

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

With this, the December issue of *Siletz News*, we say farewell to 2008 and greetings to 2009, the New Year!

31st Restoration Anniversary Celebration

Tribal members and friends gathered to celebrate the 31st anniversary of the Restoration of our Tribe. It was a wonderful event in honor of what our ancestors had to endure and the accomplishments and challenges of 2009 and the years that lie beyond.

The Saturday, Nov. 8, and the Sunday, Nov. 9, issues of *The Oregonian* published full-page ads of our 31st Restoration anniversary under the heading, "We Will Remember." The article, written by Brent Merrill, and photos tell a brief history "long before we were recognized by the U.S. government as a federally recognized Tribe ... (when our Tribe) was a number "of sovereign Tribes and bands that existed hundreds – thousands – of years ago in our aboriginal homelands ..."

The article tells of our ancestors being removed from our homelands to the promised 1.1 million-acre Coast Reservation and the subsequent "devastating loss of land and resources."

Since we were restored 31 years ago, however, the article also tells about how "our people and culture endured" and goes on to report on the Tribe's accomplishments since Restoration.

Ted Werth, a Tribal member who was young during the termination and Restoration years, addressed the audience. He gave a warm report, remembering those years as he grew up and went to college. It was uplifting to hear of Ted's experiences and success he has made of his life.

Our Head Start children also were a hit, speaking our language and singing.

I would like to thank all the staff at the Tribe and casino for their assistance in making the day a success, and thank you to the Restoration Committee, Bud Lane, Tina Retasket and Ed Ben for all the work on the calendar, photos, gifts and coordinating activities.

The pow-wow was great! Everyone enjoyed the Apache Crown Dancers, all



Delores Pigsley

students at Chemawa Indian School. I received many nice comments from visitors and guests.

Obama, the Presidency and the Aftermath

Regarding the presidential campaign, 2008 was the end of a very long and eventful year that culminated in the historic election of our nation's first African American president, Barack Obama. Who would have dreamed this could happen in America when just a few years back, blacks were bought and sold as slaves and denied the right to vote.

I watched, as many of you probably did on Nov. 4, the televised events when thousands of people of every race, ethnic and economic background, young and old, gathered in Chicago's Grant Park and waited excitedly for Obama.

John McCain appeared first on the large screen from his home state of Arizona, where he made a brief but very gracious and respectful congratulatory concession speech. When Obama appeared before the jubilant multitude in Grant Park, many in tears, his speech as president-elect was delivered with his usual composed eloquence.

For almost two years, throughout his campaign, Obama had defined his basic policies and objectives on the nation's

economy, energy independence, health care, education and the middle class.

Obama – Possible Impact on Indian Affairs

As a Harvard-educated lawyer who has taught constitutional law at the university level, Obama has stated that the U.S. government's Indian trust responsibilities are expressly recognized in the U.S. Constitution. He also has affirmed his belief in the principle of Tribal sovereignty and government-to-government relationships between Tribes and the federal government.

Obama understands the seriousness of health conditions among Indian Tribes, including the high death rates and suicides that continue to plague Tribes. He has stated that federal health care services and funding are essential if these problems are to be satisfactorily addressed.

So the enactment of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, which has been languishing for so long in Congress, is of vital importance to the Siletz Tribe and all Indian Tribes nationally. Hopefully, it will be a high priority item on Obama's and the new Congress's agenda.

Merkley Unseats Smith for U.S. Senate

As for the state senatorial race, Oregon House Speaker Jeff Merkley beat Sen. Gordon Smith in a very tight race. Sen. Smith currently serves on the Senate Indian Affairs Committee and has had a positive record with regards to Indian affairs issues.

This past fall, the Siletz Tribal Council met with Merkley in council chambers. We had an opportunity to ask questions regarding Tribal issues. We look forward to working with Merkley as our new senator.

Elders' Council Meeting

Dec. 13 • 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Chinook Winds Casino Resort

For more information, please contact Danise Barker at 800-922-1399, ext. 1225; 541-444-8225; or daniseb@ctsi.nsn.us

Nuu-wee-ya' (our words)

Introduction to the Athabaskan Language Open to Tribal members of all ages

Siletz
Siletz Tribal Community Center
Dec. 2 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Jan. 6 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Salem
Salem Area Office
Dec. 9 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Jan. 13 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Portland
Portland Area Office
Dec. 8 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Jan. 12 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Eugene
Eugene Area Office
Dec. 1 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Jan. 5 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Come and join other members of your community and Tribe in learning to speak one of our ancient languages.

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

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*.

Editor-in-Chief: Brenda Bremner
Editor: Diane Rodriguez
Assistant: Natasha Kavanaugh

Send letters to:

Siletz News
P.O. Box 549
Siletz, OR 97380-0549
541-444-8291 or
800-922-1399, ext. 1291
Fax: 541-444-2307
E-mail: pias@ctsi.nsn.us

Deadline for the January issue is Dec. 10. Submission of articles and photos is encouraged. Please see the Passages Policy on page 23 when submitting items for Passages.



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Name: _____

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Change of address: Tribal members – call the Enrollment Department at 541-444-8258 or 800-922-1399, ext. 1258; all others – call the newspaper office.