

# Artist evokes memories of traditional life

Years of dedication to tribal arts earns tribal member prestigious award from local museum.

Story and photos by Shannon Keaveny

In the warm morning sun, Archie Caldera sits on a chair outside his art studio. Around him loom the barren hills and open blue skies of the Warm Springs Reservation.

Above him, a wooden sign with the words "Thunderhawk Arts & Crafts" gently swings in the breeze.

He busies himself chiseling a design into the tip of a deer antler that is now the cavity for a pen.

The pens, at \$20 a shot, are part of his livelihood.

"I see a pair of deer antlers as two pens, two buck knives, and 12 key chains," Caldera muses about his artistic sense.

Inside his well-used studio space lays a deer-hide being prepared for tanning, antlers are mounded in a pile, and brightly colored glass and stone beads sparkle on the floor.

Hanging from the ceiling are beaded necklaces, dream catchers, and handmade drums.

Deer antler buck knives are lined in neat rows on a table.

Center staged is a moose antler sculpture.

It's his sculptures that won him recent fame and the Judge Choices Award at the Museum at Warm Springs.

One could say Caldera is a connoisseur of tribal arts.

His eyes shine as he talks of his various influences and teachers throughout his life.

As a young boy of about nine, Caldera first learned to do beadwork from his uncle, Bruce Berry.

Because his family was poor, Caldera traded his beadwork for clothes.

"I used to trade my beadwork for some Levi's," remembers Caldera.

At age 16, he carved his first eagle head, transforming a small piece of bone to a shining piece of ivory.

He remembers learning how to make buck knives from Ri-

When she and other family members presented him a deer hide jacket, sewn with beadwork, saying they were very proud of him, Caldera was nothing less than honored.

"I just knew how much work something like that took and for them to give it to me was a great honor," says Caldera.

From a traditional family, Caldera remembers growing up in an atmosphere where he always had access to his cultural arts. If he wanted to learn it, there was someone there to teach it.

"My elders gave me most of my support," says Caldera.

Caldera's family taught him to always give his first piece away, a lesson he follows to this day.

"That's how you can tell a traditional boy. They give with their heart," he explains.

The greatest thing you get in return is a smile, adds Caldera.

Now, some 30 years later, traditional artisans knock on his door.

*"I do it all from my heart. Because of my traditional past, I have traditional feelings that make me proud to be a Native American. Being Native American sets me apart in this world."*

**Archie Caldera**  
Warm Springs artist

chard Rowe, an Oklahoma Cherokee.

As an adult, Caldera traveled to Canada and learned to carve stone.

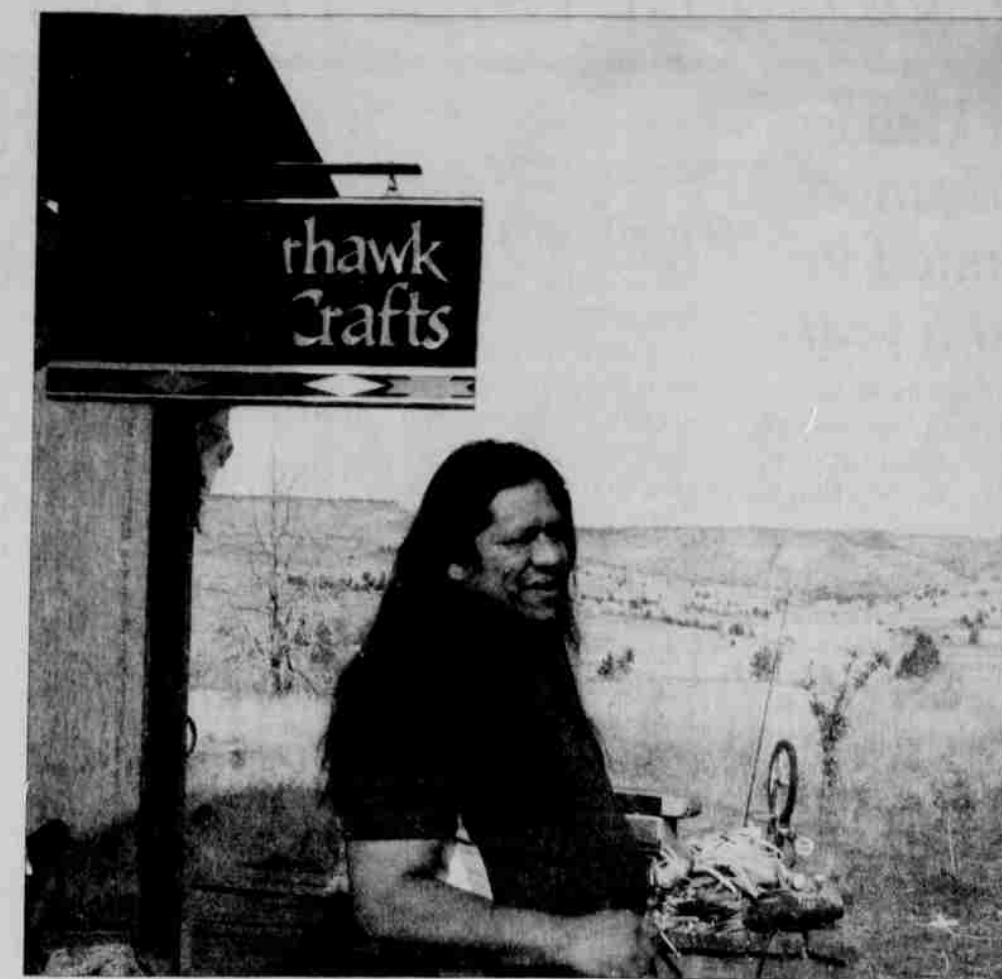
In his studio, he points to pictures of bygone friends and family and remembers the lessons from each person.

