

Letters to the Editor

Vote controversy

To the tribal membership,
This is in response to the unsigned article labeled "Reasons why Tribal Council election needs to be invalidated." Since I am referred to as the "chief statistician," I feel I have the right to set things straight in the eyes of the people.

In the first place, I only recommend a date. I recommend a date based on the fact that when the Tribal Council approves the nominations, they set the date for the election. They approved the nominations in Pocatello, Idaho, on March 13. When I asked if a date was set they said, "We'll talk to you on Monday." On Monday the March 19, I went in to Tribal Council and I have always them, I need at least three weeks to get the absentee ballots out, and time for them to be returned. The memo that I wrote on the 13th was brought out and the date of April 2 was set. My staff of three had to scramble around to get the absentee ballots together and sent. All of the out-of-state were sent out on March 21 and 22, the in-state were mailed out on the 23rd.

The following Monday, we received a ballot back from Georgia. This shows that there was sufficient time for a ballot to be returned. Ballots were returned from as far away as Wisconsin, New Mexico, Montana, Texas, California and Washington, D.C. Up to this date, only 32 ballots came in after the election.

The people who requested lists had both labels and a list. I asked that the list with children on it be brought back so we could look at it. If we had mailed out ballots to children, it would have been sent back. Up to this date, none have been returned, and we have never seen this list with children on it, so I believe this is a gross misstatement.

The rumors are flying. I heard someone say there were up to 400 people left off the voters list. This again is a gross misstatement. I wrote 72 people to let them know that they showed up without a district. Twenty-three of those people returned their forms, and many of them showed up at the polls. Each district was given the chance to question a candidate at each of the respective district meetings. The Tribal Council just approved the choices.

Madeline Queahpama-Spino, Director of tribal Vital Statistics.

Council and 12 elections. Never in that time have I tried to influence voters in any way. The fact that I relieved Shirley Sanders so that she could take a break, was all I was doing, and all I did was write down the names of the people coming in the door. I was not at the counting table.

I was told of Eugene Austin Greene Jr., helping Arlita carry the ballot box to the back room where the counters are. The ballot boxes are big and bulky, so Austin was being a gentleman by carrying the box for the counters, who are all ladies. As far as Wilson Wewa Jr., carrying a box, I do not know. If this is true, they could have been helping the committee again after the polls close, because the boxes were delivered to the superintendent's office.

Again, if a list had children's names on it, it should have been returned to Vital Statistics for proof that this statement is valid.

The vote made to accept the results at Kah-Nee-Ta was a vote of the full Tribal Council, with one member out of the room. Six voted for; three against, with one out of the room, and the Chairman not voting. It was made prior to the presentation by Lori Anderson, acting superintendent, so it had no bearing on what the superintendent's decision was. She had her statement done prior to the meeting, and she said it still would have been the same. But it was said that based on 72 members for the election, and four (not 44) against, she would have gone along with the Tribal Council's decision.

Ordinance 44 allows the BIA superintendent to keep the boxes for three days after the election in the event of a dispute. This is in section 16 of the ordinance.

In order to do away with the districts, it would have to be a secretarial election to amend the Constitution and By-laws.

Isn't it an abuse or misuse of tribal property in using e-mail?

If the person who wrote this, and those people who supported this unsigned document do not have the courage to sign their document, then they should not be slandering people by naming names.

Each district was given the chance to question a candidate at each of the respective district meetings. The Tribal Council just approved the choices.

Madeline Queahpama-Spino, Director of tribal Vital Statistics.

The election

Thought I would say a few things about what happened during the certification of the election results. When the results were revealed, Tribal Council members present, including myself, all voted to certify the results.

Tribal members who wished to challenge the election were allowed into Council Chambers.

They expressed three areas of concern:

1. Time was not allowed for absentee voters to receive and return their ballots by Election Day that amounted to over 500 votes.

2. Tribal members between the ages of 21 and 24 years were not on the voter list, the number of them unknown.

3. The relationship between the Election Board members and the candidates constituted a conflict of interest.

After some discussion the

tribal members were told that they could submit their challenge concerns to the BIA Superintendent within three days of the election.

