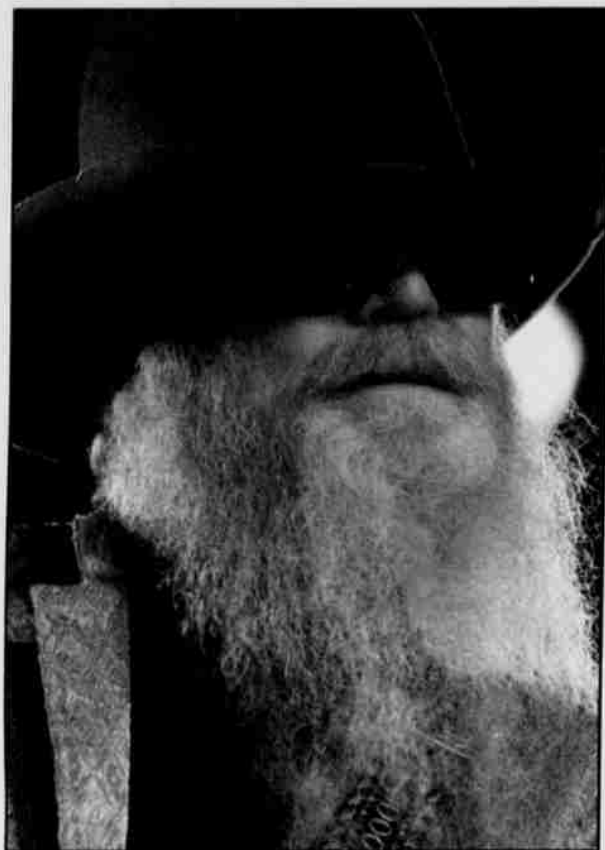


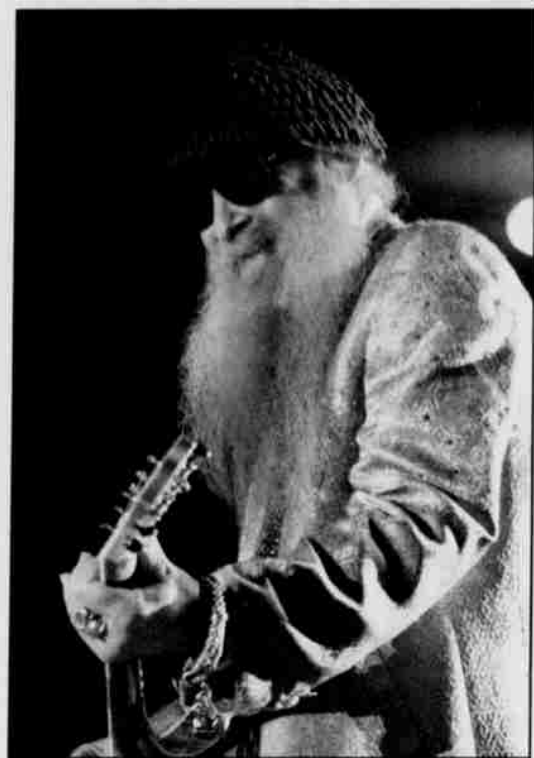
ZZ Top ROCKS the Mountain

Photos by
Toby McClary



Sharp Dressed Men —

On Friday, October 7, "That Little ole Band from Texas" (aka, ZZ Top) performed before a sell-out crowd at Spirit Mountain Casino. ZZ Top front men Dusty Hill and Billy Gibbons wore a pair of their cheap sunglasses and accompanied drummer Frank Beard for an evening full of entertainment.



Tribal Member Sees New Job As A Way To Give Back To Tribe

■ Reina Nelson is new to the Member Benefits Department.

By Toby McClary

Tribal member and Member Benefits Specialist Reina Nelson is happy to be working for the Tribe, the Elders and the Member Benefits Department.

"My job enhances my life by allowing me to work in the Native community," said Nelson. "In turn, I help enhance the lives of the community members."

Nelson has worked with the Member Benefits Department since July 2005. Some of her job duties include payment processing, social security verification, working with the Disability and Medicare Part B Programs and corresponding with social security administration regarding benefits to Tribal members.

Nelson grew up in Portland, Oregon and was raised by her grandmother Gertrude Perry. Perry was a Umatilla Tribal Elder and passed away in 2002. Being raised by her grandmother, Nelson believes that she can better understand the ways of the Elders.

"I feel like I have a gift with the Elders," said Nelson. "I feel like I can relate to them. Our Elders are our teachers and we all need to respect that."

Nelson attended Roosevelt High School where she served on the student council and was voted Homecoming Queen her senior year. She graduated with a 3.0 grade point average.

Through the Tribal Education Program, she studied accounting and business at Portland Community College and graduated in 1987. Af-

ter working a short time at a local chiropractic clinic, Nelson began working at Emanuel Hospital as the Medical Administrative Assistant. She worked five years at the hospital doing ultra-sounds and radiology.

Nelson decided to go back to school and attended Portland State University for three years as a Pre-Med student. She then started her own business running the financial end of a plumbing operation.

Along with her many responsibilities, Nelson also did volunteer work for Low Income Housing for Native Americans of Portland Oregon (LIHNAPO). She served as the Secretary and the Treasurer for LIHNAPO, which is still an active operation in Portland under the Native American Youth Association.

Nelson then spent a year working for Public Broadcasting Systems (PBS) doing traditional Native American dancing on the television show Young Audiences which traveled to different schools of the Northwest teaching the youth a variety of cultures.

From 1999 to 2003, Nelson did volunteer work for the Beaverton and Tigard School Districts. She worked as the Art/Literacy Coordinator and developed the curriculum and showcase for the Northwest/Coastal Indian students.

"I did most of the volunteer work for my kids," said Nelson. "I wanted to be involved in their lives while they were young and I wanted to teach them Native American cultures."



Tribal member and Member Benefits Specialist Reina Nelson

She explained that she wanted to bring her children up traditionally because that was how she was brought up herself.

"My grandmother was very active in the Native community," said Nelson. "She was influential in bringing the Native community together in Portland and she instilled a lot of cultural values in me."

In 2003, Nelson went back to school attending George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon. She studied business management and organizational leadership and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in December of 2004.

While Nelson was attending college in 2003, she was also contracting with the Tribe's Cultural Resources Department as an inter-

viewer and transcriber for an oral history project on the lower Willamette River. Nelson is currently working with the Portland Satellite Office on a video project titled "Life-ways of the Columbia."

In February of 2005, Nelson applied for the Member Benefits Specialist position. In July of 2005, she was hired on to the Member Benefits team.

Nelson now resides in Willamina, Oregon with her two sons Richard, 17, and Peter, 10. She has led a very busy lifestyle in the past, but seems to be content with settling down at her full-time career in Grand Ronde.

"This is my way of giving back to the Tribe," said Nelson. "And the best part is, I'm getting paid for it." ■

Photo by Toby McClary