

Letters

Dear Grand Ronde Tribal members:

In the July 15, 2011, issue of *Smoke Signals*, it was stated I gave testimony on June 3, 2007, during a public hearing regarding a "Proposed Constitutional Enrollment Amendment." If you read the transcript of that public hearing you will see I did state I felt the amendments proposed at that time should be presented to the Tribal voters as one amendment.

In reviewing the information I have about the public hearing and the changes that were proposed to our Constitutional Membership Requirements, I recall there seemed to be some confusion over what was really being proposed. I believe that is because from the time the Enrollment Requirements Ad Hoc Committee presented their recommendations to Tribal Council on Oct. 17, 2006, to the date of the public hearing on June 3, 2007, the proposed definition of Grand Ronde blood had gone through several changes, yet each change was presented as the Enrollment Requirements Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations when those changes were not worded according to the committee's recommendations.

Plus, the committee had recommended one amendment and one vote, but Tribal Council decided on two amendments and two votes. This was all done under the leadership of Chris Mercier, who was Tribal Chair at that time, and Angie Blackwell, who was Vice Chair.

After giving testimony and talking with various Tribal members after the public hearing, I began to see the wisdom of having separate amendments for each proposed change to our Constitutional Membership Requirements. Thus, knowing what I know now, I would have advocated at that public hearing that each proposed change to our Constitutional Membership Requirements should be presented as separate amendments as they turned out to be in the February 2008 BIA-conducted election.

I continue to feel the 2008 BIA-conducted election was a success because Tribal voters had the "freedom of choice" to vote on each proposed amendment based on each amendment's individual merits. That is the way I believe it should be in any Tribal Constitutional election in the future. This type of an election also lets the members of Tribal Council know how the voting Tribal membership feels about each issue.

I personally think the most important testimony I gave during the June 3, 2007, public hearing was my recommendation for the definition of Grand Ronde blood, which is stated in the transcript of that public hearing, and was as follows: "Grand Ronde blood is defined as all Indian blood derived from a direct ancestor whose name validly appears on any official Tribal membership roll previous to the Restoration of November, 1983." Please pay close attention to the words "previous to the Restoration of November, 1983," as that denotes our Grand Ronde Indian blood is ancestral, meaning it comes from our ancestors before Restoration. There is a difference in what I proposed as a definition of Grand Ronde blood during the public hearing in June 2007 and what the current Tribal Council is proposing for the definition of Grand Ronde blood.

In closing, I want to emphasize that since the passage and approval of the 1999 amendment to our Tribal Constitution, my No. 1 priority has been our Constitutional Membership Requirements and working to see that Grand Ronde Indians are allowed to enroll in our Tribe, which is their Tribe, if they have the correct required blood quantum, and one or more ancestors on a roll or record of "Grand Ronde members" from the time the Grand Ronde Reservation was officially created by Executive Order in June 1857 up through Termination.

Leroy Good
Roll #892

Eugene office holding Summer Day Camp

The Eugene Gathering Place will be having a six-week Summer Culture Family Day Camp from 1 to 5 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday through Aug. 18. This free day camp focuses on culture and health and wellness. Children ages 5 to 9 are required to have a chaperone and children 10 and older are not.

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