

Remembering our branch manager, our leader, our friend

By Selena Boise
Management successor

Words of understanding, support and encouragement are the things that I will remember the most about my longtime branch manager Rudy Clements, because it was Rudy who kept me on my toes and never judged me when I fell. He would just tell me, "Don't worry about it, next time you will do better."

Spilyay Speaks

I remember way back when I first talked to Rudy, I was terrified to talk about our Spilyay problems. But Nat told me not to worry, because Rudy was always ready to listen first. And he was always ready to listen first.

He was always asking if there were anything he could do for us at the Spilyay, or at KWSO.

It came as a surprise to me when I heard about his passing. I couldn't believe it at first.

He now joins my other mentors and people I looked to for help and information, Donna Behrend, Marsha Shewczyk, and Pat Leno-Baker.

I'm always glad that they were here at the Spilyay when I started here, because I learned a lot from all of them.

I am truly thankful to Rudy for allowing me to be a big part of the reorganization of the Spilyay Tymoo from the start.

I watched and took part in the paperwork to rename the job titles, determine their wages, and on top of that I was the job evaluation representative, so I took part in that also. I was always thankful to him for that.

I am the job evaluation representative, and site coordinator because Rudy chose me to be. I always wondered why, until his daughter told me that it was a learning experience for me. He was always giving me opportunities to experience new things.

Now I am here wondering what things are going to be like without him and his supportive, encouraging words.

And I will always remember those words, as if he had just said them to me.

Toe Ness

How many manic depressives does it take to screw in a light bulb?

None, let them cry in the dark.

If Microsoft built cars, you would need to restart your car, then it would perform illegal operations and crash.

Congratulations

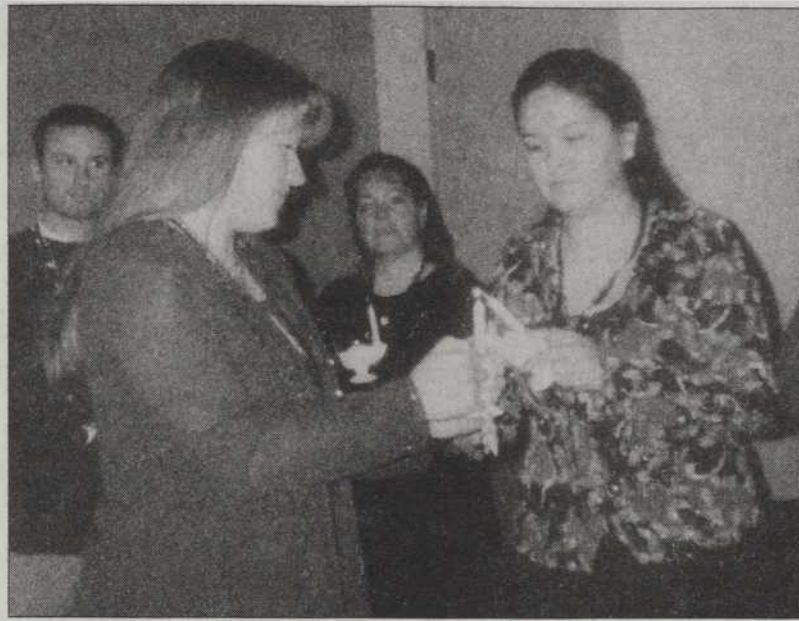


Photo courtesy of Roma David

I am very proud to congratulate my daughter Elizabeth Jane Johnson for completing her education and receiving her RN pin on Dec. 3. In the picture she is shown at the candlelight ceremony held at St. Charles Medical Center with 18 classmates who also received their RN pins. She will go through graduation with cap and gown in June.

I'd like to say a special thank you to all the Red Hatters who attend the pinning for Elizabeth. It made me very proud to see the elders there to show their support for one of their own getting her RN pin. Thank you. Roma David.

Thank you

I am writing this letter to thank people who supported me through rodeos and endurance races and squaw races. Thank you Papa Lon, Grandma Loretta and Auntie Kelsey and Karly Swanson for being at all of my events cheering me on. Thank you uncle Carlo and

auntie Alicia and Papa Jimmy Sr. for being there.

To my Papa Kuks, Richard Tohet, thank you for all your love and support and the many things you have done for me.

To my coach, Jimmy Tohet Jr., thank you for teaching me how to be a cowgirl. I learned how to ride horses from you. Thank you Uncle Junior.

