

Nokomis to "Dig the Past"

Contributed by Brenda Seekins
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NEWPORT ‐ With the support of a new Titan 1000 metal detector, students and advisors at Nokomis Regional High School will be "digging the past" in the coming weeks, and into next year. The new Nokomis Archaeology Club began several years ago when a contractor at the school dug a large pit for teachers to "seed" with a variety of "artifacts" for eventual "discovery" and study.

The Kellyco Metal Detector Superstore was intrigued with a question posed with a grant application. "Do you ever see a fat archaeologist?" That simple question garnered a \$200 grant for Nokomis teachers Howard Whitten and Brian Hanish for a hands-on history lesson.

Kellyco donated the Titan 1000 metal detector from its Florida showroom to the new Nokomis Archaeology club in Maine, including headphones and a finder's log. The metal detector company also will put information about the program on its website, www.kellycodetectors.com, and keep it updated with finds from the high school group.

Digging in the special archaeological pit at the school gets students out of the classroom and applying practical skills including critical thinking, collaborative work ethic and mathematics, graphing and plotting. Both Whitten and Hanish hope beyond the school-based dig, students will be able to get out into the district to assist individuals as well as historical societies, locating old farm foundations and local historical artifacts. They expect the original farmstead on the Nokomis property may be located or at least items from that earlier use. The project can also include mapping and documenting of local properties.

"It gets kids involved, engaged and outside," Whitten said. "Anything we find will go into the local historical collections, and any money finds can go into a pool to expand our equipment."

The Archaeology Club will eventually be one component of a history guild at the school to tap the interests of other students and classes, expanding into historical research, chemistry, social studies, and biology, and demonstrate a tie between the disciplines.

Kellyco will keep in touch with the Maine school to encourage the students to discover relics and learn history in an open-air environment. When the time comes to expand the archaeology program, Kellyco looks forward to providing support and assistance for the program's future needs.

Located in Winter Springs, FL., Kellyco, the world's largest and oldest distributor of hobby metal detectors, is housed in a 30,000 sq.ft. warehouse fully-stocked with the latest and greatest metal detecting equipment and technology. At any given time, there are more than 3,000 metal detectors in inventory and available to enthusiasts around the world.