

Letters

Dear *Smoke Signals*:

We would like to take the opportunity to thank the employees who participated in and supported this year's very successful Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Employee Food Drive. A big thank you, also, to the Elders and community members of Grand Ronde for their support.

There are a number of people and local companies we would like to acknowledge for their support. They include Jolanda Cataby, Melody Baker, Steve O'Harra, Jeff Larson, Andrew Freeman, Jill Hafliger, Marietta Leith, Jennifer Leggit, Julie Singer, *Smoke Signals*, 2007 Christmas Party Committee, Hannah Ashley and Angie Lindsey at A Balanced Touch Massage, Fat Cat Espresso, The Sun Shack and Michelle Hislop at Healing Moments Massage.

Overall, we brought in more than 17,000 items of food for the Grand Ronde Food Bank and GrandSherMina Food Bank. We understand that the holiday season can be a financially difficult time for all. This year we went above and beyond all expectations. This truly shows the generosity of our fellow employees and community members.

Thank you again for all the support in 2007. We're looking forward to 2008.

Genifer Grout, Shanna Eide, Shannon Simi
2007 CTGR Employee Food Drive Co-Chairs

Dear Tribal Members:

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Lee Ann Huffman. A number of you who are familiar with our Tribal history know that I and most of my family are descended from Chief Tumulth, one of the Tribe's famed treaty signers from 1855.

The purpose of this letter is to ask you to vote "yes" on the upcoming Constitutional election. If these amendments fail, especially Amendment C, my son, Ricky, will be denied enrollment in my Tribe.

My reasons for asking you for your "yes" votes are not very complicated. Four years ago, I enrolled my newborn son, Ricky, in our Tribe. He has 18 cousins with the exact same blood who are enrolled Tribal members and I was thrilled to be enrolling my firstborn son into our Tribe to join them. This was an important rite of passage for my family.

However, my son was denied enrollment into our Tribe. This was a result of the 1999 Constitutional amendment. The effects of that denial were devastating to my family, both immediate and extended. Can you imagine how it feels to tell my now 4-year-old son that his cousins (my siblings' children) can all be Tribal members but that he can not? That they can participate fully in our Tribe and their heritage, but that he, with the exact same blood running through his veins, can not?

I've heard Tribal members make a lot of comments about how many of us would like this amendment to pass simply because we would like to share in the financial benefits of being a Grand Ronde Indian. The reality is, I think, the opposite. People secretly oppose these amendments because admitting 298 new Tribal members would mean slightly less benefits to themselves.

When I look at little Ricky, the last thing that crosses my mind is money. Our mother went to great lengths to make my brother, sister and me fully aware of our Indian ancestry, even though we, like the vast majority of Tribal members, grew up away from Grand Ronde. I intend to raise Ricky the exact same way regardless of how the amendments go, because his ancestry is important whether he is an enrolled member or not.

Why can't Ricky enroll? Simple. When the 1999 Constitutional amendment passed, it designated Grand Ronde blood as blood derived from an ancestor on the Restoration roll. In other words, because Ricky is not descended from one of the first 1,100 Tribal members, his blood is not considered "proper" Grand Ronde blood. His blood quantum is not the issue, but from whom he gets the blood is. It is kind of a harsh fate for a young child just beginning to learn his heritage, which includes one of Grand Ronde's chief treaty signers.

If you don't think this is a fair situation, then that is all the more reason to help pass these amendments. The floodgates aren't going to be opened by these amendments. Benefits and per capita aren't going to dwindle to nothing. Ricky and the dozens of other children affected by this amendment aren't being greedy. When Ricky comes to pow-wow, he just sees a Tribe and knows that this is his, that all the other Tribal members are somehow family. Greed, and money, are not thoughts rolling around his head. He doesn't even know what "greed" is.

Please vote "yes" on the upcoming Constitutional amendments. Although only Amendment C affects my family, I plan to vote yes on Amendment B also, as I want justice for all our Tribal children.

Lee Ann Huffman
Roll #2933

See page 10 for more letters.

Tribal Office Closures

All Tribal offices will be closed on Monday, Jan. 21, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Attention Tribal members

2008 GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

■ Sunday, Feb. 10 — 11 a.m.

Monarch Hotel & Conference Center

12566 S.E. 93rd Ave.

Clackamas, OR 97015

Exit 14 — Sunnyside Rd/Sunnybrook Blvd. off of I-205

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DEADLINE DATE	ISSUE DATE
Friday, Jan. 18.....	FEB. 1
Tuesday, Feb. 5.....	FEB. 15
Wednesday, Feb. 20.....	MAR. 1
Wednesday, Mar. 5.....	MAR. 15

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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 e-mail 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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