

## Letters to the editor

### Family, friends

To the family and friends of Oits Lee Johnson, "Oitsy," we would like to thank the following:

For all the support and guidance, auntie Myra J. Orange, and a big bear hug.

Auntie Shirley and uncle Jeff for support and hugs—just being there. It meant a lot.

The lil' sisters—Phyliss, Sandy, Rhonda, Kali and Jolene George, for helping with the house.

Greg Arquette for officiating and arranging the drummers. Sam Starr and Larry for preparing his body.

Carol Lawrence, as she took care of his plate.

LT Suppah and Lawrence, who with crew prepared the meals and took care of the kitchen area. The dancers, especially the young ones who lit the floor to comfort and guide him on his journey.

The elders who shared their thoughts and prayers.

The pallbearers who cleared and danced their brother. Love you, and take care of each other!

Austin Smith and the Warm Springs Boxing Club for their words, prayers and "10 count."

Grandfather Larry Wesley and Russell Jackson Sr., for their prayers and support.

Uncles Corbett T. and Jerry White for support and prayers.

For the loved ones who couldn't be here, may "Grandfather" watch over them and comfort them.

All who sent their prayers. Thank you from all our hearts! It made our job to prepare his last journey go smoothly.

'Bro' Jason Rabbi and uncle Virgil Orange for helping us burn his personal items. Love you both, and may you be blessed!

All the lil' nieces and nephews, be strong and love one another. May Grandfather watch over and comfort you. Thank you one and all.

**Lee Connie, Wendi-Jenna, Leanne, Carriane and Treyvon Johnson.**

### VA treatment

To the Warm Springs community,

I am writing this letter to apologize to the community of Warm Springs regarding my actions that took place on the evening of September 14, 2015. First, I would like to apologize to my family, friends, neighbors and community members who I may have scared or caused to be displaced that evening.

More importantly, I would like to apologize to the Warm Springs Police Department, who had nothing but my best interests in mind. They responded to a difficult situation that could have led to a tragic outcome, if it were not for their training and dedication to serving and protecting our community members.

I am currently being treated by the Portland VA Medical Center, and have been admitted to the Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (RRTP) in Vancouver, Washington. The focus of my treatment has been on my addiction to alcohol and my Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), due to my combat experience while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The RRTP is an in-patient program providing behavioral healthcare services to veterans who want substance abuse treatment. I've participated in every modality of treatment offered in this program. I have been formally diagnosed with PTSD and have started therapy. This is the beginning of my path to recovery that allows me to seek professional help to overcome my traumatic past, so that I can once again live a healthy and balanced life.

PTSD and alcohol use disorder are both treatable conditions, unfortunately, it took me several years to receive mental health care for my PTSD and alcohol use. In the years since my return from Iraq, I often found myself having thoughts of suicide to end the distress and pain that I felt. I want any veteran who is struggling with a similar situation to know that they can seek help immediately from the VA.

I have lived with PTSD for a long time and I am happy to be receiving the care I need to address this mental illness. Help is available—don't hesitate and delay, reach out! Very respectfully,  
**Johnathan Courtney**

### Greenhouse

First and foremost I'd like to extend sincere apologies where it is due. I feel deep regret for my errors that I have owned up to. Since my arrival here I've attained my education and average score of 612 on my GED. I am now almost complete with an apprenticeship in landscape management tech, on a very intense schedule of 2000 hours. I am in a money smart class, as well as a solar electricity course on how to design and install photovoltaic solar electric systems.

I made a choice to take advantage of every opportunity that is available to me here. I think it is past due but it is never too late to mend. So I might as well utilize the resources in my time.

I want to commend whoever thought up the proposed greenhouse petition. We as a tribe I feel are in dire need to advance economically in a world that we are a part of. I have thought of how much we could've gained when the millions of dollars worth of timber were burned in the past 10 to 15 years in our mountains.

Since our forest products are not in demand any more, let's take a chance at the greenhouse. By hook or by crook we need to step up our economy for our legacy as a tribe to survive. Happy holidays to you and yours.

**Curtis L. Brown**, no. 74650-065; federal correctional institute, PO Box 5000, Sheridan, OR 97378.

### Pay system

I am not writing this to anyone in particular. It is more like voicing my thoughts and concerns. This recent change in our payroll system has me concerned for my financial future. I was issued a "rapid pay card/Mastercard" by MetaBank, member FDIC, to cut back on paper or something like that in our payroll system.

I banked with US Bank in Madras when I first started work in mid-2014, and was using their direct deposit account for checking. That worked fine until I filed for taxes in 2015 with H&R Block—expecting a rapid refund to be directly deposited to my bank account.

It turned out that H&R Block and myself were denied any of that year's tax return because of money owed to the state of Oregon, because of back child support. The expected return was close to \$4,000, so I owe H&R Block from last year.

I don't blame anyone for my children having to get state assistance but myself and my addictions. My concern is this. The US Bank is the bank that holds the stamp that our checks or former checks were issued to us. I was under the impression that any money earned on our reservation was protected under some sort of sovereignty. Wrong obviously. If the bank that issues our checks can't protect my income, I am troubled for this new system's handling our payroll system.

