



What's happening in Linn County, Oregon April 2023

Let's take a walk down LCSO memory lane

By Alex Paul
Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — High school history classes teach us about the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl that sent poor families fleeing the Midwest in droves, headed for California and other western states in search of jobs.

But we seldom think about the daily lives of people who were already living in places like Linn County, Oregon. Life was difficult and money was hard to come by.

But staff in the Civil Division of the Linn County Sheriff's Office recently found official documents that offer a peek into life during hard times — court warrants.

Captain Jeff Schrader said the documents were found in a file cabinet by his predecessor, Tammy Woods.

"They were in packets and envelopes," Schrader said. "They were found a couple years ago, but we didn't know what to do with them. We finally figured out they should be framed."

Al Severson recently completed the job and now Schrader and Sheriff Michelle Duncan are figuring out where the documents should be displayed.

The documents include feature ornate artwork and official seals.

For example, G.H. McElroy was given a County Jail Conditional Pardon after being convicted of possession of intoxicating liquor on July 11, 1931 (remember this was the prohibition era).



Civil Division Captain Jeff Schrader shows off one of several ornate legal documents found in a file cabinet and recently framed for the Linn County Sheriff's Office.

He also was ordered to pay a \$300 fine, a considerable amount of money in those days, the equivalent of about \$6,000 today.

His pardon came on August 19, 1931 after District Attorney L.G. Lewelling, "recommended that said G.H. McElroy be released

from custody in order that the county may be saved the expense of his maintenance."

The pardon was signed by Gov. Julius Meyer.

G.E. Raymond was also given a pardon on March 26, 1930, by Gov.

A.W. Norblad.

Mr. Raymond also had an issue with illegal alcohol and had been fined \$400, or for each day in jail \$2 would be deducted from his fine.

Mr. Raymond was released after agreeing to pay \$25 per month toward his fine.

If he failed to make payments, Sheriff Herbert Shelton (who was also the county tax collector) was authorized to arrest and jail him.

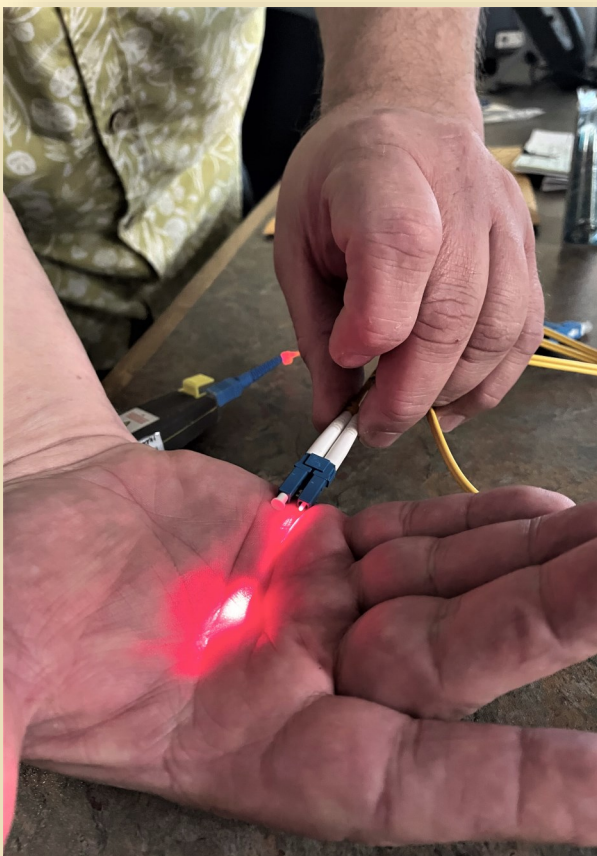
Well, it appears Mr. Raymond did not learn his lesson.

On July 10, 1930, Sheriff Shelton sent a letter to the Chief of Police in Medford advising him that Mr. Raymond made his \$25 payment in April and then failed to pay in May and June.

"The last we heard from him he was working as a bellboy in the Chandler Hotel. He may be engaged in the selling of liquor," Sheriff Shelton wrote. "I understand he associates with the son of your local Dodge Dealer and you may be able to ascertain his whereabouts through that source."

In May 1933, Merle Cochell was convicted of "larceny of livestock" and sentenced to one-year in the county jail, but on September 5, 1933, District Attorney M.D. Shanks recommended that Cochell be "granted a conditional pardon ..."

