

The Growth of Tamánwit, a community of member artists

By Gabby Robinson, for the W.S. Community Action Team

(The following is a narrative of the development of Tamánwit: A Community of Warm Springs Artists.)

By early springs 2014 a dozen Warm Springs community members had held several informal meetings to discuss the possibility of starting an artisans' cooperative.

A co-op enables people to work together to increase profits and improve their businesses collaboratively, which ultimately eases stress related to business and financial management.

From those early 2014 informal meetings, a steering committee was established to help Warm Springs' artists find opportunities for community members to sell their work and share their traditional arts and crafts with others.

Thus, an artisan's cooperative was formed.

In 2016—in collaboration of the Warm Springs Community Action Team—the group began having regular meetings and workshops, attended by up to 25 community members.

What began as informal meetings, now has a Facebook group called *Warm Springs Artisans Community*, and a page titled *Tamánwit: A Community of Warm Springs Artists* with over 120 members each.

In the summer 2017 the group selected its name, and its participants have now elected official

board members who are dedicated to help the organization become a legal entity, in collaboration with the Community Action Team.

On Tamánwit's official website you can view artists who helped Tamánwit become a reality. You can also see some of their beautiful work. The website is: warmspringsartists.org

Tamánwit names board

Warm Springs artists create many different types of art including beadwork, huckleberry baskets, ceramics, cedar root baskets, pine needle baskets, quilts, traditional ribbon shirts and wing dresses, traditional jingle dresses, paintings, deer hide bags and moccasins, and buckskin dresses.

After the success of artists during the solar eclipse events, and the Community Action Team Outdoor Market, participants decided to take the next step forward and hold the election of Tamánwit's board members in late September of this year.

Six individuals were elected: Gerald Danzuka, Shayleen Eaglespeaker, Marge Kalama, Tamera Coffee, Aurolyn Stwyer, and Tamera Moody.

They held their second board meeting October 23, resulting in the appointment of official positions for board members. Gerald Danzuka was chosen president; Shayleen Eaglespeaker, vice president; Tamera Moody, treasurer.

The board, in collaboration with the Community Action Team staff, is committed and dedicated towards the development of Tamánwit.

The progress made thus far could not have proceeded so quickly without the assistance of First Nations Development Institute's Native Arts Initiative grant funds.

FNDI provided the seed money for this historical and timely undertaking.

The board members' first priority lies in finding efficient ways to make Tamánwit a self-sufficient legal entity.

This includes writing articles of incorporation and bylaws, defining the terms, roles and responsibilities for board members; developing requirements for participating community members; and determining what types of partners and grants the organization could benefit from.

Currently the organization is working towards facilitating economic opportunity for Warm Springs Indian Reservation artists; providing educational opportunities for aspiring Native artists; and increasing public knowledge and understanding of the tribal arts and crafts of the Columbia River Plateau.

While Tamánwit still has a long road ahead, it has proven that it holds the motivation and willingness to empower community members with artistic knowledge and business opportunity.

If you're interested in viewing the fruits of Warm Springs artists' labor, visit Art Adventure gallery in Madras during the month of November where six artists are showcasing their work.

Tamánwit at Art Adventure



Painting by Emily Courtney, on display with other tribal pieces at the Art Adventure Gallery.

Warm Springs artists are featured through November at the Art Adventure Gallery in Madras. The show is *Tamánwit: A Community of Warm Springs Artists*.

The show features works by

Anita Jackson, Aurolyn Stwyer, John Finch, Pamela Louis, Beatrice Lopez, and other Warm Springs artists. Stop by and check it out, Art Adventure Gallery, 185 SE Fifth Street in Madras.

Documentary confronts use of Native mascots

A film screening at Central Oregon Community College confronts use of Native American mascots.

More Than a Word, a documentary about the controversial use of Native Americans as sports mascots, will screen at COCC in Madras from noon to 1:30 p.m. on Monday, November 13; and at the Bend campus on Thursday, November 30.

