

## Letters to the Editor

### Chieftanship

We, the family of Alfred Smith Jr., want to thank Chief Nelson Wallulatam for meeting with us to inform us of the Wasco tribal custom of choosing a sub-chief. This was done in November, 2003 at his home in Upper Shitike Creek. Thank you, Nelson, for working with us and teaching the accepted way carried on through many family generations. As per your instructions, we went ahead and held the ceremony, dinner, and giveaway at the Agency Longhouse in the spring of 2004.

We would also like to thank the many Wasco elders who signed the document appointing Alfred Smith Jr. as the Wasco sub-chief. We are retaining all the pictures taken at the ceremony, as well as family pictures, and the complete family tree that goes back to the Wasco chiefs of the Columbia River. We would also like to especially thank the Wasco people and others who attended the ceremony and shared in this historic event. **From the family of Alfred**

### Tribal Court

This letter comes as a response to the May 10, 2006 article in The Madras Pioneer (The Pioneer) regarding a pending child welfare case in the Warm Springs Tribal Court. Rather than print a fair and balanced article, The Pioneer chose to present only the mother's side of this story. The Children's Protective Services and the Warm Springs Tribal Court are bound by confidentiality laws and are unable, therefore, to discuss any of the particulars of this case with the public; we can, however, provide information about how the Tribal Court works.

The Tribal Court is bound by tribal and federal law to protect the health, safety, morals, and welfare of children and their families. Court decisions are made by applying the facts of the case to the law, and all the decisions in this case were made in that manner. Conjecture, innuendo, emotion and unsubstantiated allegations cannot substitute for rational thought and the truth in court matters.

Child custody and welfare cases are inherently emotional and the parties are often unable, or refuse, to make fair and objective judgments about the outcome. This is an understandable element of human nature, and those of us who work in the child protection and welfare arena know that at least one of the parties will be unhappy with the court and program decisions. A child cannot be split to satisfy

each parent's needs, wishes and desires, rather, the child's welfare, safety and best interests take precedence over those of the parents.

A child's welfare and need for governmental protection should not be used to help sell newspapers or win awards. Child welfare and protection issues influence a child's development into adulthood, and, when made public, reversing the negative influences they have on the child is made all the more difficult. Hopefully the child involved here will not see this article reprinted or referred to in future "Looking Back" sections of The Pioneer.

This article does a disservice to the weary yet dedicated employees working in the child welfare and protection area who face an unrelenting number and complexity of cases. We hope that The Pioneer's journalists and editors will be more sensitive to the effects their stories have on the people they write about, especially the children, and that in the future, publishing fair, factual, truthful and balanced articles will be the standard.

Sincerely,  
**Anita L. Jackson**, Chief Judge  
**Marie A. Calica**, Associate Judge  
**Barbara Jim**, Associate Judge  
 Warm Springs Tribal Court

### Horse family

One day my two sons approached me, asking for my permission to go wild horse racing with their uncle Yaht.

Jimmy Jr. was 17 years and Jamie was 15 years. My first thought was, "Oh no!" That's a wild, dangerous sport in rodeo. "Why wild horse racing?" I told them to let me think about it.

Well, while thinking about this, it brought back memories of my deceased brother Jake Jr. When my boys were younger my brother Jake already had plans for them. He named all three of them. One would be a jockey, trainer and galloper on the racetrack. I liked that plan.

Our family has been around horses all our lives. My dad Jacob Sr. grew up with horses. He rode horses, raced on the track. My dad's racehorses have won many, many races on recognized tracks and dirt tracks. Their uncle Jefferey did a good job with wild horse racing and saddle bronc riding. He broke his own horses.

Anyway my boys did get a license in trainer, gallop Boy and were owners of thoroughbred racehorses. I was hoping my boys would continue racing

horses, but it didn't turn out that way.

I gave my permission to Jimmy Jr. and Jamie to go wild horse racing with their uncle Yaht. This was their decision and what they wanted to do and I wanted to support them. I'm glad their uncle Yaht was there to work and teach them about the sport.

