

Letters

Dear *Smoke Signals*,

St Andrew's Mission Cemetery, Umatilla Reservation, Pendleton, Oregon. This is the final resting place of Rock Pichette, my great, great grandfather and ancestor to many Tribal members of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Rock is the grandfather of Mabel Gaston, whose father, John Pichette, is the brother of my great grandmother, Emma Pichette Pelland.

The white tombstone on the grave has this inscription:

Rock Pichette

Died: March 10, 1902

Age: 66 years 4 months

Asleep in Jesus! peaceful rest

Whose waking is supremely blest

Rock and Victoria had 13 children. Certainly their moving to Grand Ronde from their French Prairie farm must have been difficult. When we look to our ancestors, the Ahnkuttie (old people), we must not forget their struggle to survive in a hostile world, much as we work to protect ourselves in the 21st century. Rock went to Umatilla to work on a construction project and passed on into eternity. In 1902, it was impossible for him to be brought back to Grand Ronde. When you are in the Umatilla Country, do stop in the St. Andrew's Mission Cemetery and pause to respect a Grand Ronde ancestor.

Thank you,

Claudette Parazoo

Tribal Tilikum Elder #2923

Dear Tribal Council,

I want to thank you so much for the Tribal Pendleton Blanket I received in the mail for Restoration. God Bless you all.

Evelyn Stevens

Roll #3083

To The Editor:

Mr. Merrill: What possible purpose did it serve to publically insult a Tribal Elder in your article regarding the Restoration Celebration in the latest issue of *Smoke Signals*? I'm referring to the last paragraph of the article "When I left, Crystal Gayle was getting ready to play and I was worrying what possible trouble could be coming from the interview Tribal Elder Dean Mercier was last seen doing that brand new *Statesman Journal* reporter. I'm sure I'll find out." You should be praising him instead of taking verbal potshots at Dean. You should thank him for his efforts not only in the Restoration but also the Reservation Bill presented and signed into law for our Tribe. There are very few who can claim to have worked on both Bills and have it be fact. Your comments were very inappropriate and a sad way to demonstrate respect to an Elder, no matter what you personally feel about him.

Jackie Whisler

Roll #545

Editor's Note — One of the best things about being in Indian Country day in and day out is the humor. When Indian people make an effort to tease someone — it is a way of showing you like somebody. When I first got to Grand Ronde years ago I was reintroduced to a long time friend of my family, Tribal Elder Dean Mercier. If you know Dean then you know that his feisty nature and his humor go hand in hand. I consider Dean and his wife Chris to be great friends, as I know they consider me to be their friend. We have shared a lot of laughs over the years with the teasing that we throw back and forth. We have also shed some tears. Dean and Chris' friendship for me became all too clear a couple of years ago when Chris and Dean's son L.Cpl. Keoki Santos walked on after an experimental military plane crash. They turned to me to handle the crush of media attention they were besieged with after Keoki's death. We got through that and our friendship grew strong. After speaking with Dean, he understands my intent — to me, that was what was important. The comment you refer to was meant to be humorous, but I do apologize if you were offended. Thanks for the opportunity to explain.

Dear *Smoke Signals*,

The holiday season is here and it is certainly a beautiful time of year. In 1992 I was living in Portland, Oregon, working for the Bureau of Land Management. It was going to be a slim Christmas because of some bills to be paid. I was delightfully surprised to get a Christmas card from the Grand Ronde Tribal Council along with a check for \$50. I recall how thankful I was for those dollars and especially since they came unexpectedly. We have enjoyed larger checks over the years and each is very wonderful to receive. Thank you Tribal Council.

Claudette Parazoo

Tribal Tilikum Elder #2923

Editor's Note — It was brought to our attention that the young couple referred to in the Restoration celebration article were standing at the front of the food line because they had been asked to keep others from starting to eat early. They were allowed to then eat first as a thank you for their courtesy.

