

Salem girl donates artifact to Tribe

Biface will be displayed in museum once it is built

Thanks to a 10-year-old Salem girl, the future Grand Ronde Museum and Cultural Center will have one more Tribal artifact to display when it opens.

Micheaylaa Engman, a fourth-grader at Richmond Elementary School, found the artifact — a biface — while digging in the dirt at the Salem apartment where she lives with her mother and brother.

The apartment is about 100 yards south of Mill Creek, which was a site heavily used by Native Americans in the pre-contact era.

After finding the item, which Engman told *The Salem Statesman-Journal* looked like a "pretty weird rock," she showed it to her mother, Callavinna Simons, who called the Marion County Historical Society, which referred them to the state Parks and Recreation Department.

State Archaeologist Dennis Griffin authenticated the item as a Native American artifact, probably used by the Santiam band of the Kalapuya people.

Griffin said it was a biface because the stone is flaked in such a way as to create a cutting edge that is sharp on both sides.

Tribal member and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Eirik Thorsgard said the tool could have been used as a cutting implement or a scraper. He told *The Statesman-Journal* that he has never seen one like it from the Willamette Valley.

The estimated age of the artifact is anywhere from 200 to 2,000 years old.

On Monday, April 30, Engman and her mother and brother, Devon, visited the Tribe and signed over the deed to the artifact. Thorsgard said that when the museum opens

in 2013, her name will be on display with the artifact as the donor.

In return for the donation, the Tribe gifted Engman a modern arrowhead, a shell necklace made by Tribal members and a DVD and book about the Tribe.

"It's good to make sure they are getting a fair trade, for children especially, because when they find something, they have an emotional attachment," Thorsgard told *The Statesman-Journal*. "It is important when they take the step to give it back that you celebrate their contribution."

Griffin advised others that if they find Native American artifacts while working in the garden or digging that the best course of action is to leave it in its place, take a photo and call his office.

"Every Tribe is trying to find ways to tell the story of who they were to the general public and future generations," Thorsgard said. "Being given the opportunity to have artifacts our ancestors made is important to help us tell that story." ■



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal member and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer and Cultural Protection Coordinator Eirik Thorsgard displays a biface, the Tribal artifact that Micheaylaa Engman, 10, found outside the Salem apartment she lives in with her family.

Includes information from The Salem Statesman-Journal.

Chinuk Family Literacy Night set

A Chinuk Family Literacy Night will be held at 5 p.m. Wednesday, May 23, at the Tribal gym.

Dinner will be provided and each attending family will receive a translated Chinuk book and compact disc.

Everyone is welcome for a fun, family-friendly evening of Chinuk language-based activities.

RSVP to Esther Stewart at 503-879-1443 or e-mail esther.stewart@grandronde.org. ■

Elders' garage sale seeking donations

Tribal Elders are regularly seeking donations for fundraising garage sales. To donate an item or items, contact Tribal Elders Linda Brandon at 971-267-0918 or Duane Wheeler at 541-992-3254. ■



Memorial Day Observance

MONDAY, MAY 28

Meal served at noon
Program begins at 1 P.M.

This event is free and
open to the public

Honoring our Veterans

CTGR West Valley Veterans

Memorial

9615 Grand Ronde Road

Grand Ronde, OR 97347

