Cheryl Bell

I, Cheryl Bell, descend from the Quantanna/Delannnis family line. I was born and raised on San Juan Island along with many other Cowlitz Families who have lived there for over a century.

I have had the privilege of serving on Tribal Council for the past 18 months and have been consistent on ensuring that all Cowlitz members are given equal rights and benefits no matter where they live.

I worked with the USDA for nearly 20 years both as a Food Safety Inspector and Consumer Safety Inspector. Being part of the government that ensures food safety was an honor. I worked with and enforced Codes, Regulations, Notices and Directives. This experience has been very helpful in the work that is done on Tribal Council and in the guidance we are given.

I also serve on the Tribal Cultural Board, Indian Child Welfare Committee and Code Committee. Our children are our future and being a part of the committee that works to keep our families together through intervention with the courts and preventative measures to aid families before they need intervention.

I have attended as many tribal committee meetings as possible and push for better communication and that invitations be sent out to all tribal members, that you will have this opportunity.

I supported “VOTE BY MAIL” so that all tribal members could vote and have their voices Heard. My hands are up to the 91% of you that also supported this important Amendment and together we can get more involved and have a real say in what our Our Tribal Council decides.

I also support the values of No Cowlitz Left Behind and am grateful to help NCLB bring People together during the pandemic when most tribes had no way to communicate with their members.

I want to see the tribe communicate better with all its members and think a strong tribal website and portal are sorely needed so that all members can be kept up to date as things happen.

I support a Hardship Policy for Enrollment, so that “lost birds” are not left on the outside looking in.

I also support universal health care and dental care for all members. In my short time on tribal council, we have begun taking the first steps to make this a reality and we need to keep up this work.

The importance of Cowlitz Culture can never be overstated. Without our culture we have no tribe. I will work harder toward bringing cultural practices and activities to all members so that they can participate. I also support having our cultural activities recorded and added to our website.

The Cowlitz Tribe is on its way to becoming an economic powerhouse that will fuel our programs and the lives of our members and I support our economic diversification so that we have the backs of our elders and those in need.

I am running for TC and would appreciate your support and your vote so that I can continue to serve you.
CANDIDATE FOR TRIBAL COUNCIL

Brenyn Cahill

Brenyn did not submit a candidate statement or photo.

Kris Dillehay

I am from the Wannassay family lower Cowlitz
Jacque (Jack) Cassity/Jaqueline Wannassay Hill/Maude Wannassay/Frank Wannassay/Jack Wannassay!

I support cutting the council down to 10-only if voted by general membership.
I support vote by mail.
I support hardship, case by case.
I believe in truth and transparency
I believe in growing our resources and creating job opportunities for our tribal members.
I support members getting involved, I recently added 5 new faces to the Pow Wow committee, but also think you should be allowed to be on 4 committees at a time.

I have been on the Pow Wow committee since 2017, serving as chair this being my 3rd yr.
I’m on culture board as Pow Wow representee. You may have met me frosting a cookie, signing into a meeting, or ordering Cowlitz merchandise.
I worked at Taco Time becoming a manager after a few months and leaving with 29 years of management experience. I believe in working hard and open communication to get the job done.

I’m honored to ask for your vote this June.

Thank you
Respectfully,
Kris Dillehay
Krisdil43@gmail.com
Teri Graves

Nákw’s (Greetings) Relatives,  
My name is Teri Graves, daughter of Joyce  
Schumaker; daughter of Marie Woracek; daughter of  
Alfred Marion Smith; son of Peter Smith; son of Elizabeth  
Smith; daughter of Harriett Iuse Musch Skaowit;  
daughter of Chief Scanewa.

“Horse People riding, this River so Free, the  
Land of the Cowlitz, is calling to me.”

My Journey to come home to our People started over 40 years ago. My thirst to know my People started when Great Grandpa Smith died when I was a child, and with him all the answers to a child’s questions about being Cowlitz--yet we are resilient people.

