

Merry Christmas — Feliz Navidad — Happy Holidays

# Linn County



# REPORTER

What's happening in Linn County, Oregon

December 2024

## Magical Holiday Celebration lights, displays at Expo Center

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — December is always a busy month at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center, but this year, three of the mid-valley's favorite holiday events have come together for a colorful and exciting Mid-Valley Magical Holiday Celebration.



Kris Barnes

This colorful event features the annual Christmas Storybook Land, the Town and Country Christmas Bazaar and new this year, the always popular Pastega Christmas Lights that have enchanted young and old alike for decades.

The Mid-Valley Magical Holiday Celebration features nearly a full month of holiday cheer. Christmas Storybook Land and Pastega Christmas Lights will run from Nov. 30 to Dec. 22. Hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturdays and



Sundays, and 4-8 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

Pastega Christmas Light figures — which graced the Pastega Pepsi Bottling plant in Corvallis for decades — are now housed inside at the Fair & Expo Center.

Admission is free, but canned and non-perishable foods are wel-

come.

The annual Coastal Farm & Ranch Town & Country Bazaar — featuring works by more than 200 craftsmen and artists — will run from Dec. 6-8. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Dec. 6-7 and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Dec. 8.

In all, there will be more than 60,000 square feet filled with tasty treats, jewelry, local art, candles and more.

Admission is \$2. Children 12 and under are admitted free.

Learn more at [www.lcfairexpo.com](http://www.lcfairexpo.com) or see page 15.

## Merry Christmas Linn County

Linn County Treasurer Michelle Hawkins and her husband Jeff, have done it again.

They spent the Thanksgiving holiday decorating the Courthouse Christmas Tree that stands in the second floor rotunda.

This year's theme is red and white and is the 15th for the couple.

See story on Page 11



Call the Linn County Board of Commissioners at 541-967-3825.





The Linn County Reporter is digitally published monthly by the Linn County Board of Commissioners.

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## Linn County Board of Commissioners



Roger Nyquist



Sherrie Sprenger



Will Tucker

The Board of Commissioners meet at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesdays.

You can listen to the meetings by calling 541-704-3002 PIN 8442.

Call 541-967-3825

# New custodial supervisor is “living the dream”

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — Little boys often dream of becoming a firefighter, policeman or airplane pilot when they grow up, but none of those careers interested James Weber.

Weber, the new Linn County custodial supervisor, vacuumed his first carpet at the age of three and ran a floor buffer when he was just 12. By the time he was a teenager, he knew he wanted to make his living as a custodian.

And even before he graduated from high school, Weber, now 27, was “living the dream” as folks like to say. His part-time job in high school was as custodian in local schools.

“It kind of runs in our family,” Weber said of his career choice. “My great-great aunt spent 22 years as a custodian and my grandmother was a custodian at North Albany Middle School. I remember helping her.”

After graduating from West Albany High School in 2015, Weber worked for Greater Albany Public Schools for six years and then became a custodial supervisor with the Corvallis Clinic for three years.

He joined Linn County in November, succeeding long-time custodial supervisor Rick Slover, who retired.

Weber said he enjoys his job because he can see — and even hear — progress.

“When I vacuum, I can hear dirt being picked up and I can see the cleaner carpet,” Weber said. “When I polish a floor, I can see the new shine. I take a lot of pride in that. I know some people don’t enjoy stripping and polishing floors, but I really like it.”

Weber said he also enjoys the great variety of work needed to keep Linn County buildings shiny. “We have everything from carpet to terrazzo,” Weber said. “I even enjoy working with the classic brown tile.”

Weber is single and says becoming a supervisor has allowed him to meet a major goal — purchasing his own home before the age of 30.

Weber not only enjoys custodial work, it is also his hobby.



New Linn County custodial supervisor James Weber knew he wanted to be a custodian when he was in grade school.

On weekends, Weber will travel up to 200 miles going to garage sales, where he looks for antique custodial equipment such as industrial vacuums or floor polishers. “I must have at least 10 floor buffers,” he said. “I also like vintage radios.”

At Corvallis Clinic, Weber supervised a staff of 20. With Linn County, he supervises three people.

“My goal is to update our methods and to standardize the products we use,” Weber said.

General Services Director Russ Williams said in announcing Weber’s hiring, “We are thrilled to announce that James Weber has joined us as our Custodial Supervisor. His selection was unanimously approved by the interview team and endorsed by our custodial consultant. With a custodial background in the medical field and in the Albany School District, James brings an impressive skill set and a fresh perspective that we believe will significantly benefit our team. Raised in Albany, he has a connection to our community, making him an ideal fit for our organization.”

## Linn County to host immunization clinics

The Linn County Communicable Disease Prevention team will offer three school vaccination events in December, ahead of the deadline for school exclusions.

They are:

- Tuesday, Dec. 17, from noon to 7 p.m., at Linn County Health office, 1600 S. Main St., in Lebanon.
- Wednesday, Dec. 18, from noon to 7 p.m., at Linn County Health office, 799 Long St., in Sweet Home.
- Friday, Dec. 20, from noon to 7 p.m., at the Old Armory, 104 4th Ave.

SW, in Albany.

All childhood immunizations will be offered. Please preregister at least two days before the event of your choice at [https://](https://www.cognitoforms.com/linncountydepartmentofhealthservices/immunizationregistration)

[www.cognitoforms.com/linncountydepartmentofhealthservices/immunizationregistration](https://www.cognitoforms.com/linncountydepartmentofhealthservices/immunizationregistration). No walk-ins will be accepted after 6:30 p.m.

## Marine Patrol accepting applications

Are you looking for a fun and exciting summer job? We have great news. Applications are being accepted for Marine Patrol Deck Hand for the Linn County Sheriff’s Office.

The position is a temporary position and works from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend (late May through early September). Position duration is subject to change.

For more information, and to apply, visit <https://buff.ly/3vAgIT5>



# District Attorney Marteeny learns about border efforts

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — Linn County District Attorney Doug Marteeny saw the workings of the Customs and Border Protection agents up close November 6, as one of five Oregon District Attorneys invited to spend time at the U.S.-Mexico border near San Diego, Calif.

Marteeny was a guest of the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program (HIDTA) which assists local law enforcement agencies that are committed to responding to drug trafficking.

“We received briefings from Customs and Border Protections and Homeland Security Investigations,” Marteeny said.

Topics included fentanyl abatement and suppression team reports.

“Our Border Patrol agents are the front line for preventing entry of drugs, human trafficking and terrorists from entering the United States,” Marteeny said.

Marteeny said he visited the San Ysidro Port of Entry, where 100,000 people cross every day.

Marteeny said he learned that trafficking in methamphetamine and cocaine are both up and heroin is down.

