

Gavilan College student Kari Elin holds pre-historic knife she unearthed Sunday.

Pre-historic artifacts found at Scotts Valley City Hall

By JOAN RAYMOND and JOHN McNICHOLAS Sentinel Staff Writers

SCOTTS VALLEY - Seekers of ancient objects hidden in the ground took to the trenches over the Memorial Day weekend at City Hall, and uncovered some important new pieces in the mosaic of local pre-history.

While some sun worshipers spent their three-day holiday tanning on the beach sand, archaeological volunteers from throughout Northern California methodically turned shovelful after shovelful of dark earth in the parking lot of the civic building.

The painstaking digging and sifting of each section of the prehistoric campsite turned up paleo-Indian artifacts that lend certainty to previous estimates the site is at least 10,000 years old. The site may have been continuously inhabited since the end of the last ice age, says Kate Harper, president of the Santa Cruz Archaeological Socie-

Sunday afternoon, the searchers found a small artifact

chipped from local chert called a "crescent."

Harper called the find "extremely exciting. It pretty well dates the site, because they were made only between 6,500 and 9,000 years ago. They're fairly rare in Northern California and have never been found in this area."

been used to shoot at aquatic birds, could have been a Indian campfires and spear points. specialized knife form, or may have had "religious

All of Scotts Valley may have been a lake at the end of was simply an oversight. the last Ice Age, she explained, a rich larder for indigenous

Stone told the press the "oversight," which violated people. All that remains of that lake is the peat bog and the City Hall's building permit and the California Environ-

a qaurtzite "uniface," and all-purpose cutting and scraping tool with one worked face, Harper said. The tool falls ing tool with one worked face, Harper said. The tool falls When the bulldozer began the grading, Stone said he in the previously-unrepresented middle of the technolog- forgot about the prehistoric site. "When you're getting ical curve, between early crude quartzite tools and the things done for nothing, you take it when they come. I more sophisticated obsidian and chert artifacts

The technological progression represented by

evidence of tools found at the prehistoric camp may indicate that one culture used the site continuously from at least 10,000 years ago to 4,000 years ago, says Cabrillo College archaeologist Rob Edwards.

"One of the exciting things about this dig was it was completley volunteer," Edwards said. "It was one of the best digs I've seen. Everybody wanted to be there, and it was just delightful. I just walked around smiling."

He said when the crescent was found, experienced archaeologists let loose whoops of triumph.

"A lot of archaeologists were skeptical about this site. You think the Scotts Valley people were skeptical — you should have seen some of the professionals. They're basically skeptics, and need to see things proved in more than one way.

Edwards said one of those skeptics remarked after "I'm eating crow, and it tastes very good."

The two finds were the most exciting of many artifacts culled from the site over the weekend.

The volunteers continued the work of San Jose archaeologist Robert Cartier who unearthed artifacts three years ago before his dig was interrupted by the blade of a bulldozer.

In 1981, grading for the City Hall parking lot greatly She said the crescent's use is not known. It may have damaged the area where Cartier discovered remains of

> Former Mayor Friend Stone, who supervised the City Hall construction, said the illegal grading of the known site

spring near at Spring Lakes Mobile Home Park, she said. mental Quality Act, was due in part to the shoestring The second exciting find, which turned up Monday, is budget of the City Hall project that was being built by another breed of volunteers - builders

didn't think anything about it," Stone was quoted as

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