

## Editorial and Opinion

# More reasons to participate in the Tribal Council elections

By Tracy Dugan

Once again this year there are a large number of candidates running for positions on Tribal Council. The newsletter plays a role in helping to introduce the candidates to the tribal membership by printing comments from each of them along with a photo. This is in order to help voters who live outside the community learn more about the people who are running.

This year there are fourteen candidates. Some changes have been made by the Election Committee regarding voting procedures and how the names will appear on the ballot. They are in random order, not alphabetical order, to avoid confusion between candidates who may have the same names, etc.

I've been coordinating the tribal newsletter for three years now, and every summer I write an editorial urging tribal members to vote in the election, no

matter where they may reside in Oregon, or for that matter, the nation.

I have explained the importance of each vote, the careful selection each tribal member must make in order to ensure the best and most qualified candidates are elected into office. I have addressed those tribal members who live out of state, who may think that the Tribe has nothing to offer them—that tribal actions and decisions are of no consequence if you are not a local member.

I won't go through all that again this year. Except to say that the Election Committee has passed several new ordinances making it extremely easy for everyone to vote. For example, all registered voters will automatically receive an absentee ballot in the mail. All anyone has to do is read about the candidates in the August 1 edition of *Smoke Signals*, make

their selections, and mail the ballot back. It's never been this easy!

Of course, if you would like to vote in the election, but you are not registered, you may do so in the Enrollment Office any time between now and the election. You can even register on election day.

In addition, for those of you who found last year's Candidate's Forum informative, the Election Committee is holding another one this July at the Community Center. It will be on Sunday, July, 16 from 1-3 p.m.

Tribal members will be able to ask the candidates questions about the significant issues facing the Tribe in the upcoming year. All voters are encouraged to attend.

This is an ideal chance to find out how candidates feel about the specific tribal areas you care about most.

## Tribal Council Elections

September 9, 1995 at the Tribal Community Center

*Candidates will be featured in the August Smoke Signals*

### TO ALL TRIBAL COUNCIL CANDIDATES

- August 1st *Smoke Signals* will print profiles of all Council Candidates for this year.
- You must submit your statement and photo of yourself by July 10, 1995 in order for it to be printed.
- Your statement must be 400 words or less.
- We will be available to take a photo of you, if you don't have one you want to publish.
- Call Tracy or Kim if you have any questions. Our numbers are 1-800-422-0232, or 879-2254.

# Office of Tribal Justice discussed at Listening Conference

By Mark Mercier



On June 2nd and 3rd Tribal Council member Kathryn Harrison, Ed Larsen, along with tribal attorney Michael Mason and I travelled to Salt Lake City to attend the Northwest American Indian Justice Conference, hosted by the United States Department of Justice.

Attorney General Janet Reno and Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah were the keynote speakers at the conference. Reno told the tribes that on January 30 the Department

of Justice created the Office of Tribal Justice. This office was established to serve as the coordination center for all Department of Justice activities relating to Native Americans.

The mission of the Office of Tribal Justice will be to coordinate and focus the Department's policies and positions on Native American issues, maintain liaison with the federally recognized Indian tribes, and work with appropriate federal, state, and local of-

ficials, professional associations, and public interest groups. The major functions are as follows.

- Communicate with the tribal representatives on Department issues of concern to tribes.
- Ensure that the Department's policies and positions are clearly communicated to tribes.
- Maintain liaison between the Department and the various divisions and bureaus of the Department and the state, county and local governments, professional organi-

zations, special interest groups, and private entities with interests or responsibilities in tribal matters. •Coordinate federal Indian policy with federal agencies that have a role in Indian Country.

The actions taken by Reno and her staff deserve recognition and appreciation by all Indian tribes throughout the nation. The Tribe is grateful for all the support that the Department of Justice and the Oregon District United States Attorney Office has given.

**MOVING... Let us know...** If you have recently moved or are planning on moving, let us know so you won't miss a single issue of your favorite newsletter. *Smoke Signals* newsletter is available to anyone at no cost. Just fill out this form with your new address and mail it back to the *Smoke Signals* (address below).

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NEW ADDRESS:

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### EDITORIAL POLICY: Letters From Our Readers

*Smoke Signals* is a publication of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon. We have recently adopted an Editorial Policy that encourages input from readers about stories printed in *Smoke Signals*, as well as other tribal issues.

Letters must be printed or typed, and cannot exceed 300 words. *Smoke Signals* reserves the right to edit any letter for clarity and length, and to refuse publication of any letter or any part of a letter that may contain libelous statements or personal attacks. Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *Smoke Signals*, tribal employees, or Tribal Council.

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