

Like a Native Detective, PSU Grad Is Making Indian History Her Life

■ Tribal member Jessica Juran works summers organizing the Tribe's cultural collections.

By Ron Karten

Jessica Juran has been pursuing Indian history at least since high school when she wrote a paper about the effects of the Spirit Mountain Casino on the neighboring communities.

"I've kind of always been interested," she said recently from an office in the Community Center where she spent much of the summer cataloguing the Tribe's photography collection, estimated to include more than 1,000 photographs.

Last summer, she worked at cataloguing the Tribe's artifact collection, including baskets, stones and arrowheads. Among the baskets were the nearly 300 donated to the Tribe by Anita Neilson, a Tillamook collector who gained an interest in Indian artifacts through her long time friendship with the great granddaughter of Tillamook Tribal Chief Kilchis. The Neilson donation represents from a third to a half of the Tribe's current collection.

The Tribe also has an archival collection including tens of thousands of documents and historical records, according to Lindy Trolan, Cultural Collections specialist.

"It's interesting," said Juran, "getting to see everything and figuring out where it all came from."

A history student just graduated from Willamette University (WU)



Photo by Ron Karten

Jessica Juran

and set to begin graduate studies in history at Portland State (PSU), Juran discovered along the way that "I like to track things down. I like the detective work."

At WU, she traveled to Seattle to research a paper regarding the city of Salem's reaction to the federally run Chemawa Indian School of the 1880s. At that time, federal policy aimed at assimilating Indians into

the dominant culture (simultaneously wiping out Indian culture) and the federal repository for original documents from that era were only in Seattle. Even today, the school's website makes no mention of the disastrous policies of the past.

Her senior thesis at WU looked at public support for militia efforts to "exterminate" Indians during the Rogue River Indian Wars. The militia, composed mostly of miners and others only temporarily in the area for personal gain, had no compunction about killing Indians to make gold digging easier.

Recipient for three years of the Tribe's Higher Education scholarship and additionally of an education grant from the Tribe, Juran also earned a WU Internship to work with the great granddaughter of one time Oregon governor Oswald West. His legacy, Juran said, includes the effort that made Oregon beaches public property and one that "cleaned up" the state's prison system.

"He was also big on prohibition," she said. West was governor of Oregon from 1911-1915.

For the coming year, Juran has a fellowship from the Oregon Histori-

cal Society. It provides her tuition and the opportunity to work 12 hours a week on an upcoming Society project. Her particular job will be with the Society's Public Historian, Richard Engeman, coordinating with affiliated museums to put together an exhibit tentatively called - "Oregon A to Z."

At home, or with her roommates from Willamette University in Salem, Juran describes herself as an arts and crafty person. She mats artwork and paints birdhouses.

"I like to make stuff," she said.

Her dad's (Rod Thomas) side of the family includes the Hudsons and Merciers, and also includes Bruce Thomas, her father's brother, who used to be Chief Executive Officer of the casino.

A lot of her interests and natural abilities also come from her mom (Maryann Juran), who has an enormous collection of photos covering all sides of the family. It is also her mom's hobby to mat and frame and keep track of these many pictures.

Her current ambitions lean toward the strengths she has uncovered with her educational achievements — "I'll either teach or work in a museum," she said.

"We're lucky to have her," said Trolan. "She has combined her academic studies with our Tribal history, and it's exciting to see." ■

Tim Nelson Stays in Education To Help Others

■ Active as a student, Nelson now counsels students to go to college.

By Ron Karten

Tribal member Tim Nelson has always been "pretty active" in school events. As a high school athlete, he enjoyed baseball and cross country while holding down the equivalent of a full time job with a trucking company. "It was a lot of evening and weekend hours."

At Eastern Oregon University, where he majored in business administration, management, and marketing, he also served in the school's Ambassador program for all four years of his undergraduate career. He was president of the Ski Club for two years, taking skiers to Bachelor, Hood, Anthony Lakes and Whistler in British Columbia.

Although he grew up in John Day, Nelson remembers a lot of Pow wows and rodeos from his youth. His mother, Tribal member Judy (Strom) Nelson, grew up in Grand Ronde, and with the family, Nelson



visited his many relatives in the area — including the Butlers, Bishops, and Zimbricks — "as much as I possibly could."

When he graduated from college this spring, Nelson felt lucky that the opportunity in the Admissions Department at the university opened up. "I love the university," he said.

It's a bonus to him — as a new student recruiter — that he spends his days "talking to students about where higher education can take them." Although, of course, he likes

it when students choose Eastern Oregon, Nelson said he emphasizes the value of higher education no matter where the students go to get it. "I want to see these students have opportunities," he said.

His fellow staffers also contribute to make the job satisfying. "I also got great people to work with," he said. "The people I work with were part of the decision (to work here)."

Handling politics is among the

lessons he has learned since joining the university staff. "One of the biggest things that you don't learn in the classroom is how to handle political issues in the real world, and how to communicate with people; how you can say certain things at certain times, and (learn) who to call for what."

Also among his lessons is the value of patience. "It took me four times of changing my major to see what I wanted to do. It just takes time to see what you want," he said.

He also appreciates the adventure of the job. "There are always new things every day to keep your eyes on," he said. ■

Raising Money Has Never Been So Much Fun

■ Tribal member Tammy Cook enlisted a big casino presence to raise \$6,400 for McMinnville hospice.

By Ron Karten

Executive Casino Host Tammy Cook enlisted a big Tribal presence in raising \$6,400 for McMinnville's Health Dynamics Hospice. Tribal members Camille Mercier - Human Resources Director for the Grand Ronde Tribe's Spirit Mountain Casino (SMC) and Mychal Leno - Employee Development Manager - led a talented group that also included SMC employees Kathy Barnett, Rachel James, Cheri Barnes and Cheryl Adams.

Cook's biggest money making event was the Bachelor Auction, which included Tribal member Regan Dugger among five men who put themselves up for sale. That event alone brought in \$1,700, Cook said.

"And it was fun to see all these adults chasing glow-in-the-dark golf balls" for the Moonlight Golf event at McMinnville's Bayou Golf Club.

"None (of the events) were unsuccessful," Cook said. "Everybody knows the value of hospice."

Cook's trophy said she was 2nd Runner Up.

"That sounds better than third place, doesn't it?" she asked.

