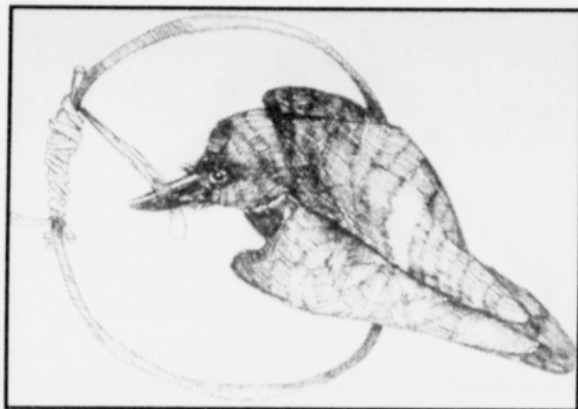


TRIBAL PROGRAM NEWS

Ask Raven

Raven will answer your questions about problems associated with alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. You can call in your questions to the numbers at right or mail them to:

Raven
P.O. Box 549
Siletz, OR 97380-0549



Dear Raven: I am hearing that a lot of our kids are using pain pills. What can we do?
A Parent

Dear Parent: According to a 2007 teen survey done by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, abuse of prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications by teens is a serious problem. According to the survey:

- One in five teens has abused a prescription medication.
- One in five teens has already abused a prescription painkiller.
- Forty-one percent of teens think it's safer to abuse a prescription drug than it is to use illegal drugs.

I am so very glad you wrote to me about this as I too am worried about our youth. Prescription drug abuse among teens is a growing and serious problem of which many parents are unaware. Here is some important information for families:

- The most commonly abused prescription medications are painkillers, like Oxycontin or Vicodin, which produce feelings of euphoria and pleasure and are highly addictive. They can easily lead to overdose when crushed and snorted or mixed with other drugs, such as alcohol.
- Depressants, such as Valium or Xanax, also are commonly abused by teens. These drugs make people feel calm and reduce anxiety and tension. They are addictive and can be deadly when used in combination with prescription pain medications, some OTC cold and allergy drugs or alcohol.
- In addition, stimulants, such as medications for ADD and ADHD like Ritalin and Adderall, are being abused by some teens to help them study better or to suppress appetite for weight loss. These medications also can be addictive, cause feelings of fear or paranoia and lead to various health problems.
- Some OTC and other easily obtainable medications, such as cough suppressants containing dextromethorphan, also are being abused.

It's important for all of us to know what medicines you may have around your home and keep them in a secure location. Watch for signs of medication abuse, such as slurred speech, staggering walk, sweating, nausea, vomiting, numbing of extremities, dilated pupils, drowsiness and dizziness.

Teens with a computer and a credit card can order prescription drugs. It's important to have an awareness of what is mailed to your home.

Parents need to be aware that they set an example for their teens by not abusing or sharing their prescription drugs or OTC medicines.

Once addicted to these prescription drugs, it can be extremely difficult to stop using and once stopped, to stay drug-free. Changes occur in the brain with extended and abusive use and the brain continues to send strong messages asking for these drugs. It also can take time for the brain to normalize and start making its own natural "feel good" chemicals that it has slowed down on because it's getting much more than is normal.

If we can prevent our young people from starting or stop the use before it has gone on too long, we can make a huge difference in the rest of their lives. They are our future and we need to do all we can to give them the good start in life they deserve.

Thank you to all of you who care enough about youth to reach out for help.

Raven

A New Sense of Freedom

Seventy to 80 percent of the people involved in the criminal justice system have problems with drugs and alcohol. Oregon's prison population has gone up 128 percent for women and 60 percent for men in the last 10 years.

How much smaller would this number be if those people had sought treatment before the act that got them into prison? It's worth thinking about how many good people end up incarcerated and useless to society, family or culture because of actions badly influenced by drugs and alcohol.

These same people often come out of prison considerably less "good" than before they went in. Being stigmatized as a felon makes it extremely hard to find good employment and to have the other opportunities afforded to most people.

Foster care costs in Oregon have gone up 45 percent in the last four years, primarily because of methamphetamine use. It's a huge cost to taxpayers, but how much worse of a cost is it to those children and to the addicted parents that get separated?

And so much of this suffering and the toll on individual lives could be alleviated if drug use were confronted, if families would refuse to ignore and enable alcohol and drug abuse, if abusers were to begin treatment before that last worst act.

Tribal services for substance abuse and addiction are available. If you are weary of the toll that drugs or alcohol are taking on your life or on a family member, simply call:

- Eugene Area Office at 541-484-4234 and ask for Hal

- Salem Area Office at 503-399-9494 and ask for Conrad
- 541-444-8286/800-600-5599 and ask for Janet, Walt or Delina

Different levels of services are available depending what is needed. Appointments can be made for outside of business hours for people who are committed to full-time work.

The only thing you need to bring is a desire for a better life than what you are now experiencing with drugs or alcohol. It's available and waiting for you.