Since that time, I found you--my People. I have served on Health Board, Southwestern Tribal Health Alliance, Cultural Committee, Powwow Committee, and Tech Team. I volunteered with the Youth long before I had children of my own and long before we had a Youth Board/Department. I have a passion to share the Pride of being Cowlitz with our Youth. I love to teach drum-making, ribbon skirts, bead work, weaving, singing/drumming, dancing, sweat lodge, story-telling, and medicine wheel with my People.

My love for Tribal Canoe Journeys started in 2002, when I traveled to Hoh River for “Paddle to Quinault.” In 2006, Cowlitz Families came together and put a canoe on the water. In 2008, John Barnett bought us our canoe, “Sahu hi tithla.” I’ve had the blessing to listen and learn from the stories of Elders and Chiefs, and with that, earned a responsibility to Honor those teachers by teaching it forward.

In my Teachings, we are only as strong as our weakest. This helps me to love and understand our People; to listen to your words, needs and Hearts. All my life has been in the work of Service (military/paramedic/medicine), and I will continue to work in a position of Service for our People.

“The Spirits they Whisper, ‘My Child never roam, come back to the Cowlitz, the Cowlitz is Home.’”

It’s important to me to speak up against inequities for those unable to speak--our Children, our Elders, our Warriors, our People with past mistakes, our People far from home, our Houseless, and for our “Lost Birds”. On TC, it is important to have various experiences and knowledge to bring to the table and have those hard discussions to work forward for the betterment of our Tribe. I am ready to do that work, because in the end this is most important: Cowlitz Are Stronger Together.

“My Brothers and Sisters, Stand Now with me, We are United, A Nation that’s Free.”

I will finish my BA in Native Pathways this June and have been accepted into the Master’s in Public Administration-Tribal Governance at The Evergreen State College for Fall 2022. Any questions, I can be reached at terigraves@comcast.net or my cell 253.290.8057. My resume’ for more on my work history and abilities: https://my.indeed.com/p/terig-6u3nm98

It would be an Honor to serve you on Tribal Council.

I humbly ask for your vote.

Ná’xqwul’as
Larry Kestner

My name is Larry Kestner; I am the son of Shirley Kestner, grandson of Georgie Earl, great-grandson of Lucille Legarde, great-great-grandson of Sophie Weiser/Weaser, and great-great-great-grandson of Skloutwout. It would be an honor to serve on Tribal Council and represent the members of our tribe.

I was born and raised in Tacoma, where I enlisted in the Navy. My enlistment in the Navy led me to Florida, where I lived for 25 years and raised four amazing daughters. Recent opportunities have allowed me to move back to Washington, reconnect with our tribe, and participate in cultural activities. Participating in our cultural activities has been an awakening for me, to my spirit, in a way that is hard to define. Pulling in our canoe, making drums, learning our songs, weaving from natural materials, and making a button vest are some of the activities that I have enjoyed doing. Our tribe has very generous and talented teachers willing to share their knowledge; I am so grateful to you all!

Although I have been fortunate to have the opportunity to move back to Washington, I know it is not an option for everyone. I will never forget the longing to connect from afar and how isolated from the tribe I felt while living in Florida. Voting by mail allows every tribal member’s voice to count and feel more connected to our tribe.

My previous work experience includes being a submarine mechanic and quality control inspector while serving in the Navy and a Union Steward at the United State Postal Service while employed as a civil servant. This work allowed me to develop knowledge and skills transferable to the role of tribal council member.

Attention to detail is of great importance; it applies to documentation and human interaction.

Being a true advocate and building sustainable solutions for groups of individuals with varying needs begins by being a great listener who keeps their personal bias out of the solution-building process.

I have worked with groups of individuals with opposing views and opinions to find common ground to bring resolution to highly contentious situations.

Guided and counseled others on building positive working relationships in challenging environments before, during, and after dispute resolution.

Skills and knowledge to draft new or revisions to governance policy and experience following policy, process, and procedures to bring forth proposed changes.

