

NIGHT GAME – The Siletz Booster Club received \$25,000 in August 2008 to help replace the football field lights at Siletz Valley School. This included funding for lights, poles, an electrician and equipment rental.

Education is Top Priority

Education opportunities are the programs that receive the most funding from the Tribe. A total of 51 percent of the funds given out have gone to support educational opportunities for youth.

Education grants have gone to places like the Oregon Coast Community College, the Native American Youth and Family Center, the Siletz Valley Charter School, the Oregon Coast Aquarium, the Hatfield Marine Science Center and the Lincoln County School District.

"What the Tribe has done just in the last few years with their charitable giving is extraordinary," said Lincoln City Mayor Lori Hollingsworth in a telephone interview. "They have really helped out many organizations in our area and we are grateful for that."

Health care is the second most gifted category, with 17 percent of funds going to health care programs that benefit individuals and families.

Among the organizations to receive funding through the STCCF are the American Cancer Society, Olalla Center for Children and Families, the Toledo Volunteer Firefighters Association, the Pacific Communities Health District Foundation and Food Share of Lincoln County. The fund also contributed student dental kits throughout Lincoln County schools through Altrusa International of Yaquina Bay.

Lincoln County has a long-standing tradition of active 4H participants and the STCCF recognizes and supports those efforts. Lincoln County 4H programs received \$2,871 in 2004, \$1,000 in 2005, \$5,000 in 2006, \$2,185 in 2007, \$1,250 in 2008 and \$6,975 in 2009 for a total of nearly \$20,000 in the last six years.

The First Grant

The first grant ever given by the STCCF was to the Siletz Royalty so they could attend the Gathering of Nations Pow-Wow in New Mexico. This is the largest pow-wow in Indian Country and features drummers, dancers, Elders and Royalty from all over the world.

The amount of that first-ever grant to the Royalty was \$1,500. The total amount of money given during the first quarterly charitable distribution was \$30,550.

In 2000, just five years after the casino's opening, the Tribe began making charitable contributions to surrounding communities with a total of \$134,006. A

total of \$81,953 was distributed in 2001 and \$238,182 was given out in 2002. That number increased in 2003 when the distribution amount was \$409,762 and increased again in 2004 when the amount given was \$466,300.

The Charitable Fund broke the \$500,000 mark in 2005 with \$610,363 given out and that total moved up to nearly a \$1 million in the next two years. In 2006, \$817,341 was distributed and \$819,054 was given out in 2007.

A total of \$897,446 was distributed through the fund in 2008 and the Tribe broke the \$1 million mark in 2009 when \$1,110,333 was given out to deserving charities.

According to Kelley Ellis, STCCF secretary and Siletz Tribal member, the charitable fund is the Tribe's way of giving back.

"I have been working with the Charitable Fund since it began in 2000," said Ellis. "I was the executive secretary to the Siletz Tribal Council when the Charitable Fund was created and I was given the task of assisting in the development of the application and working with applicant organizations."

In 2001, Ellis changed her employment position and then returned to the Tribe and began working for the Tribe's Natural Resources Department in July 2005. After returning to the Tribe, Ellis was asked to help out with the Charitable Fund and after several months of filling in, she was asked to remain as the fund's secretary as well as fulfilling her duties as the administrative assistant in the Natural Resources Department.

Ellis is well-known throughout the Tribal organization for volunteering for

additional projects and the fund has been one of those for the last four years now.

The STCCF has been there for many organizations throughout the surrounding communities and that helping hand comes with a lot of pride in the organization.

"I really enjoy working with the Charitable Fund," said Ellis. "It gives me an opportunity to assist organizations throughout our county (Lincoln County), Oregon and the United States successfully apply for donations for their exciting projects and needed services. Because I am a staff member and have no responsibilities in the review or approval process, I am able to assist organizations that need assistance in completing their applications."

Ellis said she is building a strong network through the work the Charitable Fund does.

