

Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

I am writing in response to your article in the October News letter. In the first place I think the Council was out of place in accusing Vernon of "ripping off the tribe" in an open meeting. They should have done it in executive session. Whenever a council member is in doubt of some wrongdoings, a meeting should be called and the council member should be faced with the problem in executive session.

Also in Brenda Bremner's article on the front page in the second paragraph, she stated Vernon received cash donations which he used for personal gains. I do not know why she would print such a lie. After all she was sitting in the front row when Vernon's bank statements were passed around. Every penny was accounted for. As for the 4 hours Delores Pigsley referred to — had she been doing her duties she would have taken care of the 4 hours before they were ever sent to accounting. She stated in her chairman's report that she wants to stand for honesty and integrity. Well, I would like to say as far as Vernon is concerned she does not know the meaning of honesty and integrity. This is NOT the first time Vernon has been accused of wrongdoing.

Since she has been chairman I believe we have lost quite a bit. I am talking about contracts & grants. Those people are still working for the tribe that were responsible for writing grants.

I would like to thank Ed Ben for the compliment he gave the Chairman of the pow wow committee, even though he referred to the wrong person as being chairman. I asked the pow wow committee to keep me in the background merely because I do not like BORING the people by building up myself or my family.

In closing, I would like to say that those who pointed their finger at Vernon that there is always three fingers pointed back at them.

With that, I close.
Doug Brown
Toledo, Oregon

To the Editor,

I felt that I had to write this letter concerning Vernon Brown.

I still feel there is something else behind all of this business about 4 hours of Culture time, and soliciting money for himself through the tribe's name. Vernon always kept an eye on things that went on in the offices, and had to put a couple of administrative employees in their places; for these actions Vernon wasn't very popular, BUT!!! What was done to Vernon Brown was very unethical. Now is the time for the people to get involved in our tribal business.

Three vacancies are coming up and now is the time to vote for someone who would help the people, and not themselves. We don't need a "MA PREM" and her followers on our Council. We, the people, haven't got a voice in any tribal business.

We need to amend our Constitution to gain power in order to control tribal council spending of timber revenue monies without our knowing what's going in. They are buying more land all the time, and for what? The Council should publish the timber revenue budget in order for the people to know where their monies are being spent.

I think it's about time for tribal members to take a stand for what is rightfully theirs. They do not need to be dictated by a handful of tribal council members.

Joan Washington
Salem, Oregon



To the Editor:

I must correct a portion of the Chairman's report that appeared in the October Tribal newspaper.

My letter to the Council on September 11, 1985 regarding expulsion action was again interpreted by experts and for their benefit. My exact words in that letter were — "none of us are beyond reproach, the disturbing fact is that some do not get caught as quickly as others", and I did give some examples hoping the Council would examine their consciences before resolving their allegations. On all other occasions where personalities are involved the Council doors are closed to the public. The chairman has used this authority many times so why do we need a "Goat" now?

I also need answers to several more questions —

1. Re: Motion #27 in the May minutes. How many Council members went to Warm Springs for Pi-Um-Sha but attended or participated in the Softball Tournament instead of the Pi-Um-Sha activities? Were any of the Council members publicly accused and expelled for knowingly accepting money for personal gain and neglect of duty? Our timber money?

2. On the over-discussed and final denial of the 4 hour issue and the denial of Tribal Council-Committee members hours for working on the Pow-Wow, why does another Tribal Council-Committee member get paid for working at the Health Fair during the Pow-Wow and attending a Pow-Wow ceremony? Getting paid for attending Pow-Wow was a big No-No in May. Is it again not what is done but who does it? Our timber money?

3. Who gets paid wages and travel for transporting the Tribal Council mail and other documents to the Chairman in Albany or Salem?

4. Why do we accept a Chairman that cannot be here at the Siletz Office daily to answer the mail, sign documents and oversee the daily Tribal Operations? We do have a Vice-Chairman but he has no directions from the Chair, he sees very little mail, he has very little communications with Staff, he is seldom asked to attend or informed of meetings but he does get to meet with Tribal members and at their convenience. We do have concerns and questions and cannot afford long distance phone calls to the Chairman.

5. Is our Tribal headquarters in Siletz or Salem?

6. Is the lawyer taking over the role of Tribal Court too?

7. Is the Chairman honest in distinguishing who gets paid \$5.00 an hour and for what duties?

8. When you have a tremendous hangover and collect \$40.00 for occupying a Chair during a Tribal Council meeting is this neglect of duty and falsifying a time sheet? Our timber money?

