

NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday Meetings
DATE **TIME**
 Wednesday, April 21 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 Smoke Signals:

Although I'm an inmate here at Eastern Oregon Correctional facility, I'm proud to say I've completed my GED through Blue Mountain Community College.

I've included a copy of my test scores and would like it if you could publish my accomplishment in our *Smoke Signals* newspaper along with this photo and a little note as well.

I'd like to thank my cousin Tim, first, for all his encouragement. Without his constant push along the way, I might have fallen off track.

And thank you to my son, Silver. He was my inspiration and motivation. "Son, stay in school."

I'd also like to encourage anyone who might be struggling along this journey to stick with it. It's an awesome feeling of accomplishment.

Leon Luey

Roll #2628



Tribal member Leon Luey

Dear Smoke Signals:

I want to start out by saying this letter does not represent any group or organization; only my own convictions.

Over the years I have seen many things that upset me, but I never spoke up. I only prayed about them. But this last week I have been so sad I decided to speak up.

I can think of so many programs that our Tribal membership could benefit from that are not offered. For example, a women's recovery house, programs for struggling single parents, and more alcohol and drug prevention.

I know from working a temporary job in behavioral health that most people who enter the rehabilitations end up going in and out of a revolving door.

Then I see many people in their recovery not having transportation to get to their AA and NA meetings. What I don't understand is how can we put in three bars only a couple of miles down the road and forget the people here who are struggling to live clean and sober lives? They end up having to beg rides to their recovery groups and there is absolutely no support after business hours when relapse is most likely to occur.

Long-term recovery is just as important as the immediate intervention. I believe our Tribe should do everything possible to help these people.

Eight years ago, I was in a very bad situation. I had a 5-week-old son and a 2-year-old daughter and was trying to leave my abusive husband. I was so thankful at that time there was a Domestic Violence Program to help me. Soon after that, the program was canceled. This upset me.

Since then I have been educated about domestic violence. It is a huge problem, especially among Native American Tribes. It is a horrible problem that needs attention. Not only immediate prevention, but also long-term emotional recovery and education so the cycle does not continue. Why are these not priorities?

Recently, as I was hearing about different ways our money was being spent, such as the \$7 million hotel renovation, I knew I wanted to say something. Most recently, as I found out the Portland Gay Men's Chorus that is coming to our casino is being sponsored by our Spirit Mountain Community Fund, I got sick. I am a Christian and in NO WAY do I condone this sponsorship. I do not judge them or discriminate against them, but that lifestyle is against anything I believe. I am embarrassed that our money is being spent in this way. There are better ways that the money can be used.

I wanted to speak on this for two reasons. First, my grandma was born on this reservation in 1905. She was very proud of being Native American. She also was a Christian woman who prayed many years for this land. I often wonder how she would feel about the things being allowed here. Are the emotional, physical and spiritual needs being met or are they taking a back seat to Tribal Council's first-class tickets and hotel makeovers?

The second reason is, as a Christian, I pray God's blessing on this land. I love everyone here and want to see this community come together and overcome the many problems that plagued this place for many years.

In order for complete healing or recovery to be possible, God has got to come first. He does not care about our casino revenue or being politically correct. He cares about the broken people here and what we are allowing to happen on our land. This is my heart for our people to become healed and whole.

Cindy Gleason-Larson

Roll #1838

(Editor's note: Tribal member and Spirit Mountain Community Fund Director Shelley Hanson said the fund is not sponsoring the fundraising event for the Grand Ronde Community Resource Center, but has funded the Portland Gay Men's Chorus in previous years with grants.)

CORRECTION — Due to an inputting error, a sentence in Tribal Elder Adrainne Llaneza's April 1 letter was incorrect.

The printed letter said, "I'm asking why the Elders are not included in these financial questions."

The submitted letter, however, said, "I'm asking why the Elders are not included in these financial equations."

Smoke Signals regrets the error.

General Council meeting
Sunday, May 2 — 11 a.m.
Tribal Community Center

Smoke Signals

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DEADLINE DATE	ISSUE DATE
Tuesday, April 20	May 1
Wednesday, May 5	May 15
Thursday, May 20	June 1
Friday, June 4	June 15
Monday, June 21	July 1
Tuesday, July 6	July 15
Tuesday, July 20	Aug. 1

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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