“Drugs are one of the main things crossing our borders that affect our communities,” he said. “Human trafficking also crosses our borders and we are now seeing an influx of Chinese nationals crossing borders illegally. Once they



**Above:** A portion of the border wall between the United States and Mexico. **Right:** Drugs were being smuggled into the United States in a fuel tank. **Below:** A fake Louie Viton saddle.

cross our border, they are told they must work off the crossing fees and then are held in servitude.”

Marteeny said there is also an increase in the number of Chinese nationals who have come into the United States and are running illicit marijuana operations.

“They are violating state growing rules, code enforcement, environmental laws and are creating a huge drain on the power grid,” Marteeny said.

Marteeny said Chinese nationals are also involved in illegal massage parlor operations (one such case prosecuted in Linn County a few years ago).

Marteeny said the group also toured the border wall and saw several iterations of fencing, put into place over decades.

“For me, this trip confirmed the dedication of our Border Patrol professionals. They want to serve our country and make it safer. It is an overwhelming job.”

According to the Drug Enforcement Agency, the HIDTA Program was created by Congress in 1988. There are 33 HIDTAs and HIDTA counties are in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia.

To qualify for consideration as a HIDTA, an area must meet the following criteria:

- The area is a significant center of

illegal drug production, manufacturing, importation, or distribution;

- State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies have committed resources to respond to the drug trafficking problem in the area, thereby indicating a determination to respond aggressively to the problem;
- Drug-related activities in the area are having a significant harmful impact in the area and in other areas of the country; and
- A significant increase in allocation of Federal resources is necessary to respond adequately to drug related activities in the area.

# New nutrition program brings food security close to home

ALBANY — Families and farmers in Linn County had a delicious and nutritious new program to sink their teeth into this growing season.

The Food for Health pilot program, developed by the Linn County Health Education and Maternal and Child Health teams, is an innovative project that aims to provide food to families in need while also investing in the local economy. Through this pilot, Linn County staff delivered free, fresh, and local food straight to 50 families’ doors, twice a month for more than five months.

Participating families from across Linn County were happy to receive boxes of colorful fresh produce and protein every two weeks. Linn County’s Maternal and Child Health team, composed of nurses who do home visits to new low-income parents, helped identify and enroll patients and families from their client pools who had indicated a need for food assistance. After a five-minute phone call, they were signed up and eligible to receive food boxes all season long.

With rising food costs at grocery stores and farmstands alike, participants reported they simply would not have had access



Tomatillo harvesting.

to these in-season fruits and veggies, let alone ones from local farms, if not for this pilot program. In a survey conducted after the program’s completion, one participant stated, “My kids are thrilled. They can be picky eaters, but they look forward to these boxes because they are filled with exciting new foods.”

Funded by grants from the American Heart Association and Oregon Health Authority, Food for Health staff contracted directly with farmers from Linn County and the surrounding area to pur-



Diego Nieto delivers food boxes.

chase food for families, including Oso Honey Farm, PK Pastures, Wahl Family Farms, Willows Acres, La Mancha Orchard, and many more.

Every two weeks, fresh produce and meat from these farms would be aggregated at Oso Honey Farm, packed into boxes, and loaded up into county and farm vans to deliver to families across Linn County.

For Linn County Food Systems Coordinator Diego Nieto, who developed the pilot along with other Linn County staff, this

pilot represents an opportunity to meet families’ needs directly while also supporting and building connections with local farmers.

“A community that can feed and take care of itself is a resilient one,” Nieto said. “We hope the Food for Health pilot can demonstrate to our partners and healthcare providers that if we step in to help connect the dots and invest in nutritious local foods, everyone in our community ends up better off.”

As for what comes next, Linn County hopes to administer and expand the program next year. While this year’s pilot focused on new parents, the county is exploring other strategies and target populations. Local healthcare clinics could help distribute food boxes to their clients and patients, for example.

“The home delivery model worked so well, we will definitely do that again next year,” Nieto said, “but we would like to develop additional distribution methods to reach other community members. Either way, our goal is to at least triple the volume of food we’re providing to the community next year.”





# Saluting our veterans!



## Veterans Services takes part in OSU Beavers football flag ceremony

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

CORVALLIS — Linn County Veterans Services Director Dee Baley-Hyder said the opportunity to help carry an American flag nearly as big as a football field at the OSU Beavers football game as part of Veterans Day events on Nov. 9, was “surreal”.

Baley-Hyder was joined by fellow Veterans Services staffer Eric Rice.

She said the office received a call from Calvin Anderman of Oregon State, about a month before the event.

“We were instructed to be at the Truax Center between 8 and 8:30 a.m.,” Baley-Hyder said. There were several dozen people on hand, she said.

“We put the flag together in 12 large strips,” Baley-Hyder said. “We practiced pulling the flag out and rolling it back up. There are handles and you have to keep a hold of them at all times.”

Baley-Hyder said the group practiced pulling the giant flag onto the field and practiced timing with the OSU band.

The flag came out for show time about 15 minutes before the 12:30 p.m. kick-off.

“I was doing good until the fireworks went off,” Baley-Hyder said. “That really got to me.”

Baley-Hyder said the flag is made of cloth and is heavy.

“What a great experience,” she said. “I was the first one on the field since I was in the lower right-hand corner of the flag,” Baley-Hyder said. “It was an awesome experience and I hope we get to do it again. It was such a good thing.”







# Saluting our veterans!



Linn County Health Services staff with a float they entered in the annual Veterans Day parade.



Linn County Veterans Services folks are always up for a good parade.



Linn County Sheriff's Office is a faithful supporter of the Veterans Day parade.



Call the Linn County Board of Commissioners at 541-967-3825.



# Christmas sugar cookies recipe with easy icing

Courtesy: Sally's Baking Recipes

These are fan-favorite cut-out Christmas sugar cookies! My recipe for sugar cookies promises flavorful cookies with soft and thick centers, slightly crisp edges, and flat tops for decorating. The dough comes together with 7–8 simple ingredients, and the cookies hold their cookie cutter shape in the oven. Decorate them with my easy glaze cookie icing, a wonderful alternative to royal icing. Get out your rolling pin and favorite cookie cutters and have fun!

I originally published this recipe in 2014 and have since added new photos, a video tutorial, a few more success tips, and a list of helpful tools.

The holiday season and a batch of decorated Christmas sugar cookies go hand-in-hand. Today's recipe is a classic staple, and has been a popular favorite since I first published it many years ago. It's basically my favorite sugar cookie recipe, but all dressed up for the holidays. And I love that you don't need to mess with royal icing! The cookie icing below is unfussy and low maintenance, which is definitely appreciated if you're baking a lot of cookies in December.