CEDARR

Community Efforts Demonstrating the Ability to Rebuild and Restore

June 3 • Noon
Siletz Community Health Clinic Conference Room

Please attend!

Siletz Tribal A&D Programs

Prevention, Outpatient Treatment and Women's Transitional

Siletz: 800-600-5599 or 541-444-8286

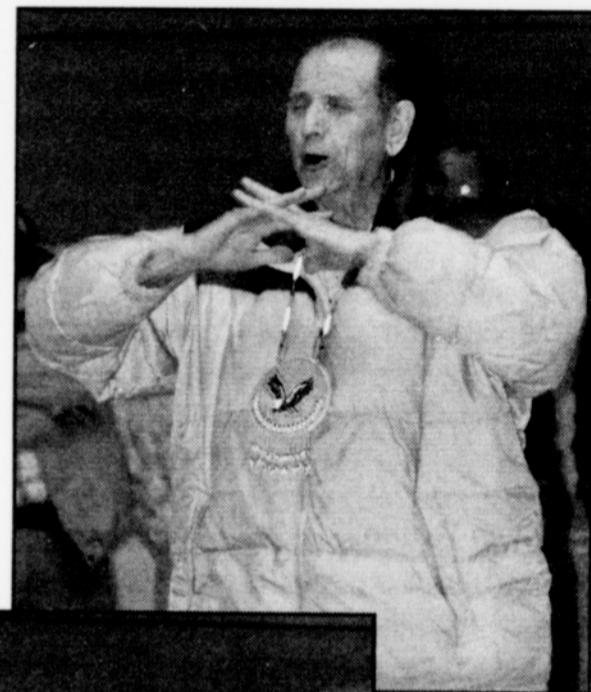
Eugene: 541-484-4234

Salem: 503-390-9494

Portland: 503-238-1512

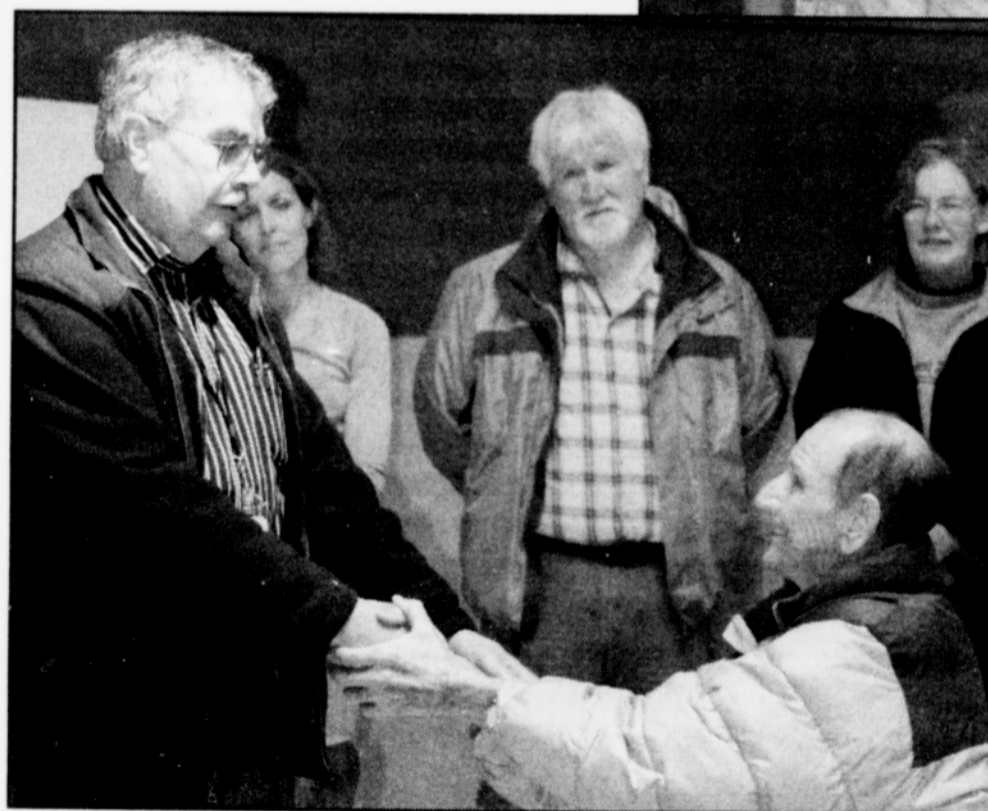
Honoring Walt Klamath Siletz Tribal Community Center May 19, 2009

The Oregon Indian Council on Addictions honored Walt Klamath with a surprise lunch and awards. Joining Walt at this special and well-deserved time were family, friends, many members of the community, representatives from the Native American Rehabilitation Association and the state of Oregon, and three other Tribes.



Photos by Natasha Kavanagh

Walt is known for his storytelling and he shares one in closing (above).



Denis Bosque takes Walt's hand as he shares his love and appreciation with him.