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Crawfordsville skull sent for DNA testing

By Marilyn Montgomery

A partial human skull found near Crawfordsville in March was sent Thursday to Pennsylvania State University for possible DNA tests. Linn County Sheriff Dave Burright said.

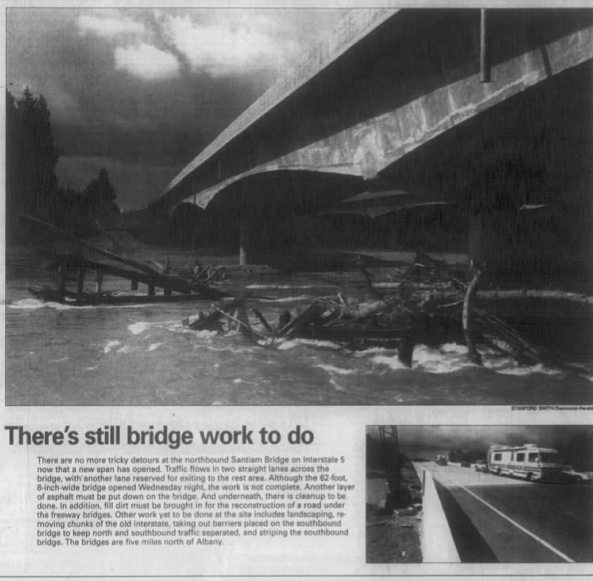
The skull was the fourth effort by Linn County detectives to find out the skull's origin. Since a dog found it on March 27, it has been examined by Oregon State University anthropologist David Brainer, Linn County Medical Examiner Gary Go by and John Lindy, a forensic anthropologist from Vancouver, Wash. under contract to the Oregon Medical Examiner Of-

ice. Lindy examined the skull in Portland last month and his findings were about the same as Brainer's and Go by's, Burright said. "It's extremely weathered and human. It's probably female, but I would not commit to that," Burright said. Detectives had speculated that the skull had come from the grave of an early settler or a Chelapeo Indian, but none of those who examined it have concluded that. Most believe the skull either was never buried or has been exposed to weather for a long time, and that it probably belonged to a small female.

No one has reached any conclusions about a small road hole behind the right ear. Identification has been difficult because the hole is only the top portion of the head. The skull cavities are intact, but eye sockets are not, and no teeth are attached. The skull was mailed Thursday afternoon to the Department of Anthropology at Penn State. Scientists there will try to get a DNA sample from it, Burright said. "It's not a sure thing, but if it's successful, we'll be looking for samples to compare," he said.

The skull turned up last week two weeks after a Democrat-Herald story about the continuing mystery surrounding the July 1996 disappearance of 13-year-old Rebecca Lee Ficks. Ficks vanished from her home at the state Highway Division maintenance compound at Salsburg Junction. Reporters asking about the identity of the skull planned the idea that it might be Rebecca's, Burright said in an earlier interview. Since then, detectives have been contacted by two other missing people who fit the skull's general description. ■ Ann Elmwood, 11, of Corvallis, who disappeared and was presumed abducted during a March of Dimes walkathon in Benton County in 1978. Searchers looked for Elmwood in several areas of Linn County in the weeks after she disappeared.

Virginia "Glenn" Erickson who was 16 in October 1973 when she left her home in Foster to go hunting. She has never returned and is presumed dead. If DNA can be removed from the skull, it would be tested against blood samples from members of the Elmwood, Ficks and Erickson families who share a common female relative with those who are missing. The sheriff's office will pay \$100 for Penn State scientists to try to get the skull's DNA, \$500 to test it, and an additional \$200 for each other sample that is tested for comparison, Burright said.



There's still bridge work to do

There are no more tricky detours at the northbound Santiam Bridge on Interstate 5 now that a new span has opened. Traffic flows in two straight lanes across the bridge, with another lane reserved for exiting to the rest area. Although the 62-foot, 8-inch-wide bridge opened Wednesday night, the work is not complete. Another layer of asphalt must be put down on the bridge. And underneath, there is cleanup to be done. In addition, fill dirt must be brought in for the reconstruction of a road under the freeway bridges. Other work yet to be done at the site includes landscaping, removing chunks of the old interstates, taking out barriers placed on the southbound bridge to keep north and southbound traffic separated, and erasing the southbound bridge. The bridges are five miles north of Albany.



Strong quake shakes Seattle

SEATTLE (AP) - Baseball fans in the Kingdome swayed, windows in homes and stores as far as 100 miles away shook and the lights went out for thousands. But when it was all over, the strongest earthquake in the state in at least 15 years left behind no significant damage. One person broke her arm, but no serious injuries were reported.

