

# Pawn store visit sparks donation to Chachalu

By Brent Merrill

*Smoke Signals staff writer*

Sometimes you're just in the right place at the right time.

Tribal Post Treatment Counselor Chris Holliday can attest to that and if Cultural Collections Supervisor Veronica Montano has anything to do with it, others will do the same in the future.

"Chris did exactly what we hope everybody does in the Tribe," said Montano. "His awareness that we had a museum and then being able to go out and advocate for the items to come home is kind of ideal."

What Holliday did was by chance happen upon a large portion of the Kenneth Nelson Russell Collection while visiting with friends at Capital Pawn Shop in Salem. Holliday has no affiliation with the Tribe's Culture Department or Chachalu, the Tribal museum; he just knew as a Tribal employee that there was a museum.

Holliday encountered 84-year-old Norma Yeater, the daughter of Kenneth Nelson Russell, purely by coincidence.

Holliday said he was visiting with friends when a nice elderly woman entered the shop and talked about a collection of Native American artifacts. He said she made it clear that she did not want money for the collection, but just to have it go to the right place.

The pawn shop owners knew that Holliday worked for the Grand Ronde Tribe and had Yeater speak to him.

"I told her I work for the Tribe and that I can put her in contact with one of our people who works at the museum. They would more than like to talk to you," said Hol-



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

**These are just a few of the more than 300 projectile points and arrowheads recently donated to the Tribe by Norma Yeater. They are now being housed at Chachalu Tribal Museum & Cultural Center.**

liday. "She said she had had her dad's artifact collection for many years so I put her in contact with the museum. She was really happy."

Yeater agreed to have her father's collection of more than 300 projectile points and arrowheads donated to the Tribe. She said her father was a farmer and beekeeper, and that he began collecting arrowheads when he was only 5 years old.

Kalapuya points were made of obsidian, petrified wood, basalt rock and agates.

Yeater said her father grew up on 10 acres in Turner near Salem and that almost all of the arrowheads were collected on the family property.

"He started to find arrowheads at a very young age," said Yeater. "He had an eye for it. It was a love of his. From the time he was little, when they plowed the fields he was out there looking. I've been really concerned about daddy's collection."

Yeater said a series of unusual circumstances led her to Capital Pawn that day. She said she started the day with a rare visit to her safety deposit box.

"I had some rings my husband had given me so when I was going by the pawn shop I thought well I'm going to go in and see what these things are worth," Yeater said. "Somehow we started

talking about Native American artifacts. I don't remember exactly how.

"So you see this all progressed into something wonderful happening. That's the story. Isn't that amazing? Nobody could be happier than I am that the collection is finally where it should be."

Yeater said she knows she was in the right place at exactly the right moment.

"I've found that so many times these things that happen are not happenstance; they were meant to be," said Yeater. "I am just totally

thrilled."

Montano said she was happy that everything fell into place allowing the Tribe's Cultural Collections Program to acquire a large portion of the collection.

"She was very excited to get this collection back to the Tribe," said Montano. "All of these artifacts are from an area that was our ceded lands. With this collection, this woman can tell us on a map where they came from. Knowing that they all came from here makes it a special collection."

Montano said she wanted to thank Holliday for his efforts.

"This is the perfect example of what should happen when it comes to potential donations of artifacts and even historic documents," said Montano. "We want everybody to know what we do in our collections program and that we are available to answer questions regarding these collections."

Holliday said he is so happy that everything worked out.


"It's just a beautiful collection," said Holliday. "I was just elated to know that it went to the right place. It made my year just to be a part of helping her because she was really stressed. It's a wonderful thing that it all worked out and it was just a wonderful experience."

Yeater said she is so happy to have her father's collection in the hands of the Tribe that it makes her emotional.

