

## Letters

### Dear *Smoke Signals*:

This is a letter to everyone.

I have just been to the burial of my former stepfather, Hubert Mercier. This prompted my letter to you all.

Life is a brief and precious treasure. Whether this life is less than a year or nearly 100 years, it is over in a blink of an eye. Life has many joys and many regrets.

Life is what it is and we all do the best we can. Sometimes our choices cause heartache for ourselves and those we love so dearly. Life is for the living, though, and I encourage forgiveness even if understanding has not come to us yet.

Ultimately, God is the only one who truly understands our hearts and what our life experience has been that shapes who we become. I encourage all of us to give our pain and grievances over to His higher power and love each other.

We are all family. Tribal members, Tribal descendants and nonTribal family members.

Blessings,

**Rosemary (Palanuk) Nelson**

Sister of Tribal member

**Rebecca (Palanuk-Mercier) Goeserich** Roll #1971

### Dear *Smoke Signals*:

The family of Hubert Mercier would like to thank all the people who sent cards and flowers, and for the kindnesses that they helped with.

We deeply appreciate the help from the Community Center kitchen staff for putting on the meal.

**Crystal Thomas**

Roll #533

### Dear *Smoke Signals*:

I felt an obligation to address the members in *Smoke Signals* since there are other letters from two members that reflect their personal opinions, which I respect.

I agree with Tribal member #409. There should be an investigation and an audit into the letter that was recently sent out about the Leno family and their supposed preferential treatment. I don't necessarily want to know who wrote the letter as much as I want to know if the content of the letter is true. If none of the information is true, then the Leno family has nothing to worry about.

There have been many anonymous letters sent out about current council and past council with no signature on the letters and I don't recall the council using Tribal resources or staff to get to the bottom of those letters. On the other hand, if only part of the information is true, I have serious concern. I believe the membership deserves the truth, as rumors are always flying around out here in Grand Ronde; members are only seeking the truth.

Part of the letter said ethics charges were filed against Reyn. This is true because I was on council and part of the vote that sanctioned him.

The picture in the letter identifies a TV on a desk, which is not right considering no one else can bring a TV to work and keep it on their desk. There are many questions I want answered that are in the letter. If none of it is true, Councilman Leno will have no trouble answering questions.

**Chips Tom**

Roll #818

### Dear *Smoke Signals*:

This past month, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde lost a cultural treasure and local legend that we should take a few moments to recognize. My great-grandfather, Hubert Mercier, passed on July 17, 2008, while at his home surrounded by family. He nearly lived to complete his 98th year — his birthday would have been in September — of an eventful life that began in Grand Ronde, nearly a century ago.

As Indian people, our history has rarely been written. It has been passed down generations through stories and our ability to tell them is legendary. Hubert was a master storyteller. One of the greatest I have known throughout my travels through Indian Country. He may not have told his stories about Tribal myths and legends or the ways of our ancestors. He never spoke a word of Chinook Wawa to me. In fact, his English could only be described as "colorful," due to the fact that he cursed so much. But the way he told his stories was uniquely Grand Ronde and uniquely Native. I will dearly miss those stories and can only hope I do Hubert justice when I share them with my children. And thus, continues our history.

The services for Grandpa Hubert were attended by hundreds of individuals, many of whom, I believe, would have surprised Hubert himself to see at his funeral. I'd like to thank everyone who attended the services, especially those individuals who may have been on the receiving end of Hubert's ire. It meant a lot to see so many people who were willing to take the time to pay their respects to the man.

Hiyu mah sie,

**Bryan Mercier**

Roll #1357

### Dear Family and Friends:

The family of Chips Tom would like to thank all the friends, family and guests who made his 80th birthday a special memory that he will never forget.

He had a great time visiting with his friends and family. His favorite part was the food, of course, and many thanks to the staff at Spirit Mountain Casino; they did an excellent job.

We have three winners to the photo quiz game "CONGRATULATIONS." They are Siletz Tribal member and cousin Jeff Flagg, Grand Ronde Elder Joyce Ham and Grand Ronde Elder Alan Ham. They won by answering the questions on the quiz about who, what and when the pictures were taken.

Thank you for the generous gifts and cards, and a special thank you to the Riggs girls who came all the way from southern Oregon to say Happy Birthday. We love you and hope to see you at his 90th.

Blessings to all,

**Chips Tom and Family**



Tribal Elder Chips Tom, center, celebrated his 80th birthday on July 12 at Spirit Mountain Casino. Guests included Tribal Elder Violet Zimbrick, left, and Tribal Chairwoman Cheryl A. Kennedy, right.

### COMMUNITY-WIDE YARD SALES

**The Elders, Grand Meadows & Family Housing**

**will be having community yard sales!**

**Come join the fun and see what treasures you can find! One man's junk is another man's gold!**



Ad created by George Valdez

### The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Surplus

#### Equipment Sale

COMPUTERS, DESKS, OFFICE CHAIRS, TABLES, 100+ VIDEO RECORDERS & TAPES, AND MISC OFFICE EQUIPMENT.

Saturday August 16, 2008, 9AM to 4PM, CTGR Tribal members only (must show ID)

Sunday August 17, 2008 unless sold out, 9AM to Noon, Open to general public

NEW LOCATION!!!

Sale will be held at 28840 Salmon River Hwy (former location of CTGR Gaming Commission and Spirit Mtn. Human Resources)

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