

## Letters

### Dear Tribal members:

There has been a petition signed by many Tribal members asking Tribal Council to ensure that we receive a minimum of 25 percent of our revenue in per capita payments. Tribal Council has received copies of this petition, and I would like to urge them to consider the positive effects that this would have on every Tribal member, everywhere, without exception.

There are many programs, benefits and services provided by the Tribe, but every single one of them serves a small portion of the Tribe, or a small percentage of Tribal members who qualify for those benefits or services or program assistance — every single one of them except per capita payments!

Per capita is the only one that is evenly distributed to all Tribal members everywhere, regardless of where you live or your circumstances or age or health or income; this is truly an equal benefit meant to help everyone the same, and many Tribal members really rely on this Tribal supplement for paying bills, paying for child care, paying out-of-pocket medical expenses and general living expenses.

The issue of 25 percent per capita, or the issue of per capita payments in general, tends to focus on members' desire for increased "welfare assistance" or "free money," associated with greed and lack of appreciation for what they're getting. This cannot be further from the truth. This benefit, as well as all benefits we receive from our Tribe, is not given to us out of pity or generosity; all Tribal monies and all benefits are inherently ours, just as every single aspect of the Tribal government is ours.

We put our faith in Tribal Council as leaders of our Tribe to allocate those benefits judiciously and to manage our funds responsibly — but they are our benefits; they are our funds; it is our Tribe! I believe that everyone is grateful for what they receive, but they, like many throughout this country, are struggling. They're wondering where their per capita money is going, and they're frustrated because answers from Tribal Council are not forthcoming or not comprehensible or clear.

I, like many Tribal members, look at the dwindling of our per capita payments (and subsequent demand for a higher per capita percentage) as a reflection of Tribal government overspending, program administration failure and an inability to manage the Tribal budget effectively. In other words, demanding more money in per capita payments is at the same time a demand for government accountability and financial responsibility.

We are not asking for something that is impossible to give, or something that is not already ours; we are asking for more responsible management of our funds and an appropriate distribution of benefits to all Tribal members through the per capita payments.

Our Gaming Revenue Allocation Plan, written as a requirement of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act to allow us to appropriate the revenue from our gaming activities, is based on Tribal Council determinations and approval by the Secretary of the Interior. This is a living document (meaning it is dynamic and changeable), and can (and should) be edited as needed to meet the changing needs of the Tribe. Currently, it states that "The Tribal Council has found that the general welfare of Tribal members is best served if a portion of the Tribe's share of the net revenue of the gaming enterprise [Spirit Mountain Casino] is distributed per capita to Tribal members at the discretion of the Tribal Council, but not to exceed 45 percent of net revenues."

This means that Tribal Council can currently use its discretion to allocate up to 45 percent of our casino revenue for our per capita payments for the general welfare of Tribal members! Of course, in order to do this and have it be meaningful, they must first look at the revenue brought in at the casino (and associated obstacles to increased revenue), the (over)spending at the government and administrative offices, and their lack of budgeting acumen and abilities.

The fact that our per capita payments are steadily declining says that Tribal Council either doesn't want to set a standard percentage or regulate that amount through the budget process or that they don't know how to do so.

My questions: Why don't they want to? Why don't they know how?

Charles G. Haller II

Roll #1032

## Indian Child Welfare changing its name

The Tribe's Indian Child Welfare program is changing its name to Children & Family Services.

"A couple of years ago when the Indian Child Welfare Ordinance was revised, the name was changed to Children & Family Services Ordinance," said Dana Leno, Children & Family Services supervisor.

"The program values the focus of our work to support and help strengthen the lives of children and families. Child welfare has such a negative connection and we hope to broaden the community's thoughts of the types of services the new Children & Family Services Program may be able to provide to assist families."

For more information about the name change, contact Foster Care Recruitment Specialist Amanda Mercier at 503-879-2039 or [amanda.mercier@grandronde.org](mailto:amanda.mercier@grandronde.org). ■



## Grand Ronde Health and Wellness Center institutes Broken Appointment Policy

In an effort to make medical services more efficient, the Grand Ronde Health and Wellness Center (H&WC) has approved and instituted a broken appointment policy for medically-related appointments at the H&WC. To qualify as a broken appointment a patient must either not show up for their appointment, show up more than 10 minutes late or give less than 24 hours notice of cancellation. When any of these events occur, the patient is notified in writing. After the third broken appointment in a six-month time frame, the patient will not be allowed to schedule routine appointments. However, they will be offered a "sit and wait appointment" — the chance to sit and wait for an opening with a provider. This probationary period will last for six (6) months. The H&WC has a process for reminding patients of appointments and strives to notify patients of appointments the day before.

The broken appointment policy is very important as broken or missed appointments create unused time in a provider's schedule, which is inefficient financially and leads to barriers to accessing care. Ultimately, a broken appointment policy exists to improve access to care for all patients and is critical to providing responsive, cost-effective health services. ■

## Natural Resources has forest passes

The Tribe's Natural Resources Department has free annual Northwest Forest Passes available for enrolled Tribal members. The pass is valid for one year from date of issue.

The Forest Pass is valid at day-use sites in Oregon and Washington where "Recreation Pass Required" signs are posted.

Some examples are Hebo Lake Picnic Site, Derek Road Trailhead, Quinalt Rain Forest Trailhead, Tumalo Falls Trailhead, Lava River Cave Interpretive Site, Crane Prairie, Bagby Hot Springs Trailhead, Wickiup Plains Trailhead, Lake Serene Trailhead, Clear Lake Public boating site and West Fork Humtulpis Middle Trailhead. The Forest Pass does not cover fees for snow parks, some concessionaire-operated sites, developed campgrounds and cabin rentals, wilderness climbing and river permits.

For more information, contact the Natural Resources Department at 503-879-2424 or visit the Tribal Web site at [www.grandronde.org/departments/natural-resources](http://www.grandronde.org/departments/natural-resources). ■



IN CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL INDIAN DAY;  
THE NORTHWEST PORTLAND AREA INDIAN  
HEALTH BOARD PRESENTS:

7<sup>th</sup>

ANNUAL  
DANCING IN THE SQUARE  
POWOW

SEPTEMBER 28TH, 2012

TIME: 12PM - 7PM

PIONEER SQUARE, DOWNTOWN PORTLAND, OR

GRAND ENTRY: 3:30 PM

MC: TBA

WHIPMAN: ED GOODALL

COLOR GUARD: NIVA

HOST DRUM: FOUR DIRECTIONS

\*\*FIRST 4 DRUMS REGISTERED WILL BE PAID\*\*  
(PLEASE REGISTER PRIOR TO EVENT)

This event is FREE and open to the public.  
A Drug, Alcohol, Commercial Tobacco and Violence FREE event.  
Sales of sacred items are forbidden.  
The committee is not responsible for lost or stolen items or any travel or parking cost.

VENDORS & EDUCATIONAL BOOTHS  
For More Information Please Contact  
Lisa Griggs at 503-416-3269  
[lgriggs@npalhb.org](mailto:lgriggs@npalhb.org)

For more information about the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board or the 43 Federally recognized Tribes of Idaho, Oregon and Washington please visit:  
[www.npalhb.org](http://www.npalhb.org)  
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