As a tribal member who is a Veteran, has experienced geographical isolation and living in the local area, I would be honored to be allowed to bring the knowledge and skills I have built through life and work experiences to represent all Cowlitz with respect, honor, and integrity.

If you have any questions or comments for me, please feel free to email me at Cowlitzlarry22@gmail.com. I appreciate your consideration!
Kristopher Kitz
Honorable Cowlitz Tribal Members,

With great pleasure and excitement, I submit my candidacy for your Tribal Council. I bring a strong commitment to our Tribe and nearly two-decades of senior executive and enterprise governance level experience. While my area of expertise is with hospitals and health systems, I believe leadership expertise and experience leading large organizations strongly translate to the role of a successful and productive Tribal Council member. My uncle, Mike Caso, served our tribe as a long-time Council member until his untimely passing, and instilled upon me the importance of service to our people and values necessary for us to continue to thrive.

I hold bachelor of business administration and a master of health administration degrees from the University of Washington and currently serve as the Executive Director of System Strategy & Business Development for TMC Health in Tucson, Arizona and the President of our subsidiary, the Southern Arizona Hospital Alliance. In this role I work directly with our Boards of Trustees in setting policy for the health system and making strategic investment and growth decisions.

There is much we can do together to better the lives of our people, regardless of where they live. As we continue to grow as a nation, I am committed to serving alongside Tribal Council members to ensure we put our people first. We will enrich the lives of our tribe through financial and social support, as well as culturally through programs, our language and many other diverse opportunities. I will seek to bring additional balance and unite our Council around its core purpose – serving the people. As our nation grows, becomes increasingly financially sustainable and we continue to expand our services, I believe my experience, background and commitment to our tribe will serve all Cowlitz well.

Work Experience:
Executive Director, System Strategy & Business Development – TMC Health
President, Southern Arizona Hospital Alliance – TMC Health
Vice President, Retail Health & Strategic Partnerships – MultiCare Health System
VP & Chief Strategy Officer – PeaceHealth
System Director, Strategy & Business Development – MultiCare Health System

I kindly and respectfully ask for your vote.

-Kristopher Kitz
Stephanie Myers

My name is Stephanie Myers, and I have been a part of the Cowlitz tribe since it was first recognized. I remember attending council meetings with my grandmother and father when I was a child. I now have myself, and soon all four of my sons enrolled in the tribe. I want to carry on the Native American traditions my grandmother taught me to my children. I plan to spend time retaining the culture that was lost to my family after my grandmother’s passing. Over years of life’s lessons, I have learned that my ambition for growth and learning never died. The knowledge of never giving up that was passed down to me led me to recently graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Business administration with a focus on accounting. I plan to use my degree to become a Certified Practicing Accountant within the next year and a half. I plan to learn from the experience of the tribal council and contribute any knowledge and ability I have to the Cowlitz tribe by helping in any way I can. Knowing that my father, Steven Myers, his mother (my grandmother) Grace Lane, and her mother (my great grandmother) Grace Wannasay and so many further generations back fought so hard and for so many years to get help get the Cowlitz tribe recognized, and with so many members of my family enrolled in the Cowlitz tribe, I find it is my duty to be more involved with the inner workings of the tribe. I believe that by becoming a member of the Cowlitz tribal council, I will be able to learn more about the tribe from the inside while doing everything I can to move the tribe towards a better future for every single member, those currently enrolled and those who should be. I ask you to please consider my candidacy to become a tribal council member. I will work as hard as the many generations of my family have to do what is suitable for our people. I promise to learn from the Cowlitz tribe, listen to the people of the Cowlitz tribe, and honor their wishes as the tribe grows and moves toward a better future, holding in mind this generation along with the next seven generations to come.

Darlene Rhodes

Best of days to all my relatives
I’m am pleased to be nominated for TC
It’s time to look to the future as life returns to movement after these long two years of pandemic To grow our future and bring culture about maybe even break ground on a new longhouse and or a new cultural Arts and museum center.
Moving forward in language and mountain gatherings
I would be proud to serve the people in the next few years
I have worked with Drum, canoe, elders and had a great time getting to know
A great majority of our people
Let’s make this next couple years ones to remember
Vanessa Robertson

My name is Vanessa Robertson. I am daughter to Elizabeth Robertson, granddaughter to Leatrice Joann Swanson and descended from Simon Plamondon. I'm 37 years old and I am running for tribal council.