On The Cover — In our annual year-end review issue we take a look back on 2003. One of the highlights of the past year was again the Tribe's Annual Contest Pow-wow during the third weekend of August. Once again, the pow-wow lured visitors like young traditional dancer Calvin Goudy and his family who came all the way from the Yakama Nation to Grand Ronde to participate in what has become one of the largest Native gatherings in the Pacific Northwest.

Attention: All Tribal Members of The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde PLEASE HELP US UPDATE OUR INFORMATION

RE-ENROLLMENT IN THE ODS — MEDICAL AND DENTAL PLANS FOR — THE 2004 OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD

In an effort to update our current insurance information, we are asking each Tribal member to re-enroll in the ODS Health and Dental Plans. Even if you are currently enrolled, we are requesting that you still fill out an application and re-enroll.

The purpose of re-enrolling each member is to provide the Tribe with updated member information, including whether or not you have other insurance available to you (i.e. Oregon Health Plan, Medicaid, Medicare, another insurance company, etc). If you do not re-enroll, you **will not** be taken off the insurance programs. We are just requesting your assistance in this endeavor and appreciate your help.

Each Tribal member has been mailed a letter with a new application and return envelope. **Please make every effort to return your Medical and Dental insurance applications by Friday, December 19, 2003, to: The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Attention: Member Services Department, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347.**

SMOKE SIGNALS 2003 DEADLINES

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde, OR 97347

1-800-422-0232 • FAX: 503-879-2173

www.grandronde.org



BRENT MERRILL
PUBLIC INFORMATION
COORDINATOR/EDITOR
503-879-2321
brent.merrill@grandronde.org



JUSTIN PHILLIPS
GRAPHIC DESIGNER
503-879-2190
justin.phillips@grandronde.org



RON KARTEN
STAFF WRITER
503-879-4663
ron.karten@grandronde.org



TOBY MCCLARY
PRODUCTION
ASSISTANT I
503-879-1358
toby.mcclary@grandronde.org



SANDY BOBB
SECRETARY
503-879-1453
sandra.bobb@grandronde.org

DEADLINE DATE	ISSUE DATE
Fri., Dec. 16	JAN. 1, 2004
Mon., Jan. 5	JAN. 15
Tues., Jan. 20	FEB. 1
Thurs., Feb. 5	FEB. 15
Fri., Feb. 20	MAR. 1
Fri., Mar. 5	MAR. 15
Fri., Mar. 19	APR. 1
Mon., Apr. 5	APR. 15
Mon., Apr. 19	MAY. 1
Wed., May 5	MAY. 15
Fri., May 21	JUN. 1
Fri., Jun. 4	JUN. 15
Fri., Jun. 18	JUL. 1
Fri., Jul. 2	JUL. 15
Mon., Jul. 19	AUG. 1
Thurs., Aug. 5	AUG. 15
Fri., Aug. 20	SEP. 1
Fri., Sep. 3	SEP. 15
Fri., Sep. 17	OCT. 1
Tues., Oct. 5	OCT. 15



SHELLY KENT
CENTRAL PHONES
503-879-5211
shelly.kent@grandronde.org



PETA TINDA
FREELANCE
JOURNALIST
503-879-1416
peta.tinda@grandronde.org

EDITORIAL POLICY

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Our editorial policy is intended to encourage input from Tribal members and readers about stories printed in the Tribal newspaper. However, all letters received must be signed by the author, an address must be given and a phone number or email address must be included for verification purposes. Full addresses and phone numbers will not be published unless requested.

SMOKE SIGNALS reserves the right to edit letters and to refuse letters that are determined to contain libelous statements or personal attacks on individuals, staff, Tribal administration or Tribal Council. Not all letters are guaranteed publication upon submission. Letters to the editor are the opinions and views of the writer. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of **SMOKE SIGNALS**, Tribal staff, Tribal administration or Tribal Council.

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