

Walking On...

Leona Jean Harriss

Oct. 5, 1974 – Dec. 25, 2010

Tribal member Leona Jean Harriss was born on Oct. 5, 1974, in Portland, Ore., and walked on Dec. 25, 2010, on Christmas Day, only 36 years old.

She was born to Barbara Schlapie and Fred Chippewa and raised by her mother and stepfather Dan Alexander. She was the oldest of four children and much later gained a stepbrother.

She was the best sister and was always there for the kids. She always protected them and made sure they were all safe and taken care of.

When Leona was a child, her grandmother, Marie Quigly, nicknamed her "Gimme" because Leona would always say, "Gimme, gimme."

Leona loved people and was well-known in the community and fast to meet people wherever she was or went. She always had something to say that made you smile or laugh. And when there was someone in need, she would be the one to open her door or loving arms to help a person out.

And when Leona was eight months pregnant with her youngest child, Nattie, she went hunting for a week on the Reservation with her close cousin, Tyrone Rock, and was bound and determined that she was going to get a deer or a bear. She was always doing something out of the ordinary, but Leona loved nature and the wild. She was always learning about Mother Earth and teaching us new things.

She was a Miss Fix-It; she could fix anything and if we needed a raincoat, she would tear up a garbage bag and make one. She was always looked to when we didn't know something or had a question. Leona will be loved and missed by all.

She is survived by her mother, Barbara Schlapie; stepfather, Dan Alexander; brothers and sisters-in-law, Daniel and Corina Alexander and David Alexander and Rosa Rodriguez; sister and brother-in-law, Lisa and Alan Deatherage; stepbrother, Cody Alexander; daughters, Alicea and Andrea Leon and Natalia Harriss; son, Anthony Harriss; nieces, Ashley Ehlers, Aleha Alexander, Alina Alexander, Jasmine Alexander, Desiree Alexander, Arrianna Alexander and Daysha Deatherage; and nephew, Dominic Alexander.

Leona's last words in life were, "I miss my children." And her wish for herself was to be cremated and have her ashes spread on Spirit Mountain. We ask all who knew Leona or were related to her to join us in her honor and spread her ashes so she can fly.

The family will be meeting at the Tribal cemetery in Grand Ronde at noon Saturday, Aug. 20.



Leona Jean Harriss, left, and Barbara Schlapie

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