One reader commented: "These are the BEST cookies! The dough is so easy to put together and to work with. They taste amazing; buttery and not too sweet. They cooked up perfect, just like you said, crispy on the edges with a nice soft middle!! And the icing... oh the icing! It's the perfect consistency for using a squeeze bottle and yet it sets up firm and glossy so you can stack the cookies or pack and ship them. ★★★★★"

## Here's Why You'll Love These Christmas Sugar Cookies

- Soft, thick centers with slightly crisp edges
- Irresistible buttery vanilla flavor
- Made from simple ingredients
- Leave plain or flavor with extras like maple, cinnamon, peppermint, and more
- Hold shape while baking
- Icing is manageable for young bakers and beginners
- Freeze beautifully

Easy-to-follow recipe used by beginner and expert bakers alike

By the way, if you love sugar cookies, but aren't up for decorating with icing, you'll enjoy my stained glass window cookies, Christmas sparkle cookies, pecan sugar cookies, or drop Christmas sugar cookies instead.

## How to Make Christmas Sugar Cookies

You need 7–8 ingredients for the dough. With so few ingredients, it's important to follow the recipe closely, because each one has an important job. Creamed butter and sugar form the base of the dough. Egg and flour provide structure, and vanilla adds flavor. I almost always add a touch of almond extract for additional flavor, and highly recommend that you try it too! You could also use peppermint extract or another flavor ex-



tract instead. Baking powder adds lift, and salt balances the sweet.

So many little ingredients doing big jobs to create a perfect cookie:

**Success Tip:** Make sure you start with proper room temperature butter. Room temperature butter is cool to the touch and about 65°F (18°C), which may be cooler than your kitchen. To test the butter to make sure it's ready to cream, poke it with your finger. Your finger should make an indent without sinking down into the butter. The butter should not be shiny or greasy.

This is a recipe that requires some planning ahead.

After you make the cookie dough, it must chill for 1–2 hours, and up to 2 days. Chilling is a mandatory step. Without chilling, these cookie cutter sugar cookies won't hold shape. You don't want your snowman-shaped cookie turning into the Stay-Puft Marshmallow Man (though that could work for Halloween cookies).

Also, the icing recipe below needs at least 24 hours to dry/set (but you can certainly eat them prior to the icing drying!). This is much longer than royal icing, which usually dries in 2 hours. So even though we're not messing with finicky royal icing, we do have to wait longer to stack/transport the cookies.

After you make the cookie dough, divide it in half:

And then roll out each portion of dough before chilling:

Let's talk about rolling out this dough, because it's an unusual order of steps.

## 3 Tricks to Rolling Out Christmas Cookie Dough

**Trick #1:** Pay attention to the order of the steps. Notice how I roll out the dough BEFORE chilling it in the refrigerator? That's the most important trick! Let me explain why I do this. Just like when you're making chocolate chip cookies, to prevent the cookies from over-spreading, the dough must chill. If you've ever tried rolling

out chilled sugar cookie dough, you may remember how difficult it is to roll out cold, stiff dough. So, roll out the dough while it's still soft (right after mixing it together), and then chill the rolled-out dough.

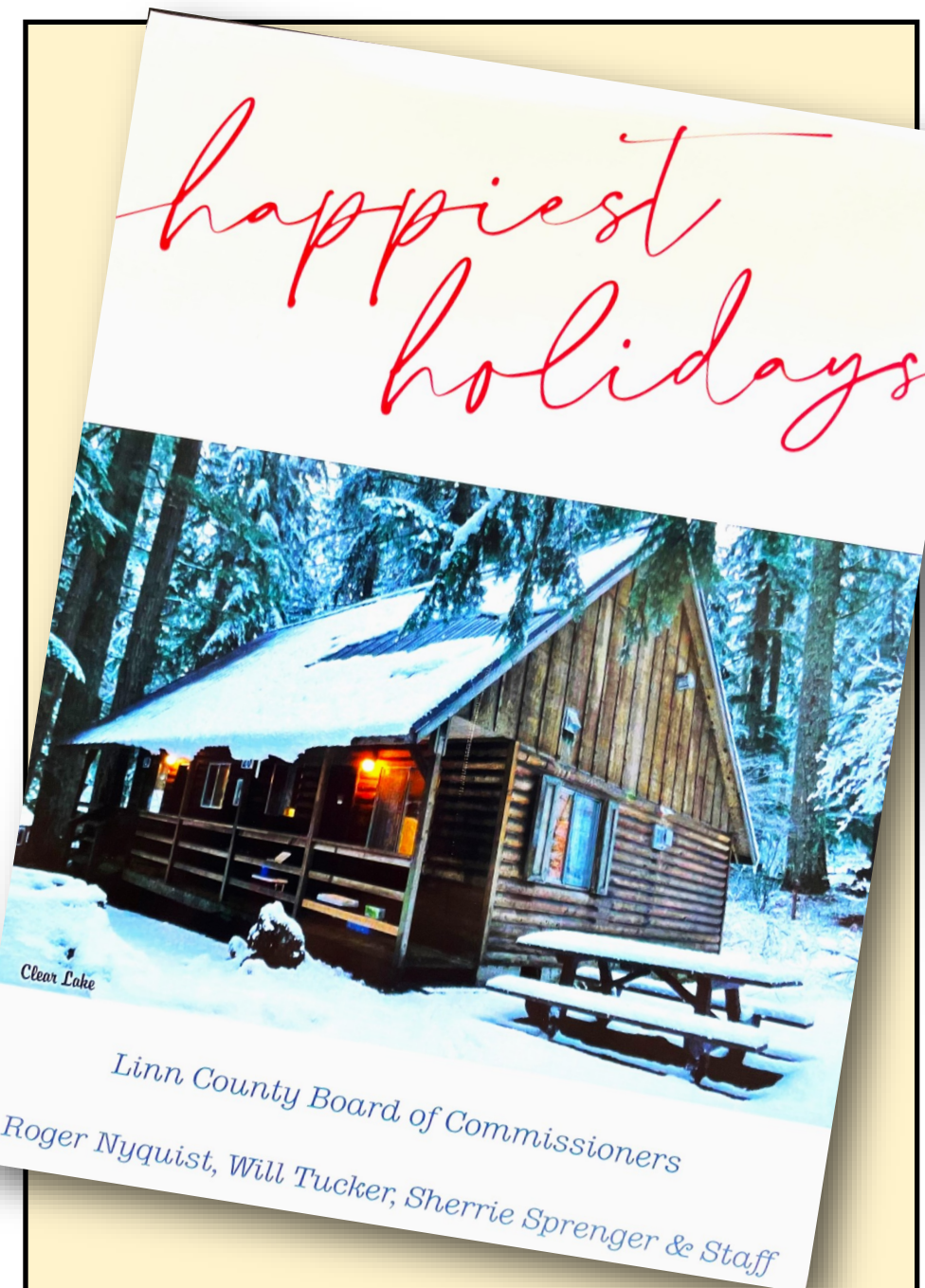
**Trick #2:** Divide the dough in half before rolling it out. Why? Smaller sections of dough are easier to roll out.

