

**NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday Meetings**  
**DATE** Wednesday, Oct. 28 .....  
**TIME** 5 p.m.  
 Please note that these times and dates are subject to change if needed. Call Dakota Whitecloud, Tribal Council Relations Coordinator, at 503-879-1309 to confirm.

**Letters**

**Dear Grand Ronde Tribal members:**

I would like to thank all of you who voted in this year's Tribal Council Election. As I've stated in the past, our right to vote is the biggest voice we have and I encourage all eligible members to take the initiative to let your voice be heard.

I would like to extend a special thank you to those who supported my campaign and voted for me in the election. My position on Tribal Council would not have been possible without each and every one of you. Your support means a lot to me and I am honored to represent the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and its members.

I am committed to listening to the membership and to doing the best job I can. I did not make a lot of promises during my campaign, but I will follow through with the ones that I did make.

Again, I thank you all very much.

**Toby McClary**  
 Roll #1471

**Dear Tribal Council and Tribal community:**

With each new Tribal Council the membership and I hope for change. I am not concluding that everything needs to be changed; the Tribe and the leadership have done a lot in the last 10 years to improve the community. For instance, providing housing for our poor, Elders and student assistance have greatly helped and had impacts that may not be reflected in the community. We know that these actions have resulted in less homelessness and greater confidence for students to pursue higher education.

We still have much work to do! As Native Americans, we fall behind most other ethnicities in terms of decent education, employment opportunities and income. This mostly results from generational poverty, dispossession of our lands, oppression and marginalization. Poverty, a lack of internal and external resources needs to be addressed with capacity building: increasing our Tribal members' skills, living conditions and opportunities.

As a proud member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, I urge the Tribal community to continue to create policies that will allow for the improvement of our community. Census data indicate that in 2000 only 3.9 percent of people 25 years old and older living in Grand Ronde had a bachelor's degree. Although many community members reside outside of Grand Ronde, this is still an accurate reflection of the educational level and thus opportunities and degree of poverty of our Tribe. We need to focus on increasing educational opportunities to continue to invest in our Tribe and decision-making process.

As a second year Master in Public Health student, I have learned the drastic effect political decisions have on a community. The decisions our leadership make affect our Tribal members generations after they leave office. I know that had the Tribal Council not chosen to make education a priority 10 years ago, I may not have had the opportunity to receive a higher education.

I know some Tribal Council members see per capita as a handout that makes it easier for our members to not work. If we can provide more educational resources our members will be able to improve our chances of increased physical, mental and spiritual health through better income and quality of living. Per capita can be a very necessary tool for our community members. It is used to help pay bills, education costs, housing and proper nutrition. Research shows that safe, nurturing and high-quality environments in childhood increases children's ability to achieve in school and later on in life. This also leads to better health, lower cost of medical bills, higher productivity and increased capacity for our community to work together.

The cost savings will allow for more money to be used for other necessary social assistance programs. It also improves the lives of our Elders and increases our life expectancy (which is really low compared to almost every other ethnicity). Per capita can lead to more resources in terms of books for children, better nutrition, better housing environments (which leads to lower rates of asthma), high socioeconomic status. I suggest we continue to have per capita.

The following policy ideas could help with our community's problems. I suggest the Tribal Council invests money in programs to: assist single parents with daycare assistance, improve literacy for children, enhance support and skill trainings provided for members, create rehabilitation programs for Tribal members released from prison custody, enhance housing opportunities, increase social programs that provide temporary assistance and increase the amount of financial assistance. Per capita improves the social economic status of members, which improves housing, education, skills and also the resources of Tribal children

I know that as a community we are no better than our weakest member. It is all of our jobs to improve ourselves and our community. No one should stand alone.

I have much respect for our Tribal Council leaders of current and past councils; you have made important decisions that help improved our community. Thank you for your hard work each day and for taking the time to read my letter.

**Rebecca Knight**  
 Roll #1783

**CORRECTION** — In the Oct. 1 issue of *Smoke Signals*, the submitted Walking On for Tribal Elder John Henry Simmons did not include Simmons' nephew, James Gilbert, among the list of pallbearers at the funeral.

**General Council meeting**  
**Sunday, Nov. 1 — 11 a.m.**  
**Tribal Community Center**

**Smoke Signals**

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DEADLINE DATE	ISSUE DATE
Tuesday, Oct. 20 .....	NOV. 1
Thursday, Nov. 5 .....	NOV. 15
Friday, Nov. 20 .....	DEC. 1
Friday, Dec. 4 .....	DEC. 15
Friday, Dec. 18 .....	JAN. 1, 2010

**Editorial Policy**

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