

TRIBAL PROGRAM NEWS

"The Restoration Act is as important as our Tribal treaties. It gave us back programs and services and it outlined a plan for obtaining a land base."

Delores Pigsley



Little Miss Siletz Illeana Rose Blacketer, Delores Pigsley, Jr. Miss Siletz Rose Pigsley, and Don Pigsley take part in the Honor Dance for the 2007-2008 Siletz Royalty at the Nesika Illahee Pow-Wow. (photo by Laurel V. Johnson)

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"The social programs, health care and education benefits went away, such as they were. The Bureau of Indian Affairs was a different animal and those under their jurisdiction didn't necessarily have a good relationship. The reservation had been greatly diminished and it appears the members felt hopeless about the future."

Termination not only ended funding for much-needed programs, but was a designation of extinction for the Tribe, ending all recognition of the Tribe as a government or community of Native people.

Restoration meant reversal of the Termination Act for the Siletz. Among the key players during the Restoration effort of the early '70s was Tribal leader Joe H. Lane, Sr. It was Lane who began to gather members of the Tribe to hold meetings to discuss the merits of Restoration and how to achieve it.

"When Joe Lane began the effort to look at Restoration, a few Tribal members agreed that it was a good thing to do," explained Pigsley. "Initially, it was slow trying to convince our members. It was an even bigger job trying to convince our neighbors and our legislators."

Although the job ahead was a daunting task, Lane and others went to work. All they had to do was look at the poverty of their people to gain motivation to organize and attend meetings and to tell their story to local lawmakers and decision makers.

"The need of our members was terrific," said Pigsley. "While some members succeeded in the bigger economic world, others did not. Jobs, health care and social programs were desperately needed. Tribal leaders knew a land base would be necessary for housing and that a land base would be the basis for the Tribe's economic recovery.

"Few Tribal members today remember those years from termination through to Restoration," said Pigsley. "The Restoration Act is as important as our Tribal treaties. It gave us back

programs and services and it outlined a plan for obtaining a land base."

After the Restoration Act was passed (Nov. 18, 1977) and led to the creation of a service area for Tribal programs that today encompasses 11 Oregon counties, the 1980 Siletz Reservation Act established a 3,600-acre reservation land base when it was passed into law.

"This truly was a new beginning for the Siletz people," said Pigsley. "This new beginning in November of 1977 was one of the most important events in the history of the Tribe."

Siletz Tribal Elder Linda Merrill, the daughter of Joe Lane, remembers the hard work of her father and others to achieve Restoration for the people. She said he had heard that other Tribes in the country were organizing and he used that as motivation to begin gathering members of his own Tribe.

"My Dad started the Restoration process and saw it through to a successful end," said Merrill. "It (Restoration) was successful because those in support of the project believed in his dream, which became their dream."

Merrill said her father's efforts to Restore Siletz found support in Sister Francella Griggs and Alaskan Native Charley Johnson. Merrill, who made it to the Restoration meetings from her home in Milwaukee, said Lane began traveling back and forth from his home in the Portland area to Siletz in an old Winnebago he purchased for the effort.

It was Lane's relationship with Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield that turned out to be key to the Tribe's successful efforts.

"I know he had the support of his friend Mark O. Hatfield at the time," said Merrill. "Mr. Hatfield has always supported the interests of Native Americans."

Today, Restoration has brought opportunity to the Tribe in the modern day. That opportunity is a direct result of the efforts of a handful of individuals who believed in a dream.

As any Tribal member recognizes though, Restoration is more of a process than an event. Many years of devastating federal policies are difficult to overcome. Many milestones have been reached in the past 30 years – which gives more hope for the next 30 years.

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revitalize tribal culture was for the Siletz Tribe to regain its status as a tribe recognized by the United States.

In November 1977, after years of intense lobbying, Congress and President Jimmy Carter approved Public Law 95-195, which reinstated recognition of the Siletz as a federal Indian tribe. The Siletz Tribe was the second in the nation – and the first in Oregon – to achieve restoration.

Dedicated to improving the quality of life of its nearly 4,400 members, the tribe puts strong emphasis on the education, health and the social well-being of all its members.

Significant tribal accomplishments since Restoration include opening a

health clinic in 1991; building more than 100 homes and multiple dwellings for tribal members; completing the Siletz Dance House in 1996; opening the Tenas Illahee Child Care Center and the Siletz Gas & Mini-Mart in 2003; opening the Logan Road RV Resort in Lincoln City in 2004; and opening the Hee Hee Illahee RV Park in Salem in 2006.

The tribe also played a lead role in opening Siletz Valley School in 2003 and the Siletz Valley Early College Academy in 2006.

Chinook Winds Casino in Lincoln City opened in May 1995. In June 2004, the Siletz Tribe purchased the former Shilo Inn adjacent to the casino and opened Chinook Winds Casino

Resort. Chinook Winds Golf Resort opened in April 2005 when the tribe purchased the former Lakeside Golf and Fitness Center in Lincoln City. The combination of tribal employees and those at Chinook Winds Casino Resort has allowed the Siletz Tribe to become the largest employer in Lincoln County.

The Siletz Tribe has honored its tradition of sharing within the community by distributing more than \$5.4 million through the Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Fund and other tribal resources. Chinook Winds has donated more than \$1.25 million in cash and fund-raising items since 1995. It also provides in-kind donations of convention space for various fund-raisers as

well as technical support, advertising and manpower for events.

30th Anniversary Restoration Celebration Nov. 17, 2007 Chinook Winds Casino Resort Agenda

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| 10 a.m. | Welcome and Invocation Siletz Feather Dancers Head Start Students Guest Speakers Picture Presentation Buffet Luncheon Closing Remarks |
| 6 p.m. | Pow-Wow Grand Entry |