**Trick #3:** Roll out the cookie dough directly on a silicone baking mat or parchment paper so you can easily transfer it to the refrigerator. Pick the whole thing up, set it on a baking sheet, and place it in the refrig-

erator. If you don't have enough room for two baking sheets in your refrigerator, simply stack the pieces of rolled-out dough on top of each other, with parchment paper or silicone baking mat in between. You can see me doing this in the video tutorial below.

After the rolled-out dough chills for at least 1–2 hours, use cookie cutters to cut out shapes, and re-roll your scraps. Remember, you have two slabs of dough.

Arrange cookies on a lined baking sheet. I usually get about 2 dozen 3-inch cookies from this recipe. Here's some of the cookies before baking:







# OSU Extension Service



## 4-H awards banquet held at Expo Center

The 2024 Linn County 4-H Awards and Dessert Auction was held on November 7 at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center. The evening was hosted and emceed by Linn County 4-H Ambassadors that have taken on a leadership role at the county level.

Emcees were Selah Wright and Caden Foley.

Special Recognition was given to Kim Calvery as the Experienced Volunteer of the year. Kim has served as a volunteer for 23 years total, the last five years spent working with youth in Clever Clovers and as the art and photography superintendent.

Michelle Bristow was awarded the Newer Volunteer of the Year Award. Michelle has been the swine volunteer for Lacombe Livestock for the past three years. She has brought a

sense of community and belonging to the Swine group while also teaching great animal husbandry and life skills.

Debra Christianson was recognized for her 50 years of Volunteer Service to Oregon 4-H. Debra has volunteered across many counties and currently is providing her skills to Linn County.

The Friend of 4-H award was presented to Michelle Robinson of Furniture Share.

Furniture Share has received grants so they are able to come to the county fair and purchase animals from the auction. In turn, the meat from those animals is used in the food boxes that Furniture Share provides to people in need in our local community.



Michelle Robinson, Executive Director of Furniture Share, accepts the Friend of 4-H Award from Selah Wright and Caden Foley.



Kim Calvery received a gift basket from Selah Wright as the Experienced Volunteer of the Year.



Michelle Bristow was awarded the Newer Volunteer of the Year Award and received a gift basket from Caden Foley.



Debra Christianson was recognized for 50 years of Volunteer Service to Oregon 4-H presented by Selah Wright.





4-H Ambassadors lead the Pledge of Allegiance, above, and served meals to guests at the annual 4-H awards ceremony, Nov. 7 at the Fair & Expo Center.



## 4-H Volunteers Needed

Do you have a passion and a willingness to share it?



Adults with all interests are needed to help mentor youth.

This is an exciting opportunity to help young people learn and grow!

Contact: [jody.hill@oregonstate.edu](mailto:jody.hill@oregonstate.edu)



# Albany hosts the 45<sup>th</sup> Christmas Parlour Tour

Join us for the 45th Annual Christmas Parlour Tour and enjoy the sights and sounds of an old-fashioned holiday celebration through Albany's intriguing nationally registered historic districts.

The event runs 2 to 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8, with beautifully decorated homes and other historic buildings – highlighting architectural styles such as Queen Anne, Mid-Century Modern, Craftsman and others – open for touring.

Tickets are \$15 and available online until the day before the tour at [monteithhouse.org](http://monteithhouse.org): hit the link under Upcoming Events. On the day of the tour, bring your e-receipt to the Albany Visitors Association, 122 Ferry St. SW, and redeem it for a wristband and ticket, which includes information about the homes and a map. Both ticket and wristband are needed to enter the homes.

Tickets also will be available the day of the tour beginning at 1 p.m. at the AVA office, cash or check only.

Visitors may:

- Tour the homes in any order they choose. Some homes are within walking distance of each other,

while others may require a short drive.

- Ride the Albany Trolley to most of the sites or catch a ride on a horse-drawn wagon that will be touring on a limited route.
- Enjoy refreshments, which will be available at the Albany Regional Museum as well as the Monteith House.
- Sign up at the Albany Regional Museum for a chance to win free tickets to the 2025 Summer Interior Homes Tour, which will be held Saturday, July 26, 2025. While there, they can tour the museum's exhibits and enjoy a special showing of quilts created by local quilters.
- Visit other historic buildings, such as Whitespires Church, United Presbyterian Church, the Downtown Carnegie Library (where visitors can take the chill off around the library's cozy fireplace), the Cumberland Community Center, and the Historic Carousel & Museum.

For more information, contact the AVA at 541-928-0911, or email [info@albanyvisitors.com](mailto:info@albanyvisitors.com).

LINN COUNTY 4-H IN COOPERATION WITH

Furniture Share

## BLANKET DRIVE

FOR THOSE IN NEED

Drop off your clean, new or gently used, blankets to the OSU Extension Office - Linn County  
December - February

33630 McFarland Road  
Tangent, OR 97389

Contact: Michelle Robinson at 541-730-2421  
or Jody Hill at [jody.hill@oregonstate.edu](mailto:jody.hill@oregonstate.edu)



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FEMININE HYGIENE

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TOOTHBRUSHES & TOOTHPASTE

Drop off at OSU Extension Service Linn County  
by December 6th



Call the Linn County Board of Commissioners at 541-967-3825.



# County Parks, Sweet Home partner for new RV dump station

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

SWEET HOME — As an excavator with a hydraulic hammer head broke up asphalt paving, Sweet Home city officials, Linn County Parks & Recreation and Knife River staff members tossed shovels of dirt the afternoon of Monday, Nov. 4, marking the beginning of a long-awaited RV dump on five acres in the heart of the community.

The facility will be located on five acres owned by Linn County that was carved off the former Willamette Industries (Weyerhaeuser) mill site before it was sold to a private owner. The county had acquired the property in lieu of more than \$500,000 in back taxes owed by the Western States Land Reliance Trust.

The site is behind the Sweet Home Bi-Mart store and will be accessed via 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Knife River Project Manager Chris Phillipson said that if all goes as planned, the \$690,791 project will be up and running in February. The Oregon Parks & Recreation Department has provided a 50% matching grant toward the project costs.

The new dump station will have four service lanes, according to Parks & Recreation Director Stacey



Participating in a ceremonial groundbreaking ceremony at the new Linn County Parks & Recreation RV dump site Monday afternoon, Nov. 4, were, left to right: Chris Phillipson, Knife River project manager; Tristan Davis, Parks & Recreation Operations Supervisor; Parks Director Stacey Whaley, Sweet Home Mayor Susan Coleman, Knife River's Brian Reichart and Interim Sweet Home City Manager Jason Ogden.

Whaley.