But Caldera's grandmother, Rose Mitchell, still living down the street, is his biggest influence.

Together they swap the knowledge of their ancestors that many fear may soon be lost. Some aspiring young artisans come knocking too.

But, according to Caldera, not enough.

Caldera will always openly share his knowledge of tanning hides, making buck knives, dream catchers, drums, using natural fibers, stringing a necklace, traditional plant uses and



**ABOVE:** Archie Caldera stands in front of his art studio on the Warm Springs Reservation. **Left:** Caldera chisels a design in a deer antler pen, one of the many traditional crafts he creates in his studio.

## Eels counted at Sherars Falls

Biologists assess lamprey populations at Sherars Falls for the first time.

By Shannon Keaveny  
Spilyay Tymoo

Along with the fishers, tribal biologist Jennifer Graham and fish technician Joel Santos worked long, hard hours throughout the lamprey season at Sherars Falls.

Their shifts often started at 10 p.m. and ended as late as four in the morning.

As tribal fishermen moved their gaffing hooks slowing across the Sherars Falls rocks before snagging an eel, Graham and Santos used long handled dip nets to scoop their own eel up.

Their efforts were part of tribal mark-recapture study at Sherars Falls to count Pacific lamprey.

"We were trying to estimate the numbers of lamprey crossing Sherars Falls, something that has never been done before," explained Graham.

After catching the eel, the biologists quickly marked them and brought them two miles downstream to Buck Hollow Landing, where they



Lamprey caught at Sherars Falls that was marked and then recaptured later on. It is part of an effort by biologists to assess lamprey populations.

were released.

The marked lamprey were then recounted as they attempted to pass over the falls again.

In other lamprey studies on the Columbia River Basin, traps are used to catch the primitive fish. But this year at Sherars Falls the traditional dip-net was used for the first time by biologists to count lamprey.

"I think it was successful because our numbers were higher," said Graham.

Meanwhile, as eels were collected by tribal members for personal subsistence use, the biologists measured and counted their catches.

This practice was also done for the first time this year.

The numbers for the two lam-

prey studies at Sherars Falls probably won't be processed until late this year, said Graham. Relatively little is known about lamprey.

What is known is that their life cycle is similar to salmon. In addition, the reasons for their decline in population are similar to salmon: Passage problems for adult and juvenile lamprey migrating through the dams, declining conditions of spawning and rearing habitat in freshwater, decline of the marine prey base including ground fishes, walleye Pollock, Pacific hake, and salmonids due to fishing and other factors, and chemical "rehabilitation" (i.e. extermination by rotenone) of streams.

There are three types of lamprey species that occur in the

Columbia River Basin - Pacific lamprey, river lamprey, and western brook lamprey.

Most commonly fished on the reservation and at Sherars Falls are Pacific lamprey.

Both Pacific lamprey and river lamprey are parasitic. They feed primarily in salt waters by attaching themselves to the pectoral region of a fish.

After a long spawning period that can last up to seven years, juvenile lamprey head out to the ocean.

It is estimated they remain in the ocean off the coast of Oregon for 20 to 40 months. As adults, they return upstream to spawn. During this time they do not feed.

Considered weak swimmers compared to other fish, lamprey enter fresh water as late as June and complete migration into streams by September. Lamprey presence at Sherars Falls occurs between June and September.

From late April to early September 2003, 115,689 lamprey had crossed Bonneville Dam.

From the end of May to early September 2003, 28,131 lamprey had crossed The Dalles Dam. Both counts were higher than 2002.

From those locations the lamprey split off into various streams throughout the Columbia River Basin.

tribal practice, fishing.

The six-point antlers, used as the base of the sculpture, came from a bull shot by Phillip Squiemphen and was the first he ever killed.

Between two points is a fishing scaffold made from a seven-point bull elk horn, shot by William Stwyer. The net below was made from cut beads and took Caldera two days to make.

A traditional fisherman, carved from the steatite stone,

is mounted on the antlers.

After four years of honorable mention, Caldera received the Judges Choices award last Saturday at the Museum at Warm Springs.

He dressed head to toe in traditional regalia.

"I'm just a happy guy. I'm really proud," he says of the award.

Caldera or Thunderhawk Arts and Crafts can be contacted at (541)553-1081.

## New archaeologist surveys tribal timber sales, wild fire damage

Hired in June, the new Warm Springs archaeologist is grateful for her opportunity to work with the tribe.

"I'd like to be here for many years," said Tara Gauthier.

Gauthier primarily does archaeological surveys for future timber sale sites on tribal lands.

When a timber sale is pending, it's her that bushwhacks through the brush and makes sure no prehistoric sites will be disturbed.

"We call it 'back woods crashing.' But it's just hiking, which I love," she said.

"My job is to try to allow logging to continue without disturbing things important to the area," she explained.

In her office a large map is pinned to the wall. After performing a background search for land claims and prehistoric sites based on information from the maps, Gauthier makes arrangements to go take a look herself.

She scours the surface ground for remnants and signs of the past. If something significant is found, arrangements are made to log around the site or fall trees a



Archaeologist Tara Gauthier away from the site.

Rarely, Gauthier said, are subsurface excavations done anymore. Usually only if a road or some other permanent structure is built, she explained.

Gauthier is originally from the Seattle area. She recently received her Masters in Archaeology from Idaho State University in Pocatello. Her thesis was on lithics, the study of stone tools.

During summers while going to school, she spent time in the Aleutian Islands in Alaska on an excavation dig. She was also an archaeological intern near Mount Hood.

As the B and B Complex fire simmers down, Gauthier and a crew will be surveying the damage to historic areas.

She also foresees her job assessing construction sites on the reservation in the future.