



Agnes Pilgrim, second oldest Tribal member, walks on

Editor's note: Agnes Pilgrim was born Sept. 11, 1924, and walked on Nov. 27, 2019. She was 95.

A traditional wake was held at the Dance House on Dec. 13. A memorial service took place at the Tribal Community Center on Dec. 14, followed by a graveside ceremony at the Paul Washington Cemetery in Siletz.

Siletz News would like to share the article below, first published in late 2016, as we remember Grandma Aggie.

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 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.



File photo

Pilgrim, continued on page 11

Agnes Pilgrim



Courtesy photo by Teresa Simmons

STAHS Chairman Gloria Ingle tends the organization's booth at the Restoration Pow-Wow in November.

STAHS reaches out to the community

By Teresa Simmons, STAHS Vice Chair

The main goal of the Siletz Tribal Arts and Heritage Society is to raise the funds needed to build "A Place for the People," a cultural center with a museum component that will be located on Government Hill in Siletz. To bring in those donations, spreading awareness of the planned cultural center is imperative.

To that end we've been involved in a whirlwind of activity individually and as a group. With only six members on the volunteer board (Chairman Gloria Ingle, Vice Chair Teresa Simmons, Secretary Shawna Rilatos Smith-Gray, Treasurer

Angela Ramirez, Celesta Lee and Grace Elting Castle), everyone has a role to play.

We strive to make people aware of our project through many avenues. Media interviews, taking part in local events in which the STAHS name is recognized, planning public events that provide awareness of Tribal history and culture, and participating in Tribal events are all part of the process.

We have also developed items that we sell to raise funds, such as our sweatshirts, hoodies and cookbooks; hold auctions of

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2020 CTSI Planning Department Community Meetings

Dates and Locations

Thursday, Jan. 9 – Eugene Area Office

Thursday, Jan. 16 – Siletz Tribal Community Center

Thursday, Jan. 23 – Salem Area Office

Thursday, Jan. 30 – Portland Area Office

General Schedule for Evening

5 p.m. – Mingle

5:15 p.m. – Welcome & Prayer

5:30 p.m. – Light Dinner

5:40 p.m. – Agenda

FEMA and Hazard Planning Update

2020 Census and the Tribal Complete Count

And more!

7 p.m. – Drawing, Open Discussion and Mingling!

For more information, contact the Planning Department at 541-444-8361 or 800-922-1399, ext. 1361; or 541-444-8127 or 800-922-1399, ext. 1127, for the Planning clerk.