Whaley said users will access services at a kiosk that will accept

credit cards. Cost will be \$10 per vehicle.

An added convenience is that

RV owners and others will be able to purchase potable water from the City of Sweet Home at the site. Currently, the city's only bulk water dispenser system is at the city's water plant.

The new facility will join county RV dump sites at Waterloo, Sunnyside and River Bend campgrounds. Whaley said the dump site at Sunnyside Campground will be decommissioned in the future due to its age.

"This new dump site is better environmentally and works with the city wastewater system," Whaley said. "It's better for everybody. We are excited to partner with the city and provide something that is beneficial to both the community and its many visitors."

Whaley said another benefit is that the four-lane system will likely reduce waiting times for RV owners. Mayor Coleman and Interim City Manager Ogden both agreed that the project is beneficial to the community.

"We're excited to be able to provide this service in partnership with the county parks to the many people who enjoy recreating here," Ogden said.

Learn more about Linn County Parks & Recreation at <https://linnparks.com/>.

# Surf and Turf: OSU researchers to study feeding seaweed to cattle

OSU News Service

Oregon State University researchers have received a \$1 million grant to study the impact of adding seaweed to the diets of beef cattle as a way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Recent research has found that feeding seaweed can reduce methane emissions from cattle, most of which originates from enteric fermentation that is characteristic of their digestive process.

Oregon State will investigate a specific type of seaweed – Pacific dulse, a species grown commercially on the Oregon Coast – and focus on the effects of including this seaweed in diets of cattle that graze sagebrush steppe landscapes, a common ecosystem in the western United States.

"At a time of heightened public concern about greenhouse gas emissions, this project has the potential to help ranchers more sustainably and efficiently produce beef while also providing an economic benefit to seaweed producers," said Juliana Ranches, project director and an assistant professor at Oregon State's Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center in Burns, Oregon.

The five-year project is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

The agriculture sector accounts for 9.4% of greenhouse gas emissions (Link is external) in the U.S. with cattle being responsible for more than a quarter of the greenhouse gas emissions from the agricultural sector. The majority of that contribution comes from methane produced during enteric fermentation.

For the project, about 20 cows will graze each year in an approximately 100-acre pasture at the Northern Great Basin Experimental Range in Riley, Oregon, between Bend and Burns. They will wear GPS collars and be contained within a virtual fence.

The researchers will supplement the cattle feed with Pacific dulse grown along the Oregon Coast by a company called Oregon Sea-

weed. They will feed different amounts of dried dulse to the cattle to access the supplementation level that most suppresses enteric methane, which is emitted during the digestive process of cows.

"We will also be looking at the way the seaweed is grown and how that impacts the compounds of interest that contribute to methane reduction," said James Fox, an algal physiologist in the Oregon State Department of Microbiology and co-investigator of the

project.

Fox will also work with colleagues at OSU-Cascades in Bend to study the impact seaweed supplementation has on bacteria in the cattle stomachs and how the bacteria may contribute to methane reduction.

Additionally, the researchers will use an atmospheric measurement tool called an Eddy Covariance Flux Tower to measure changes in carbon dioxide and methane levels in the pasture.

"Most of the research on seaweed feed supplementation for cattle has taken place in feedlots," said Rory O'Connor, a rangeland ecologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service in Burns and co-director of the project. "Our work is novel because we are focused on cattle that graze in the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem." Partners on the project include Chuck Toombs, the founder and CEO of Oregon Seaweed, and the USDA Northwest Climate Hub.

## Enter our second annual ugly Christmas — Hanukkah — Kwanza sweater contest!



**Wear your favorite ugly holiday sweater to work on Monday, December 16.**

**Take a snapshot and send it to [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us).**

**A panel of distinguished judges will vote and pick first, second and third place sweaters.**

**Winners will receive gift certificates to the Mad Platter Café.**

**Entries must be received by 5 p.m. on December 16. Winners announced Friday, Dec. 20**

**Call the Linn County Board of Commissioners at 541-967-3825.**



# Captain Schrader, Deputy Fairchild retire from LCSO

ALBANY — Two long-time members of the Linn County Sheriff's Office retired in November.

Captain Jeff Schrader retired November 7 after a 27-year career. Civil Deputy Chris Fairchild retired Nov. 20 after 28 years of service.

Captain Schrader began his LCSO career as a reserve deputy in 1997 and in October 1998 was sworn in as a patrol deputy.

Since then, Captain Schrader has worn many hats and has been a part of several special teams and assignments. He was a marine deputy, a deputy advisor with Search and Rescue, on the Traffic Team, a timber deputy, major crimes detective, SWAT Commander and most recently, captain of our Civil Division.

Captain Schrader said that he is excited to spend more time with his family and do some traveling. He also said that he will miss the people at the office the most, having been able to meet some amazing people over the years.

Captain Schrader leaves us with a piece of advice, "Life is short and don't take anything for granted! I would recommend retiring as soon as you can to get on with your life. At the end of your life, you won't likely be wishing you worked more, but you will probably wish you spent more time with the people and things you care most about".

Deputy Fairchild joined LCSO in 1996, serving as a deckhand with the seasonal Marine Patrol. At the conclusion of the summer, he was welcomed full-time as a patrol deputy. During his many years with Linn County, he served as a member on the Warrant Apprehension Team, and most currently spent the last years of his career assigned to the Civil Division as a Civil Deputy. He was also a member of the Dive Team and served as the Reserve Deputy Coordinator.

We asked Chris what he is most excited about in retirement, simply put, he is excited to spend more time with his family, travel and not work. He made it a point to mention that he will miss his friends and co-workers the most, and that it has been a great pleasure and honor to work for the Linn County Sheriff's Office.



## EVENTOS DE IMMUNIZACION ESCOLAR

**Evita la Exclusion Escolar**

**Fechas Y Lugares**

LEBANON	SWEET HOME	ALBANY
MARTES, DICIEMBRE 17 12PM-7PM 1600 S MAIN ST LEBANON, OR 97355	MIERCOLES, DICIEMBRE 18 12PM-7PM 799 LONG ST SWEET HOME, OR 97386	VIERNES, DICIEMBRE 20 12PM-7PM 104 4TH AVE SW ALBANY, OR 97321

Ofreciendo todas las vacunas infantiles

Escanea el codigo QR para \*preinscribirte  
\*Por favor preinscríbese al menos dos días antes del día del evento que escoja

## SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION EVENTS

**AVOID EXCLUSION**

**DATES AND LOCATIONS**

LEBANON	SWEET HOME	ALBANY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17TH 12PM-7PM 1600 S MAIN ST LEBANON, OR 97355	WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18TH 12PM-7PM 799 LONG ST SWEET HOME, OR 97386	FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20TH 12PM-7PM 104 4TH AVE SW ALBANY, OR 97321

Offering all childhood immunizations  
Click the link or scan the QR code to \*pre-register

\*Please pre-register at least two days before an event day of your choice

**Register online**





## Red and white is Courthouse Christmas Tree theme

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — Michelle Hawkins knew what this year’s Courthouse Christmas Tree theme was going to be a year ago.

