

# Tribal artwork featured on COCC campus

By Leslie Mitts  
Spilyay Tymoo

Central Oregon Community College has a new outdoor sculpture, thanks to local artist Lillian Pitt.

Pitt recently completed the sculpture for the college, and it was officially dedicated during an event earlier this month.

Pitt spoke to the crowd about her original career as a hairdresser and beauty school instructor—it wasn't until later in life that she turned to art.

It's fitting that her sculpture is being featured on the COCC campus, as Pitt also spoke of the ways in which students inspire her.

"If it weren't for the students to carry me on, I would have been a goner," Pitt said.

When she received a call from COCC telling her that she was chosen to complete a sculpture, Pitt said, "I about fell over."

In the end, Pitt added, "It was just such a major pleasure to do."

The recurring image featured in her sculpture—called "She Who Watches"—is based on a Columbia

River petroglyph that represents the last of the woman chiefs.

It is the same figure used to watch over the village of Pitt's great-great-grandmother, she said.

"What a perfect thing to have for students," Pitt said.

"She'll just help you keep going, and it's just one step at a time."

Next Pitt will be working with students to create petroglyphs on several rocks on the COCC campus.

Because of health issues with her hands, Pitt said, she's been working with items in nature for about 10 years in place of carving.

For that reason, she uses items like pinecones and shells to press into the clay and create texture.

"It's almost meditative," Pitt said.

In her opinion, "It's just a wonderful feeling. Nature has done that for me with clay."

Art is not something Pitt plans to give up anytime soon, she said.

"I know I have many more years of creating because you just can't stop doing it," Pitt said.



Lillian Pitt's sculpture at Central Oregon Community College.

Leslie Mitts/Spilyay

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Tribal members have the rare opportunity to have an important legal document drafted for them free of charge.

The University of Idaho Law School, and the Institute for Indian Estate Planning and Probate, are sponsoring a program in Warm Springs allowing tribal members to have their will drafted for them by a knowledgeable professional.

Because of a change in federal law governing disposition of property following a tribal member's passing, having a will has taken on greater importance, said Roberta Armstrong, of the University of Washington Law School. Armstrong is in Warm Springs through the summer, available to tribal members for drafting of wills.

"Keep tribal lands in members' hands," according to the flyer that Armstrong has placed around the community. To contact Armstrong, call 553-3438, ext. 109.

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