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Copper piece in city compelling regional history

February 24, 2014
The Mining Journal

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A large piece of Upper Peninsula history currently on display in Presque Isle Park is in danger of being removed - and permanently erased for future generations.

The 28.2 ton piece of glacial float copper sitting across the street from the Superior Watershed Partnership offices was brought here in 2010, after two Hancock men found the giant chunk of copper using a handheld metal detector device.

Late Marquette historian Fred Rydholm was instrumental in saving this piece of history from the smelter, and wanted it to be on display in Marquette.

It was brought here following his death in 2009, largely through the works of friends who had hoped to honor Rydholm's dream. Now, those friends are asking the public to help them ensure it stays here.

The Marquette County Community Foundation has established a fund to help the save world's largest piece of glacial float copper, and \$255,000 needs to be raised before this year is out, the partnership said in a news release.

According to the partnership, the Smithsonian Institute has confirmed the specimen is the largest known piece of glacial flat copper in the world, dwarfing the famous Ontonagon Boulder, which weighs less than two tons and is currently on display at the Smithsonian.

The chunk of copper was originally brought to Marquette with the intention of buying it from the owners. But, the money was not raised in time, and the owners extended the deadline by 18 months in October.

Whether or not the piece of copper is here in Marquette, we strongly believe it should remain intact. It is a valuable piece of history and a reminder of the strong mining legacy that helped build communities in the Upper Peninsula.

People who have an interest should consider a donation.

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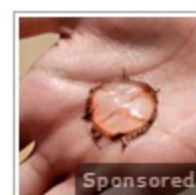
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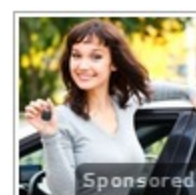
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