“I knew I wanted it to be red and white,” Hawkins said. “I found a large Merry Christmas and Happy New Year banner and that was that.”

The Linn County Treasurer said this is her 15<sup>th</sup> Courthouse tree and she has next year’s theme already picked out.

“I look for decorations all year long, plus we have lots of decorations stored in the former jail on the third floor,” Hawkins said.

This year’s tree is a Douglas fir and is nine-foot-tall. She found it at Tree Kings near Salem.

“We picked it out on Wednesday, before Thanksgiving and they flocked it. We picked it up on Thanksgiving,” Hawkins said. “It was so heavy General Services helped us unload it and set it up.”

Hawkins said she usually prefers Noble and Grand firs.

“This is my first Douglas fir and it looks great. It really looked nice after it was

flocked,” Hawkins said. “It turned out beautifully, exactly as I had envisioned it. I wanted the bottom to be five to six feet around.”

Hawkins said she was pleasantly surprised by the wide selection of trees that would work with her theme.

“There was whole field of them,” she said.

Courtney Leland will attach giving tree tags to this tree soon.

Pick a tag, shop for a boy or girl whose info is on each tag and return new, unwrapped gifts to the Commissioners’ office by December 16.



## Committee seeks mental health outreach ideas

Linn County Mental Health is asking the public to help identify community activities where staff

and the Mobile Crisis van can provide information about the services it provides.



Sandy Minta

Program Manager Sandy Minta says the Mental Health Department has always had an outreach program, but a new committee — the Events Committee — composed of staff

and lay persons, is actively searching for community event opportunities.

Jessica Burris, manager of Linn County’s Public Health office in Sweet Home, is chairing the committee. Anyone with suggestions may contact her at [jessicaburris@linncountyhealth.org](mailto:jessicaburris@linncountyhealth.org).

“We want to participate in a variety of events, maybe monthly,” Minta said. “We are also partnering with the 9-8-8 program — like 9-1-1 but for mental health issues.”

Minta added, “We would like to educate as many people as possible about what mental health services are available and how they can be accessed.”

Thanks for reading the Linn County Reporter.

### Linn County Juvenile Department's ANNUAL 'Holiday Food Basket' RAFFLE

Tickets are \$5.00 each for all 3 raffles and can be purchased through December 11<sup>th</sup>

\*\*\* All 3 Drawings will be held Wednesday, Dec 11<sup>th</sup> @ 11:30am

Tickets may be purchased at the Linn County Juvenile Department OR, contact [tricker@colinn.or.us](mailto:tricker@colinn.or.us) for other options.

Sponsors:  
Linn County Juvenile Department and  
Scentys by Lily Richardson.

RAFFLE 1: An Amazing Scentys Bundle, donated by Lily Richardson, LCJD

- 'Kickoff To Christmas' Full Sized Warmer
- Room Spray 'Just Fir You'
- (3) Scentys Bars: Toasty Cabin, Honeycrisp Harvest, Stroopwafel Delight
- Scentys Fragrance Flower: Radiant Red Poinsettia
- Scentys Fragrance Oil: 'Holiday Market'



RAFFLE 2: University of Oregon Ducks Basket

- Licensed Uofo Ducks Garden Flag
- Uofo Ducks License Plate Frame
- Licensed Uofo Ducks Playing Cards
- Licensed Uofo Pennant Flag
- Uofo Fighting Donald Duck Sticker/Decal

RAFFLE 3: Oregon State Beavers Basket

- Beavers Bluetooth LED Lightstrip Wireless Speaker
- Beavers' Pennant Flag
- Licensed Playing Cards
- Oregon Beavers' Licensed Hot/Cold Insulated Cup



All proceeds will be used to purchase supplies & build food baskets for Juvenile Department youth & families for Christmas.

Call the Linn County Board of Commissioners at 541-967-3825.





## Sweet Home Planning Commission approves CSC lease

*Courtesy The New Era*

SWEET HOME — The Planning Commission at its Nov. 7 meeting held a public hearing for and approved a conditional use permit to the City of Sweet Home which allows Community Services Consortium to lease space at City Hall.

While CSC would provide needed resources for East Linn County, a nearby homeowner raised the question about the impact the organization would ultimately have in the area, and whether homeless or transitional residential services might grow out of CSC in the future.

CSC will lease approximately 3,200 square feet of the east side of City Hall, in addition to parking and storage space. Assistant City Manager Cecily Pretty said the lease is for a five-year term.

The portion of the building to be leased had not been renovated when the city moved in in 2019, and it has since been used for storage. The application indicates CSC intends to assist the city with renovations to the office space, which would include a separate front entrance, two bathrooms with showers, a washer and dryer, and general office space construction.

Pretty explained the showers are intended for the work crew that encounters a lot of poison oak while clearing vegetation.

City Hall is located in the Public Facility Zone. If the city leases any of its property, then the portion of leased property becomes taxable per ORS 307.110. Reading from the staff report, Planning & Building Manager Angela Clegg noted the bus stop at City Hall provides convenient access to CSC, and the organization is also offering in-kind services to the city, specifically fuel reduction work.

Plans outline where the new CSC office will be located inside City Hall.

CSC’s Workforce Development crews would provide fuel reduction services 10 days a year (a \$20,000 value) on public and private land by felling and bucking hazard trees; thinning trees in crowded stands; brushing, trimming, pruning surface and ladder fuels; chipping and hauling away debris; and delivering firewood for low income households. Additionally, they could write fuels reduction prescriptions based on Oregon State Fire Marshal standards.

The application states, “Their work is oriented toward wildfire prevention through the creation of defensible space, and/or the reduction of surface, ground, ladder and aerial fuels in areas within the Wildland Urban Interface. Fuels reduction on property within a WUI is especially important because of its proximity to timberlands.”

CSC provides services such as: supportive services and case management for veterans and families, SNAP training and employment program, community career coaching, job search assistance, resource navigation, work experience programs, WIOA youth programs (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act), seasonal utility assistance, and forest fuels reduction/defensible space crews. The Duck Hollow Homeowners Association submitted a letter indicating concerns from the neighborhood that abuts City Hall. Their concerns centered around potential impacts CSC’s services could have in the area, including “increased foot traffic, transient activity, loitering and access to our subdivision while people await services, the potential for increased criminal activity, unauthorized access to our wetland areas, increased noise pollution for adjacent properties, and the potential for future undisclosed services to impact the safety and standard of living for our association members.”

