

2004 Candidate Statements

Betty Bly

I am very proud of my Indian heritage. I was raised in a large and extended family east of Sutherlin, Oregon. I grew up learning the old values... love and sense of family, respect and truth, honesty and morality, forgiveness and humility, dignity and humor, responsibility and hard work. My grandmother instilled in me a deep respect for our culture, and told me to always be proud of who I am. My great-great-grandmother, daughter of famous Chief Comcomly and wife of Chief Kasino was named Ilchee, which means moon girl. Ilchee was better known as "She who paddles her own canoe". Her name best summarizes my personality...I am not afraid to paddle my own canoe.



I have been a successful businesswoman for 30 years. As co-owner of Tye Communications Contractors I played a part in negotiating with top officials of the federal government securing military contracts at ICBM launch sites. As sole proprietor of B's Bookkeeping and Tax Service I worked with IRS auditors and chief financial officers of large corporations. For the past 12 years I was employed as Executive Director at an exclusive retirement home for elderly women. I worked with state and federal health officials, DEQ, EPA, and others. I also served in a leadership position with many volunteer organizations and commissions. My favorites being chairman of March of Dimes, and Person's with Disabilities Commission.

I made the decision to run for Tribal Council out of the respect for those who came before me (Our past and present Elders) and out of concern I have for our Tribe's future (Our children). There are many issues that I feel need to be addressed; enrollment, per capita, insurance for all spouses and children of Tribal members, open and honest communications between Tribal and General Council, tribal member employment, housing, and involvement of Tribal members outside the immediate Grand Ronde community in our government.

The first duty of a Tribal Council member is to be a role model to the rest of the tribe. A true leader. The duties go far beyond that which is outlined in the CTGR constitution. I believe that he/she should be dedicated to the tribe first. He/she should be mature and well educated in life experiences have high moral standards, possess a true devotion to our culture, with continuing self-education as a priority, and have demonstrated successful leadership in a similar position. It should be a priority of good Tribal Council leadership to promote communications with General Council. When I attend council meetings I ask questions and expect answers. I don't attend to win the door prize and eat a free lunch. I also believe that at each of these meetings, a monthly financial report should be made for the purpose of true accountability to the tribe, including each council member's activities justifying their expense account for the past month.

I feel that no one should make a career of Tribal Council. The salary received by members of Tribal Council should not be what motivates their interest. True leaders in Indian country have few worldly possessions because they take care of the needs of the tribal people first, even if it means personally going without. Elect me to Tribal Council and you will have a caring, dedicated, experienced leader who is not motivated by personal gain.

For more detailed information about who I am and what I believe in, visit my web site, (BETTYBLY.com) or email me at (BettyJBly@aol.com)

I ask for your support in the upcoming election, be responsible and... VOTE your conscience!

Thank You,
Betty J. Bly
Roll # 3544

Elaine LaBonte

My name is Elaine LaBonte. I am the granddaughter of Esther and John LaBonte and the daughter of Lester LaBonte and Nancy Ridlon. I am running for Tribal Council because I want to work for You.

I am often told by different Tribal Councilors that, "Elaine, I supported your issue but I'm only one voice and one vote." I will not be one voice, I will be the Voice of the People. Your concerns, your issues, your ideas and your opinions are collectively what will make us a strong Tribe. And I will bring your voices to the Council table.

Over 150 years ago, our tribal leaders were faced with some tough decisions; decisions that were made only after considering the impact to the People and to the future generations. Today we are in a similar predicament. Our tribal sovereignty is under attack (always), our population has grown tremendously and our finances have surpassed all predictions. Our Tribal Council must make the decisions that impact us today, our children tomorrow and our future generations to come. Will there even be a Tribe in another 150 years? Now is the time that we need to consider very carefully what the needs of our Tribe are. Survey after survey is mailed out and I don't see where much is done to address the concerns of our Tribal members. Where I stand on a particular issue isn't as important as where YOU stand. Our Tribal Council needs to set aside their own personal opinions and work towards the greater good of our People. This is what I will do as your Tribal Councilor.

I am running for Tribal Council because I believe that we need a more traditional form of government. A government that listens to the People; a government that welcomes dissention, welcomes conflict and works towards the common good of all the People. Tribal members should not be fearful of voicing their concerns for fear of losing their jobs, for fear of losing tribal services, for fear of being banned from tribal buildings or from fear of being evicted from their homes. Likewise for those brave enough to voice their concerns, those issues should not be swept under the carpet, but acted upon.

150 years ago our people were brought to the Reservation. There were language differences, there were cultural differences and there were political differences. Our ancestors overcame those differences and formed the Confederated Tribes with a common goal in mind. Today we have communication problems of a different sort, but they exist none-the-less. We will always have cultural differences, and our political problems too often end up in our Tribal Court. We need a more traditional form of government.

