of two tribal members. She was raised and has resided in/around Siletz her entire life.

She is an employee of the Siletz Tribal Culture Department and represents our tribe. She should know what she's talking about. In my knowledge of her, as my cousin, she would not speak otherwise.

Levi Simmons

Dear Tribal Members:

Thank you so much for those who chose to vote for me. I will, over time, prove that I was worth your votes. What I want for us as a people I believe I can still accomplish as a general council member and still change our elected council.

I propose this – over the next three years, add one new seat until there is a total of 12 council members. For those extra three seats, you can only be elected to that position if you have never been on council before. Hope-

fully, that can get some new blood. That is, if a block vote doesn't statistically put someone in there. We must elect people on their own merit, not because you have been told to. If someone told you to jump off a cliff, would you do it?

I believe our council is honest and hardworking. I think they need new angles to look at things because if we all keep doing what we're doing, we'll keep getting what we're getting. It is possible to do business that is profitable above

logging and gambling. Even a business that breaks even is good if it creates jobs.

For all those who thought "Why bother?" and didn't vote, well – get involved. I haven't really done any council participation before, but I will now. I doubt I'll run again for some time, but I will work for our tribe in my own way.

Once again, thanks for those who believed in me. God bless.

Sincerely,

Phil Rilatos Jr.

To the editor:

Hello, my name is Randall. Of the people in this tribe who know me, many can honestly say I have **no** shame. My own mother has referred to me as "a rabid dog," a description my actions have earned. So why should anyone listen to what I have to say?

I've walked up to police officers with a pistol in my belt and various felonies on my person just for the fun of it. I've walked in on meth community task force meetings and shut them down by dominating all conversation. I stood with my head high while a judge gave me six years in the Oregon prison. Never batted an eye. But do you know what I can't do?

I can't look my aunties in the eye.

These beautiful, traditional Native women – you all know who you are. I never shed a tear for the loss of my freedom, but when I consider these women, the lives they live, the sacrifices they make, the responsibilities they carry, it breaks me down inside.

They represent everything I believe and hold sacred – our traditions, our families, our children, and my life is a travesty of all these things.

But even I can understand the "mindset of Native people." Even I know who "told me that our tribe should provide for the basic needs of our people." It's in the Constitution of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. It was decided on by the same

people who fought for our recognition as a people and paved the way for everything we now have.

Selene Rilatos' grandfather was one of these men. She has spent the last 15 years carrying on our ways and working for our people.

Who are you, Cindy Jackson? What have you done? To put it in a nutshell for you, your words, "I was taught," "my parents taught me," "Indian people." Why not "our people?" What happened to "we," "us," "the people?" That's the example we hope to set for our children.

And you, Mrs. Jackson, have already made it clear in the past that it "does not matter who raises our chil-

dren." Every word you speak condescends to others. You place yourself above and judge what you cannot possibly understand. Who do you think you are, how dare you?

If you feel a need to vent your misguided ideas and judgments on someone, send them to me – I've earned them. But don't you ever speak down upon the name of my Aunty Selene, who deserves nothing but the respect of our entire tribe.

To all my aunties, you're my hope and motivation to pull myself out of this mess I've created. I love you all and thank you for being who you are.

One Love,

Randall Hartwell

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