

To the editor:

I am writing this as a concerned Tribal member. I attended the General Council meeting on Saturday, Nov. 5, at the golf course in Lincoln City.

The main General Council concern was about a baby denied enrollment.

Right now the blood degree is 1/16. Any lower than 1/16 is none.

I called a Tribal Council member and was told that lowering the blood degree to descendency was going to be put out for vote to the Tribal members.

I also was told by this Tribal Council member that the Tribal roll majority is 1/16 so most likely it will pass.

I also was told by this Tribal Council member that when it passes, there will be no more elder stipend or per capita.

I know there are members out there that rely on getting this money.

The family that is pushing for this is not bothered by members that have hardships.

If and when the Tribe decides to go descendency, I pray that I will be in good health and win the lottery.

Be sure to vote. If you are in doubt, ask questions.

Joella Strong

To the membership, concerning our Tribe:

In attending the General Council meeting on Nov. 5, 2011, I was appalled and concerned to hear the term "descendency" throughout the meeting. My grandfather, the late great Stanley Strong, served on the Tribal Council before termination. He was an integral part of the Restoration movement that represented our people in Washington, D.C. His testimony lent to the re-establishment of a (land-base) reservation for our Tribe. It both saddens and angers me to think that the long hours, hard work and genuine sacrifices made by my grandfather and the other leaders of his generation could be destroyed by the people of this generation.

It is my belief that it is not what is in your heart, but what is in your veins that makes you Indian. That's what my ancestors taught.

What reason would the U.S. government have to recognize a Tribe that has no members with Indian blood?

Our sovereignty is based on Tribal status, which is contingent on Indian blood quantum, Indian blood derived from one of the Tribal bands recognized in our Constitution as being ordained "Siletz Confederation."

In conjunction with sovereignty and self-governance are the U.S. grants that benefit each member of this Tribe. Are we really going to conquer ourselves?

By choosing descendency, that's what we would be doing. I urge you to consider this and the things you've been taught by your grandparents about what it means to be Siletz Indian and to hold onto that.

We are a proud people who have walked a hard road to get what we have and to stay where we are.

We will only keep what we have by saying "no" to descendency. I thank you.

Marcos Muniz-Strong

Tututni, Tolowa, Joshua, Sixes, Shasta, Klamath River, Chetco

Dear Tribal members:

My name is Gerald Ben and I am running for Tribal Council this year. Having retired from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) after 23 years of service, I feel I can now dedicate my time to helping guide the Tribe through the next few years.

With BIA budgets getting tighter and funds from other sources also drying up, Tribal operations will have to work harder and smarter to provide the membership with courteous, timely services. I hope that as a Tribal councilman I can help assure we as Tribal members can continue to receive much-needed assistance in areas like health, education and welfare.

Gerald Ben

To the editor:

I would like to thank all the people/kids who donated toys and money to Operation Christmas Child.

Sylvia and the Siletz Gospel Assembly of God Church

Dear Tribal community:

I would like to take the opportunity to thank some employees of our Tribe who continue to be of excellent service to the people they serve.

First, I would like to thank the pharmacy and reception staff at the Siletz Clinic. The staff at the reception desk is always accommodating and when I have had concerns with my father's health, they have done everything they can to get him in to see his doctor quickly. It is obvious that our health services staff truly care about our Native families that they serve.

Next, I am so thankful for our pharmacy staff. They always get my prescriptions to me quickly when I have had them mailed to me. When I have come in for prescriptions for my husband, they have helped me work with the medical staff to get him the least expensive prescriptions.

Once, I did not have enough cash to cover all of his prescriptions and one of the staff actually covered the cost until I could come back the next day with the rest of the money! Now, that is not expected, but nevertheless is excellent and thoughtful service.

I would be remiss if I did not include Debbie Williams, Michele Rowan and Trish Daniel. They work so hard to ensure that employees who are out ill and on extended leave are able to receive whatever benefits are available to them to make their time off from work the least stressful it can be.

Debbie Williams specifically checked in with me and worked with my claims representative with The Hartford while I have been off work on short-term disability since my surgery. She is a precious gift to our CTSI employees.

