

Winter Weather Hits Grand Ronde Hard with High Winds and Sideways Rain Storms



Photos by Peta Tinda

Letters

Dear Editor,

This is a letter of special thanks to family members who showed me their love and concern in taking up an offering and helping me out after my accident on my job. It means a lot to me to see the love a family can share.

Thanks to all,
Victor Cureton
 Roll # 104

Dear Editor,

May I say how very proud I am of the Wellness facility; the concept of preventive medicine is such an enlightened approach to good health.

I have found massage therapy eliminates the need for pain pills, entirely.

There is a need for several appointments in a row in massage therapy, and there in lies the problem. It is very difficult to get back in for a follow-up session.

I have talked to other Tribal members who voice the same concern. We feel it takes too long to get in and too long a wait for subsequent visits.

I truly hope this problem can be acknowledged and addressed.

Gratefully,
Charlene Freeman
 Roll # 194

Comment from Dr. Austin: Our massage therapy service has reached a level of maximum capacity, which causes longer waiting times for appointments and longer intervals between appointments. This situation can result in less than optimum results for those for whom treatment is delayed. Currently we are considering ways to fund and expand our massage therapist staffing to accommodate the growing need.

Editor's Note: We asked Dr. Austin to provide an explanation for Charlene's letter. Not only do we want to print your letters, but we want to try to find an answer when possible.

Mail Room Changes

By Chris Mercier

Up until recently about the only threat your average postal worker would encounter was the occasional pit bull, sunburn or epic leg cramp. But to quote musician Don Henley and Tribal Mail Clerk Jeff Mercier "This is the end of the innocence."

The recent perceived onslaught of anthrax threats, through which the postal service has been key, has reached into Tribal territory. What used to be one of the most cut-and-dried duties around the Tribal Governance Center has quickly become the most contentious.

"I wouldn't say my job has become much more difficult," said Mercier. "But it's definitely become more interesting."

Even the possibility of a microbial calamity was enough reason to have the Tribal administration look

into safety measures in regards to mail room procedures. One of the remedies was the relocation of the mailroom office to an off-site location. You won't find Jeff on the first floor of the Governance Center anymore.

The blue house that formerly housed the Grand Ronde Gaming Commission near Spirit Mountain Casino's Human Resources building has become the new mailroom.

"Basically, in order to minimize the threat, we've been isolated," he added. "We thought this was necessary because of the sheer volume of mail we get from (Washington) D.C."

But even further precautions have been necessary. Mercier must

now handle all mail through a thin layer of latex gloves. Near his desk sits a red bag, it looks like a first aid kit, but it is a contaminant kit. Guidelines for determining suspicious packages have been imprinted in his memory. Any package without a return address receives hardcore scrutiny and is immediately returned to the Postal Service.

Such is the price of safety these days.



Photo by Justin Phillips

Casino Hosts Restoration Concert

Continued from front page

Miller had a tough life growing up.

"My father and I had a troubled relationship till the day he died," said Miller. "He never really loved me, just controlled me."

That sadness is often reflected in his songs. Many deal with the issues of abuse and abandonment that plague Indian families.

"I still wish I had my dad to take me trout fishing," said Miller.

His songs also talk about how it is to be an Indian in the world today.

"My songs talk about hope, struggle, survival, forgiveness; a lot of things," said Miller. "They're about the circle of life. My songs are like stories. I try to create energy with my music, so that the listener can take a journey."

"I'm also addressing issues with my music," continued Miller. "That's the real purpose of my music. It keeps me more in tune with what the Creator wants, not what

Bill Miller wants. My songs contain unconditional love — without it, I'd be fake."

Miller's music is a roots-driven testimony to the rock'n'roll in his soul, accented by crunching guitars, soaring lyrics and primal drums, all accompanied by the haunting sound of the traditional Native American flute.

"My music is about healing. It's a vehicle for communicating a message. With music, I realize people are understanding — thank God — that message," said Miller. "I also realize that it's a gift; being able to do what I do. There's no inbetween. I try to be the best I can be. I'm still developing that gift."

With his music Miller communicates his vision of the role Natives must play in America today.

"It is time this country knows about Native people," said Miller. "I want us to be more — I'm sick of us being lost children; of our people being the lost children. We need to be



Bill Miller

Photo by Peta Tinda

a part of the government. We need a bigger voice. Even though we're just one people, we're a very big part of this nation, not only our history, but also our future. We need to find ways to look ahead. We need to raise the bar. We need to keep expanding boundaries, not just here, but everywhere. There are no boundaries anymore. We must retain our integrity with our language and song. That's a magic we have that other people don't. It adds beauty to everything we do. That we have that in us, it's powerful."

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All Tribal offices and the Health and Wellness Center will be CLOSED:

- ALL DAY on Monday, December 24 — Christmas Eve
- ALL DAY on Tuesday, December 25 — Christmas Day
- Close at noon on Monday, December 31 — New Year's Eve
- ALL DAY on Tuesday, January 1 — New Year's Day

HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!