The Tribal Council members who were present, further discussed the issues of the tribal member concerns. The Chief Statistician was called into the Tribal Council Chambers and was asked if the concerns were true. The Chief Statistician responded in saying that many errors were made, including absentee mail out, and 21 to 24 age group being left off the voter list. The Chief Statistician took a stance in support of all Election Board members and Counting Board.

Tribal Council members present were given four options. The last option being to undo the election and have another election. As a matter of record, I stated that if another election was to be held that it will be done without my name as I would withdraw from the election.

Soon thereafter a motion was made to undo the election and have another election. Not all Tribal Council members agreed with the motion, but the motion passed. Reason for the motion: absentee voters, especially those that lived out of state, were not given sufficient time to participate in the election, and an unknown number of tribal members between the ages of 21 and 24 were not on the voter list and not given the opportunity to participate in the election process. There were also names of minors included on the election list.

Each of the Tribal Council members including the Chiefs took an Oath of Office to uphold the U.S. Constitution and the Tribal Constitution in the best interests of the tribal members before their term begins. I took this oath very seriously for all tribal members.

Tribal Council as a whole and by a majority vote, chose to overturn the Tribal Council members that thought re-election should have been in order.

Having said that, one would have to wonder why two Seekseequa members would vote to overturn, when they asked Tribal Council to support them to withdraw from the election because of an error in the election process. "Hey go figure."

In closing, those 500 people that were not given the opportunity to participate in this process, even though they lived off the Reservation at this time, I would venture to guess that at least one family member living on the Reservation would agree that an injustice had been done. This could be 1,000 votes to impact the next tribal referendum, not to mention those between 21 and 24 years of age. That's going to be interesting.

I mentioned earlier that I withdrew my name if a re-election were to happen; I was soundly convinced to re-submit my name back on the ballot, even after I tried to convince my supporters to enter me in as a write-in. I thought I'd mention that, to address any "rumors" out there.

Fifteen years ago I had said that I would represent the District as long as they wanted me to, and when they thought my work as a Representative was done, they would let me know at the polls, when that time came I would walk away without looking back.

It's been an honor and a

privilege to have been a District representative these past years. I thank those that had confidence in me, without me having to "campaign." If I were to campaign, I would never do it at a Memorial.

Respectfully,
Raymond Calica Tsumpti, Sr.

Auxiliary

To the following people, businesses and community,

On behalf of the Ladies Auxiliary Elliott Palmer Post 4217 in Warm Springs, we would like to thank you for your support:

The soldiers, officers, and members of the Elliott Palmer Post 4217; Elton Greeley, Warm Springs Senior Program for the use of the Senior Building and copier; the Museum at Warm Springs for use of the building.

Buddy Poppy sales: Black Bear Diner in Madras, Case Equipment in Bend, Madras Pioneer newspaper, DMJ Automotive in Warm Springs, Warm Springs Forest Products in Warm Springs, Nissen and Meyer Accounting in Redmond; \$120.56 raised through these sales!

Buddy poppies are the VFW's official flower and represent the blood shed by American military service members. The flowers were made by disabled, hospitalized and aging veterans in VA hospitals, dorms, and state veterans' homes. The money supports the Relief Fund to help members, veterans and their dependents.

If you would like VFW Ladies Auxiliary information, or to donate to the Buddy Poppy sales for Warm Springs, contact us at PO Box 248 in Warm Springs and thank you. Support our upcoming blood drive in Warm Springs through the American Red Cross - watch for the date in early summer.

Pinky Beymer, president, and Auxiliary members.

Appreciated

I want to personally thank all the people that voted. Your vote is very important. Thanks to all that supported me as a write-in candidate.

Change is needed, but change will be slow.

My grandfather once shared with me, "Sometimes, you might have to give up something to get what you want."

Thanks to my family whom have always rallied for me and my endeavors in life and especially to my wife Cheryl for always being here for me.

Terry Courtney.

Traditions

"Living a good life," that is what our ancestors wanted to preserve for all of the tribal members. That is what our treaties are all about. Most of us have grown up learning a lot about our cultural needs and the traditional ways of life. We are the caretakers of not only nature's gifts, but also of the children in our lives that are the future.