Also, a big thank you to my wonderful Programs I staff and supervisors who supported me with donated leave, words of encouragement and best wishes while I have been ill. I am a week away from getting back to work and good and ready to boss ya'll around again! Of course I am kidding. What I really want to do is give you a pat on the back and say "well done" to my staff for keeping the services going and continuing to do what they do in such an excellent way for our Tribal families!

Thank you again to my supervisors for being patient with my recovery. See you all soon!

Rebecca Williams

Siletz Tribal members:

I am announcing my candidacy for Tribal Council. My name is Kelley Ellis and the tribes my family descends from are Hoopa, Yurok, Karuk, Toootney and Chetco. My mother is Kristi Martin-Bayya, who has been married to Bristo Bayya for 24 years. My grandmother was Ellen Martin and my great-grandparents were Wilbur and Christine (Selsic) Martin. I descend from Abbie Wilson, which relates me to many families within the Tribe, including the Johns, Bells, Butlers and Selsics.

I would like the opportunity to represent the Siletz membership as a Tribal Council member. I have a bachelor's degree from Oregon State University. I have worked for the Tribe for over 20 years in various positions, providing me education and knowledge of the operation of programs and the Tribal government. I have been a spokesperson representing many Tribal members in Tribal Court and in administrative appeals for many years.

The only promise I will make in my campaign is to work toward fair and equitable policies and laws throughout the Tribe. Having represented many Tribal members in and out of Tribal Court, I have become aware that many of the current program policies and Tribal laws are skewed to protect the Tribal staff and the Tribal government instead of the membership.

There are many responsibilities as a Tribal Council member and I am ready to fulfill those responsibilities. I am young, energetic, educated and ready to serve the Siletz Tribal membership. I ask that you consider voting for me in the upcoming election. If you have questions or would like to discuss any concerns, please contact me via e-mail.

Thank you,

Kelley Ellis (Kellellis01@gmail.com)

To the people of Siletz:

Recently my husband, Calvin Van Pelt, died and I want to let you know how pleased and proud he was to be a member of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz. We enjoyed attending the functions and regretted Cal's health would not permit him to participate more fully. We appreciated the advantages he received as an Elder and I thank you for the generous death benefits. He rests now with his father, Roy Van Pelt, in Forest View Cemetery in Forest Grove.

Sincerely,

Loris Van Pelt

Dear Tribal members:

I am Gloria Rilatos Ingle. I would like to take this opportunity to declare my candidacy for Tribal Council.

An enrolled Tribal member, my parents were Edward and Dolores Rilatos. Some of you may remember my dad as Ouchie Rilatos. My grandparents were Tuton and Pearl Rilatos, Hoxie and Lizzie Simmons, and Louie and Kate Chantel, who said she was born on the slopes of Mt. Hood at huckleberry picking time.

After 28 years of teaching and being a school principal, I am now retired. I have the time to commit to the many responsibilities that Tribal Council members carry out. My years in education have helped me develop the skill to communicate not only with children, parents and Elders in a fair and positive way, but also with local, state and federal agencies that affect the lives of families. In this way I believe I would represent the Tribe in a positive light and be someone Tribal members would be proud to have represent them.

During the past year I have been part of the Tribe's budget committee. I believe my experiences as an educator and committee member would be of benefit in making good decisions, especially in this time of economic pressure.

As a Tribe we have come a long way in the things we have accomplished, but maintaining them and continuing to expand will take patience, time and Tribal commitment. I believe in economic development based on the operation of our resources as businesses whose main intention is to make money. I would rather see 10 small businesses that employed a total of 50-60 people making continuous yearly profits than several large investments that become money pits.

I believe our obligation to social services must remain so Tribal members can continue successful, prosperous lives.

I believe that policies and procedures are in place to make fair and equitable decisions that apply to everyone 100 percent of the time.

It is an honor to have the opportunity to run for council. Please feel free to talk with me when you see me. I am open to listening to your concerns and positive ideas about our Tribe.

Sincerely,

Gloria Ingle

Siletz News Letters Policy

Siletz News, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, is published once a month. Our editorial policy encourages input from readers about stories printed in *Siletz News* and other tribal issues.

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*.

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