

Whidbey Native Connections Initiative Newsletter March 27, 2024

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 6:30 PM: NEXT NCI MEETING

We have invited Michelle Cladusbid (Adopted Tlingit) and Tony Cladusbid (Swinomish Tribal Member and descendant of the Lower Skagit) to speak during our April meeting. They will share about the Indigenous presence on Central and North Whidbey, and tell us about opening Beaver Tales Coffee on the Coupeville Wharf. They have an inspiring vision to create an Indigenous Cultural Hub on the wharf.

BEAVER TALES COFFEE ARRIVES IN COUPEVILLE



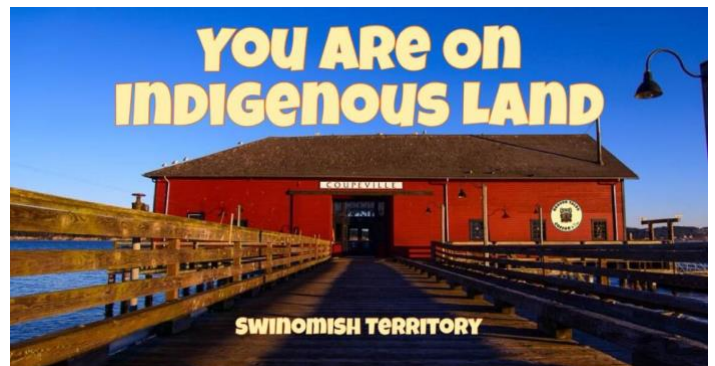
Beaver Tales Coffee is “a Woman/Native Owned Coffee Roaster, Coffee Shop and Cultural Gift Shop” that has locations in La Conner and Oak Harbor, and now Coupeville. The owners are Michelle Cladusbid (Ah Dah Néik - Adopted Tlingit) & Tony Cladusbid (Spah Kia Kud - Swinomish Tribal Member). Their tagline is “*Coffee Roasted with Love and Served Fresh in the Usual & Accustomed Area of the Swinomish Tribal Community.*”

This winter Michelle and Tony bought the restaurant on the Coupeville Wharf that was formerly occupied by The Cove. Beaver Tales Coffee on the Wharf opened for business on Friday, March 1, 2024, with a grand opening planned for May 18th to coincide with the Penn Cove Water Festival.

Michelle and Tony’s vision is to develop **swədəbš Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve: An Indigenous Cultural Center Connecting the Rich Past to the Vibrant Future.** “We propose the creation of an Indigenous Cultural Hub in Coupeville, WA, integrating a restaurant/coffee shop, gift shop, gallery, and educational spaces into a comprehensive center. This multifaceted approach aims to provide an immersive and educational experience for visitors while supporting, preserving, and celebrating the rich heritage of our indigenous communities.”

For more on the vision for a cultural center, click here:

<https://www.beavertalescoffee.com/visionwho-we-are>



SPRING BOOK DISCUSSIONS: [Register here](#)

Once again, we are thrilled to have Frances Wood offer three online discussion sessions of books by Native authors. You can attend one or all sessions. Copies of each book are available in the Sno-Isle Library system and soon in the UUCWI library as well. **Register to receive the Zoom link**, and Frances' study questions that you can keep close as you read or review.

Wednesday, April 17, 6:30pm on Zoom: *Red Paint: The Ancestral Autobiography of a Coast Salish Punk*, by Sasha taqʷšəblu LaPointe



LaPointe is from the Nooksack and Upper Skagit Tribes and grew up moving around the Pacific Northwest with her family, developing a passion for the punk scene and keeping alive her responsibility of being the namesake of her beloved great-grandmother, Vi taqʷšəblu Hilbert -- a linguist who helped preserve Lushootseed.

Wednesday, May 22: *Jesintel: Living Wisdom from Coast Salish Elders* (essays and photographs), published by Children of the Setting Sun

PODCAST: YAI (YOUNG AND INDIGENOUS) AND SASHA LAPOINTE

YAI Podcast interviews local author, musician, and professor, Sasha taqʷšəblu LaPointe! Her memoir *Red Paint: The Autobiography of a Coast Salish Punk*, is the topic of discussion and is our book read for April. [Listen here.](#)

LYLA JUNE: ARCHITECTS OF ABUNDANCE

If you missed Lyla June Johnson's lecture on March 22, you can view the recording of it [here](#) on YouTube, courtesy of the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation.