We all live in one world and we all need to work together to keep the ways of life in balance with nature.

Our ancestors knew how important it was to be ever thankful to the Creator of all things and not just on Sunday. We never had Sunday or Wednesdays. Every morning

was worship time every day.

Alcohol or drugs never were a part of our traditional ways of life. Indian pride? Life is tough all over.

Why do our people sometimes prefer alcohol over the salmon, the deer, the roots, even the welfare of their families? Why?

Did you forget what your grandfather or grandmother used to say? Have you passed on the customs and traditions that our ancestors preserved for us back in 1855? Are we self-destructing or do we even appreciate life?

Terry Courtney.

Seniors Day

Attention to all community members:

The Warm Springs Senior Department is requesting your help, by making any type of donations possible for this year's Honor Seniors Day.

The theme for this year's Honor Seniors Day is "A Dream Come True," and is to be held at the Agency Longhouse in Warm Springs on Friday, May 11, 2007.

If you are unable to make any donations, you can be a volunteer helper.

Any and all donations will be greatly appreciated and can be delivered to the Senior Department building at 2331 High Looksee.

Donations can also be picked up by a staff member of the Senior Department.

For more information, please contact the Senior Department by either a phone call to our offices at (541) 553-3313, or by stopping by the office located at 2331 High Looksee St.

We, here at the Senior Department would like to thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,
The Staff at the Senior Department.

Concerns

To our community of Warm Springs,

This is a concern we will call "Equal opportunity and fairness."

For all that read or who choose to listen and think the same as well do think out loud but never say anything. Well I am a tribal member here and would like to take time to share how we feel about some concerns or issues and fairness. Well here are our major ones, for example we have overcrowded housing, too many in one home. We should do what some people call sweat equity or assist with homes and help clean or basically get homes done sooner. Help out, it's better what people say, "One hand washed the other," and we are all humans, want to make it better for everyone. We need to make a stand and listen not only hear but listen to who is talking. And we can resolve these if a community will stand as one.

And the other concerns are jobs for us as tribal members. Whatever happened to taking time to teach or train us. There are still some people willing to learn and want to work. But we all think we cannot do it, there is no such thing. We walk side by side not in front or behind. We should improve job fairness, training or at least give that person a chance and take a good look at what we all should do. It is hard to have one family work-

ing. It is not easy. It is very expensive nowadays. We should be happy for what one person has. We all don't have what others have but it doesn't mean we work hard for it too.

So it shouldn't be like that. We're all humans, and we do want to learn if they teach us and there are those who really want to.

And the other concern is court issues that do arise to us as clients. Whatever happened to just playing fair or just equal opportunity. We do also do what they call hearsay and not a whole lot listen to both sides and only want to hear and say just a fraction of what is really being done and the attitude and rude behavior and cut out the gossip and what happened to confidentiality and be there to do their job and not for what they call when you want. We do want to be treated as clients and be treated how they would like to be treated. Okay, it is gladly appreciated, and it's all good but comes with time and respect that would also be nice. And whatever happened to our culture and heritage and our language. What are our tribal leaders doing to improve if anything should arise. Some of us would like to learn these, such as fishing, hunting, root-digging, berry picking, and culture for our future generations. And our treaty rights as tribal members. One day a younger generation might be Tribal Council or office. We are seriously losing a lot or missing a lot. The younger generation needs to be taught that respect and listen to elders and parents. Don't let children rule. Teach and they will listen or talk. Speak up. Make a stand and represent the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Oregon. No one can take that away from us. (It is called pride and respect and trust and loyalty.) Thank you for your time. One day we might be our future leader. Thank you community.

Sincerely, **Rachel Saludo.**

In Montana

Hello, everyone.

I'm just writing to let everyone who's wondering how or where I am. Well, I'm physically better than before, everything else is so-so. Be living in Montana for a little longer.

Probably be back maybe next summer, who knows? I don't. Anyways, I sure could use some mail from anyone curious, wondering, bored, whatever.

So if you so desire, I will return all, so don't be scared.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Anthony J. Gonzales,
AO2108412

2340 Mullan Rd.
Missoula, MT 59808.

Sincerely,
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