

Tribe to Visit Willamette Meteorite in New York

By Justin Phillips

Several representatives from the American Museum of Natural History in New York visited Grand Ronde recently. Museum staff confirmed the Tribal Council's planned May 16 visitation and first blessing of the 10,000 year-old, 15 and a half-ton meteorite "Tomanowos."

The Tribal Council met with Myles Gordon, Vice President of Education; Dr. Peter Whiteley, Associate Curator in Anthropology; Martha Graham, Director of Cultural Resources and Lisa Guggenheim, Vice President of Government Relations and Community Affairs at the museum.

The museum will be closed for all other visitors during the Tribe's visit and blessings from Tribal members.

The Tribe signed an agreement with the museum in New York last June that gave Tribal access to Tomanowos.

Tomanowos is the largest meteorite ever discovered in the United States. It was found in the Willamette Valley of Oregon, and was acquired by the American Museum of Natural History in 1906. It is a rare and important scientific specimen — an object that long ago fell to Earth from space, carrying with it many secrets of the history of our solar system and of the planets within it.

It is said to weigh 15 and a half-tons now, but large portions of this meteorite weathered away before it was found. About 1,000 meteorites fall to Earth each year.

According to Tribal legend, Tomanowos was sent to Earth as a representative of the "Sky People." The meteorite represented a union of sky, earth and water. Tribal hunters would dip their arrows in rain-water collected in its basins.

A new plaque has been installed in front of the meteorite to inform visitors of its importance to the Clackamas and their descendants. The Tribe believes the meteorite has healed and empowered people since the beginning of time.

The Tribal Education Committee also met with the museum representatives.

"What we talked about was the opportunity for local Tribal member stu-



New Yorkers in Indian Country — Representatives from the American Museum of Natural History in New York recently visited the Tribal Council and members of the Tribe's Education Committee to discuss the Tribe's planned visit to the meteorite "Tomanowos." The museum has agreed to close the site to all other visitors while the Tribe visits and conducts a blessing. There will be internships at the museum for Tribal youth beginning in July of this year.

Pictured here (from left) front row: June Sell-Sherer, Kathryn Harrison, Myles Gordon, Cheryle Kennedy, Bob Haller and Rob Greene. Back row: Butch LaBonte, Jan D. Reibach, Martha Graham, Lisa Guggenheim and Peter Whiteley.

dents participating in an internship at the museum in New York," said Marion Mercier, Tribal Education Manager. "What we decided is for our high school youth to participate rather than our college students at this time. There are a lot of opportunities for our students to participate in similar programs. We don't really have this type of opportunity for high school students. We are going to focus this year on a two to three week internship program participation for our local high school youth."

The Youth Education program is working on identifying a couple of young people that may want to participate in the program. A staff chaperone would accompany the youth.

While the youth participate in the internship, the staff will also participate in training and development about museum programs and different activities the museum is doing.

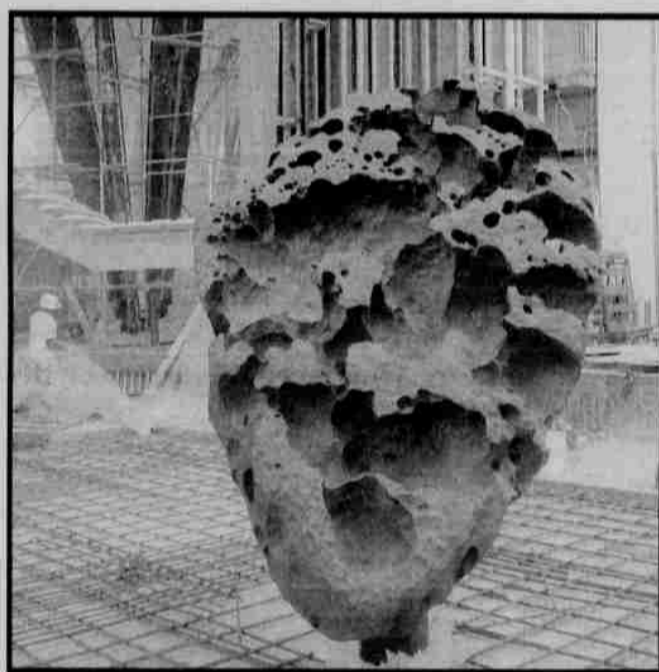
Mercier said she is very excited about this new opportunity.

The internship is called "Inside View." This is a program for students

who may be able to work on a special project with a mentor or one of the museum's scientists. They will learn to lead tours in the museum. The museum will pay for housing and a stipend.

"This is how we are going to start out with the partnership between the museum and the Tribe," said Mercier. "We anticipate that our partnership will expand in the future to include other staff development or other intern opportunities for our college students as well. Right now, we are shooting for the first week in July to start the first phase."

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It Fell From Outer Space — The 10,000 year-old meteorite "Tomanowos" currently sits in the American Museum of Natural Science in New York. Several thousand visitors view the meteorite each year at the museum and a plaque has been placed near the meteorite to explain its significance to the Tribe.

Connie Holmes Takes a Seat on the School Board

■ Tribal member looks to make a difference in the lives of local young people.

By Justin Phillips

It feels good to make a difference in a child's life.

Tribal member Connie Holmes has been doing that for years with her daughter.

Soon she will be able make a difference for all kids throughout the Willamina School District.

Holmes was elected to the Willamina School Board on April 9. Holmes will be filling the seat of Jeff Biller, who resigned.

"I was not supposed to start my term until July 1, but I received an early appointment to the school board on April 9," said Holmes. "We are starting labor negotiations so this (new opportunity) will definitely be jumping in with both feet. I am looking forward to the opportunity of representing my fellow community mem-

bers, working with the other school board members and staff members of the Willamina School District."

Holmes' daughter Melanie Monson, a fourth grade student, attends the Math and Science program at the Willamina Middle School.

"This program is usually a target when it is time for budget cuts," said Holmes. "Those of us who have children in this class feel it is important to retain this program. It challenges my child and is providing her with a good foundation for college. Many parents have said that if this program is done away with then they will either move out of the district or send their child to another school."

"You would need to visit this program to get a better understanding of what they provide their students,"

said Holmes. "It is a tough program that really challenges the kids academically."

Holmes also said that the top issue affecting many school programs is budgetary constraints due to a local tradition of declining financial support for local education needs.

"This (lack of financial support) limits spending for much needed school supplies and equipment," said Holmes. "I will work diligently to find new ways to get additional funding for our schools."

She added that the number one priority is to provide a quality education for all the students in the district. The district is losing money with enrollment declining.

"We need to find ways to improve the overall education our children are



Connie Holmes

receiving and attract students to the district as well as retain the students we already have," said Holmes.

Holmes is the daughter of the late Elmer Holmes and Karen and Norris Merrill. Her brother is Tim Holmes.

"I would like to extend a thank you to all of you that have supported me in my efforts to be elected and especially to my family for all the ways they support me in everything I do," said Holmes.