Thanks to my uncle Chico Holliday for your help with a place to keep my horses and practice from.

Thanks to Jason and Snuffie Smith for your kindness when you let me practice at your ranch and for your horse and tack.

Thank you to everyone who supported me through all of my races and events. If I have forgotten anyone I am sorry. Thank you. Ahliyah Hisatake.

Birthday and other wishes...

Happy birthday to Rebecca R. Adams 01-02-67. Finally hit the big 38, or is it 39? Who knows. Just have a nice birthday and a Happy New Year 2006! Dad, Mom, William, Maury, Lyda, Arlissa, Jermaine, Aritta, DeVonne, Amial, Tanaya.

Happy birthday to Devonne James Rhoads 01-16-91. Happy 15th birthday to you. Always remember that as another year goes by another better year is around the corner. You're just starting your young adult life, now keep on track with your education. I believe in you and I have faith in you. Like I always say, anything is possible today only if you focus and just commit to succeed at whatever you decide as a career. But anyway, Happy Birthday and know that the whole family does love you. Dad, Grandma Arlita, William, Maury, Lyda, Arlissa, Jermaine, Aritta, Tanaya, and Mom Rebecca.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and Happy Birthday to my mom Marlena Becerra, from your daughter and your grandchildren who love you and miss. From Gracie Estrada and Estrada grandkids.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to my brothers Victor Becerra Jr., Antonio Becerra, Jaime Becerra, Armando Becerra and Simone Danzuka. And to my sisters Bianca Becerra, Leticia Becerra and Andy Stacona, Andrew Jr., Monika, Mariab, Anthony and Briana Stacona. Your sister, aunt and daughter Graciela Estrada.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to my children Carlos Estrada, Cecily Estrada, Andrea Estrada, Tristine Estrada, Chloe Estrada. I love you guys a lot. Love, your mom Graciela Estrada.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to my baby girls Beatriz and Alica. Mommy loves you and misses you.

Merry Christmas and Happy

New Year to my Mom and Dad (Annette and Teodoro Arce). I love you both and thank you for all you've done for me. To Adri, Theo, Steven, Daniel, Alonzo, Beatriz, Alicia, Martin Jr., I love and miss you all. Love, Marci.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to my husband Victor Martinez and our sons Mario and Giovanni Martinez. I love and miss you with all my heart. Love always, Marci.

Feliz Navidad, Martin Adan Maldonado Jr. Love you lots son and miss you. Hope to be with you soon. Love always, Mommy Rosaline Arce. And to my little angels Beatriz and Alica Arce-Colazo, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Love always, Auntie "Rosalina."

Merry Christmas to my baby girls Beatriz and Alica. Mommy loves you and misses you.

Regarding letters

Thank you for writing to the Spilyay Tymoo. Please, when writing, keep in mind that letters should be of no more than 350 words. Letters that are too long will have to be cut. Please submit only one letter per person per edition. No defamatory or libelous statements can be published in the Spilyay. Thank you.

More Indians becoming involved in state politics

(AP) - Irene Folstrom traveled a long way from the Indian reservation where she was born - to Stanford University, then on to law school at Cornell.

Tribal members often urged her to bring her talents back home to help tackle drugs, gangs and violence on the impoverished Ojibwe reservation. But Folstrom would just smile and nod - until her uncle was stabbed to death on the Leech Lake reservation and a cousin was killed by a drunken driver.

"When I came home for back-to-back funerals, I knew then that I had to come home" for good, Folstrom said.

Folstrom, 31, abandoned plans to stay with her husband during his medical residency in Arizona and returned to Minnesota, launching a state Senate bid that could make her the first American Indian woman elected to the Legislature.

"Our areas are ignored a lot of the time because we're poor," she said. "The state has a lot of power and the Legislature has a lot of power to assist communities that are in need."

Around the country, Indians are increasingly getting elected to state office and taking part in a political process that they once kept at arm's length.

"Indians were here first - it's about time," said former Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, who was the only American Indian in the Senate from 1992 to 2004. "We're way behind the African Americans and Hispanic Americans in getting politically involved, but we're beginning to take a page out of their notebook."

