

Tribal veteran’s song included on ‘Women at War’ CD

By Dean Rhodes
Smoke Signals editor

Tribal member Shelly Rae Nichols served in the U.S. Navy from 1990 to 1993 aboard the U.S. Cape Cod stationed in San Diego, Calif. Like other members of the military – male and female – she had the potential to endure the trauma of physical injury and post-traumatic stress disorder during the Desert Storm era. However, female veterans too often carry additional trauma from their service, such as military sexual trauma, which can range from harassment to rape. For Nichols, a rape committed by a shipmate occurred in 1991 while in the Philippines and contributed to cutting her military career short. After her attacker was court-martialed, sentenced to a year in the brig and then drummed out of the Navy, Nichols was re-assigned to the Cape Cod, where she was continually harassed for reporting the attack. Eventually, her commanding officer gave her an out – she could leave the Navy. “I wanted to stay in for quite a while longer, but I had to leave. It was sad,” she says from her home in Moses Lake, Wash. She married and had two children, and buried the military sexual trauma deep inside her under many layers of emotional scar tissue. Nichols’ military sexual trauma, along with a foster care childhood that included abuse by a relative, eventually led her to write what would become the lyrics to “Warrior Wings,” which will be one of 15 songs to be included on “Warrior Songs Vol. 2: Women at War” that



To hear Tribal member Shelly Nichols discuss her song “Warrior Wings,” go to www.spreaker.com and search for “Smoke Signals podcasts” or click on the link on the *Smoke Signals’* Facebook page.

will be released on Saturday, Nov. 10. Warrior Songs is a nonprofit organization based in Madison, Wis., which facilitates healing among U.S. military personnel, veterans and those working with veterans by using songwriting and the arts as vehicles. “Women at War” will be the second release from the organization’s “Story to Song” program, which is designed to transform buried experiences and feelings into a song that heals and entertains while it also educates, motivates and inspires. Warrior Songs collects stories for its “Story to Song” program in a variety of ways – at songwriting workshops, testimony submitted to its website and through personal encounters on Warrior Songs outreach trips across the country. Veterans are then paired with songwriters to develop a song of



Submitted photo

Tribal member and Navy veteran Shelly Rae Atkinson Nichols records backing vocals for her song “Warrior Wings” at Blue Room Studio in Madison, Wis., in June with singer Anna Wang at the controls. The song, based on Nichols’ writings, will appear on “Warrior Songs Vol. 2: Women at War,” which will be released on Nov. 10.

self-expression and healing. Once approved by the veterans, the song is taken into a recording studio and performed by established musicians. For Nichols, New Jersey songwriter Garrett Stahl took her diary writings and poetry and helped create a song. After Nichols and Stahl agreed on the final lyrics, Nichols met singer and classically trained pianist Anna Wang, who recorded the song in June 2018 with Nichols providing backing vocals on the track. Wang performs all of the instruments and sings lead vocals. “For me, this process broke open a heavy shell I was hiding behind for so many years,” Nichols says. “One-hundred percent body, mind and soul, along with tears of sadness, but with the strength from the great creator I found the strength to tell my story.” “Warrior Songs seeks to educate the public and veterans’ communities about veterans’ issues like PTSD, MST and other war trau-

mas,” founder Jason Moon says. “Helping veterans to turn the destructive force of war into something meaningful and beautiful allows them to reclaim hope and joy as important forces in their lives.” Nichols, 46, says she hopes her song of picking up the pieces – “Now living the life she’s always deserved/One about freedom, one about pride/Telling her story to heal the wounds inside” – will help anyone who has experienced abuse, either in the military or in civilian life. “For me, it’s to let other women or men know that it’s OK to open up your shell. ... I am hoping that for other women that this song tells them to not be afraid to tell your story. If you were raped, report it. Don’t wait for years. I’m hoping my song says that even though you may have had a hardship, you can still break out of it and feel alive. Tell your story.” To listen to Nichols’ song, visit warriorsongs.org/track/1564075/warrior-wings. ■

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FORM 2

IN THE TRIBAL COURT FOR THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES

OF THE GRAND RONDE COMMUNITY OF OREGON

In The Matter of:) Case No.: C-18-014

Malia L. Davis)

Applicant.) [ADULT]

NOTICE TO ANY INTERESTED PERSONS:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that the above Petitioner has filed a Petition with this Court on the 11 day of October, 2018, requesting that Petitioner's name be changed from Malia Lorraine Davis to Malia Lorraine Blanchard.

The purpose of this Notice is to give all interested persons an opportunity to show cause why the name change should or should not be granted. Any person objecting to the proposed name change may file a written objection with the Court within 14 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as to why the Court should not enter an order granting the proposed change of name.

DATED this 11 day of October, 2018.

Malia L. Davis

Petitioner

Malia L. Davis (Print Name)

Page 1 – Notice of Name Change [Adult]

FORM – 2



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