After graduating from Ferndale High, I moved to Longview to pursue degrees in early childhood education. During that time I had the honor to work for our tribe in the elders program. There I was taught many things like, how to cook from our culture and for our people.

After college I have worked in early childhood education for the last 18 years, as a lead preschool teacher. Where I have developed the skills of leadership, patience, and understanding. Through experience and classes I have come to know and understand The Washington State WAC and Nyack. I’ve also had much experience with CPS, family health services, that have given me the skills and knowledge to be a member of our ICW committee, youth board and one of the tribe’s QEW. Where I now have an amazing opportunity to learn about not only our ICW and how it helps our Cowlitz children and families, but also ICWA and our rights by law.

I have dedicated my life to helping children succeed in life and grow in a safe, loving environment. I have now committed my future to the children of this tribe keeping them within our culture and this tribe. To make sure that children thrive and succeed in life we need to help, not only the children, but the family as a unit. Making sure parents have all resources they need from: medical, food, housing, schooling, career opportunities, daycare, and even mental health. We also need to make sure that the families can get support regardless of where they live.

I hope to follow in my Great Grandfathers, and grandmother’s footsteps of being on Tribal Council. They have both taught me the importance of preserving our culture and family, they have also taught me that the Tribe comes first. That means to me, what’s best for the tribe, not best for the one. With that in mind, I believe in equal benefits and opportunity for all tribal members, no matter their location. I believe in trainings for Cowlitz individuals to fill positions, before hiring non Cowlitz. I believe in full transparency, not only from the Council, but all business dealings we have that would not break confidentiality clauses. The council was set to represent the members, their wants, needs and do what was best for the tribe as a whole. That will be my main goal if I am elected. We need to look to the future for stability and find ways to make our tribe thrive, along with preserving our way of life and culture. We need to move forward with times and find more ways to be able to support our own people. So we don't cease to exist and we can continue to be the forever people!

Thank you for your consideration,
Vanessa Robertson
Jessica Roderick

Our tribe continues to make leaps and bounds and I'm eager to see what our future holds as a community. I am confident I can offer the necessary foresight as I fully recognize the many resources our tribe has been blessed with. It is my mission to make sure that we are mindfully making investments into the wellbeing and preservation of future generations of our tribe.

As a council member, I ultimately want to be of service – a voice and an advocate for our people. I've long worked towards making a positive impact as a future elder to our youth and community – a goal of which I hold dear. I find joy in being able to advocate and be a resource for my community’s wellness and healing needs. As someone who has worked in the healthcare industry for over a decade, I dream of further extending that support and guidance to my Cowlitz community.

In order to assist in the growth of our tribal community, my main motivation for candidacy is to improve our outreach and support programs to our tribal members. This would be accomplished by adding services, and improving and expanding eligibility requirements to benefit our members. Gratefully, being on the receiving end of our tribal services, I have experienced firsthand where we can be more resourceful with our assistance provided to our fellow tribal members. I believe it is important to plan and develop support programs that we can execute to meet the needs of our community.

We have many incredible financial and housing resources and they should be made accessible to everyone no matter their circumstances. I would love to see our healthcare be expanded into options like an Health Savings Account (HSA), this would be a benefit for tribal members that don’t live in SW Washington or need alternative/non-covered treatments. As for educational assistance, it should be provided to all. Whether you are part-time or full time student, and no matter your living circumstances. When we are elevating ourselves, we should do whatever we can to uplift each other and help break down any barriers to reaching our highest potential. Our first nations people have many talents and it is our responsibility to ensure that everyone in our tribe is offered equal opportunities in unearthing their talents.

