

A New Way of Life Encourages Recovering Addicts

By Natasha Kavanaugh

September is National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month, celebrating 20 years! The theme for this year is "Join the Voices for Recovery: Together We Learn, Together We Heal."

A subcommittee of the Local Alcohol & Drug Abuse Planning Committee, appointed by the Advisory Board of the Lincoln County Commissioners, has invited all community members to take part in the First Annual Recovery/Wellbriety Celebration on Sept. 19 in Newport, Ore. (see article on page 6).

In celebration of Recovery Month, three individuals have chosen to share their successes. These successes often go unnoticed, so please help us celebrate.

Gus W., with Lincoln County Mental Health Jail Services, Elaine G. and Melissa B. are honest, open-minded and willing to do whatever it takes to recover.

Addiction is a treatable disease and recovery is possible. It doesn't happen overnight for anyone. The process of recovery begins when you stop using drugs – abstinence is just the beginning.

So what does recovery mean to you? To Gus W., "Recovery means freedom. Addiction means the opposite."

Many addicts are unfamiliar with recognizing their own feelings and emotions. For Elaine G., it's "something I never did before recovery."

Melissa B. shares that not only is her recovery beneficial as an individual, but she is able to be "a family-oriented person" and has the ability to "deal with life and a community without using."

Educating the public reduces the stigma associated with addiction and treatment. Accurate knowledge of the disease helps people understand the importance of supporting treatment programs, those who work within the treatment field and those in need of treatment.

Chemical dependency does not detract from personal worth.

"I often observe community denial and a desire to make the addict an outcast. I think that recovery involves individuals, families and communities," said Gus W.

Drug addiction is how addicts identify with each other. Go to a meeting and in the rooms where addicts meet, you'll see them share their own recovery experience, offering the next person some hope and to take what they want and leave the rest.

"I have a responsibility to give back what I have been given," said Gus W.

Elaine G. and Melissa B. stay active within the Siletz community with CEDARR, White Bison and Families of Traditions. Both women draw motivation from their children and families.

"My son pushes me to be a better role model," said Elaine G.

Addiction can be a lonely place. You cannot do it alone. You'll find many resources are available right in your very own community. Gus W. maintains his recovery by putting those resources to work.

"I regularly attend AA meetings, I counsel addicted people who are in crisis. I talk to people who are experiencing the rewards of sobriety," he said. "I have developed hobbies and interests that don't include alcohol, drugs or places you get it. I try to balance my life by being aware of my sleep, nutrition, recreation, work, alone time, family time and friend time."

Elaine G. and Melissa B. stress the importance of step work.

"I've been doing a 12-step workbook. I discuss my answers with my cousin, she is my rock. Steps are very important, it makes you open your eyes to realize what your life was," said Melissa B.

"I am working a program. I go to meetings on a regular basis, do my steps, I talk

to my sponsor daily. You will fail if you don't work your steps," said Elaine G. as she encourages others to keep going. "Don't give up! Don't quit five minutes before the miracle! Reach out and talk to someone."

Even though Melissa B. is new to recovery, she continues to stay on top of things. She knows it's possible to "deal with life and family without using and well worth it."

Living a life of obsessive, compulsive, self-seeking behaviors resulted in unmanageability. These three keep close in their minds where they came from and where their addiction took them.

Elaine G. sends a message to the community.

"The lie is dead! Addicts do recover!" she said, adding, "I show honesty, integrity and try to be honorable in my daily actions."

Gus's experience has taught him to take it as it comes and he tries not to demand that things go his way as he describes his recovery as "so far so good, one day at a time."

What an inspiration these three are!

The process of recovery isn't easy. It takes great courage and perseverance to continue in recovery day after day.

Tribal Employee Incentive Award Winners Earn Recognition



First Quarter

Major Acts of Merit

Walt Klamath

Wendi Schamp

Naomi Shadwick

Cost Savings/Inventions

Connie James

Special Acts of Service

Tiffany Haynes

Margo Hudson

Sharon Edenfield and Brenda Bremner (right photo) wrap Caroline Easter in a Tribal Treaty blanket as they announce her retirement.



Second Quarter

Employee of the Quarter

Angela Ramirez

Major Acts of Merit

Mike Kennedy

Outstanding Performance

Kurtis Barker

Valerie Hibdon

Brett Lane

Kelly Lane

April Scoggins

Eugene Williams



General Council Meeting

Nov. 7, 2009 • 1 p.m. • Siletz Tribal Community Center • Siletz, Oregon

Agenda

Call to Order

Invocation

Flag Salute

Roll Call

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Programs:

Culture Department – Pow-Wow

Candidate's Declaration for Tribal Council

Tribal Members' Concerns

Chairman's Report

Announcements

Adjourn

Youth Hunt Forms Due By Sept. 4

Entry forms for the 2009 Youth Antlerless Deer Tag Drawing are available on the Tribe's website – www.ctsi.nsn.us, in the Natural Resources Department office in the Tribal administration building in Siletz or via e-mail from Mike Kennedy at mikek@ctsi.nsn.us. This is for Tribal youth age 12-17 only; entry deadline is Sept. 4. The public drawing will be held Sept. 14 at 5 p.m. at the Tribal administration building in the Natural Resources Map Room.