This film is free and open to the public. A facilitated discussion will follow.

In *More Than a Word*: Documentarian brothers John and Kenn Little take an in-depth look at the growing movement to change the name of the Washington Redskins football team—referred to as the “R*dskins” by the film-

makers.

The film also addresses the overall controversy involving Native American sports team mascots, and its impact on indigenous peoples.

“The significance of the film is that it enlightens and educates non-Native people on a very controversial subject,” said Michelle Cary, COCC's Native American program coordinator.

“This film seeks to shed light on the fact that Native Americans are real people who are alive and productive citizens of today, not just symbols of past history.”

For information on this event, contact Michelle Cary, Native American program coordinator, at 541-318-3782. Or: mcary@cocc.edu

Plateau Indian Art on Main Street, Joseph

The Josephy Center for Arts and Culture just received a large grant from the Oregon Community Foundation to engage a Plateau Indian artist to add his or her work to the bronze streetscape that the city of Joseph now displays.

The City of Joseph is named after Nez Perce leader Chief Joseph, as is the annual rodeo. In the past several years, local foundries and galleries, working with city officials, have developed a streetscape that features a dozen bronze sculptures. The state of Oregon recently designated the city an art district.

Four of the dozen bronze sculptures currently on Main Street depict Indians; none of them are the work of tribal artists.

The Josephy Center wrote the grant. And along with tribal representatives they will select an artist to do the work.

The Josephy Center is named after Alvin M. Josephy Jr., the noted

historian of the Nez Perce and long-time advocate for American Indians.

The center is home to a library of books that Josephy collected over his long career. Many of the books deal with Plateau Indian culture and history, and students and writers come frequently to explore Indian themes and share their work with local and visiting audiences.

The Center has a large exhibit space, and for the last four years has devoted a June show to Indian art and culture, including a show of “gift art” curated by the Nez Perce National Historical Park; another of Crows Shadow art prints; and this summer one of historical photos of the Nez Perce gathered from the National Park, the University of Idaho, and the Wallowa History Center.

The connection of the city, the Oregon Community Foundation,

and the Josephy Center promises an exciting turn for Indian artists and Indian interpretation of history and place.

Tribal artists interested in the opportunity have until January 15 to send resumes and portfolios to the center. The project calls for 3-dimensional public art, but is not restricted to bronze sculpture—the medium is artist's choice.

Up to three artists will then each receive \$1,000 and six weeks to develop proposals for a sculpture to stand in the Josephy Center courtyard, or on Joseph's adjacent Main Street. One artist will then receive one-third of the \$25,000 award, and have a year to complete the project.

Interested artists are encouraged to call the Josephy Center, 541-432-0505, and talk with Director Cheryl Coughlan or library head Rich Wandschneider. Or email: rich.wandschneider@gmail.com

Ornaments headed for America Celebrates display

The tribes this winter will have ornaments in the *America Celebrates* lights display in Washington, D.C., this winter.

The ornaments—representing the three tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation—were created by the teachers and students of the Culture and Heritage Language program.

They worked on the colorful decorations at the Warm Springs Academy Rise & Shine program, in cooperation with the High Desert Museum.

Culture and Heritage last week shipped the ornaments to the National Park Service in Washington, D.C.

The handcrafted ornaments will be among those adorning the 56 *America Celebrates* trees at the nation's capital.



Dave McMechan/Spilyay

The trees represent the 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. The ornaments from Warm Springs will be on the Oregon tree.

The lighting ceremony will be the evening of November 30. You can watch the event live on the internet at thenationaltree.org

The show will then re-air on the Hallmark Channel on Monday, December 4. The trees will be on display from December 1 through January 1.

The National Christmas Tree Lighting is one of the country's oldest holiday traditions. President Calvin Coolidge did the first lighting in 1923.

Tree decorations as created by the Culture and Heritage Language program. The ornaments are clear spheres that can be filled with decorations. The Language students and teachers then painted the outside.