The HOA president, Eric Stutzer, spoke during the public hearing. While clarifying that he wasn’t exactly objecting to the proposal, he emphasized his concerns, more specifically the potential for a residential service, which the neighborhood opposes.

“We really don’t want to have a residential service right next door,” Stutzer said. “I know in the past CSC has tried to put the homeless shelter here, as well, and that was something that our subdivision was very, very concerned about... If their scope in the future is going to be residential and expansion, then it definitely would have some form of impact on our homeowners.”

Pretty explained to the commission that in her conversations with CSC, the subject of residential services has never come up. She added that, if that use were ever to be proposed, she believes it would require a change in the permit, and they would have to go through the permitting process again.

In other business, resident Michael Fulton asked the Planning Commission to reconsider codes regarding fencing and screening. He said that while he was a contractor, he’s built fencing using corrugated metal across the state, including here in Sweet Home, but he didn’t realize it was



An aerial photo identifies the location of City Hall where CSC will move into.

against Sweet Home’s code.

“I’m just hoping you guys will look at that, maybe look at some of the pictures, and maybe make change to that code,” he said.

Fulton noted the material is more affordable and more durable than wood.



### A tree for Steve ...

Linn County General Services recently planted a Giant Sequoia tree on the north side of the Courthouse in memory of former Clerk Steve Druckenmiller, who died in September 2023. Steve served in the Clerk’s Office for 37 years and served Linn County for 44 years, including as an interim Linn County Commissioner.

— Photos courtesy Anne Wright





## 37th annual Nighttime Magic Holiday Lighting Contest

Albany residents are invited to join the 37th Annual Nighttime Magic Holiday Light Contest, celebrating the most dazzling holiday displays in town! The contest is sponsored by the Albany Visitors Association, Burcham's Metals and HospitalityVision.



Join in the fun as a contestant or get a map of the houses on display and vote for your favorite. To Enter: Decorate your home's exterior with festive lights for a chance to win fantastic prizes, including gift certificates from local stores – and, of course, a year of well-deserved bragging rights.

It just takes three things to participate:

1. Displays must be within Albany city limits.



2. Enter your display, with up to 5 photos, by December 8 through the online entry form at AlbanyVisitors.com. Entries will not be accepted without photos. A QR Code for Entry Form is attached.

3. Displays should remain lit from 5-10 p.m., December 9 through January 1 — or longer if you wish!

wish!

Know a neighbor with a dazzling holiday display? You can nominate them! Just provide their contact information, and we'll reach out to get their permission to



include their lights in the contest.

**To vote:** As in previous years, the contest is open to community judging. Be sure to check out all the festive displays before casting your vote! Voting opens Monday, December 9 and ends Sunday, December 22 at midnight. The winners will be announced on Tuesday, December 24.

**Here's how:**

- Get the PDF version of the map with this year's participating houses or link directly to the Google map from AlbanyVisitors.com
- Download our app, Albany Explorer, where you will find an interactive version or pick up a paper copy from our office.
- Fill out the Voting Survey at [surveymonkey.com/r/M5FQSPC](https://surveymonkey.com/r/M5FQSPC) after you visit the homes.

A QR Code for Voting is attached.

That's all it will take to be a part of Albany's Nighttime Magic this year! So, break out the lights and help us all have a big and bright holiday season!



### Congratulations Red Hawks!

The University of Oregon Ducks aren't the only undefeated football team in the state. The South Albany Red Hawks (Division II, Pop Warner, grades 3-4) capped a perfect 9-0 season. They captured their division title by defeating an undefeated Modoc team from Klamath Falls, 13-12. Tiffany Roubmai (Juvenile Detention) has two sons who play on the team.



### Citizens Academy graduates

We would like to congratulate all our recent graduates from our 45th Citizen's Academy! Meeting each Wednesday night for the past nine weeks, as well as a field trip day to the range and Animal Control, this class heard from presenters across all divisions within the office. The class experienced hands-on firearms training, toured our SWAT vehicles, toured our jail, visited Animal Control, got to meet our K9 Juice, and so much more!

We take pride in what we do here at the Linn County Sheriff's Office, and thoroughly enjoy the opportunity the Citizens Academy provides us to connect with our community.

Thank you to everyone that attended our 45th Citizen's Academy.

Are you interested in attending a future Citizen's Academy? Stay tuned for more information about attending our 46th academy.

Thanks for reading the Linn County Reporter. Send story ideas to editor Alex Paul by calling 541-967-3825 or email [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us).







## Brownsville readies for annual Festival of the Trees

BROWNSVILLE — Brownsville's annual Festival of the Trees will be held on Friday, December 6 and Saturday, December 7 in conjunction with the city's "Home for the Holidays" event.

Sponsored by the Brownsville Women's Study Club, the 25 trees, beautifully decorated by volunteer artists will be found in locations across the downtown business district. The list of locations can be picked up at any business in town.

The beautiful 1881 Moyer House will host three of the trees and will be open for free visits those two days. The trees are all available for auction with this year's proceeds going to support the Brownsville Library and the Sharing Hands Food Bank.

Bidding will take place both days ending at 4 p.m. on Saturday.

Winners need to be able to pick up their trees immediately afterwards.



For more information, visit the Brownsville Women's Study Club Facebook page.

## Find your Christmas trees and ornaments throughout Willamette National Forest

SPRINGFIELD — It's the time of year to visit the Willamette National Forest and find the perfect Christmas tree and ornament for your holiday celebrations. Christmas tree permits are available online at Recreation.gov, in person from local vendors, or from one of the Willamette offices.

Permits allow the holder to cut one tree in designated areas; each household can purchase up to five permits. Permits are \$5 each; online purchases have an additional \$2.50 service fee.

For downloadable maps of treecutting areas and a list of local vendors selling tree permits, visit <https://bit.ly/WNFtree>.

Fourth-grade students can receive a free tree permit by getting their Every Kid Outdoors pass and entering the voucher or pass number when prompted on Recreation.gov or by visiting a Forest office. While hunting for a Christmas tree, be sure to search for ornaments.

The Willamette Valley Visitors Association will launch its seventh annual ornament hunt on the Willamette National Forest and the Umpqua National Forest. In partnership with Cascade Volunteers, 200 locally crafted wooden ornaments will be hidden along non-wilderness trails on the Willamette's Detroit, Sweet Home, McKenzie River, and Middle Fork Ranger Districts and in the Umpqua National Forest's Cottage Grove Ranger District.

The hunt encourages local communities and travelers to connect with public lands and increase outdoor recreation activities. The tradition was born in 2018 when the Willamette National Forest provided the Capitol Christmas Tree in Washington D.C. For more information on the ornament hunt contest and a list of participating trails, visit <https://willamettevalley.org/ornament>.