"It was a terrible. My car rocked up. I stopped the car, walked back to the store, had a cigarette, walked back to the car," said David Thayer, of Sola Lake, who was driving on a bridge near the epicenter when the quake hit at 10:41 p.m. "I didn't know what had happened. I thought God had sent it." This morning, business owners near the epicenter were busy picking up merchandise that was knocked off shelves. "We had closed at 8 o'clock," said Greg Phillips, owner of the Monte Croveto Outlet. "I was here doing some stuff." Phillips said his store suffered only minor damage. "The floor was under the floor and exploded." There were a few things I like better than baseball," he said. "The big one sits and I've gotta go there a number I'd rather be than watching a baseball game."

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FBI issues alert after militia war plan found

SPokane, Wash. (AP) - Fears of potential domestic terrorism, should the standoff with Montana Freedom Park near, prompted the FBI to issue a nationwide alert to law-enforcement agencies, a newspaper reported today. The April 23 bulletin to police agencies included the text of a militia "war warning" that listed "tar-

gets of opportunity" in the event the military was used or militia leaders were assembled. The Spokesman-Review reported. Unidentified militia leaders called the war plan "Project West Nightmares," the newspaper said in a copyright story. FBI press officer Julie Weacher confirmed the nationwide alert was issued April 23 by the agency's National Security Division. "This is an ongoing matter with the Freedom Park issue in Montana and we're just not going to have any further comment," she said Thursday.

Mid-valley residents will carry Olympic torch in Corvallis

Albany Democrat-Herald
CORVALLIS - Don Rex, a long-time community volunteer in Albany, and Carol Menon Schaub, a graduate of Jefferson High School and an Olympic gold medalist in basketball, each will carry the Olympic torch when the relay reaches Corvallis Sunday. Rex's 6-mile leg of the relay will begin at Ninth Street and Pioneer Avenue at 10:17 p.m. He will pass on the flame to the next torch bearer at the corner of Highway 99W and Elm Drive. The 71-year-old Rex, an Albany resident since 1973, was chosen as one of the "community hero" torch-bearers, selected on the basis of service to the community. He was named Albany's Citizen of the Year in 1989 and is a member of the Albany Planning Commission. He is also a board member of Fish Emergency Services, the Albany Partnership for Housing and Community Development and United for Humanity. Schaub, played on U.S. women's basketball teams that won the gold medal in the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympic Games. She earned the Olympic torch when she relayed the torch to the United States at Oregon State University and played professional basketball in Europe and Japan. Schaub, 38, is a sales executive for TCC Media Services in Corvallis, is one of 400 Olympians selected to carry the torch.

Where and when
The following are links the Olympic flame and athletes will reach locations in Corvallis on Sunday.
■ 8:28 p.m. - Highway 99W and Pioneer Avenue.
■ 8:40 p.m. - Third Street and Elm Drive.
■ 8:49 p.m. - Third Street and Pioneer Avenue.
■ 8:55 p.m. - Central Park Community Center.
■ 9:02 p.m. - Monroe Avenue and Elm Drive.
■ 9:10 p.m. - Kings and Salsburg Avenues.
■ 9:18 p.m. - Buchanan and Ninth Street.
■ 9:22 p.m. - Ninth Street and City of Buchanan.
■ 9:27 p.m. - Ninth Street and West Avenue.
■ 9:32 p.m. - Ninth Street and Center.
■ 9:37 p.m. - North Street and Monroe Avenue.
The following Corvallis events will be broadcast from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday.
■ 7 p.m. - Monitors between Sixth and Jefferson avenues.
■ 8 p.m. - Monitors between Sixth and Eighth streets.
■ 8:30 p.m. - Monitors between Corvallis Arts Center and North Street.
When the procession arrives at Central Park, there will be a ceremony involving community leaders and Olympic officials.

Three Corvallis residents were selected as "community heroes" to carry the torch - Diane Mertens, Beverly Larson and 13-year-old Andrew Pater. The torch relay Sunday will travel from Elmwood Falls to Eugene via Astoria. At midnight at the University of Oregon, track champion Annette Peters will carry the Olympic flame around one lap of the track at Hayward Field to honor the late university track star Steve Prefontaine. Runners will take the torch the rest of the way along the Oregon route that includes Salem, Salsburg and Oregon City and Portland. The torch is to arrive in Salem in time for a 7:30 p.m. rally at the Capitol. Jeff Mankal, 14, a Central Linn High School senior from Brownsville, will be one of the torch carriers. He will run a 2.5-mile segment of the relay starting at 9:45 p.m. Sunday on Highway 99E at Jennings Avenue in Milwaukie. Mankal is a middle distance runner for the Central Linn track team. On Monday, the relay will travel from Eugene to St. Helens, 100 miles. Runners will then travel to Seaside, Clatsop, Wash. and end up at Olympia, Wash. The relay will come through Portland on May 8. The flame's tour through Oregon is part of an 84-day, 15,000-mile trek across the country with 10,000 torch-bearers carrying it. The relay, which will cross within a 100-mile distance of 90 percent of the U.S. population, is headed to Los Angeles, the site of the 1984 Summer Olympics, April 12 and will end at the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in Atlanta on July 18. In 1984, the relay went south through Oregon on its way to Los Angeles.