
South Central Association of Neighbors



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June 12, 2024 - SCAN Monthly Meeting Minutes

Board members present:

Wally Benson, Christine Chute, Victor Dodier, Brian Hart, Ariel Loveall, John Prohodsky, Ron Rubel, Jim Schepcke, Roz Shirack, Brian Sund, Lorrie Walker, Evan West, Mark Wigg

Jon Christenson and Jeff Schumacher were excused.

Guests were present as well. **See Exhibit A - Attendance Roster**

President Victor Dodier called the meeting to order at 6:27 pm with a quorum present.

1. Dr. David G. Lewis, featured speaker on the tribal history of the Willamette Valley

Jim Schepcke introduced Dr. Lewis, a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde. Both Jim and Dr. Lewis served on the editorial board of the [Oregon Encyclopedia](#). Dr. Lewis is an assistant professor of anthropology at Oregon State University whose research interest is the tribal history of the northwest. His blog is [The Quartux Journal](#).

Dr. Lewis and Jim Schepcke are members of the Oregon Heritage Commission.

David mentioned that Jim is a foodie and is a Mexican food expert.

Dr. Lewis's book, [The Tribal Histories of the Willamette Valley](#) was published in November 2023. Since the book was published, he has given 40 presentations. The stories in the book are expanded stories from his blog, [The Quartux Journal](#). He wrote the book to provide resources to teach Native American history. Oregon is still not teaching appropriate Native American history. His essays provide a personal perspective on history.

When Native Americans were settled on reservations their opportunities vanished. In the 1950's Native Americans were told to sell their land.

Malaria wiped out 90-95% of the Native Americans in the early 1800's. To settlers the land looked like it was unoccupied and was free for the taking.

Settlement of the Willamette Valley impacted the environment of the valley. Changes to the environment caused the loss of plants and animals Native Americans depended upon for

food resulting in mass starvation. They would steal food when they were starving. Another impact was that a one-horse trail became a wagon trail.

Joel Palmer, an Indian agent, offered inducements to move to reservations. Three tribes moved to Grand Ronde where they had no knowledge of the land.

There was no opportunity to work off the reservation. When there was an opportunity to work, a pass was needed to leave the reservation. When they worked off the reservation Native Americans would go to where they were from.

Native Americans were treated unequally and lost wealth. Settlers and officials were not following the law. At the turn of the 20th Century 1200 people were living at Grand Ronde. There were 400 left by the 1950's. Native Americans accepted change on their own terms.

The last time the Willamette Valley's landscape was in its natural state was the 1840's. Fire was used to manage the land and wetlands were abundant. Eugene was a wetland.

The Hays brothers, land speculators from California, bought land surrounding Lake Labish between 1913 and 1918. The Oregon Swamp Act provided them with the legal means to drain Lake Labish in 1918. They built a ditch, aka Labish Creek, to drain the lake.

Wapato Lake was drained in 1935 to get rid of swamp land by building a ditch to the Tualatin River. When lakes were drained, Wapato, also referred to as Indian potato, one of the most valuable foods in the valley also fed Canvas Back ducks. When Wapato disappeared and the ducks also disappeared. Often when ducks were shot, they were left behind. When Wapato came back naturally, the ducks did also.

Minto-Brown Island is a preserved native landscape. It is home to Camas and Junto (used for baskets). It's a seasonal wetland; swales form when it rains.

The Willamette Valley needs both cultural fire and seasonal water to thrive as it was in the 1840's.

John Prohodsky asked about the impact of beavers on the valley's landscape. Beaver dams help maintain wetlands and prevent forest fires.

Jim Schepke asked what the valley looked like before the settlers arrived. There would be lots of villages, especially along the Willamette. There were summer villages along rivers and winter villages on rises to protect from flooding.

Evan West asked what would you do promote understanding of local Native American history? Signage telling the story of Native Americans. For example, a Chemeketa village was located at River Front Park. Dr. Lewis recommended Ned Blackhawk's book, [*The Rediscovery of America: Native Peoples and the Unmaking of U.S. History.*](#)

A question was asked about the Confederated Tribes. In the 1853-55 treaty period treaties were signed by 7 tribes. They were never ratified by Congress. Most of the Native

Americans governed by the treaties went to the Grand Ronde reservation. Often several tribes signed treaties. When congress ratified those treaties they often ratified multiple treaties at once which treated multiple tribes as one tribe.

The Grand Ronde tribe is increasing its land holdings. The Tribe has a land officer and budget to buy land at market rates. The amount of land purchased is constrained by the Tribe's ability to manage their land.

The Grand Ronde had to sue the BIA to be recognized as a sovereign nation.

Occasionally Wapato can be found at the Asian food store on Market St.

2. Board election:

Of the 8 current Board members up for re-election seven consented to stand for another 2-year term as a SCAN Board member. They are Christine Chute, Victor Dodier, John Prohodsky, Ron Rubel Jim Scheppke, Brian Sund, and Evan West. Three people were nominated from the floor:

- Shay Fitzsimmons
- Nic Olson
- Stephan Wood

A voice vote was taken. All were elected on a unanimous vote.

3. Announcements

Neighborhood Night Out is August 6th.

Joan Stembridge is looking for people to be on the Bush Park graffiti abatement team. Volunteers will be trained to clean and paint over graffiti.

VIVA Salem featuring food, music, and more with a Latin flavor is Saturday, September 28th.

4. President's report

SCAN Goals for 2024-25 will be set at the July meeting.

SCAN's normal meeting place, South Salem High School, is closed during the summer and we will need to meet elsewhere. Victor will make arrangements to meet elsewhere, preferably Pringle Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 8:11.

Exhibit A

Attendees for Month Day, 2023 SCAN Meeting

Board Member	Email Address	Present	Board Member	Email Address	Present
Benson, Wally	wkbenson4@gmail.com	X	Rubel, Ron	ronrubel@comcast.net	X
Christenson, Jon	scan.50yrs.1973.2023@gmail.com	Excused	Schepcke, Jim	jschepcke@comcast.net	X
Chute, Christine	cachute@gmail.com	X	Schumacher, Jeff	jeff.schumacher@gmail.com	Excused
Dodier, Victor	vjdodier@teleport.com	X	Shirack, Roz	rozshirack7@gmail.com	X
Hart, Brian	brianhart@gmail.com	X	Sund, Brian	sund60@icloud.com	X
Loveall, Ariel	oversunoversky@hotmail.com	X	Walker, Lorrie	dakotalor@msn.com	X
Peterson, Josh	joshua.g.peterson@gmail.com		West, Evan	evanwest714@gmail.com	X
Prohodsky, John	johnmpro@gmail.com	X	Wigg, Mark	mark_wigg@hotmail.com	X

Other Attendees

Vanessa Nordyke, City Councilor Ward 7
Amanda Heather
L J Anderson
Chris D’Arcy
Andrew Grimshaw
Arel Grimshaw
Emily Standish
Lart and Angela Obery
Jake Morris
Dianna Villanueva
Mary Fitzpatrick
Jeff Williernier
Keith and Trina Sorensen
Jenn Fiddynewt
Michelle and Russ Liche
Alice Phalen
Peter Bergel
Susan Miller
Stephan Wood
Marcia Kelly

Tom Schennermann
Sue Darren
Carlene Benson
Deb Patterson
Karen Freeman
Nancy Todd
Lara Knudsen
K.Jones
Joan Stembridge
Jim Stembridge
Jena Knudsen
Ernesto Forcatec
Marcela Gorcaleck
Sha Fitsimmons
Claudia Howells
Alwin Turiel
Nicholas Olson
Brittiny Olson