Be mindful of safety and your surroundings when searching for trees or ornaments. Cutting trees in some areas of the Forest is prohibited. Tree hunters should remain outside of closed areas and check maps prior to heading out to search for a tree.

Forest roads are not maintained for winter driving. Be sure to bring traction devices, a shovel, extra food, drinking water, winter clothing, blankets, a flashlight, and a first aid kit. Follow us on Facebook and X @WillametteNF for more updates <https://www.fs.usda.gov/willamette/>



200 wooden ornaments have been placed in area national forests as part of the seventh annual ornament hunt sponsored by the USDA Forest Service.





LINN COUNTY EXPO'S

# Christmas Storybook Land

# Pastega Lights!



## MID-VALLEY MAGICAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION!

**Nov 30<sup>th</sup> to Dec 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Saturday - Sunday**

10:00<sup>am</sup> - 8:00<sup>pm</sup>

**Monday - Friday**

4:00<sup>pm</sup> - 8:00<sup>pm</sup>

[ChristmasStorybookLand.org](http://ChristmasStorybookLand.org)

LIGHT DISPLAY HOURS

**COME CELEBRATE the SEASON WITH US...**



Town & Country

# Christmas Bazaar

Presented by:

ADMISSION \$2  
Kids 13 & under FREE

## Dec 6th - 8th, 2024

**Bazaar Hours:**

**Friday - Saturday**

10:00<sup>am</sup> - 6:00<sup>pm</sup>

**Sunday**

10:00<sup>am</sup> - 4:00<sup>pm</sup>

- Shop from over 200 artists showcasing handmade items including candles, skin care, jewelry, toys, tasty treats, knit items, local art, and more!
- Kick off your shopping season and bring the entire family. It's a Linn County Holiday Tradition!

● Our Featured Vendors:

**Booth #D28 The Essence of Silver**

One-of-a-Kind pieces of art to wear including men's and woman's sterling silver, copper, and leather jewelry hand built in Depoe Bay, Oregon.

**Booth #F15 Space Igloo**

Unique Freeze Dried Treats handmade in Veneta, Oregon

**Booth #21 Das My Jam**

Jams, Jellies and Syrups...tropical island flavors and PNW favorites...

Over 60,000sq.ft. of handmade items for you to discover

Linn County Fair & Expo Center  
3700 Knox Butte Road Albany, OR 97322

# lcfairexpo.com

Call the Linn County Board of Commissioners at 541-967-3825.



# Army Corps patches leaking Green Peter Dam

Sarah Brown  
The New Era

Green Peter Dam has been leaking for several years now, but it only took four days to patch the thing up.

“I’m very happy with the crew and the maintenance foreman and the engineering staff that all worked together to put this together (in four days),” said Mike Pomeroy, operations and maintenance manager for the Army Corps of Engineers at Foster and Green Peter dams.

Pomeroy said the leak was not a major concern, but they took advantage of an opportunity to try to fix it.

“The dam safety engineers have been monitoring it,” he said. “There was never any danger of it causing a dam failure or anything like that, but it’s not something you want, either.”

It was the deep drawdown that allowed the Army Corps of Engineers to access the culprit: a faulty water-stop seal between blocks nine and 10 that has been slowly eroding over a loosely estimated 10-year period.

“Some people have called it a crack. It’s not really a crack; it’s just a leak in between two of the big monolith blocks that make the upstream side of the dam,” Pomeroy explained.

The leaking vertical seam was approximately 200 feet in height. Instead of trying to make any repairs to the leak, they opted for a patch job.

Thanks to the first deep drawdown last year, dam safety engineers and maintenance crews were able to get their first real look at what was taking place on the reservoir-side of the dam, Pomeroy said. Then they spent the rest of the year making plans and preparing to tackle the project during this year’s drawdown while water levels were low enough during a long enough period to complete the patch.

“It was a pretty amazing process, in my opinion,” Pomeroy said. “Last year allowed us to get down there and evaluate it, and then we did quite a bit of prep. A lot of the stuff had to be fabricated in-house, and then this second drawdown allowed us to get down there and get at it and actually make the patch.”

First, staff had to pressure wash years’ worth of debris that had been sucked into the approximately half-inch seam between the blocks, debris that was composed of small sticks, leaves, fishing line and dirt.

Next, they ran a sealant along the seam, similar to a caulking job. They followed that up by attaching a 12-inch wide, half-inch thick rubber patch along the seam, attached by aluminum plating on each side.

“It was pretty labor intensive,” Pomeroy said. “You’re talking about 200 feet of patch, about 430 anchor bolts that all have to be drilled in, 30 tubes of sealant, about 400 feet of aluminum plating, and these guys would kind of rotate through because it’s pretty labor intensive, and they got it done in four days. We were so happy.”



Pomeroy estimated it would cost “a couple million dollars or more” to fully repair the leak, adding that a repair would have involved injecting some kind of grout, but that option caused him to question how effective it would be, given that the dam needs to be able to flex during high- and low-water conditions.

The cost to patch the leak, Pomeroy said, cost just under \$61,000 for both labor and material.

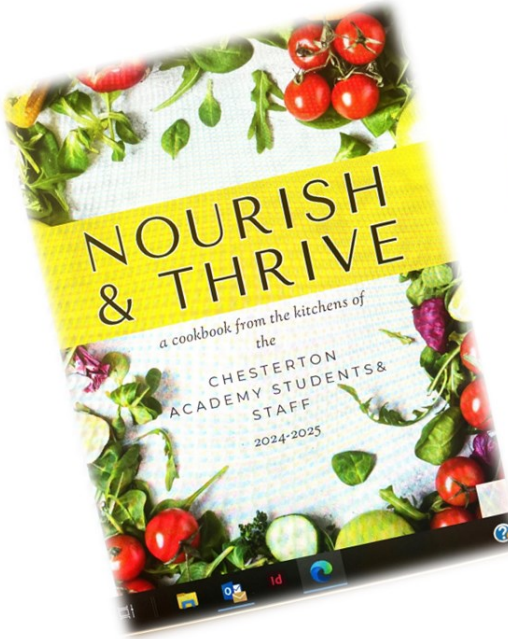


Still, Army Corps staff must wait until the reservoir is filled again to see if the patch works.

“There’s no guarantee that it’s gonna work. It really hasn’t ever been done like this before,” Pomeroy said. “The patch job went pretty smooth, but we’re really not

gonna know the full effect, how effective it is, until we fill back up.”



## Would you contribute recipes to a Linn County cookbook?

I have wanted to put together a Linn County employees’ cookbook for some time. My daughter recently put a cookbook together as part of a fundraising effort at her childrens school. She said she will help me put one together for us.

I need to know if enough people will contribute to make the effort worthwhile. Please let me know if you would contribute your favorite recipe. If we get several folks interested, we will proceed. [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us).

Thanks, Alex P.