Although these are my main areas of interest, I have a well rounded approach to the diverse areas that affect our tribe. In order to find common ground when moving forward with what is best for the tribal members as a whole, I will always strive to hear all perspectives. Respecting the thoughts of our diverse council and community to ensure all voices are heard. It is my ultimate goal to honor our tribal mission and be a Woman of Service.

In health,

Jessica Roderick
Maverick Ryan

Nakws Cowlitz family,

I am humbled and honored to be considered for re-election to the Cowlitz Tribal Council in 2022.

Pictured: Maverick Ryan, Donald Ryan, Bourbon Ryan

Your support and feedback since my appointment in December 2020 has been so valuable, and reminds me every single day of my obligation to serve you. I hope and believe that I have upheld that trust with you.

Since 2020, we have made progress on several of the priorities that I laid out at the beginning of my term. Collectively, we have accomplished much:

-Held Cowlitz Indian Tribal Housing and the former Housing Board accountable for mismanagement of Tribal Assets and poor treatment of General Council Members.

-As Chair of the Public Records Ad Hoc Committee, have worked with other Tribal Council Members to develop an ordinance to allow General Council members greater access to records and documents.

-Served as a passionate advocate for youth and families during the decision making on ARPA Funds distribution.

-Have met with Elders, Tribal Council Members, and General Council Members to assist in designing and implementing a functioning elections code for this year and future years.

-Have worked closely with other Tribal Council members and the General Council Chair to ensure that opportunities to represent the Tribe on a state and national level are utilized.

If entrusted with another term, here are some goals that I would prioritize, and that we can accomplish together. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please feel free to reach out:

-Pass and implement the Tribal Public Records Ordinance to ensure General Council members have appropriate access to correspondence and documents from their administration.

-Expand Education Program funding and service offerings. Investing in our youth is the greatest economic development tool that we have.

-Follow through on the promised review of Public Safety Department policies, procedures, and budget.

-Protect, defend, and appropriately expand cultural budgets.

-Continue to work alongside other Tribal Council members to diversify our economic future through economic development both on reservation and off reservation.

Serving you has been the honor of my young life. In the short time that I’ve been on Council, I hope that I’ve proven that my voice is one that is unique. More importantly, I hope that I’ve proven that my voice is one that you can trust, even if we don’t agree on everything.

In closing, I would appreciate your vote this June, and would be humbled to serve you for the next three years. Our future is an exciting one, and I look forward to going on this journey with you.

With love and appreciation for our Cowlitz Family, Maverick
CANDIDATE FOR TRIBAL COUNCIL

Cassandra Sellards Reck

My name is Cassandra Sellards Reck and it is an honor to serve all the Cowlitz people. As a child, I watched my mother serve on Tribal Council, which instilled in me a deep sense of pride and a deep sense of duty.

I am employed as a critical care nurse, working in a Neuro-Trauma Intensive Care Unit in Portland, Oregon. In addition to serving you on Tribal Council, I am the chairwoman of the Cowlitz Health Board, the Cowlitz Youth Board Chair, and the Secretary of the Cultural Committee.

Health Board Chairwoman: I have worked tirelessly to advance and improve healthcare services for all Cowlitz people, including:

- Expanding Cowlitz Health Services to all Tribal members, no matter where they live.
- Creating the GWE reimbursement for Medicare for our Elders.
- Working with Health Board and Tribal Council on improving our healthcare service and delivery.
- A Concierge service Healthcare model focused on Cowlitz Tribal Members is our goal.
- Increasing the health status and access to quality healthcare, dental, pharmacy and cultural centered care is our goal.

My Priorities on Tribal Council: As I seek to continue my service on Tribal Council, in addition to my focus on improving tribal health care, my priorities include:

- Supporting improved housing for our Tribal members and expanding our services.
- Delivering GWE and Per Capita payments for our Tribal members.
- Advancing a strong economic development strategy that will allow us to give back to our tribal members and grow our economic independence.
- Working to preserve and revitalize our Tribal Culture through efforts such as the Drum Group, Canoe Family, Cowlitz Language program, Cedar weaving and many others.
- Expanding access to addiction treatment and sobriety programs, as well as supporting efforts to address homelessness and restore families.
- Upholding and expanding our ability to hunt, fish, and protect our land and natural resources.

