



Photos by Toby McClary/Graphic by George Valdez

■ Tribal member has a "Chained Reaction."

By Toby McClary

In a quiet, cozy home in Hebo, Oregon, Tribal member Larry Risteen lives with many different beings. He lives with salmon and bear and even a Grand Ronde Indian. Although these figures are made of wood and do not breathe, Risteen explains that

they are very much alive.

Risteen, in a business partnership with his cousin and Spokane Tribal member Don Kieffer, sells wood carvings from his home in Hebo. When Kieffer has finished carving them, Risteen then paints, stains, sands and burns the wooden statues and

prepares them for sale. More importantly, Risteen bonds with them.

"Each one has its own personality," said Risteen. "I develop a relationship with each one of them."

When Risteen's wife, Tammy, had a heart attack in 2004 she had to quit her job. With a house payment among other bills, Risteen was struggling and needed to find a second source of income.

"We were used to two incomes," said Risteen. "We almost lost our home."

Risteen found an opportunity for a second source while having a conversation with his cousin Kieffer. Risteen explained that Kieffer came to Hebo for a visit and offered to give him a couple of statues to sell.

"He gave us a couple and we sold them and it just took off from there," Risteen said. "A lot of Tribal members stepped up to the plate and helped us out."

Risteen has sold many carved stat-

ues to Tribal members and Tribal Council members and offers his appreciation for the help.

"It was a nice gesture for them to see a person in need and help out," said Risteen. "The Tribe has been very supportive."

Risteen also works at Spirit Mountain Casino as a Front Desk Lead in the lodge. He has worked in several different departments in his eight years at the casino.

When Risteen takes a look into his life today, he explains that it is much better than one he once led.

"Coming from living in an alley and spending my days trying to find a dry cigarette butt, life is much better now," said Risteen. "I am so grateful for what I have now."

The name of Risteen's business is "Chained Reaction" and he said that he offers discounts to Tribal Elders.

If you are interested in Risteen's carvings he may be reached at 503-392-4960. ■



Tribal Council member Wink Soderberg purchased this carved eagle from Tribal member Larry Risteen. Risteen does carvings at his home in Hebo.