While Indians are rare in Congress - Rep. Tom Cole, a Chickasaw from Oklahoma, is the only one - 48 are serving in 12 state legislatures, up from 36 a couple of years ago. Oklahoma has the most, 10, followed by eight in Montana, seven in Alaska and five in New Mexico, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

The 2000 Census found 4.1 million people claimed at least some American Indian blood, and 2.5 million claimed to be solely American Indian.

Minnesota - which is home

to 11 American Indian bands and where more than 81,000 people, or 1.6 percent of the population, claimed to be at least partly American Indian - has not had an Indian in the Legislature in the past decade.

In the century and a half since territorial government was organized, Minnesota voters have elected just six Indian men to the Legislature.

Indians and others said that is a problem, when nearly every year brings debate on gambling rights, tribal sovereignty, and other issues that directly concern tribes, including health care, education and natural resources.

Leech Lake tribal chairman George Goggeye, who backs Folstrom, blames the dearth of Indian lawmakers on racism, lack of political experience and money, and the tribes' relatively small numbers.

Nighthorse Campbell suggested another reason: hostility toward the U.S. political system. He said that when he first ran for office, militant Indian friends questioned why he

would get involved with a government they viewed as the enemy.

But that appears to be changing. INDN'S List, a Tulsa, Okla.-based group, was launched in February to work for Democratic Indian candidates - Indians traditionally have voted heavily Democratic - and get out the Indian vote. The group operated its first camp to groom prospective lawmakers in October.

"We want to be courted for more than our votes and our money; we want to be courted for our voices," said Kalyn Free, the group's president and founder.

Folstrom has her work cut out for her. At least two other Democrats want to challenge first-term state Sen. Carrie Ruud, a Republican.

The district itself is seen as ideologically mixed. While Folstrom can count on strong tribal support, she must appeal to white voters in Bemidji and conservative-minded Twin Cities retirees living in the area's luxury lake homes.

"She understands the problems we have up here," said John Thompson, a Leech Lake tribal member. "I know she doesn't have the solutions, but she's willing to look for them. I'm a supporter - 100 percent. One thousand percent."

Folstrom, her husband, Brett Masayesva, and their two sons, ages 1 and 3, are moving into a house in Bemidji they just bought. Masayesva, a doctor, will fly back and forth while he finishes a residency at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

Minnesota's last American Indian state lawmaker was Sen. Harold "Skip" Finn, a Democrat from Cass Lake who resigned in disgrace in 1996 for stealing about \$1 million from the Leech Lake Band of Chippewa.

Bill Lawrence, the Chippewa publisher of the Native American Press/Ojibwe News, said Finn's legal troubles made life tougher for Indian politicians. Lawrence himself ran as a Republican in 2000 for the same Senate seat Finn held and Folstrom is seeking. He lost.

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Letters of Apology

This is my apology for my trespass at my cousin's. But he is my bro so I feel about this. I wish that you don't have any issues with me any more. Bird J. Bruce. And a merry Christmas to you. See you around. I am not happy at all?

To whom it may concern, I am sorry for me and Bird being there at the wrong time and the wrong location. So I'll be back. Edge Kalama.

My fellow tribal members, I would like to apologize for my actions on Dec.

1, 2005. My poor decision-making to drink firewater led me to harm and hurt the people I love and care about the most. I would also like to thank Warm Springs finest for handling my situation. Louis D. Smith.

I am writing this letter of apology to you the community and fellow tribal members for endangering lives because of my wrongful doings and actions on Oct. 11, 2005. I now look upon humanly possible mistakes as a learning experience because nobody's perfect. Nancy C. Williams.

I would like to apologize to

the people of the Confederated Tribes for the DUII I got on the early morning of Nov. 24. I was wrong, and put lives of others including my own in danger. I ask for forgiveness and it will not happen again. Thank you. Floyd C. Frank Jr.

K.J., I'm apologizing for stealing your car. You did not deserve to get your car stolen. I feel we ought to embrace the community and help one another, not steal from the community. I say sorry again. Maybe this life could be living in happiness. Cody Lesina.

I was instructed by the Tribal

Court to write an apology letter to my partner Warner Williams and his wife. So here it goes. I'm sorry for invading the privacy of your home a year ago while buzzed up. And to the people of the rez, I'm sorry. Edge Kalama.

To the tribe and Warner I went to court and they told me to give my apology for coming on your property. I am sorry for doing whatever I did at that time and I won't invade in your place again. All in all I don't go back to Warm Springs just for business nowadays. I am sorry. Bird Bruce.