



Spilyay Tymoo

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Probate judge urges community to avoid backlog

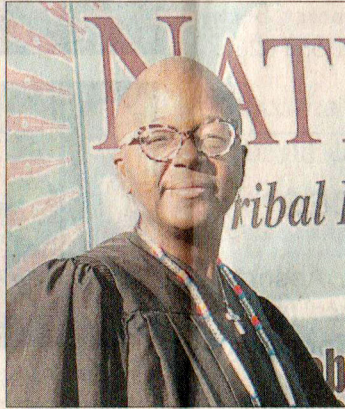
Roberta Armstrong serves the Tribal Court as the Probate Judge. She was appointed to the position last year and re-appointed this year by Tribal Council.

Judge Armstrong has worked with the tribes for many years, having first come here as a legal intern in 2007 to help the membership with the writing of wills and trusts. And for the past 15 years she has been an attorney.

Judge Armstrong is urging community members to help avoid adding to the already existing backlog of Probate cases.

“We have 590 backlogged cases,” she says, “and I’m stressing the importance of utilizing the tools available to the community to expedite the probate process.”

One such tool available to the



Tribal Probate Judge
Roberta Armstrong

public is NativeProbate.org, a website designed to assist Indian families in handling their loved ones’ probate on their own.

The website provides general information on Probate; and court-approved forms can be found on the site. Additionally, the Native Probate court offers a court facilitator, who can be reached at 541-615-1815 to request a Probate

packet. (Essential to note: the facilitator cannot provide legal advice.)

As the newly re-appointed Probate Judge for the Warm Springs community, Judge Armstrong encourages attorneys and advocates to assist in filing Probate matters to address the large backlog of pending cases. “By working together, we can help families navigate the process more efficiently and effectively,” she says.

In response to an article in the May 2 Spilyay, outlining the Probate process, Judge Armstrong acknowledges the changes that have been made to streamline the process.

These changes include virtual hearings and fewer required hearings. However, the Judge also emphasizes that community members must still be proactive in providing necessary information and documentation to avoid delays.

She urges community members

to be aware of the process’s requirements, including filling out forms regarding the estate’s assets, the will, and bank information. Additionally, all vehicles belonging to the deceased must be parked until Probate is complete, and the home must be safely kept until the Probate is closed.

In conclusion, Judge Armstrong encourages community members to utilize the resources available to them, and familiarize themselves with the Probate process requirements, in order to avoid adding to the backlog of cases.

As all Probate hearings are currently done virtually, community members can participate in the process from the comfort of their own homes.

“By working together, the community can ensure a smooth and efficient Probate process for all involved,” the Judge said.