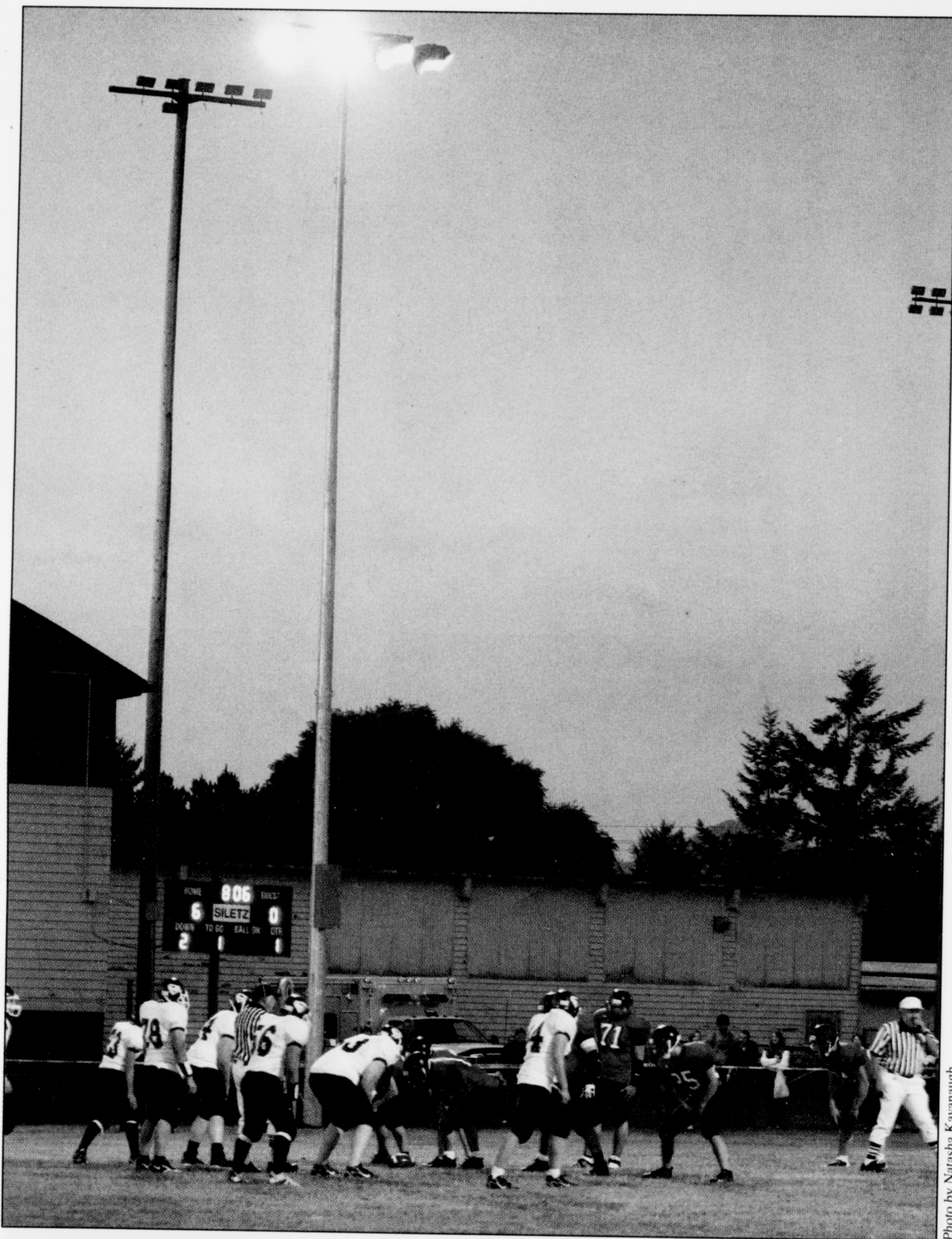


Photo by Natasha Kavanaugh