I know what it’s like to feel as though your voice isn’t being heard, and I am running for Tribal Council to give a voice to all Tribal members and to make sure that Tribal Council is listening to you and responding to your needs.

Seeing Cowlitz Tribal Members thrive is exciting and why I want to continue my Tribal Council service. I’d be honored to have your vote.

Respectfully,

Cassandra Sellards Reck
White Buffalo Calf Wannassay

Cowlitz People-

I am the Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Granddaughter of Chief Jack Wannassay (Lower Cowlitz) and Sally Queen, (AKA Patch Eye Sally, Klikitat). I was born and raised in Longview, WA not far from the house boat where my ancestors once called home. We are the Salmon River People. We bring the Salmon Ceremony and are famous for our medicine, trading and for being the nicest and loudest family. They call us the Wannassay because we “Say what we want to say.”

I am an old soul and possess many spirits. I legally became White Buffalo Calf Wannassay on September 29, 2020, formerly Keli Jo Hause after Self-Realization in August of 2020. At the time I was living in Arizona and was being awaked by the Southwest Tribes, especially the San Carlos Apaches. I am the phoenix, risen from the ashes.

While the Wannassay Clan played a significant role in the Cowlitz Federal Recognition, we do not have a family representative on the Tribal Council. Because of this and some encouragement from my cousin, I have accepted the nomination, in hopes that one of us (Kris Dillehay, Stephanie Meyers, Brenyn Cahill Wannassay, Charles Charcoal Thunderbird Wannassay-Meyers or myself, White Buffalo Calf Wannassay) will be elected.

If elected I will instill accountability and integrity in your Tribal Government. I do not for myself but for Great Spirit, in humble service, for My People. Great Spirit and my ancestors are my guides.

Elected or not, I will bring you the Seven Sacred Rights and we will revive our culture and the indigenous way of life. May our traditions not cease, but may they permeate and bring healing to Earth, and back into harmony with each other. Peace be upon us. Amen.

Taku Wakan Yu’teca,

White Buffalo Calf Wannassay
Sheryl Whitlinger

Klahowya, my name is Sheryl Whitlinger. I am a descendant of Chief Scanewa. I am running for a position on Tribal Council with a vision of bringing our people closer together to better help our tribe. I am a Licensed Mental Health Counselor that has worked in a variety of settings over the past 25 years; the last eleven years spent working directly with local tribal communities. The success of my career has depended on my honesty and integrity to make informed decisions in a good way. With this experience and my natural compassion for people and for good, I hope to be an independent voice on Council for our people and to assertively say what needs to be communicated when necessary.

I was brought up knowing and appreciating that I am Cowlitz. When my son turned 12 and attended Cowlitz Kids Camp, I became active with our cultural activities and have served on the Youth Board, the Health Board, and most recently with the Graduation Team to recognize our Cowlitz Graduates. Seeing that our Cowlitz Culture continues to grow is very important to me. Without our culture we don’t have anything that distinguishes us as Cowlitz. Most important to me going forward, is that we do things in a good way that honors our ancestors, our history, and our people.

My strongest belief is that we always take care of our Elders. They are our teachers, the ones who pass down our history and offer a connection to our past and future. I am a strong proponent for making tribal housing accessible to all our tribal members, but I believe the place to start in setting a good example is for the Elders living at St. Mary’s Mission. They have been exposed to mold and other conditions that have been stressful for them. They have had to move and be relocated because of the living conditions, and still, things there have not been remedied. Our Elders should be able to live out their lives in safe and comfortable surroundings with the services and sense of community they need. I am not a businessperson; but I do understand and care about people. If I am elected, I hope to be a strong advocate for transparency, a voice of reason for the issues that face our tribe and to always represent the needs of the people. I will do my very best to honor our past, present, and future. Thank you for your vote.