

NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday Meetings

DATE	TIME
Wednesday, Aug. 8.....	5 p.m.
Wednesday, Aug. 22.....	5 p.m.

Please note that these times and dates are subject to change if needed.

Letters

Klahowya nayka tillixam, Klahowya!

I thought it was time I share a few thoughts concerning the low voter participation issue that has plagued our community over the years. This condition is the result of lack of understanding and poor education. I'm talking about Indian education and what it means to be an indigenous human being — something so hard to be in this world of two worlds we live in.

Being Indian isn't easy, but we have a vast amount of tools and knowledge to pull from to help us and guide us. These guides are found in our traditions.

Sadly, too few of our people have had little opportunity to learn or study these great gifts given by our ancestors. Sad because without the sharing and passing on of these traditional knowledges — what I call the great way — we hurt ourselves and run the risk of losing them. We lose too much more, what is left to say that we are Indian?

So for you members who are disengaged for whatever reason and not voting — you have a duty to do your part. Learn the traditions and you will discover all it means, what a gift it is to be a Native person. This ain't no free ride or right of birth; it takes work to be an Indian. It's the hardest thing you will ever do, but so full of beautiful blessings. We do not take without gifting back. Yes, that's part of those traditions. No more easy ride people, do you part!

Walter F. Simmons
Roll #2317

Dear Smoke Signals:

Recently I received a postcard from a Tribal member, Brenda Tuomi. I don't know Brenda, who is running for Tribal Council, but she brought out an interesting fact: Only 33 percent of those eligible to vote actually vote in Tribal elections.

One-third of the Tribe is determining what happens to all of us because that one-third votes. We can only hope that this elite one-third does their homework before they decide any issue.

In 2010, the Supreme Court issued the infamous "Citizens United" ruling where unlimited corporate funds can be used in elections. People decry this ruling because they say it means elections can be bought by whoever has the most money.

I don't like the ruling, but the deeper meaning to me that is people are swayed by bright colors and loud, repetitive voices. Since we have to "live with" this ruling for now, we have to adjust and do research and dig deep for underlying motives on issues that have meaning in our lives.

The same goes for Tribal elections: Can we trust that the one-third that decides Tribal issues have done their homework? Wouldn't it be better to do your own research and cast your own vote?

Thanks to all of you who take the time to cast a thoughtful ballot.

Judith Pettibone
Roll #717

(Editor's note: Voter turnout in the 2011 Tribal Council election was 32.88 percent. In 2010, it was 29 percent.)

See page 12 for more letters.

Correction — Tribal Elder Eugene Hudson, 91, an Army veteran, is alive and well in Salem, Ore. He was reported to have been a Navy veteran and to have walked on in the Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans' Powwow story in the July 15 issue. *Smoke Signals* regrets the errors.

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The Tribe's Cultural Education Department offers adult Chinuk Wawa language classes from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Monday and Wednesday in Room 207 of the Tribal Education Building. Language classes can be taken for college credit or for fun. For more information, call 503-879-2249 or 503-437-4599. ■

Smoke Signals

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DEADLINE DATE	ISSUE DATE
Monday, Aug. 6.....	Aug. 15
Monday, Aug. 20.....	Sept. 1
Wednesday, Sept. 5.....	Sept. 15

Editorial Policy

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