

LETTERS

Dear Editor,

I'm writing this letter because I'm so tired of reading all the negative articles in our newsletter.

There are a lot of great things our Tribal people are doing. Take our Education Program: yes, we are on waiting lists, but that shows you many of our people are trying to better ourselves by using this program. It's only natural we don't have enough money to go around. I understand we are to take care of our people who live in our service area first. But that doesn't mean that we that choose to live outside the service area mean any less to our programs. It's just that it's harder to reach everyone.

I'd like to applaud the clinic staff for their professionalism when I used the facilities in the late November. I had dental work done, my eyes examined and medical care all in the short visit I was there. They squeezed me in on short notice and bent over backwards to service me. Let me tell you, that was the best Dentist visit I've ever had. The staff made me so relaxed. I was laughing so hard, the Dentist had to stop so we could get my tooth pulled.

I also visited the Personnel building and everyone greeted me with a smile.

I saw a few Tribal Council Members while I was walking through, and they were all hard at work trying to better our Tribe. People, just look at their time sheets. They really do work hard for us. Council Members, you have my "thank you" for your wisdom, time, and care.

We have a wonderful Gaming Center. Many Tribal people worked hard to get that in. The Gaming staff treated me so very nice while I visited there.

We are so lucky to be a Tribe again. Let's not judge people so quick until we've worked their jobs.

Everyone keep up the great work!

Sincerely,
Angella Robertson.

To The Editor,

I am writing in support of higher education. There is a need for our tribal members to support it, especially with revenue generating programs like the gaming center. I haven't heard of any waste but believe helping people who make the commitment to help themselves for a better way of life is a very high priority. This can be done through education, starting a business, improving health, or investing in a house and family. It may take a survey and involvement of all members to set priorities for where our money is spent.

Four years ago I was 34 years old and after a long list of jobs and a roller coaster life I was ready for a serious change. Thanks to our tribe and the help of Bob Tom, my wife Kelly, and cousin Dave Hatch, I fulfilled my dream of attending college and earning a degree. This spring I will graduate from Pacific Northwest College of Art with a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Graphic Design. My thesis is based on a Native American Identity System. I am designing a logo, brochures, advertising, and a Web Homepage which I hope can be used by our tribe and/or members. I have also started part-time work for the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians and began ONABEN classes. My ultimate goal is to start a successful business to create packages similar to my thesis and develop multimedia for both business and individuals, giving special consideration to Native Americans.

None of this would have been possible without our tribes' support for higher education. I believe it's money well spent that will bring a return on the investment, and both pride and self-confidence to me now that I have a career instead of a job.

I hope everyone will look at the value of education for themselves or their tribal members as a high priority.

Sincerely,
Another Educated and Very Thankful Siletz Member,
Chris Conklin

Dear Tribal Members;

With mixed emotions I am resigning from my position as Social Services Representative in the Portland Area Office. My reasons for this are many:

One of my main concerns I have is lack of support from my supervisors & co-workers. We have strict eligibility guidelines for the G.A. Program. At times non-eligible persons were declared "eligible" by administration or Council members bypassing the original decision.

There are also guidelines and criteria for the administration of the GA Program and other assistance. Recently, there was an influx of requests for Emergency Assistance. As a result of one or two families receiving multiple services early this year many badly needed emergency assistance requests were denied for lack of funds. Only the immediate family members of one or two families benefitted from this Emergency Assistance in the Portland Area before it was depleted. It was disconcerting to have to tell other Tribal Members that there were no Emergency Assistance funds available. If there should be an audit conducted SOMEONE is going to have to have some good answers as to why certain people were allowed benefits which didn't meet the criteria.

Almost as a weekly ritual, I received harrassing phone calls from a certain Tribal Elder who told me, "If you don't do this or that for me, I will see to it that you are fired". Dear Tribal Members, none of us deserve this kind of abuse. I have done my best to remain professional and unbiased in the performance of my duties and to perform those duties to the best of my ability.

There was a recent theft in the office. We all knew who did it. And yet, the entire staff was finger-printed. The perpetrator confessed and received no more than a slap on the hands for a CLASS C FELONY CRIME!!!

Unless there are some changes made. The lack of

peer support, and inequities of clients' claim handling by supervisory personnel will make this position one that will find it's new occupant feeling dejected, unappreciated, and abused... just as I did.

Respectfully,

Rose Irwin

To The Editor,

In the February edition of the Siletz Newsletter, it was great to see how many Tribal Members are pursuing higher education in Oregon.

I wanted to take this opportunity to add a few more names to the list of Siletz Tribal Members attending Oregon Coast Community College in Lincoln County: Kelly Ellis, Darelle Butler, Bruce Butler, Jennifer Mason-Holt, Tobi Mason, Raymond Blacketer, and Lillie Butler.

This list is a partial list that does not include all of the Small Business Development Center clients at the College.

Please call the Oregon Coast at 265-2283, #103 for more information about your local community college.

Sincerely,

Pat O'Connor, President

To Tribal Members,

I want to express my thanks on your vote on my being reelected to a Council position. I will work hard for the tribal members and I am available to talk with if you have a concern. The turnout of voter participation exceeded the numbers that have voted in prior elections, I would encourage more voter participation in coming elections.

I also encourage the tribal members to register for their county, and state elections. It is getting very important that there be Indian friendly representatives.

Again, I thank you for you vote.

Lillie Butler
Councilperson

To Siletz Tribal
Members,

My name is Albert G. Reed. My father was Albert A. (Tootsel), my Grandfather Elmer Reed.

My family has long been involved with the Siletz Nation. I call us a nation because that is what we are.

For the last two years I have been a member of the Hunting and Fishing Committee.

I see the Tribe torn, as to where our new found revenues should be used.

The issue as I see it is the land. With the land we are people. With the land we have our heritage. With the land we have a home.

Our Tribal rights of hunting, fishing and gathering are slowly being stripped away the Government saying we can't take care of our own homes. How many hundreds of years has the Confederated Tribes taken care of our homes without

Government help? How many hundreds of years have we taken more than we need? How many years have we polluted the air and the water we use? Think about it how many of us have taken to much? As a Tribal Member that enjoys the wealth that mother nature has to offer.

I am tired of the Government that can't balance it's own budget, telling us we don't know how to care for our own homes.

As a committee we asked the Council to hire an additional attorney to help fight in court the battles that will restore the land to our care. To date (February, 1996) we have no response.

These issues will not go away, and neither will I.

I know these are long and involved issues, but wouldn't you as a Tribal Member like to see (One Million Six Hundred Thousand) acres put back in the hands of people that know how to care for it?

It's time for this Nation to stand-up and tell the government we are self-governing and we can take care of this land we love.

Tribal Member #752
Albert E. Reed