

TRIBAL COUNCIL NEWS

Council's Year-End Presentation

Editor's Note: At the January General Council Meeting, Candy Robertson gave the Council's year-end report which discusses the different committees and work groups each Council member is involved with. The report is reprinted here to allow tribal members to become familiar with the purpose of committees and work groups, and who serves on them.

Good afternoon, everyone and welcome to our first General Meeting of the new year. For those of you who do not know me, my name is Candy Robertson, and I'm going to be making a brief report on other meetings and organizations Tribal Council is involved with.

In the past, you have heard us refer to ATNI, and NCAI; today, I want to tell you more about them, since they are the two main organizational meetings Council attends. "NCAI" or National Congress of American Indians, is an organization with a main office located in Washington, D.C. The membership consists of Indian tribes from all over the United States. There are two main conferences/conventions that NCAI holds, one is the mid-year conference and the other is the annual convention. The annual convention is the one Council representatives just recently attended, from November 28 to December 3. It was the 50th year convention. Each tribe appoints by tribal resolution a delegate and an alternate to represent their tribe. This last year at the mid-year conference, Kathryn Harrison served as the tribal delegate, and Margaret Provost as the alternate. At the annual convention, Kathryn Harrison served as delegate, and I served as the alternate. Merle Holmes also attended both conferences and Ed Larsen, Andy Jenness, Leon Tom, and Val Grout each attended one.

The delegate has the authority to vote, and the alternate votes in the delegate's absence. This very rarely happens. The Grand Ronde Tribe has a reputation for staying and being at the conference at all times, to the very end. The Health Reform and Gaming are examples of two major issues discussed at the conferences. There were 1300 registrants and 153 tribes present at the annual convention, the highest attendance in approximately ten years. It was mentioned that Indian people are getting the important message that we need to unite and be heard by our legislative people, especially regarding our tribal sovereignty.

It is very beneficial for the Grand Ronde Tribe to continue their support and participation to this organization.

Along with the meetings and workshops held during the day, there are area caucuses held as well. Grand Ronde belongs to the Northwest/Portland Area group. So when General Assembly recessed at 5:00 P.M., we went right into area caucus until 7:30 or 8:00 P.M.

Since this was the time for elections for positions on the NCAI Executive Board, we scheduled three area caucuses: to hear who the Northwest Tribes wanted to support for President, etc. Other important issues discussed were issues that had an impact on the Northwest area and wanted NCAI to be aware of.

"ATNI" or Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians", is similar to NCAI, only the membership consists of about 46 tribes from the Northwest.

Instead of holding area caucuses, we sometimes hold Oregon tribes meetings in the evenings and discuss what issues and concerns Oregon tribes have that they want ATNI to be aware of, and forward to NCAI.

The tribal delegate and alternate is also done by tribal resolution. They are Merle Holmes, and alternate Ed Larsen.

We are well known in this organization also, for our attendance and participation. The Council representatives that attended the most recent ATNI conference along with Ed and Merle were Kathryn Harrison, and myself. Leon Tom has attended previous meetings. During this last meeting, Ray McKnight and Leon Tom were attending a Timber Conference.

Chairman Mark Mercier has attended a special ATNI meeting called earlier this year.

Because Council has seen a need for more time to be spent on tribal issues and activities due to the growth of the Tribe, at a December 23, 1992 planning meeting, work groups were established. These work groups' duties would consist of looking at specific needs, resolvent possibilities, then taking the proposals back to Tribal Council meetings with recommendations of final approval or disapproval.

The work group assignments are as follows:

*Jurisdiction: This group focuses mainly on tribal court issues. Kathryn and Merle serve in this group.

*Legislative Development: This group looks at legislation that has an impact on Indian tribes, local and nationwide. These issues could be in the proposal proposed amendment stages. Gaming and Senate Bill 61 are two examples of these issues. Merle, Andy, Kathryn, and myself serve in this group.

*Community Development: This group will devote its time to looking at and researching changes in the community, making it possible to look at program services and restructure them to best meet community needs. Kathryn, Val, Andy, Ed, and Leon serve in this group.

*Tribal Laws & Ordinances: This group drafts new tribal ordinances and/or proposed amendments to current tribal law. The proposed language within the ordinances is discussed and reviewed thoroughly in work group meetings before a recommendation is made to Tribal Council. There are several staff people who contribute to the drafting of the ordinances by facilitating, preparation, or program input: Jim Willis, Mike Mason, summer intern student Angie Leno,

Jackie Whisler, John Mercier, Dakota Whitecloud, Cliff Adams, and Spirit Mountain Development Corporation.

The tribal government to date has 31 different ordinances in effect. If a tribal member wishes to review these ordinances, an ordinance book is available at the information table located just inside the main door of the tribal government building, or in each division. Kathryn, Merle, Ray, Ed, Val, and myself are in the Laws and Ordinances Work Group.

*Land Acquisition: This group works at researching possible land purchases. Ray, Leon, and Ed serve in this group.

Council members each serve as a liaison to a tribal committee. Currently, I serve on the Fish & Wildlife Committee, Kathryn Serves on the Health Committee, Ray Serves on the Timber Committee, Leon Serves on the Cemetery Committee, Val Sits on Elders' Committee as the elected position, Merle serves as liaison to the Education Committee, and Ed serves as Council liaison to Spirit Mountain Development Corporation Board of Directors.

In closing, I would like to let you know it is the Council's intent to keep you informed. We will provide you with information and on-going reports either at the General Council Meetings or through the Tribal newsletter.

Thank you for your time and attention.

—Candy Robertson



Personnel Director Kit Devine left, works on Strategic Planning with Tribal Council. They are developing a plan for the Tribe's future, which resulted from input at the Strategic Future's Conference last October. Part of the plan involves adopting a Vision Statement, which will be printed in Smoke Signals when it's completed.