

Janelle Sue Brown

January 3, 2024



Janelle Sue Criteser was born to Raymond and Phyllis Criteser on June 28, 1958. She was the youngest of four siblings, born and raised on the reservation in Smith River. She departed this world on December 29, 2023.

Janelle was a proud citizen of the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation. She attended Smith River School from kindergarten to 8th grade and graduated from Del Norte High School in 1976. She often would recall special moments spent with her grandmother Elsie in Big Flat on the family property with many of her cousins.

Janelle was known as a hard worker and had several occupations throughout her lifetime. She worked in the lily fields, as a crab processor, a housekeeper, and a dental assistant at United Indian Health Services. Her longest career lasted over 12 years, working with Del Norte County Health and Social Services as a social worker's aide.

In her early years, she married her teenage friend, Edwin Lee Owings. They were married for 13 years and had two daughters, Cara Sue, and Emily Rose Owings. Janelle was a fisherman's wife through and through

and often helped Eddie with his crab gear and baiting.

Later in life, Janelle found true companionship with Earl Ira Brown. Together, they had a son, Guschu in 1995. While her son was still a baby, she attended College of the Redwoods and graduated with her AA degree. Earl and Janelle were married in 2001, their wedding is still remembered as the party of that year. Together, they navigated life's journey and created a foundation of love and support for their three children. Her life was a testament to her appreciation of her heritage and was dedicated to raising and teaching her children the importance of continuing family traditions. They raised their family and resided in Smith River on the reservation until both of their passings.

She enjoyed camping, swimming, baking, and dancing. She attended several concerts and enjoyed listening to music. One of her favorite pastimes was beachcombing. She spent a lot of time with her mother, they enjoyed playing bingo and making an annual trip to Siletz, OR to attend the Pow Wow.

Janelle is preceded in death by her husband Earl, her parents, stepparents, and her siblings David and Rayona Criteser. Her family finds comfort that she is reunited with several other aunts, uncles, grandparents, nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. She leaves behind so many loved ones and will be missed dearly by all those who knew her.

She is survived by her children Cara Kuhn (Michael), Emily Reed (Thomas), and her son Guschu Brown. Her grandchildren Annalena, Tee-me', Marlee, Willow and Phoenix. She also leaves behind her sister Dawn (Dennis), stepsisters Jeri (Robert) and Julie (Lamont). She had several sister-in-laws, brother-in-laws, nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Those that know her will remember her unique laugh, bold and multi-faceted personality. She was a strong advocate in areas that were important to her. She had love, was loved, and will be greatly missed.

There will be a viewing on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, from 11am-3pm. All those that knew her are welcome to come say their final goodbyes. There will be a potluck to follow at the Howonquet Hall Community Center in Smith River starting at 4pm. Please bring a dish to share. She will be interned with her husband at the Howonquet Indian Cemetery in a private ceremony at a later date.