

In March 2010, Siletz Tribal representatives, council members Bud Lane and Tina Retasket, General Manager Brenda Bremner, Tribal Attorney Craig Dorsay and I attended many important meetings and made a number of important contacts with our own congressional representatives.

The organizations we attended included the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC).

Meeting with NIGC Officials

We met with the current chairman and staff of NIGC to discuss issues of special interest and concern to us. As for the appointment of a permanent NIGC chairman, we learned that candidates' names would be submitted to fill the vacant position temporarily held at this time by George Skibine.

Meetings with House and Senate Committees and NCAI

In previous issues of *Siletz News*, I reported on one of our Tribe's priority issues, which is to obtain congressional support for legislation authorizing 99-year fee-to-trust leases. We also used this opportunity to continue to secure congressional support and update committee members on our major Tribal activities and issues.

This update included a status report on the more than \$6 million the Tribe received from various agencies under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). We listed the following agencies that contributed to our Tribe under ARRA:

- BIA/Federal Transportation Agency for road improvement
- Department of Energy for energy conservation strategies
- Environmental Protection Agency for a water project
- Health and Human Services for child care development projects
- Housing and Urban Development for housing block grants
- Department of Labor for summer youth program
- Department of Agriculture for equipment for food distribution program
- Oregon Department of Energy for weatherization and startup program



Delores Pigsley

Chairman's Report

At NCAI, major issues of national importance were discussed, including the Carciere fix, the Cobell settlement, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act and the upcoming national budget hearings that will significantly impact Tribes.

Regarding the Carciere fix, you will recall it was the Narragansett Tribe's land-into-trust application that formed the basis of the Supreme Court's Carciere vs. Salazar decision.

That decision not only has an impact on the Narragansetts but also on Tribes across the country. Contrary to what had been the country's policy for more than 75 years, the court ruled that Tribes that had not been recognized in 1934 don't have the right to have land taken into trust under the Indian Reorganization Act.

This is an issue about which the NCAI and individual Tribes are deeply concerned and involved, an issue the U.S. Congress will need to "fix."

As for the Cobell lawsuit settlement, there were indications a few weeks ago that the Obama administration and lead plaintiff Eloise Cobell had come to an agreement on terms. This turned out not to be the case, however.

Many obstacles are still in the way of a settlement. Questions about lawyer fees have been raised, among others. Eloise Cobell has been a champion for

this cause and we hope the issues can be worked out.

During our D.C. visit, we also attended a nice reception for Sen. Daniel Inouye (see photo below), who has been a champion for Tribes for the past several years. We took the opportunity to not only thank him for his contributions, but also ask his support for a Carciere fix.

Oregon Tribal Gaming Alliance

Close to home, an issue about which the Oregon Tribal Gaming Alliance (OTGA) has been very much involved is the proposed non-Tribal casino that will be on the Oregon ballot this fall if enough signatures are collected.

Preliminary studies indicate the proposed casino will have a negative impact on Tribal casinos as well as Oregon Lottery revenue. Because of this, OTGA does not support the proposed casino project that would be located at the old dog track in Wood Village east of Portland.

The OTGA will study the impact and implications of such a casino on Oregon Tribes and develop an action plan addressing those issues.

Chemawa Indian School

The new dormitory has been completed at Chemawa Indian School, the oldest continually operated boarding school in the United States. All the old dorms have been torn down and the new dorm is occupied.

The school held a nice reception for visitors just prior to its 130th birthday celebration. The new Chemawa dorm has pictures of the old campus and is very nicely built and decorated.

Standing Committee Appointments

In closing, I want to take this opportunity to thank the Tribal members who applied to serve on committees this year. Everyone who applied was approved to serve. It's important to keep the Tribal Council advised on issues and committee members are one important source of information for the council.

There is a Standing Committee ordinance that governs committee meetings, activities and travel. The committees must keep minutes and provide meaningful input to the Tribal Council.



Courtesy photo

Alfred "Bud" Lane III and Delores Pigsley attend a reception honoring Sen. Daniel Inouye of Hawaii in Washington, D.C., on March 1.

Tribal Children Need Foster Parents

Do you value Siletz Native culture and want to help preserve it? If so, please consider fostering for the Tribe. The Siletz Tribe needs loving, stable, nurturing homes in all areas. If you are interested, please contact Shawna Henarie, foster care certifier, at 541-444-8275 or 800-922-1399, ext. 1275; or visit www.ctsi.nsn.us/icw.html.

Nuu-wee-ya' (our words)

Introduction to the Athabaskan Language

Open to Tribal members of all ages

Siletz

Siletz Tribal Community Center
April 6 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
May 4 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Salem

Salem Area Office
April 13 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
May 18 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Portland

Portland Area Office
April 12 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
May 17 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Eugene

Eugene Area Office
April 5 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
May 3 – 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 Cultural Department at 541-444-8320 or 800-922-1399, ext. 1320; or e-mail budl@ctsi.nsn.us.

Send letters to:

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Deadline for the May issue is April 9. Submission of articles and photos is encouraged. Please see the Passages Policy on page 20 when submitting items for Passages.



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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.