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Atiyeh to speak in Tualatin

The public is invited to hear “Whatever Happened to the Last Republican Governor”

By **YVONNE ADDINGTON**
READER CONTRIBUTOR

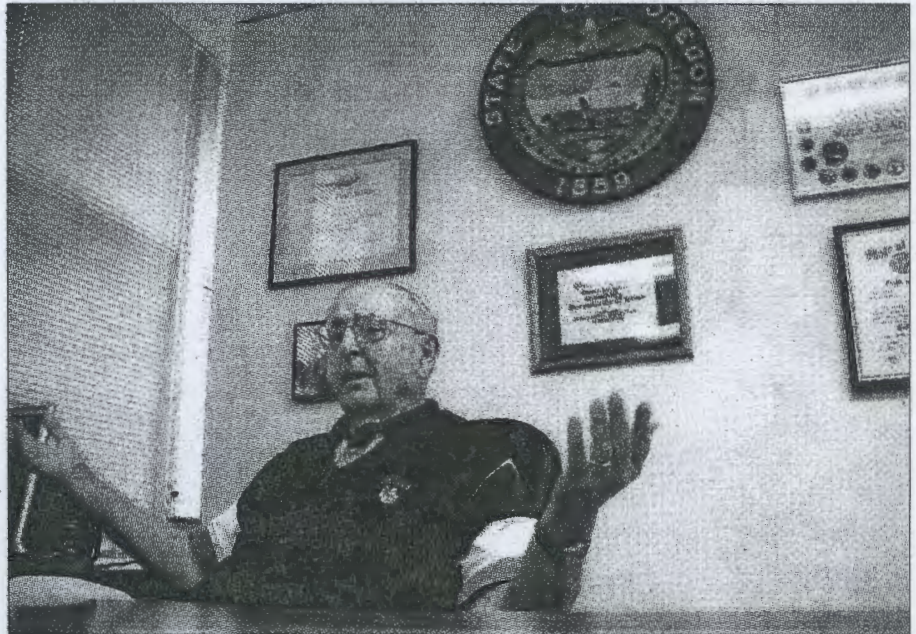
Former Oregon Gov. Victor Atiyeh will speak at 1 p.m. Wednesday during the Tualatin Historical Society meeting in the Tualatin Heritage Center, 8700 S.W. Sweek Drive. The public is invited.

“We are pretty excited that he is coming,” said Yvonne Addington, president of the Historical Society and an Atiyeh appointment as the first Oregon Community Development manager. The title of his speech will be “Whatever Happened to the Last Republican Governor,” which covers a lot of territory, Atiyeh said. Atiyeh was Oregon governor from 1979 to 1987.

Although often thought of only as a public servant, Atiyeh grew up in a family retail business and spent 35 years full time in the company, Atiyeh Bros. Inc., serving as president after his father died. He resigned after being elected governor.

After he left office, he began a business, Victor Atiyeh & Co., as an international trade consultant and has been the president and CEO since inception.

He served as governor during a national recession in the early 1980s that was especially difficult for Oregonians.



MICHAEL LLOYD/THE OREGONIAN/2009

In an interview last year, former Gov. Victor Atiyeh recalls the recession of the early 1980s, when he was in office.

Atiyeh personally led the state in recruiting the first wave of Asian companies to invest and create jobs in Oregon. He made nine trips to Japan as chief executive and was actively involved in recruiting many major companies to Oregon.

In that capacity, he came to know many leading Japanese businesses, such as Seiko, Epson, NEC, Fujitsu and others.

His lifetime of service is marked by honors, awards, peer and public recognition, honorary academic degrees and professional achievements in business and government.

He also represented Washington County in the Oregon Senate from 1965-1978 and the House

of Representatives from 1959-1964.

An interest in history led him to serve as president of Multnomah Muzzle Loading Rifle Association; Oregon Historical Society Board, Washington County Historical Society Board, Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation, Boy Scouts of America, Japan America Society of Oregon; Commission on Indian Services, World Affairs Council.

He was class president of Washington High School in 1941, where he was all-city football guard and captain of the football team.

Yvonne Addington is president of the Tualatin Historical Society