One time I rushed to Mollala to watch my boys in a wild horse race, then drove all the way to Grants Pass, where my two other sons, Jason and Clinton, were with our race horses. I arrived at Grants Pass at 4 a.m. and we hauled our racehorses out at 10 a.m. to the Prineville racetrack. My Bronco was needed to haul our horses to the next race meet. We had a lot of good, wonderful experiences with our horses.

Another time my two sons told me about some discouraging words. While wild horse racing they met some negative and discouraging people. But by the grace of God they also met some encouraging people. Encouraging words that uplifted them. I told my boys to never mind them negative people and "take to heart" the people who were encouraging them with the sport of "wild horse racing."

My two sons are now 24 years and 26 years and are still wild horse racing. It's very dangerous when you have eight teams in the arena with wild horses bucking, kicking, biting and fighting to get away.

My boys always go to Tygh Ridge to wild horse race. I don't understand how my boys' team placed third in the finals when both times out they crossed the finish line first.

The other two teams crossed the line second and third, both times out and they placed first and second in the finals.

Some of the other teams approached my boys and shared words of not understanding how the results came out as they did.

My boys are going to keep on doing their best in this sport of "wild horse racing."  
**Melinda Frank.**

### A message

Hello, Warm Springs. I am writing to speak my mind about the ups and downs of living in a small community. Mostly the downs. To start I want to express my feelings on the unprofessionalism on the part of some of the people in higher positions. For them to believe in hearsay, and implicate others in drug use, drug dealing with no formal proof just really upsets me. I see and hear it a lot about how much this person sees so and so with a new boyfriend or girlfriend and not liking it. But to try and say they know that

person and to slander or libel them is just uncalled for. To judge a person should be left up to the trained judges in our justice system. You don't walk in my shoes, nor do you walk in my mates shoes. You are on the outside looking in. Maybe you should not even be looking if you want to judge us, label us, shun us, and try hurting us with your petty gossip. Oh yes we are no angels, we have pasts. But we are moving on from that together. Its not up to you what we decide to do with our lives. You see what you want, you hear what you want, but please don't always say what you want. We don't want everything you do. I am mostly upset to hear secondhand about myself and my mate being "watched" because we are drug users and dealers. Not true, I have been employed at my job for 11 years. And have never failed a drug test or had to worry about one. But to slander my mate for the things she is dealing with in her personal life and some of the debts we are paying to the community for our mistakes. To say I know your other half and he is my good friend but on the other hand take it out on her and say hurtful and untrue things and test her. I ask you test me too if you are going to implicate me also. You are in positions where confidentiality and professionalism are a must, so please heed my message. I am not judging you or labeling you, anybody in this community who this has to do with. You should know who you are. I ask in closing, talk to either one of us, preferably both of us before you go spreading rumors with no merit. We have nothing to hide. Misery loves company but we don't want your company, be happy with yourself before saying how unhappy you are with everyone else. Thank you, **Orlando Stevens.**

### Our sponsors

We would like to thank our sponsors in Madras and Warm Springs for helping us to attend the young basketball tournaments in Grand Ronde and Seattle. Thank you to Warm Springs Forest Products Industries, Cliff's Auto, Erickson Thriftway, Madras Marine, Miller Ford Nissan, Petals & Posies, and Gloria's Espresso. Last but not least, Earl, Rita and Valeria Squiemphen.

Without your support we could not have placed second at Grand Ronde, and third at Seattle. Many thanks. **Sammi O'Reilly.**

### The Man above

For all my life I've wondered why I've felt a longing need to cry.

My world's been shut behind some doors, the shame so great the evil pours.

Can love so true be know to me? Can't wait to have my heart set free.

Each day I pray my heart will find what's really felt and not in mind.

"Lord send an angel to guide the way, to open my heart as I kneel and pray."

When doors come open and evil goes out, I'll teach it to all what the heart's about.

There's only one way, it's through genuine love. It happened to me through the Man Above.

By **Otis Johnson.**

### Fire safety

Hello from Warm Springs Fire and Safety, your fire department.

We often don't realize that our vehicle exhaust system can start a devastating wildfire that can destroy homes and our natural resources. Keep this in mind while enjoying the outdoors this holiday weekend.

Fire conditions in the northwest still remain extreme even though the forecast calls for rain and cooling temperatures.