Indigenous Regenerative Food Systems & the Excavation of Hidden History

Trudy Sundberg Lecture Series, this free public event was sponsored by the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation.

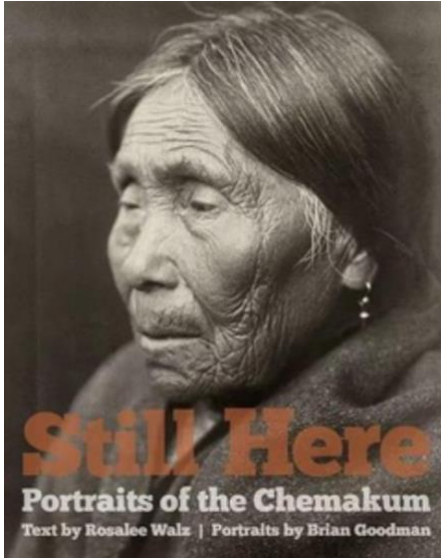
Dr. Lyla June Johnston, Indigenous musician, poet, scholar, and community organizer of Diné (Navajo), Tsétséhestáhesé (Cheyenne), and European lineages, will speak on what can be learned from pre-colonial Indigenous food and land management techniques to combat our current climate crisis.

FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 4 PM: At the Coupeville Library
John Halliday (Muckleshoot and Duwamish): What is a Chief? How Native Values Can Teach Resilience

If you missed John Halliday's talk, you can view images [here on the Sno-Isle Library Foundation website.](#)



MARCH 1—APRIL 28: STILL HERE: PORTRAITS OF THE CHEMAKUM EXHIBIT



An exhibit of 4' x 5' black and white portraits of the Chemakum People will run March 1—April 28 in Port Townsend. The public is welcome to view the portraits in the foyer, fellowship hall, and sanctuary at the Quimper Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2333 San Juan Avenue, PT on **Fridays March 8 to April 19** from noon to 3 pm. Questions: ncagquuf@gmail.com

Chemakum people, who lived in the Chimacum Creek watershed, have been widely considered extinct and written out of history. In fact, there are many Chemakum descendants.

They hold a family gathering each summer to honor the lives and history of their people. In 2021, the League of Extraordinary Observers (LEO) was invited to photograph the families at this event and a special exhibit of these photographs was unveiled at Chimacum High School April 14, 2022.

The exhibition has its genesis in the monthly meetings of the Chemakum History Group, a committee of the QUUF's Native Connections Action Group. It is chaired by Maria Mendes and Barbara Jo Blair and includes Chemakum descendants, representatives from local Chimacum organizations, the Chimacum School District, and the Jefferson County Historical Society.

Brian Goodman was the principal photographer of this project with assistance of LEO members Tim Lawson, Robert Tognoli, and Kerry Tremain.

"We are grateful to them and to the Chemakum History Group for helping to correct the record and acknowledging that we are, indeed, still here," says Rosalee Walz, Chair of the Chemakum Tribe.

SATURDAY, MARCH 30: FIELD TRIP TO VIEW EXHIBIT WITH PRESENTATION

Saturday, March 30 from 3-5 pm in the sanctuary at QUUF the Chemakum will share their story with the community. All are welcome.

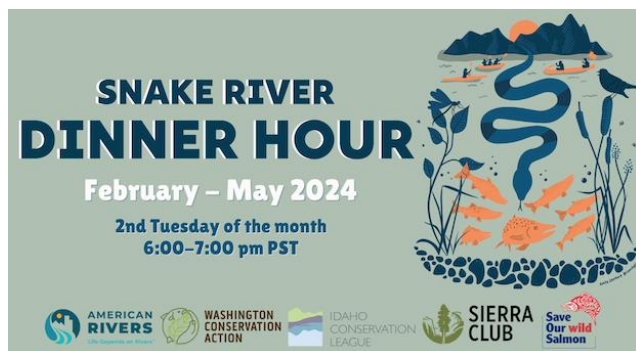
Join other NCI folks on a field trip for this special presentation. We'll walk on the 1:15 Port Townsend ferry. Members of the PT Native Connections Action Group have generously offered to give us rides from the ferry to the hall and back again. You can choose to return on the 5:15, 6:45, or 8:30 ferries. **Please [register by emailing](#) us by Sunday, March 24th** to reserve a ride in Port Townsend.

