Around 14,000 years ago, (when the Tualatin mastodon was alive) the area was a land of small hills with open evergreen forests, meadows, and wetlands. Just north of Mt. Rainier in Washington, stretched a huge glacier, thousands of feet thick and thousands of miles wide. Through that chilly world, the mastodon walked, munching leaves and twigs, avoiding predators such as dire wolves and scimitar cats. Although we don’t know for sure how she died, scientists speculate from where her bones were found that she may have drowned in a bog.

Mastodons and mammoths were both members of the elephant family, but they were very different creatures. Mastodons were primarily woodland browsers, feeding on shrubs and trees. Mammoths were open-country grazers. Both mastodons and mammoths died out in North America around 10,000 years ago.
The huge bones of the mastodon skeleton are on display at the Tualatin Library. The mastodon, now extinct, was once common in North America. The 14,000 year-old bones of this large mammal were discovered by Tualatin residents just a short distance from the Library.

The Tualatin Historical Society has led the effort to preserve, display, and interpret the Tualatin mastodon.

Sometimes, strange and surprising things are buried in your own backyard!

George (left) and Sund (right) received ‘A’ grades for their colossal class project.

Printed on recycled paper.