

Letters

Dear tribal members:

I am writing with concerns about the upcoming special election. Some blood quantum records have been found inaccurate. We have families of full sisters and brothers with different blood quantum amounts. Keeping an accurate tribal roll is our tribe's responsibility. It is absolutely necessary to guard against error. Before we start changing our Enrollment Ordinance, we need to have an accurate roll.

Currently, we have families that claim Tillamook, Klamath, Nez Perce, Cayuse, Klickitat, Alaskan, Sioux, Cree, Chinook, Chippewa, etc. These are not treaty tribes, but the blood has always been accepted here as part of blood quantum. Many before were adopted here by our chiefs even before treaty times.

Now we question their wisdom.

Tribal members have been told this amendment is supposed to prevent people from relinquishing from other tribes to come to Grand Ronde. But looking at the 6-15-99 *Smoke Signals* under "Proposed Changes" (the bold) does not do that. We were also told at the community meeting that if blood quantum depreciated to where our membership declines, we could change this amendment back again. But the BIA must approve a special election, so there are no guarantees. From experience, they could propose termination rather than an election. I suggest that the reason the Tribe wants to practice exclusion is because of money. (Read 6-15-99 *Smoke Signals* "Why should I care?")

Without our blood, our treaties are no good. And without our treaties, we would not have the right to have a casino! Some people within our tribe, don't want to learn or hear about history. It is your history that has given you your present, and your present ensures your future.

This proposed amendment was written hastily, without the benefit of an "impact statement." The enrollment records were not researched and the effects of this amendment were not studied. At the first of the year, there were approximately 701 tribal members with 1/16 blood. But to truly understand the impact you have to include all the persons that are just short of 1/8. There are approximately 1195 persons that would be affected. That is over one-fourth the current enrollment. If these people can't add their spouse's blood to their child's, these people will not have another generation of enrollment at Grand Ronde. They are our cousins and a part of our community we shouldn't deny.

This amendment will create hard feelings between and within families. To all of you registered to vote, I urge you to vote no! This amendment is wrong for our people! Our "blood" is our birthright; given to us by the Creator. The treaties ensure us of our rights, but they are not worth the paper they are written on. Protect your birthright, protect your blood! Vote no!

Thank you,
Christine Contreras
 Roll # 3431

EDITOR'S NOTE: Due to the content of this letter and the closeness of the special election, we asked Tribal Council to comment on the accuracy of the author's statements regarding the process for amending the Constitution.

This letter contains inaccuracies. We believe a few of these need to be corrected to avoid misinforming our membership.

Tribal Council currently has the authority to correct the membership roll by making blood quantum changes or adding a person to a roll who should have been listed, but was not. The proposed Constitutional amendment retains this ability to correct the membership roll.

The BIA does not approve a special election. If Tribal Council or General Council submit a legally sufficient Constitutional amendment to the BIA, the BIA is required by federal statute to conduct a special election on the proposed amendment.

The statement that "without our blood, our treaties are no good. And without our treaties we would not have the right to have a casino" is also inaccurate. Our Tribe was restored by an act of Congress, the Grand Ronde Restoration Act, and not under a treaty. Although the Restoration Act restored earlier treaties with the tribes of Grand Ronde, it is the Restoration Act which restored the Tribe's status as a sovereign government. The Tribe has the right to operate a casino because of this sovereign status (within the guidelines of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act).

The financial impact information included in the *Smoke Signals* article was provided at the request of tribal members who attended the various community meetings on this issue. This information was included in the article for the sole purpose of providing tribal members with as much information as possible when making their own decision on the proposed amendment.

The proposed amendment was thoughtfully considered by Tribal Council and was not drafted "hastily." The impact this amendment would have on families as well as on tribal resources was seriously contemplated. The Tribal Council reviewed these impacts as well as how other tribes have dealt with these matters.

Thank you

The American Legion Sheridan Post #75 and Auxiliary Unit #75 wish to thank all of the people that helped make our new Sheridan Days a huge success.

Thanks to all of the committee staff, volunteers, participants, and citizens that attended.

We especially wish to extend our thanks to Niva Grand Ronde Veterans, the McMinnville Veterans Club House Group, and all other Veterans Groups for their participation.

We also wish to thank the citizens and auxiliary members who helped make our bake and rummage sale a success.

Our thanks to the Astoria clowns whom drew the winning numbers in our raffle.

The winners were: 1st prize-Rentz, 2nd prize- Daniels, 3rd prize-Fabiano. All prizes have been claimed.

Thanks to all of you that bought tickets and we hope to see you again next year.

James Gordon
 Post Commander
 1999-2000
Julie A. Gordon
 Aux. Unit President
 1998-2000

EDITORIAL POLICY:

SMOKE SIGNALS, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, is published twice a month. We have established an Editorial Policy to encourage input from readers about stories printed in **SMOKE SIGNALS**, and other tribal issues. However, all letters must be received at the newspaper office with author's signature, address, and phone number in order to be considered for publication. **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.

DEADLINE	ISSUE DATE
JULY 6	JULY 15
JULY 20	AUG. 1
AUG. 5	AUG. 15
AUG. 23	SEPT. 1
SEPT. 3	SEPT. 15
SEPT. 20	OCT. 1
OCT. 5	OCT. 15
OCT. 20	NOV. 1
NOV. 5	NOV. 15
NOV. 19	DEC. 1
DEC. 6	DEC. 15
DEC. 20	JAN. 1

Submissions must reach the **SMOKE SIGNALS** office by the dates listed.

SMOKE SIGNALS

Public Information Office
 9615 Grand Ronde Road
 Grand Ronde, Or 97347
 1-800-422-0232
 (503) 879-2254
 FAX: (503) 879-2173

CULTURAL HERITAGE & HISTORY WORKSHOP

Governance Building Classroom • Grand Ronde
 Friday, July 16 • 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.

This workshop is FREE to all tribal members and seating is limited.
 To register contact: June Olson at 879-2249 or 1-800-422-0232 ext. 2249.
 Sponsored by the Cultural Resources Program.

Chinook Jargon Meetings

THE PURPOSE:

- provide information on current and future language activities
- gain feedback from interested community members
- encourage involvement by tribal members interested in language revitalization

THE FOCUS:

- current and future Chinook Jargon activities
- issues related to all of the original languages of the Tribe

The Tribe's Language Specialist will host a series of six meetings this summer. The Language Program encourages all interested individuals to attend. Meetings will be held from 6:30 to 8 p.m., and refreshments will be provided.
JULY 7: GRAND RONDE — Governance Center, classroom # 204
JULY 8: PORTLAND-AREA — Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI), 1945 S.E. Water Avenue, Parker Boardroom.

JULY 19: BEND — Central Oregon Environmental Center, 16 NW Kansas
JULY 26: SALEM — location will be announced
JULY 28: EUGENE — location will be announced
AUGUST 4: GRAND RONDE — A draft long-term Community Language Goals document will be presented for comment at this follow up meeting. For those interested but unable to attend this meeting, the draft document will be available by mail for comment.

For further details, call Tony Johnson at
 1-800-422-0232 ext. 2084 or (503) 879-2084.