We can help prevent these destructive fires this weekend by following some simple guidelines:

Keep vehicles off dry grass: Exhaust systems can heat up to 1,000 degrees and ignite adjacent grasses and shrubs.

Check your spark arrester: Before heading outdoors clean your ATV spark arrester. This will reduce the chance of a spark starting a wildfire.

Be prepared: Carry a shovel and a fire extinguisher in your vehicle and ATV.

We can all make a difference in reducing human-caused fires during this season of high fire danger.

From **Warm Springs Fire and Safety.**

### Congratulations

I would like to say congratulations to Felicity VanPelt, who just graduated from high school in White Swan. After the difficulties of just growing up, she made.

Congratulations to Mayanne Mitchell, who went to school at Haskell. She has a very high grade point, and was also in the Who's Who on College Campuses.

Congratulations to Allen Mitchell, who has a 4.0 at Haskell.

I would like to congratulate them all on their accomplishments. I'm so proud that they have done so well.

**Maxine Switzler.**

### Be careful

I hear the pine trees screaming. Listen to what they say: A fire is burning us up and we cannot run away!

We are home for millions of wild ones in this wood: birds, tree frogs, chipmunks, squirrels, who've left us while we stood.

Run! Run, cousins! Hop and fly! Escape this wicked day. Do not look back to your shady rests for we cannot run away.

The flames chew at our roots and lap our sap away.

They gnaw into our hearts, but we cannot run away.

We shout and scream in terror for help if someone could stop this fire burning, deep, deep into our wood.

Alas our charred remains fall in ashes all around. The heat will germinate our seeds lying on the ground.

When our pine tree babes grow up, list' to what they say. Don't let fire kill them for they cannot run away. **Dancing Light.**

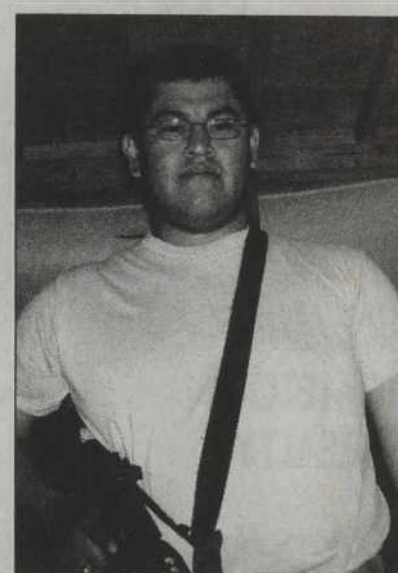
*Thank you for writing to the Spilyay Tymoo.*

### Serving in Iraq

Hello, my name is Lawren Slockish. My father is Wilbur Slockish Jr., and my mother is Suzie Slockish.

For those of you who don't know, I have been deployed over to Iraq. I have been gone since Oct. 2 of 2005 and I won't return till either March or April of 2007. I am just writing to let some of you know that if you would like to write me the address is:

Spc. Slockish Lawren  
 B Btry 1/125 strike  
 CSC Scania  
 APO AE 09331  
 So if you feel like writing



me, even just to say hello, I would really appreciate it. Thank you.  
 Sincerely, **Spc Slockish, Lawren.**

Spilyay Tymoo  
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## Congratulations, students!

Congratulations to Shayla Frank and Shirley Allen. On June 3 they received their degrees.

Shayla received her "Associates of Science" Degree in Environmental Science, Fisheries and Wildlife from Salish Kootenai College.



Shirley received her "Bachelor of Science" degree in Elementary Education from the University of Montana Western.

We are very proud of you two. The graduation ceremonies were beautiful. Our family was happy to be there to witness this event.

Grandmas Anna and Norene, aunts Margie and Jolene.

Congratulations Rayann Katchia for graduating from Flandreau Indian School.

From the Herkshans.



We would like to recognize and congratulate our daughter Tianna Herkshan on obtaining a 3.8 GPA the first two trimesters and a 4.0 this last trimester. We are both very proud of you. Keep up the good work! Love, Dad and Danni.



Congratulations to our daughter/sister Nicole Herkshan for graduating on May 23

from Flandreau Indian High School. We are all very

proud of you! Love, Dad, Danni, Paul, Tianna, Rachelle, Charlieann, Dalton, Kahne, Cheydon and Tasha.