"I absolutely did the right thing," said Yeater. "I'm just delighted; just absolutely delighted. It was on my heart for a long time. I cry every time I even think of it because it means so much to me that they are there." ■

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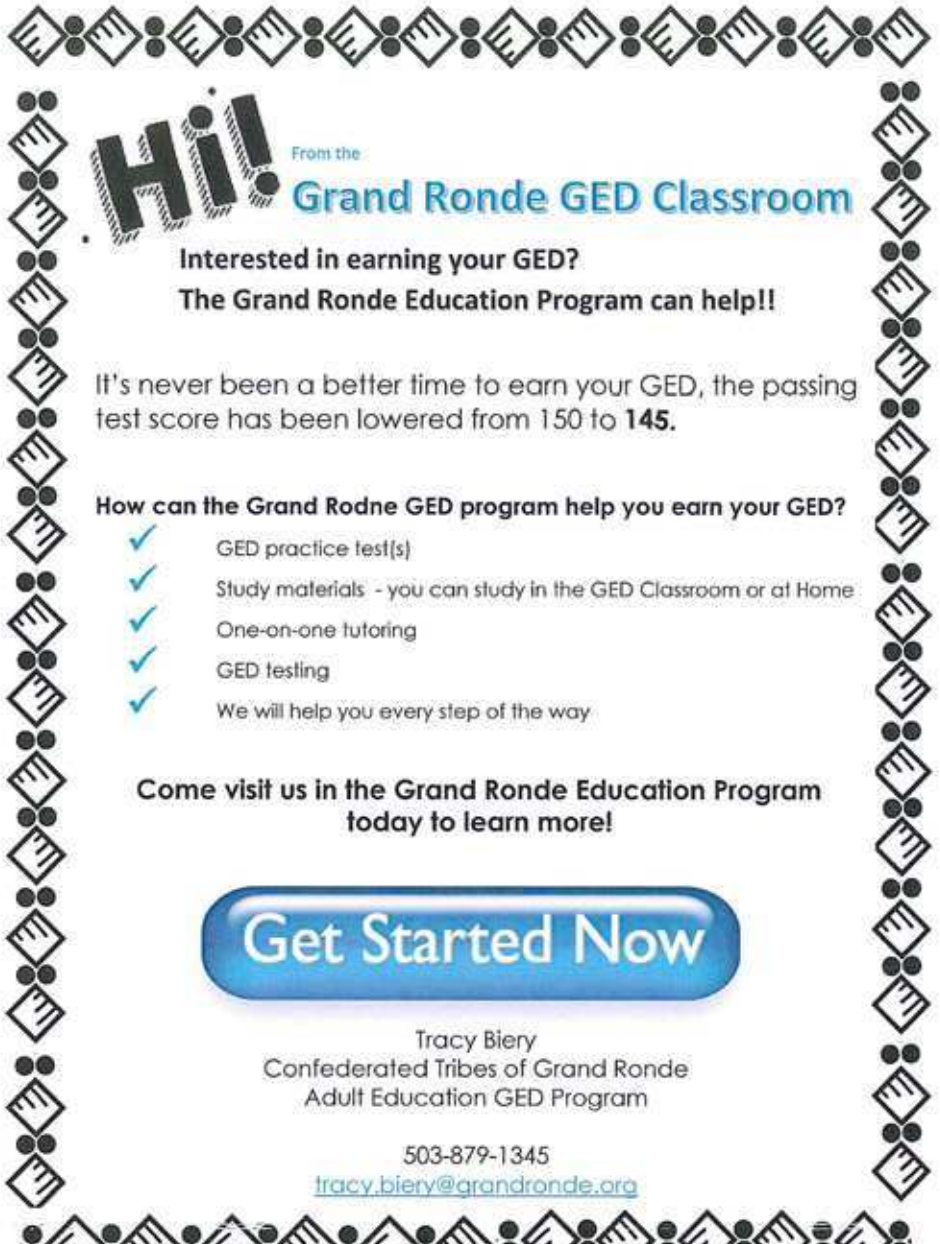
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