

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor:

It's easy to get caught up in all that is wrong and unfair with our tribe. This year (and especially this time of year), I'd like to express gratitude for all I've received, thanks to our tribe. Thank you for the Housing Program, the LIEAP Program, USDA food, the computer, the per capita checks, and the eyeglasses received at the Grand Ronde Clinic, funded through our tribe.

Thanks to everyone who helped my mother, Arlene Steggell, get into treatment this year; she is still sober. I'm proud of you, Mom, and I love you! Words cannot express how happy we are to have our mom back. Thanks to all who helped with the programs, and anything or anyone I may have forgotten.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year; especially to the sweetest daughter a mother could ask for, Melissa Lane. I love you, Galsy!

Rene' Lane



To the editor:

The Portland Area Office donated a quilt to the Elders Raffle. We would like to thank all of those who worked on the quilt. Thank you to everyone who bought a ticket for our raffle. You continue to support us and we appreciate your consideration.

The quilt was raffled at the Restoration Pow-Wow. Bonnie Petersen was the winner. Congratulations to Bonnie.

Thank you to Liz John and other elders for selling the tickets. We could not raise funds without your assistance.

Sincerely,

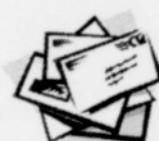
Shirley Walker and Cynthia Farlow
CTSI Elders Treasurer



To the Siletz Tribe:

I'm only an eighth Native American, my skin is white, and I can't speak the native tongue. Nonetheless, my soul does speak and it speaks loud. Have you ever listened to your soul? It's that voice that says "maybe I should defend that child" or "maybe I shouldn't throw that cigarette-butt out the window." The soul is what our ancestors listened to and even though many died fighting for its truth, they died in honor. However, in the past two centuries our surviving people have been stripped from their honor and tricked from their land. And worst of all, the majority of us have **lost** contact with the soul.

I write to you now because I am desperate. We, among most, should feel a great respect for earth. But the earth is in terrible pain and we turn our backs to Her; can't you feel it? Can't you feel



the pain of the **millions** of Africans who are starving and dying from curable diseases? Or the pain of the Amazon rainforest that is being slashed and burned, and in 40 years, might not even exist? Can't you feel the pain of the icecaps melting, sea levels rising and the thousands being destroyed by meth? Or the pain of the polluted rivers and the strange chemicals being fed to our infants?

My uncle, Walt Klamath, once spoke of the earth and as long as I can remember, he has been a man of great wisdom. But as a child, I was either too arrogant or too ignorant to understand him. But I am grown now and I understand his truth. Humankind has two choices: (1) we coincide with nature, or (2) we die by nature. Humankind cannot treat nature and people as though they are commodities to be traded and exploited.

Note that I'm not an environmentalist, a democrat or a republican. I'm just a Logsdon kid who cares about life, and I'm asking our people to stand up and face this injustice and defend our mother earth.

And I'm not saying our people haven't done anything; I, among the many, have been blessed by the tribe and have nearly accomplished my first college degree. However, the education that you have paid for has opened my eyes and I can no longer apathetically live my life. I have to do something about these atrocities and I'm hoping that the Siletz Tribe will do something as well.

So what can we do? We can ask the tribal council. And if they are unwilling to consider doing anything, then maybe we must wait until the winter ends and spring begins, for new life brings new hope.

Thank you,

Jacob Reid

To the editor:

My name is Tina Retasket and I am running for Tribal Council. I have worked for the tribe off and on since 1983. I have worked with many of the tribal programs, including social services, education, law enforcement, economic development, culture and many more. I served as a grant writer, bringing hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue into the tribe. I wrote the first self-governance grant that tripled our annual revenues from the BIA. Currently, I serve on the Siletz City Council and have served on many boards representing the Siletz Tribe. I want to use the skills I have learned in a new capacity - as a member of the Tribal Council.

I believe that we elect the tribal council to provide the vision and direction for all of the separate entities. I also believe that we have unexplored opportunities for input from our membership as voting members on some committees and boards, and will work towards providing those opportunities.

I believe we need to do a better job of informing our membership of the decisions that are made on our behalf. Tribal members lack the ability to attend some meetings and much of the information is discussed in executive session. I would work towards getting more information out to the membership in a timely manner.

I believe that we need to diversify our economic holdings. To do so, we need to emphasize better due diligence prior to engaging in economic ventures.

I want to explore new opportunities for members, including:

- health savings accounts
- increasing the number of homes on the reservation for all income levels
- development of transitional housing in locations that include urban areas
- development of businesses in Lincoln County
- re-establishment of a social services department

- creation of a matching down-payment assistance program for those who are middle income.

None of these activities can occur without sacrifice. We can fund some of these programs through existing resources, but it may require shifting percentages of some gaming revenue categories. In the end, I believe this will benefit everyone more.

If elected, I would resign my position as Assistant General Manager when a replacement is found. I have always given more hours than I have been paid for to do the best job possible. I would continue that as a Council Member, and feel that resigning my position would allow me the focus I believe the job deserves. Thank you for your consideration, and I hope to serve you on Tribal Council in the future.

If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me at: retasket@hotmail.com.

Siletz News Letters Policy

Siletz News, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, is published once a month. Our editorial policy encourages input from readers about stories printed in *Siletz News* and other tribal issues.

All letters **must include** the author's signature, address, and phone number in order to be considered for publication. *Siletz News* reserves the right to edit any letter for clarity and length, and to refuse publication of any letter or any part of a letter that may contain profane language, libelous statements, personal attacks, or unsubstantiated statements.

Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *Siletz News*, tribal employees, or Tribal Council.

Please type or write legibly. Letters longer than 450 words may be edited for length as approved by Tribal Council Resolution #96-142.

Please note: The general manager of the Siletz Tribe is the editor-in-chief of *Siletz News*.

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