

# Couple buys gifts for Tribal foster children

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

"I know the Tribe can't afford much (extra) these days," said Tribal member Ann Lewis, who is a realty specialist with the Tribal Lands Management Division, "but I wanted to start a fund for our foster kids, so I did it myself."

Actually, Lewis and her husband, Kenneth, first agreed to forgo presents for themselves to buy presents for the children, said Lewis.

Then, out she went to the stores and came back with way more than an armful. Unfortunately, she forgot to buy for teens.

"And the number of presents for boys was this big..." she said as she held her arms wide apart, "and the number for girls was only this big," as she narrowed the space between.

"So out I had to go back and get more," Lewis said.

With about 100 Tribal children now in the Tribe's foster care program — 75 in foster care and 25 in guardianships or adoptions — the foster care children are in every age range up to 18 years, according to Dana Ainam, supervisor for the Social Services Indian Child Welfare unit.

When Lewis returned, she brought her SUV filled with pres-



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

**Ann Lewis, Tribal member and realty specialist with the Tribal Lands Management Division, unloads presents from her car on Monday, Dec. 8, that will go to children in the Tribe's foster care program. Lewis and her husband, Kenneth, took the money that they would have spent on presents for each other and bought gifts for the foster care children instead.**

ents — wrapped and labeled — over to Social Services. They filled a conference room table and included about 75 separate gifts including stocking stuffers.

"I want to say how appreciative the program is," said Ainam. "For me, it's not only a great gift for kids, but it's a great gift for the program because it shows support for the program. It shows that people ac-

knowledge the work that we do and acknowledge the need of these kids that are in the system."

Mechele Johnson, the Tribe's foster care recruitment specialist, did not know about the gifts ahead of time. She walked into the conference room where the presents were

stacked and said, "Oh my gosh! That's so cool."

"We usually do a party for the kids for Christmas," Johnson said. "We give one gift — it's a pretty big one, though — but that's usually all we're able to do for them. For most in a foster home, it's the best gift they get."

"This is going to make a world of difference."

"The fact that someone in the community is taking time to try to make the life of these kids a little better shows the real spirit of a Tribal community," Ainam said, "which is taking care of others."

Lewis's ultimate goal is to make this an annual Tribal event with everybody pitching in.

"I have a personal connection to the Tribal foster care program," Lewis said, "and what I have witnessed is that these children are innocents. My goal is to start a fund for our Tribal foster children."

"I call it the 'Happy Tree' fund. I chose this name to represent not only the Christmas tree that the presents will go under, but the family tree that all Tribal members belong to." ■

## Home for sale

You must see to believe this beautiful home in South Salem on a quiet cul-de-sac. Over 1,740 square feet of serenity. 3 bedrooms, 2½ baths. Vaulted ceilings in formal living, dining and master bedrooms. Two sinks and double shower in master bathroom. Gas fireplace in family room. Tasteful Victorian touches to exterior.

Short walking distance to both Schirle Elementary and Sprague High School, as well as Kaiser Permanente.

SPECTACULAR backyard with a large hot tub that overlooks 7,000 GALLON KOI POND with stream and waterfall (VERY large koi included). Arching over the oversized deck, a lush wisteria drips fragrant blossoms in the spring.

Cedar fencing surrounds the backyard, providing exceptional privacy. John L. Scott listing MLS# 8065357 (www.johnlscott.com/37829). \$254,125.

### FOR SALE

#### 2005 22-foot Tioga Class C Motorhome

Extraordinary value at only \$49,950

You won't find another like it.

No Joke — Under 4,000 original miles!

Fully self-contained with all the amenities including: generator, 8 X 10 awning, "MaxAir" vent covers, furnace, air conditioning, full bath w/shower, microwave, full refrigerator with huge freezer, large propane tank, wired for cable and Internet. Sleeps 6; great for weekend getaway or vacation! Call 503-879-4240 for more information.





**Commercially canned Albacore Tuna**  
 7 3/4 oz cans. Available by the can, half case, or case of 24.  
 Call or e-mail for price & shipping charges.  
 Diversified Fisheries, Inc.  
 Lyle & Debbie Marrington  
 541-251-1789 or 541-469-0664  
 lmarrington@charter.net



**your dream house is waiting**

Shelley Hanson  
 Broker  
 (503)999-1194  
 shelley.hanson@comcast.net

**John L. Scott**  
 REAL ESTATE

**LOOKING FOR A GREAT PRICE ON A NEW HOME?**



**ALL FOR ONLY \$49,999**

**SHERIDAN FACTORY**