



Siletz News
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Courtesy photo by Chinook Winds Casino Resort staff

This banner will go with Tribal Vice Chairman Bud Lane (right) and others to the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., this month for the Siletz Festival portion of the Indian Summer Showcase 2011. It was designed by the Chinook Winds Casino Resort graphics team and printed onsite in the Marketing Department. Please see Tribal Chairman Delores Pigsley's article on this subject on page 2 and Charles Wilkinson's article about the Siletz Tribal history book on page 5.

Siletz women bear traditional III marks on their chins

"These marks represent my family and who we are. One day my daughter will carry the same marks that I do" says one woman who has them

By Natasha Kavanaugh

There is no single reason why women were marked with the III. The tattoos on the chin were once a desired mark of beauty and nobility as worn by the older women. They were marked for beauty, to signify young girls' entry into womanhood, for spiritual reasons and as a way to distinguish between the sexes in battle or in old age. The marks have different meaning for each person and the lines themselves vary.

"My belief is that the marks were associated with status. I also believe that heavily tattooed chins were a sign of increased status," said Robert Kentta, cultural director for the Siletz Tribe. "I think it generally signifies a connection to tradition and being at a place in their life where they are feeling like they are ready to carry those marks as their ancestors did and represent themselves as being Siletz 100 percent of the time."

Today, traditional tattooing is making a comeback with some Tribal people. Two Siletz women agreed to share some of their story behind the decision to carry the marks, the cultural significance, importance and responsibility that accompany wearing them.

Jessica Garcia is the daughter of Ardella (Case) Parr, granddaughter of Elouise (Butler) Case and Clifford Case



Photo by Natasha Kavanaugh

Jessica Garcia and Tasha Mason, in front of the sweat lodge in Siletz

III, great-granddaughter of Ella (Ben) Brown, Alton Butler, Florence (Olney) Underwood of the Yakama Nation and Clifford Case II. She is married to Oscar Garcia and has three children - Treigh, Gus and Chelo.

Garcia spends her time practicing and teaching her children Siletz cultural traditions. The family stays actively involved in Nee-Dash and pow-wows.

Jessica beads and sews each piece of her children's as well as her own regalia.

Garcia has wanted to get her marks for a few years but dismissed the idea for various reasons. When she shared the idea with her grandmother Elouise, Case told Garcia she didn't need to prove she was Indian to anyone and it's what is in the heart that matters.

See Marks on page 6.

Mussels help bring traditional foods back to Tribal community

By Chris Crawford

The Healthy Traditions program has been hard at work teaching Tribal members young and old about our traditional foods and resources. I got up in the wee hours of the morning to follow Sharla Robinson on a trip to collect mussels at Seal Rock, then teach some grade- and middle-school students at Siletz Valley Schools how to gather, cook and clean mussels.

I met Robinson at 6:00 on a Tuesday morning and was informed that Bud Lane (Tribal Council member and language/traditional arts instructor) would be gathering mussels with us. Relieved that I wasn't going to have to pitch in as much as I thought with the mussel collection, I headed out toward Seal Rock with them.

It was a perfect morning to be on the beach and, more importantly, to gather mussels. We were able to travel well out into the tide pools as the minus-2-foot tide was nearing its peak.

"I get out here about three or four times a year," said Lane. "It's hard with both (Tribal) council and my regular job."

Robinson seemed to have a much easier time getting out to gather mus-

See Mussels on page 4.