Will allow the state to garnish my wages? The cost of living right now doesn't leave much room for luxuries as it is. I try to live life one day at a time. I try to live life on life's terms. I do my best to be a responsible, productive member of our community. But to be honest, I am troubled by this different way



Love you, son, on your day, December 22, Chet C. VanPelt Jr.. Love, Mom and family, your three sons and grandchildren, bro and sisters, nieces and nephews.



Happy Birthday lil' brother, Lemo, your Nana's, Charlotte Shike, Neda Wesley, Eliza Brown-Jim, and all your family. Love, and many more.



Love, Happy 21st on December 20. Baby, stay as sweet as U R. Love, G ma - (G Pa) and all of us at 1718 Bray. Also Happy Birthday, Our Christmas present, December 25, Latrell VanPelt Graybael. Love, us, G-G Ma and family.

of being paid. Is this an infringement on our sovereignty? Call me a worry wart, but my suspicious nature has saved me too many times to doubt it now.

I am just thinking ahead to when rent is due on our apartment (in Madras). What avenues are open once my earnings are garnished? I'll just have to cross that bridge when I reach it. Good day to you.

La Wat-La-Wat, Davis Stwyer Sr.

### Indian Business Talk

## On doing well in business, as shown by 1-percent Louie

By **Bruce Engle**  
Loan officer  
W.S. Credit Enterprise

This is about '1-percent Louie,' a friend, a mentor, and a successful minority businessman.

Louie started working in a restaurant as a kid. He saved and later got the chance to buy a small restaurant that was having difficulties in downtown LA.

Louie's first lesson from that first restaurant was not to completely change the menu. It took him awhile to get most of the regulars back. He learned from his mistakes.

Louie grew as a businessman and made that restaurant a success.

Louie went on to buy, fix-up, turn-around, and sell restaurants until he accumulated the cash to build and keep the one he wanted—and then another—and so on. Louie ended up with three strings of restaurants.

Louie was a successful restaurateur, and proud of it.

He had a basic ownership and management philosophy that helped him to be successful. Also, he was always willing to share his philosophy and his success with others.

One of his beliefs was that there are no menial jobs. Louie was the best example of that. He bused tables. He cooked. He cleaned. He greeted customers. He helped out when his employees needed help.

Louie wasn't afraid of losing respect if he got his hands dirty. Everybody knew he was the boss. Everybody knew he had done, could do, and would do their job if need be.

Louie designed how every item from the menu was to be prepared and presented on the plate. A chef that refused to do things his way was sent home, and Louie put on an apron and finished the shift.

Louie created a brand and the standards of performance that made that brand successful.

I remember Louie telling me that, if the President were to come to his restaurant,

Louie would be willing to say, "Mr. President, I am proud to serve this plate of food to you." He was that confident as to the quality of the food, the preparation, and the presentation of every item on the menu.

Louie knew that pennies make dollars. He knew that if he kept track of the pennies, the dollars would take care of themselves.

He was a businessman.

Louie looked for where he could save 1 percent. Sometimes, he got lucky and saved more. For example, he did some price comparing and found that Ortega chilies cost more than Old El Paso chilies. He switched brands—and saved.

That constant attention to detail helped Louie to be successful.

Louie also helped a number of friends to start their own restaurants. He mentored them. Some of them were successful.

I know this because I ate in their restaurants.

So, what's my point?

Louie didn't have a college degree. He learned a profession. He became good at it.

He worked hard. He kept on learning and he kept on working.

Louie did well and helped others to do well. Louie thrived in this land of opportunity.

He found his opportunity. He made the best of it.

I don't know if Louie ever said, "I can and I will."

I do know that he was determined to be successful and he was.

I have talked about Louie as '1-percent Louie' for years. I liked and respected him for being a wonderful example of a businessman. He was more than that.

Louie was a family man; a loving husband; a father of eight; grandfather of many; and a very well liked and respected member and supporter of the community.

Louie is high on my list of examples of a person who could and did.

## What does it mean to be an entrepreneur?

By **Leah Guliasi**  
W.S. Community Action Team

Have you ever thought about owning your own business? Want to open a restaurant, or sell your beadwork?

If yes, then you might be interested in becoming an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurs are people

who have started their own business, and Warm Springs needs entrepreneurs if it is going to increase the number of businesses on the reservation.

However, there is more to being an entrepreneur than simply opening a business and it can be challenging at times.

Here are 10 reasons to become an entrepreneur:

Turn your dream into reality.

Do something you love.

You are your own boss and are in full control of your business.

Get out what you put in.

No income limit.

Create opportunities.

Have more freedom.

Become a driven, persistent, able, and confident per-

son.

Join a Chamber of Commerce and meet other people like you.

Dream big!

For more information about opportunities that exist in Warm Springs for people who want to start a business, contact the Warm Springs Community Action Team at 541-553-3148.

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