

✓ *As a profession*

# Former student faces challenges, inspires sister

by Linda Barr Batdorf  
Staff Writer

The wild horse ran free on the plains of what is now Southern California in the late Pleistocene Age. Suddenly, from nowhere, the animal felt a spear pierce its flesh. It is possible, and even likely, that the majestic beast ran some distance, before it succumbed to the deadly wound inflicted by early man. The spear point later fell unseen into the dust of primitive America, and would remain hidden for thousands of years until retrieved by archaeologists only a few short years ago.

Now, more than 11,000 years after the spear was thrown, former CCC graduate Shirley Barr Williams examines the weapon that brought the wild horse down. She adds ammonia solution to the spear point and begins her blood residue analysis of this ancient artifact. By using a method called cross-over electrophoresis, Williams is able to determine that this was a Clovis spear point that was, in fact, used on a horse now extinct in North America.

Williams began her college career here at CCC in fall '72. Even though her first impression of the college was that it was a lengthy walk from the parking lot to the campus and that the registration lines were even longer in the pre-computer days of the col-

lege, her long journey through the halls of academia was just the beginning.

It seems odd that Williams would become an expert in blood residue analysis, given the fact that while she sat in one of Craig Lesley's composition classes in the early '70's, she would experience such a frightening experience with the collection of blood that it would be extremely difficult for her to consider even donating a bit of her own. While discussing the art of writing, the class heard such a thump next door, activity ceased and all eyes turned in the direction of the loud, thunderous sound. Lesley investigated and discovered that an unfortunate student who had given blood earlier that day, had passed out cold in the room next to them. It was the poor student's head that had made such a noise as it bounced from desk to floor.

Afterward, Lesley and his students were greeted outside the door by the sight of this unconscious woman covered in blankets, a cold compress on her pale forehead, a nurse practitioner fussing and a lot of worried people swarming around their number schoolmate, not unlike sharks in a feeding frenzy.



Photo contributed by Linda Barr Batdorf

**Shirley Barr Williams started attending CCC in fall '72.**

But Williams has other, fonder memories of CCC. After all, she met the man who would someday be her husband here, while dining in the cafeteria in Randall Hall. (Not a bad place that specialized in hot dogs, cigarette smoke and stuffed cabbage.)

Williams graduated from CCC in June '74 with an associate degree in general science. She submerged herself in her studies during her time here, and after graduation, backed off from college for a while.

Almost a decade would pass by before she got her bachelor of science degree in anthropology. She achieved this goal while working full-time, squeezing in one or two classes at a time. Williams received her bachelor degree in anthropology in 1983, yet it would be seven years later before she would stand before a cheering audience in the coliseum with her master's degree firmly in hand.

For her master's thesis, Williams decided to begin her work on blood residue analysis. In so doing, it became necessary for her to collect "controls" for her studies.

This meant that she had to collect blood samples.

Images of the unconscious student floundering on the floor in the halls of CCC haunted her as she collected samples of elephant and camel from Wildlife Safari, bear blood from the zoo, horse and dog blood from a veterinarian, cat blood from a wound her cat received at the paw of a neighboring Tom, squirrel blood was siphoned off of a road kill, bison was retrieved from the Fred Meyer buffalo meat sale and human blood was gathered from a cut on her father's finger (she assured me that this was an accident). It was not fun. It was not easy, but she did it. You see, Williams had a dream and because

she refused to give up on that dream she was able to see it become a reality.

Now, she is one of the few women in the United States who is an expert at blood residue analysis. She has performed tests on artifacts from coast to coast, and while working at Archaeological Investigations Northwest, was even approached by a laboratory at the Smithsonian for information on her studies.

Her know-how has taken her to conferences around the United States, where she has expertly delivered papers on her studies to some of the world's top archaeologists.

You see, one of the reasons I am particularly proud of Shirley Barr Williams is the fact that I have watched her struggle over the years to see her dream become a reality. I've seen her tired eyes after working months of graveyard and studying and going to school by day. Her tenacity and strength of spirit encouraged me to return to school, and complete a degree I had begun two decades ago.

And now, as Shirley packs up her family and her belongings in order to move to Washington and open her lab near Olympia, I am saddened by her leaving, yet inspired by her continued courage and character, and I wish my dear sister all the luck in the world.

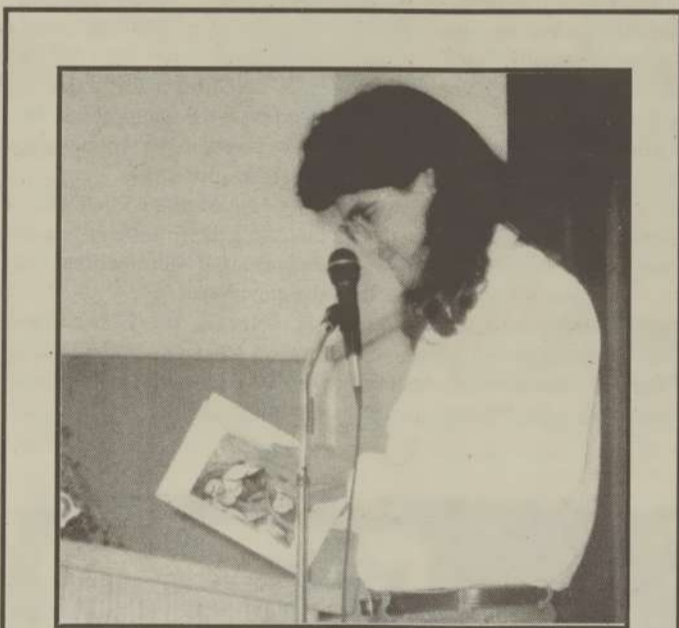


Photo by Lora Wahrgren

**Sherman Alexie attracted such a crowd, more chairs had to be brought in to Gregory Forum.**

## Poet inspires audience

by Lora Wahrgren  
Staff Writer

Poet Sherman Alexie gave a great reading on Wednesday. There were so many people there, they had to open the rest of the room to add more chairs. I had a wonderful time listening to Alexie. His poetry was very powerful and full of voice. I could really feel all the compassion he was expressing to the audience.

When he was reading about his family and tribe, I felt

I was there with them. He had a great sense of humor in his presentation. He would joke periodically about being Native American, and it eased some tension in the room.

He had a fun time being up in front of everyone, and he enjoyed speaking.

I was happy with the turnout and all the help that went into making the reading possible. Alexie's new book, "Reservation Blues," will be released in May.

## Laser shows still lighting up darkness

by Jocelyn Gauthier, Feature Editor, Jon Roberts and Lora Wahrgren, Staff Writers

If you have never been to a laser light show, you may not know what to expect. "It's an amusement park for the brain," according to Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) officials.

The show is an assault of light and sound, or at least, it's supposed to be. (Depending on how loud you are, viewer participation is very important) When watching the show, you start to feel an overwhelming sensation of blinding light and loud music.

We had the opportunity to view "Laser U2," which is one of the four laser shows that OMSI provides. Other shows include Ministry & Nine Inch Nails,

LaserFloyd the Wall, LaserZeppelin and LazerPaloza featuring Nirvana, the Beastie Boys and Stone Temple Pilots.

Be careful, laser shows can be addicting! Although the show was great, we could have had it louder.

And, for those with more sensitive eyes, the fast, bright lights can be too hot to handle, and you

may end up shutting your eyes through part of the show. But that's okay, because the music is captivating enough to hold your attention until the end.

At certain times throughout the show, it seemed that the backdrop of revolving stars was hypnotizing.

It's easy get the sensation that you're flying in space.



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