JULY 6—12: BLUE HERON CANOE LANDING ON WHIDBEY

Save the dates for the annual visit of the Blue Heron Canoe Family. Once again, we will provide some meals for them, and are welcome to participate in classes and cultural events that they will be offering. They will be camped at the South Whidbey Fairgrounds near the Fiddle Faddle Farm.

Saturday, July 6, ~5:00 PM: Landing and official protocol at SeaWall Park in Langley
Sunday, July 7: Potluck dinner

PROTECTING ORCA BY RESTORING SALMON



We can continue to put pressure on our legislators to follow the Biden Administration’s [ten-year plan](#) to restore salmon, tackle the climate challenge, and modernize the Columbia River Treaties. Follow the news at [Save Our Wild Salmon](#) and join their virtual “[Snake River Dinner Hour](#)” webinar series on the 2nd Tuesdays of the month, February—May, at 6-7 pm.

The second installment of this webinar series is **Tuesday, March 12th at 6:00 pm PST** and will focus on “How to Restore a River.” They will share more about the concrete actions and commitments and how we can support them.

SUNDAY, MAY 19 – MONDAY, MAY 27: GATHERING OF THE EAGLES

The Indigenous-led group from Lhaq'temish (Lummi) territory once again will conduct a mini-canoe journey through their ancestral lands and waters. This gathering is led by Sul ka dub (Phreddie Xwenang Lane) and the Alliance of Earth, Sky & Water Protectors.

Their bridge-building ‘Celebration of Intergenerational Cultural Heritage’ begins with a 7-island canoe journey through the San Juan Islands with five canoes. As they camp on various islands, they will offer cultural exchanges, storytelling, meditation, prayer circles, traditional song & dances with some arts & crafts vendors, and gift-making.

Saturday, May 25, they plan to paddle to Bellingham for Coast Salish Day at Squilicum Creek where they will participate in Ski-to-Sea festivities with an Indigenous flair at Maritime Heritage Park. Their journey concludes with the Alliance of Earth, Sky & Water Protectors event, including a Clam & Oyster Bake, at the Lummi Stommish Grounds (Wexliem House.)

All events are free and open to the public. Updated information and details are available on their [Facebook Page](#). Sign up on the form to participate and volunteer.



Image from the GOTE Facebook Page

UPDATES ON STATE LEGISLATION IMPACTING TRIBES AND NATIVE PEOPLE

At our February NCI meeting, we recommended that people support two criminal justice bills and a third bill supporting education on tribal sovereignty.

HB 2065: Would allow state court judges to **retroactively** do away with the use of juvenile points in sentencing.

HB 2001: This bill would provide judicial discretion to modify sentences in the interests of justice.

HB 1332. Supporting public school instruction in tribal sovereignty and federally recognized Indian tribes.

Unfortunately, the 2024 legislative session ended on March 7th without passing any of these bills. For more information about how these bills impact Indigenous people and Tribes, see our previous newsletters. During the coming months we can continue to communicate with our legislators how these issues are important to us.

INDIGENOUS NEWS SOURCES: If you'd like to stay current on the news from Indigenous people and their communities, here are some excellent sources:

[Native News Online](#)

[Indian Country Today](#)

[High Country News, Indigenous Affairs](#)

[Seattle Crosscut, Indigenous Affairs](#)

The UUCWI and WIFM convene on the traditional lands of the sduhubs (Snohomish People), the Lower Skagit People, Swinomish, and Samish. Many other people of Coast Salish Nations utilized the coast and nearby waters, and we acknowledge the significant ways the Indigenous People are still here, continuing to steward this island that is known in Lushootseed as Ts'a-kol-chey, in ways physical, spiritual, political, and social.

We honor the elders of the past, present, and future, with profound gratitude.

Whidbey Native Connections Initiative

is a justice initiative of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Whidbey Island, (UUCWI) and is supported by UU infrastructure, visionary foundations, and regional and national social-justice sister organizations, such as JUUsticeWA.

We are also supported by Whidbey Island Friends Meeting (WIFM) in ways too numerous to count. Contact us at nciwhidbey@gmail.com