9. When you can give a report for a meeting you never attended is this neglect of duty, misconduct and falsifying a time sheet? Our timber money?

10. When you can snoop, discuss and accuse behind ones back, whether it is over the phone, in an office or on a barstool, is this misconduct? Our timber money? Program money?

11. We could not get adequate food baskets, gardening and food preservation funds because no indirect dollars were there to fatten a wallet? We lost the S.T.O.W. and first E.D.A. grants because timely and accountable proposals could not be written, but while we got very little, a pay raise was handed out and eventually a promotion?

12. When you must rely on Rednecks to testify against a Tribal member, Rednecks who are worried that one day we will get our original reservation back or payment for it, which will affect their business life, Rednecks who were and still are Anti-Restoration, Anti-Reservation, Anti-Indian can still turn the Apple Indians head? White man win again? Is this 1895 or 1985?

13. What mail to us deserves a 22¢, first class stamp?

14. Are we being victimized of our assets, privileges and priorities? Our timber dollars are dwindling away, yet we cannot qualify for a small per-capita payment, even though we voted for one about a year ago?

15. Has the expulsion of a respected, outspoken and resourceful Council member added to the proud, tall image of being an Indian? Has it just scraped the tip of the iceberg?

Mary "Dolly" Fisher

To the Editor:

My family enjoyed the many displays, and films that were shown at the cultural fair and thank the Cultural Committee and participants in sharing their cultural items.

Lillie, Ralene, Reggie, Lee Butler

USDA

"Thank you", to Don Pigsley at Chemawa School, for donating chairs, to make it more comfortable for our clients.

Dear Editor,

I am compelled to react to what seems to be "mud-slinging" by my tribal council against a councilman for whom I voted in the last election. The reason I, and others, voted for Vernon Brown is because of his honesty, integrity, and deep concern for all tribal members. Because he is a minister, a man of God, I honestly feel that he would not intentionally turn his back on his beliefs and his personal commitment to the tribe and jeopardize his reputation within the community.

As I understand it, Mr. Brown can account for every penny that was collected and used for the Pow Wow Committee. And, I am sure, the four hours claimed on his time sheet months ago represent an innocent error, an error that has been made by other tribal council members with no significant repercussions, and should have been caught at the time of submission by the approving officer. The unproven allegation that Mr. Brown intentionally used tribal funds for personal gain is not enough to eject an elected official. If we, the people of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz, elect an official, we do not want that person replaced by the chairperson's appointee without a full investigation into the allegations.

The whole situation has brought to light numerous rumors regarding some of the council members, all of which can be described as "gross misconduct" far more accurately than that of which Mr. Brown is being accused.

There have also been rumors that members of the council do not want Vernon elected because of his commitment to all tribal members, including those living outside the eight county service area, and that

these same council members have been trying to get him out. I am offended that my tribal council seems to be using their authority to inflict personal vendettas. Perhaps those that "cast the first stone" should be investigated themselves!

Sincere,
Pat Morrell

Concerned Tribal Member



Indian Burial Law Changes

Reprint from Commission on Indian Services Newsletter

Effective September 23, 1985, any person who willfully violates the Oregon Indian Burial Law and is convicted, will be committing a Class C Felony instead of a Class A Misdemeanor. This means that a person convicted of an Indian burial law violation will be subject to a penalty of up to five years imprisonment and/or a \$10,000 fine instead of one year imprisonment and/or \$2,500 fine.

Other changes made in the Burial Law as a result of HB 2084 require that it more clearly states the prohibitions concerning the removal of artifacts from Indian graves. Standing is also given under the law to out-of-state tribes whose culture areas include Oregon lands.

Those instrumental in passage of HB 2084 were the Legislative Law Improvement Committee, Representative Bob Brogoiti of LaGrande, the Commission on Indian Services and the Society of People Struggling to Be Free, a Newport-based organization dedicated to the preservation of American Indian cultural resources.

SILETZ NEWS

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"Opinions Questions, Concerns"

All letters received will be printed. Please type or write legible, no profane language will be printed. All letters must include your name and address. Send letters to: "Siletz News", P.O. Box 549, Siletz, OR. 97380. Questions? Call 444-2536.