

'Honoring Pole' Headed for 9/11's Pennsylvania Site

■ Lummi Nation's First Stop is Grand Ronde as part of second cross-country trip.

By Ron Karten

The Lummi Indian Nation is giving a new totem pole to the nation. This one will be an Honoring Pole, and will be placed in Shanksville, Pennsylvania on September 7. Shanksville is the site of the crash of United Flight 93, the fourth 9/11 hijacked airplane.

The cross-country road trip taking this one east will stop first on Wednesday, August 27 at the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. A ceremony is scheduled here at 9 am.

"The thing is," said Tribal member Gene LaBonte, "you're not forgotten. For firefighters and the police and the survivors of the disasters and the families of those lost — it's something we'll need to remember for a long, long time." LaBonte will be part of the Color Guard activities when the Lummi pole arrives.

Reminiscent of the trip to New York made by last year's Healing Pole, this effort also was inspired by the last trip.

"What happened," said Jewell P.W. James, Master Carver of the Lummi Indian Nation, "was that we were just passing through Erie, Pennsylvania, and this man comes up to us and asks, 'Is that the Healing Pole?' It was totally covered up, but he had heard about it."

It turned out that he was a volunteer fireman and one of the first on the scene of the crash in Shanksville. It also turned out that his mom was part Indian and had taught him what she could about the tradition. He told his story, made a donation to

the Lummi effort and disappeared.

As a result, the Lummis made a detour to Shanksville on that trip, and when they arrived, they saw "a couple thousand people in various stages of grief," according to James. "The place was just swollen with people going there to remember the families of the people who died and the people who

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~Jewell P.W. James

sacrificed their lives."

It got the Lummis thinking about those who are forgotten, and the theme for the Honoring Pole of this year began to take shape: "We have not forgotten."

"Everybody has a gift that the Great Spirit gave them," said James. "In Indian Country, in order to keep that gift, you give back to the people, which is the way to tell the Great Spirit that you appreciate having been endowed with the gift."

James's gift is carving. He has made a name for both himself and the Lummi Nation by making gifts of his totem poles. But James said, "When we do poles, we give back to the Lummi community first."

Out of three poles the Lummi Nation brought to him for this and another project, James and his team of 8-9 others found an extra 20 feet of log for a bench

given to the Lummis "to honor our traditional cooks."

The Honoring Pole will be 13 feet high, carved out of 650-year-old Western Red Cedar, said James. "It is going to have a bear with two stylized humans on it, one male and one female because there were males and females on Flight 93."

"The bear is a figure in the mythology of Indian Country that depicts strength, courage, power, and a willingness to move forward not worrying about one's own safety," according to information supplied by the Lummi. "These are the same virtues that motivated the 'Heroes' that fought to save Flight 93. These are the

same values that make our Veterans our protectors, our heroes, our guardians."

The Honoring Pole is the second of three poles anticipated. Next year in the months before the national election, the Lummis hope to place a third pole by the Pentagon.

Overall, the project aims to promote local, regional and national awareness of the Lummi Nation and the need for sacred lands protection. It aims to cultivate good relations with members of Congress, and ultimately, to influence the 2004 national election.



Photo by Willie Mercier

Accounting Counting on New Grants Specialist

■ Yvonne Vanlandingham brings experience from the Siletz.

By Ron Karten

Outside the world of accounting, terms like "cash reports" and "financial reporting" have some sort of meaning, but exactly what they mean and what they're used for is mostly a mystery. So, it is good to have somebody like Yvonne Vanlandingham on board not only to explain these things, but also to take care of them for the rest of us.

As the Accounting Department's Grants Specialist since April 15, Vanlandingham is responsible for grants coming from the likes of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency. She keeps track of them when they come in, and then, when different Tribal agencies decide that it is time to spend those grants, Vanlandingham double-checks to make sure the grant covers a particular expenditure, and that grant money remains in the agency's account to cover the expense.

"Is this going to be an allowable cost?" she asked. "Do (the agencies) have money in their budget? I run a lot of Revenue and Expense Reports." And there she goes again with those accounting terms.

"I enjoy this type of work," she said. "I was never a Grants Specialist, but I've worked with grants."

In 12 years with the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians, Vanlandingham handled payroll and housing authority issues. She is very familiar with that other peculiar language, the one spoken by federal and state bureaucracies.

"I've been in accounting for 20 years," she said. On this job, "I get to do a little accounting but I get to do other things, too."

For quite awhile, she had her sights set on working here in Grand Ronde. "I always wanted to work for the Grand Ronde Tribe," she said, "because I knew people who worked here and they really liked it. I've been keeping my eye open for an opening here."

The challenge for her today is learning the important details of all of the Grand Ronde Tribal programs funded with grants. "My goal is to become more familiar with each of the departments to be as knowledgeable as I can be," she said.

And while she is at it, she is building bridges between programs.

"She has spent and is continuing to spend time building rapport with program managers — at Head

Start, Vocational Rehabilitation," said her boss, Assistant Controller Mike Hubbard. "Rightly or wrongly, in the past, departments have had a feeling that there is an 'us vs them' mentality, and we're trying hard to make it more of a 'teamwork' mentality."

And Vanlandingham is seeing success in this respect. "The programs are really good about sharing information," she said.

She also attends trainings — the Head Start pro-



Photo by Ron Karten

Yvonne Vanlandingham
Grants Specialist

gram is an example of a recent one she attended — in an effort to learn as much as she can about the programs and the grants they offer.

"The first thing I'll look at (with any grant)," she said, "is their reporting requirements. The use of federal moneys also requires the Tribes to follow federal rules on civil rights, for example, and on drug and alcohol issues."

A native Oregonian, Vanlandingham grew up in Clatskanie, but also has lived in Toledo, Lincoln City, and now makes her home in Salem. Mother of two and grandmother of three, Vanlandingham has a longstanding love of gardening — "flowers not vegetables," she said, with a particular love for "roses — flowers that are pretty and smell good," she said.

At the moment, however, she and her new husband (off four years last Valentine's Day!) live in an apartment in Salem where the best they are going to be able to do to fill her love of

flowers is to plant them in flower pots on the patio. Family and church activities keep her going. "Seems like I'm busy between work and home and church and family life," she said.

Tribal Member Killed In Car Crash

■ Amy Jeffers leaves two young children.

Tribal member Amy L. Jeffers, 23, died Sunday, August 10 when a vehicle in which she was riding went off the road and rolled over "several times," according to a police report. Jeffers lived in Grand Ronde.

The accident occurred northeast of Salem.

The driver of the 2000 Toyota pickup, Kandie Little, 22, swerved to avoid a deer and lost control of the vehicle. Little, also from Grand Ronde, was treated at Salem Hospital and released.

Also in the car was Kristina Rutherford, 23, of Salem, who was taken to Salem Hospital.

Two days after the accident, Rutherford was listed in 'fair' condition. Her injuries were not considered life threatening.

Jeffers is survived by her mother, Jill Brandon, formerly with the Tribes' Wellness Center, now of LaPine, Oregon; her father, Robert Jeffers, of Salem; a sister, Kristie Jeffers, of Salem, and two children, Brandon Shephard, six months; and Rock Shephard, 5.

Services are scheduled for today at 11 a.m. at the Grand Ronde Cemetery. A pot luck dinner will be held immediately following the services at the Grand Ronde Community Center.