

NOTICE — Monthly Tribal Council Wednesday Meetings

DATE	TIME
Wednesday, May 22	5 p.m.

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

Letters

Dear Smoke Signals:

My name is Nancy Babb (Simmons) and I have been a Tribal member since Nov. 28, 1988, by Resolution No. 313. My father and his family lived on the Reservation when it was terminated in 1954 and are on the original roll the Tribe used for creation of its membership.

I would like to point out that the Grand Ronde Restoration Act of 1983, which was signed by Ronald Reagan, made the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde a single Tribal unit for purposes of federal recognition and eligibility for federal benefits. As stated in our Tribal history, the act also provided for the establishment of Tribal self-government, for the compilation of a Tribal membership roll and for the establishment of a Tribal reservation.

I remember being encouraged by members on the original roll to enroll, so the Tribe's numbers would increase and with increased numbers could reap the benefits of increased federal funding. So I did as I was told to help our Tribe get the numbers it needed so it could get the federal dollars to establish our government and numerous federal programs still in place today. After all, federal funding is proportionally based on the number of enrolled Tribal members.

My concern is that the "Enrollment Audit Explained" publication recently sent out by the Tribe does not explain what membership criteria were used per the Restoration Act. As quoted from the publication, it just states the following: "As outlined in the Restoration Act, a membership roll of the Tribe was developed by the Secretary of the Interior using the membership eligibility requirements of the Restoration Act." Well, I would like to know just what does "as outlined in the Restoration Act" mean.

The publication goes in great detail about the Tribe's Constitution requirements for membership, but fails to identify what the Restoration Act membership requirements are. Per the article, "The Tribe's Constitution established membership requirements different from those of the Restoration Act."

Are we in trouble by some federal agency? Is our federal recognition being questioned? Why now, after 30 years, is the enrollment being scrutinized so harshly and I'm sure at an excessive cost? Are we suffering some financial difficulties? It sure appears that way with increased premiums for non-Tribal members' health contribution and Student Rental Assistance put on hold for four months while money is spent to question our enrollment? Sounds like a bit of greed has touched our Tribe that I have been so proud of in its efforts to help and assist its Tribal members to become an educated and self-sufficient community no matter what state they live in.

I personally believe that it would be helpful if the Tribe would publish the Grand Ronde Restoration Act of 1983 for all Tribal members to see, so we can understand how it is different from the established membership requirements in the Tribe's Constitution. And, if there is such a discrepancy, my first question would be what could possibly be done about it now, 30 years later? Federal dollars had already been received based on the enrollment numbers supplied by the Tribe and now the Tribe wants to vocally state that members were enrolled different from those of the Restoration Act that was signed by Ronald Reagan? What kind of message is that sending about our Tribal government? Are we opening a can of worms here that could have some trickle effect on the Tribe as a whole and is the Tribal Council thoroughly thinking this through?

I also understand all the changes that have been made to the Enrollment Ordinance and it has always been my understanding that if you were already enrolled prior to the time the amendments took effect, the already enrolled member would not be subjected to the new enrollment requirements. I do hope the Tribe takes all of this into consideration while auditing the enrollment files.

Just a reminder, when the Tribe was terminated, many members had to relocate out of the six-county service area and enrollment was still approved regardless of where we lived. The Western Oregon Termination Act of 1954 severed ties with the federal government, but with the help of members all across America enrolling in the early years, our Tribe was able to receive the federal funding it needed to organize itself to become the success it is today.

I ask, what is really going on here? And what is the intended result the Tribal Council hopes to gain?

Nancy Babb (Simmons)
Roll #2353

Elders' garage sale seeking donations

Tribal Elders are regularly seeking donations for fundraising garage sales. To donate an item or items, contact Tribal Elders Linda Brandon at 971-267-0918 or Duane Wheeler at 541-992-3254. ■

Tribal Office Closures

Tribal offices will be closing at noon Friday, May 24, and be closed on Monday, May 27, in observance of Memorial Day.

Tribal Council nominations

Sunday, June 30 — 11 a.m.

Tribal Community Center

Smoke Signals

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DEADLINE DATE	ISSUE DATE
Monday, May 20	June 1
Wednesday, June 5	June 15
Friday, June 21	July 1

Editorial Policy

SMOKE SIGNALS, a publication of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, is published twice a month. No portion of this publication may be reprinted without permission.

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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