

LICKING VALLEY GRAD DIGS UP SPANISH PAST

By SETH ROY

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HANOVER -- Licking Valley graduate Allison Galbari, 21, spent one month this summer digging for artifacts in an ancient necropolis in Spain.

She spent June in central Spain as part of an archaeological dig through ArchaeoSpain at a fifth-century B.C. settlement of Pintia.

"It was really exciting, all of the artifacts we were finding," she said. "Especially when you don't think anything's there."

This summer was the fifth field school, and the first outside the United States, for the Heidelberg College anthropology major.

"When I was little, I was interested in paleontology," said Galbari, adding that her interest shifted to archaeology later on. "It's very hands-on history."

She has been to Spain many times. She took the language in high school and college, and her family has friends in the country. Galbari said she can't speak the language fluently, but she knows much more about it after living in a small village for one month.

"I have more confidence now that I've spent a month there by myself," she said.

Galbari and a group of 10 students from the United States, Canada and the Netherlands stayed in a small village of 82 people during their time at the dig.

"By the end of the four weeks, we pretty much knew everyone there," she said.

The students spent every morning, Wednesday through Sunday, digging through the site for artifacts. They spent the afternoons either in a lab or in lectures.

"It had been buried because of a river that went through," Galbari said of Pintia and the necropolis. The dig team is working through the necropolis -- cemetery -- from one end to the other. "The further out you go, the closer you get to Roman," she said. "They can see how things were changing over time."

While digging, she found pottery, ceramic shards, metal grills and pieces of other artifacts. In the lab, the students cleaned the artifacts with a chemical bath or with water, depending on the material. "Then we put them all together and see what we can reconstruct from there," she said.

The city of Pintia dates to the fifth century B.C., around the Iron Age, and had few of its own natural resources. Residents farmed and traded their crops for other materials, such as metals, Galbari said.

The surrounding cities couldn't survive without Pintia because of its farming, so when the Romans wanted to conquer the area, they went for the city first.

Galbari and the other students would spend time away from the dig site on Mondays and Tuesdays, grocery shopping, logging on the Internet, seeing the city and traveling to other major Spanish cities.

"Mondays were pretty much our day," she said. "Tuesdays, we would always go to a major city."

After spending time in various archaeological digs, Galbari said she eventually wants to get her doctorate and teach the subject -- after she has plenty more on-site experiences. "I want to get lots of field experience," she said. "but I also want to be a teacher."

The field school experiences also have an effect on her thoughts about returning to college in August. "I'm sitting through classes thinking, 'I learned this four field schools ago,'" Galbari said.