

Families and cousins:

My name is John Roe Jr., or John Jr. to some, and it was while at the funeral for Junior John that I felt a change coming over me as I listened to a man I consider another great Elder speak about Junior.

While I'd been trying to think of something to say about Junior that might offer comfort to Jane and the John family, I was silenced by the wisdom of Ed Ben.

He spoke about Junior and his life. Beautiful sentiments and truths that brought focus to what a giving, sharing, inspirational man Junior was to many.

I didn't know Junior well, but I did know his friendly smile and his always kind words, asking about my father and family. I never noticed much that Junior was aging. I could plainly see his walker and his oxygen bottle, but those things would disappear when he smiled and greeted me.

What silenced me was when Ed spoke not only to the John family, but to the Tribe as a whole, especially the young people. He talked about how we're all "cousins" as he used Junior as an example. He related how Junior had so many siblings and as he named them, the picture he was painting for us emerged. We could see that just this one man was related to so many others and they to others until the picture was complete.

We are one Tribe, related in some way, most likely cousins. One family, no matter how distant we may be in miles or merely daily life.

We have squabbles and fallings out, but we are one and celebrate that oneness with pow-wows and other cultural events, even at funerals when we celebrate the lives of those who have passed on.

I wasn't raised in Siletz, I didn't go to Chemawa School. But I feel a greater bond of love and relationship because of the people I'm getting to know over the years as My Tribe.

I've been to only three funerals in Siletz; each one made me feel blessed to have gotten to know those who passed, even if just a little. Each one was an inspiration to me – Benny Marzan, Eddie Collins and Junior John.

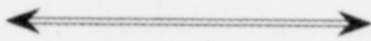
The love, respect and kind thoughts expressed at their funerals by so many helps me know Ed's words are so very real and true. They needed to be heard and heeded by all of us and for the youth to realize words are the validity of the history that makes us one.

We're all related in some way – one Tribe, one family, one people – and I'm proud and feel privileged to be a "cousin" in our Tribe.

Peace is in the sharing of soul and wisdom from our Elders.

Peace to all always and in all ways.

John Roe Jr.



Courtesy photo by Jamie Mason

Marcell and Michael Hull

Dear Tribal members:

My name is Marcell Hull (Belgard). I am 38 years old. I have been a Tribal member since our Tribe was restored in 1975. I am married to Michael Hull, 40 years old. We have been married for 15 years and together 18 years.

We have three beautiful daughters and four Tribal relative foster children, two of which we've been raising for seven years.

My husband was a hard-working builder for 20 years. Two years ago the economy crashed and he was out of a job and a career. In desperation we turned to the Tribe for help and started receiving TANF. One stipulation to get TANF was to have either a high school diploma or GED; we had neither.

I was asked by Jamie Mason to share my story to help inspire my Tribal members to further their education and at first we felt embarrassed to admit that at 38 and 40 years old, we just gotten our GEDs. But we were encouraged to feel proud by Portland Area Office staff.

Marcell Hull

Dear readers:

One of my current projects is to commit to memory ancestral stories. I started this project a few years ago and I've worked with the stories told by Charles Depoe to Livingston Farrand in 1900, which were published in 1915 in the Journal of American Folklore. Through the good work of George Wasson and other Coquille people, Farrand's field notes have come back to Oregon (from Washington, D.C.) as part of the SWORP collection.

As part of this dictation taken by Farrand in 1900 (but never subsequently published), Charles Depoe says by way of introduction to the tales, "My father's grandfather told my father's father these stories."

Even though Charles Depoe was not my direct ancestor, his sister Adah Depoe Carson Arden is. And because these two shared the same father, I now consider these stories told by Charles Depoe and written down by Livingston Farrand to be ancestral stories.

Having now memorized all these stories (five in number) by heart, I'm currently searching for more ancestral stories to memorize in the future.

If you know stories – or know of stories – that derive from Charles Depoe, please contact me as soon as you can.

Likewise, if you know stories – or know of stories – that come from any of my other ancestors or their relatives, would you please contact me? Call me at 541-688-7116; e-mail me at vilesa@lanecol.edu; or write to me at Lane Community College, Dept. of English, 4000 East 30th Ave., Eugene, OR 97405.

Andrew Viles

Siletz News Letters Policy

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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

Downey Family Reunion

June 11, 2011

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Siletz Tribal Community Center

Potluck/Picnic

For more information, contact Jean Garrett
at 541-444-7922