

Dear Editor,

As we congratulate Diane Rodriguez—who's just retired as *Siletz News* editor—and say hello to Andy Taylor—long-time associate editor who is taking over the reins, I find it wise to recall some history.

I remember that Siletz tribal members were hired nearly always—if not exclusively—to be the editors of the *Siletz News* during its first years. I remember the late Ted Werth did an excellent job, and the late Shirley Strickler did, too, before Ted's tenure—and maybe after, too. "Editor" back then meant "writer, photographer, dark-room technician, circulation manager, mail clerk, subscription clerk, and graphic designer." I don't think that has changed much still. Lately, it's been just Andy and Diane. Plus, we must not forget, the "editor-in-chief"—currently Kurtis Barker. As the Tribe's Chief Executive Officer, Barker is advertised in each issue as the newspaper's "editor-in-chief."

That was not always the case. In former times, the Siletz Tribe had a General Manager (not a CEO) and the GM was not advertised as editor-in-chief.

That changed after a certain GM (the late Phil Rilatos) directed a certain editor (yours truly) to "pull that article"—also after that same GM fired that same editor for refusing to execute the directive. (I remember the editor was convinced that the GM—by not offering any rationale other than "pull that article"—was revealing that he (the GM) was likely either bowing to undue political influence or wished to censor the news for no apparent reason, and I remember the GM appearing to be convinced that one of his subordinates was acting insubordinately and unreasonably). It was also after a lawsuit had been filed. That's when someone—someone other than replacement editor of the *Siletz News* I suspect—decided to start publishing that blurb, "CEO is editor-in-chief . . . "

Firing an editor for refusing to act as news censor—that came first. The blurb soon followed.

1 February 2025 issue of *Siletz News* was edited by a Siletz General Council member. The last time that occurred: 1 August 1989.

Drew Viles