We need to bridge the communication gaps, we need to honor our cultural diversity and we need to agree to disagree. We need to look at our tribal leaders of the past and honor the values that sustained them for millennia. Honesty was unquestionable. "Konaway Nayka Tillicum", All of our relatives were respected. Our tribal leaders conducted themselves with honor, with integrity and with the common goal of working for the best interest of all the People. I live my life by these values and I will represent you and represent this Tribe in an honorable and ethical way.

I will be sending out a letter with my employment, education and leadership experience in the next week. I welcome your comments, your ideas and your questions.

Konaway Nayka Tillicum
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2004 Candidate Statements

Mark Mercier

No statement turned in to make the deadline of Wednesday, July 15 at 5 p.m.



Angie Blackwell

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Fellow Tribal Members;

It would be an honor to follow in the footsteps of my mother, Candy (George) Robertson. After serving 10 years on Council, she set a high standard to meet. I will serve our people with the same dedication and respect that she taught me by her example.

The incumbents have served us for a very long time, and we owe them our gratitude. Unfortunately, in order to bring a new perspective to the table, someone has to be un-seated. Why do we need a new perspective? Because our Tribe is a constantly evolving, complex entity, and our leadership must evolve accordingly. Since new Council members aren't obligated to defend or justify prior decisions, they can approach issues with an open mind. Most importantly, electing "new blood" reminds all of Council that Tribal members can, and will, hold them accountable.

Empty Promises

I read several years of candidate's statements to prepare for this writing and I was struck by the promises made. Many indicated they would support an increase in per capita. Several candidates indicated support for a mentorship program, and even took credit for creating it. What we weren't told is that they cut the program's budget after the first year and eliminated it entirely effective the end of this year. Other promises included "equal treatment for all Tribal members," and "equal benefits and opportunities" regardless of where members live. There are several more examples, including development of a cultural center, but I don't have enough space to list them all here.

It's time for us to hold Council members accountable. Let's not allow them to make the same empty promises.

Eligibility Requirements:

When we voted on the 1999 amendment, we were not fully aware of a clause that prevents enrollment, even for applicants that meet the new 1/16th GR blood quantum requirement. The only way to resolve this issue is for a second vote of the people. Before this happens, everyone should have all the facts so that they can form their own opinion on the matter and make an informed decision.

Council Salaries

If the Council had received 5% per year since 1994, they would now make approximately \$37,000 per year. Instead, their salaries are almost three times what they were in 1994. If elected, I will not vote to increase my own salary. That's a promise!

My highest priority is to improve communication with Tribal members near and far, so that everyone can participate in our governance. I support full disclosure of information so that Tribal members can make informed decisions. Our Public Information Office should have an editorial board so that an impartial body can determine what information should be printed and the legal staff will no longer be able to censor the information that we receive.

I've been in training for this role all of my life. I have a degree in Public Policy and Administration; I worked for the Tribe for the past 8 years; I've worked with the Tribe's Public Issues Management Team for the past 5 years; I served as an intern with our Tribe's lobbyist during the 1999 legislative session and with the Tribe's Intergovernmental Affairs Department in 1998.

I believe that my education and background will be an asset to the Tribe. As a Council member, I will represent you in a way that builds positive relationships with Tribal members as well as local and Tribal governments. It is with this belief that I have the courage and confidence to ask for your vote.

Diana George

Diana George-Daughter of the late Alberta Riggs George and Lloyd A. George Sr. (Karak Tribe), Granddaughter of the late Lena Norwest Riggs Bobb and Lewis L. Riggs Sr. and a direct descendant of Chief Solomon Riggs. I grew up in Grand Ronde and have remained involved in Tribal affairs to serve where I could benefit the Tribe most.

I believe it is important to know what qualifications candidates possess to serve as an effective member of Tribal Council. My qualifications include: 1975-1976 as a Manpower Counselor with the Urban Indian Program working with Native American inmates housed in the three penal institutions in Salem. 1976-1985 Oregon Women's Correctional Center as the Academic/Vocational Counselor. 1985-1986 Education Specialist for The Confederated Tribes Of Grand Ronde, I was responsible for Higher Education and Adult Vocational programs after restoration. 1987-1989 Academic Tutor for Chemawa Indian School. 1989-2001 Correctional Counselor at the Oregon State Penitentiary, responsible for the case management of 200 plus inmates. Retired in September 2001.

In 1995 I began my career with Spirit Mountain Casino on a part time basis when the casino opened, as Table Games Supervisor, in 1996 I accepted the position of Executive Casino Host and in August of 2001 was offered the full time position of Manager of Guest Services where I remain today.

My education includes an A.S. Degree in Law Enforcement-Corrections and advanced studies in Native American Law and Native American Studies.

Over the years I have actively participated in Tribal and community efforts. I have served as a member of the Board of Directors for the Tribes first Health Authority Board 1999-2001, Spirit Mountain Development Board 2001-2002, Children Made Visible Board (program for children of incarcerated parents) 2001-2003, and West Valley Hospital Foundation Board (Dallas) 2002 to present.

Our Tribe faces many challenges today. If we are to be successful in meeting these challenges we must be committed to working together,



Get out and VOTE this year!

