

# Agnes Pilgrim: Long life creates many adventures

Agnes Baker Pilgrim was the seventh of nine children born to George Wentworth Baker and Eveline Lydia Harney Baker in 1924 in Logsdan, Ore., on a Tribal allotment near the headwaters of the Siletz River.

Aggie, 92, has three sons and three daughters – Robert, Keith and Tony (both deceased), Mona, Nadine and Sonja, 18 grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren and one great-great-granddaughter.

Growing up, Aggie's family lived without electricity. They had chickens, milk cows, sheep, longhorn cattle and horses. They gathered greens, pick blackberries and apples, fished, canned lots of fruit every fall and with plenty of eels in the creek, they never went hungry.

The Takelma language was spoken in her home, but not encouraged outside it. Always independent, as a teenager Aggie insisted on dancing traditionally in her buckskin dress even though this was banned by her Catholic church. She graduated from Taft High School in Lincoln City in 1942.

Over the next years she pursued a wide variety of careers, including gathering cascara bark and other wild plants, singing in a band, being a bouncer at a nightclub and a barber in a jail, driving a log truck and setting chokers, racing stockcars, working as a hospital scrub nurse and managing a restaurant.

Around 1970, she decided to finally take on the spiritual path she had always

felt calling her. She took the medicine name of her Takelma great-grandmother, "Taowhywee" or Morningstar.

Aggie described a pivotal moment in her life when the Creator "wanted me to do this spiritual walk. I said I'm not worthy, but he'd come again and he'd come again. So I said I might as well do it and when I said that, it's like a load fell off of me. I went to my kids, told them to forgive me for the mistakes I'd made. There's no such thing as parent school."

From 1974 to 1989, Aggie worked as a manager and counselor at the United Indian Lodge in Crescent City, Calif. A main focus was alcohol prevention, intervention and rehabilitation. During this time, she also received criminal justice training.

In the early 1980s, she joined the tribe's Cultural Heritage and Sacred Lands Committee. She enrolled at Southern Oregon State College and in 1985 graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in Native American studies.

Another pivotal moment in Aggie's life came when the Creator told her he wanted her to be a voice for the voiceless.

"I asked him, what does that mean? I was sitting outside by a table with a glass of water ... then the wind came up and rustled a big tree and I thought, Grandfather, should I be a voice for the wind, the air, is that what you mean?" she said. "I reached for the glass of water and thought, you don't have a voice either. The water doesn't have a voice. He said to teach

wherever you go – water is your first medicine."

Aggie was one of 13 women from indigenous cultures around the world who were invited to the International Council of 13 Indigenous Grandmothers in October 2004. This group "is an alliance of prayer, education and healing for our Mother Earth, all Her inhabitants, all the children and for the next seven generations to come." (grandmotherscouncil.org).

Aggie said that the most significant thing for the Tribe that has happened since 1977 (Restoration) was for the Creator to empower the Tribal Council to fight to benefit all Tribal members.

"One of the greatest things I have is to pray for the Tribal Council," she said. "I commend them for what they do for all of us. They fight hard for our culture and traditions."



## Dental Coloring Contest Winner

The Siletz Community Dental Clinic would like to congratulate Rainbow Mason on being our coloring contest winner! Because of her efforts to "bling" out a coloring page, she was rewarded with a Sonicare toothbrush.

If you are between the ages of 5-14, you too will have a chance to win! Come pick up your coloring page at the Siletz Community Dental Clinic and express your creativity. Submissions for the next contest must be received before March 31 at 5 p.m. One winner selected from ages 5-8 and one winner selected from ages 9-14 will receive a Sonicare toothbrush. One entry per patient per contest, please. In order to maximize the oral health of the community through these prizes, a patient can only win the contest once through the duration of the contest. Good luck and don't forget – brush twice a day and floss daily!

## Election Deadlines

### Timeline/Schedule

Feb. 4, 2017 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.	In-person Voting – Tribal Elections, Tribal Community Center, Siletz
Feb. 4, 2017 (4 p.m.)	Deadline for returning absentee ballots

## Funded Orthodontic Treatment Screening

The 2017 Funded Orthodontic Treatment Program is fast approaching! All interested parties should contact the Dental Department to be placed on a list. The screening dates are April 26-27 and May 22-23, 2017.

The program and amount of accepted applicants will be dependent on the funding for that year. Applicants are selected by case severity, motivation of the patient and guardian, reliable transportation, routine dental check-ups and the oral hygiene history of the patient, to name a few.

We want the best results possible for the patient and thus place emphasis on these items in order to achieve this. The unbiased selection process is performed under the guidance of an orthodontic specialist and chosen through a committee.

Open to all ages who are CHS-eligible only. Must have a scheduled screening appointment during one of the four screening days to be considered.

Each year's selection process is independent from previous years and does not carry over. Selected and treated individuals can only be selected once for the duration of the program.

All applicants will be notified by mail if they have been chosen. Please contact the Siletz Dental Clinic, 541-444-9681 or 800-922-1399, ext. 1681, to be put on the list.