WARRANTS ... See Page 4



IT team making big strides with fiber optics

By Alex Paul
Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — Over the last four years, several Linn County buildings have been upgraded to high-speed network backbone connections, thanks to the installation of new fiber optic lines, according to IT Director Steve Braaten.

The installations and setup have been the responsibility of network engineers Mike Armstrong and Rob Hooper, Braaten said.

In some cases, network speeds are a 10x improvement, from 1 gigabit per second to 10 gigabits per second.

Linn County buildings that have seen upgrades so far include the Lebanon Health Center, Albany Health Annex, Willamette Health Center, Lebanon Justice Court, the Fair & Expo Center and Juvenile Detention Center.

"In the case of the Willamette Health Center and Fair & Expo Center, we had unstable public internet connections which we have now converted to direct fiber to both sites," Braaten said.

Braaten said Linn County also works with local contractors, such as Precision Fiber, to install Linn County owned fiber optic lines to existing power poles. Additionally, Linn County has a contract with Pacific Power to use their poles. The county owns several dedicated fiber paths in the downtown area where dedicated fiber is more cost-effective.

Left: IT Engineer Mike Armstrong demonstrates how a fiber optic line carries data.

Fiber Optics ... See Page 5



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Sherrie Sprenger



Will Tucker



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You can listen to the meetings by calling 541-704-3003 PIN 8442

Call 541-967-3825

Sheriff's Mounted Posse earns statewide awards

The Linn County Sheriff's Posse was recognized and received several trophies at the Oregon Association of Mounted Posses (OAMP) Annual Convention. OAMP is a statewide organization that helps with promotion and training of mounted posses around the state. The Sheriff's Posses represent and assist their sheriffs in a variety of ways. In Linn County, the posse assists with search and rescue, security, and representation at events and parades around the county. Linn County has a longstanding history of participation at OAMP and is committed to public service through good horsemanship. Linn County received the following OAMP trophies for 2022: The Linn County Posse received the Don Burbank Memorial Trophy for Sportsmanship. Anyone who knows a member of the Linn County Mounted Posse knows what gracious and wonderful people they all are. They are a fantastic team to have here at LCSO. Linn County posse member Betty Allen received the Most Active Member Trophy. Betty gives so



Betty Allen of the Linn County Sheriff's Posse and Sheriff Michelle Duncan.

much of her time to OAMP as an Executive Board member. She is always willing to help anyone and the Linn County Posse is grateful to have her. Sheriff Michelle Duncan was honored to receive the Sheriff's Award

trophy for being the most active sheriff in OAMP. Linn County sheriffs have a long history with this award and it is named after our very own Sheriff Ken Goin. This is a trophy that is not given every year and has not been awarded since 2018.

Gov. Kotek approves county homeless declaration

By Alex Paul
Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — March 14, Linn County Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker ratified a resolution declaring a state of emergency due to homelessness. The commissioners had previously submitted the declaration to Gov. Kotek and on March 20, Gov. Kotek approved the commissioners' request.



The goal is to make Linn County eligible for funding as the state moves closer to allocating millions of dollars for homeless programs. Gov. Kotek has asked that the Legislature allocate \$130 million, but legislators went beyond that request and approved \$200 million. Although all three commissioners signed onto the declaration, Commissioner Nyquist said he is high skeptical that Governor Kotek's plans will have any significant affect on the state's homeless situation and he blamed Oregon's lack of leadership on the issue for continued problems.

Nyquist said the state has legalized Class I drugs, downgrading possession charges from felonies to misdemeanors; has approved such complicated land use laws that building affordable housing is nearly impossible; and has not provided enough beds to house Oregon's mentally ill and get them off the streets. Commissioner Sprenger called the declaration the "tool we need to be able to move forward and potentially access funds."

Commissioner Tucker said rural coun-



Huts built by Sweet Home High School students and volunteers at the new homeless shelter in Sweet Home. The shelter is on property donated by Linn County. Photo courtesy The New Era.

ties should have been included in Gov. Kotek's original declaration months ago. He pointed out that on a per capita basis, Linn County has a higher proportion of homelessness that Multnomah County.

In a letter to the commissioners, Gov. Kotek noted, "First and foremost, I want to applaud you for the hard work you are doing in Linn County to respond to the homelessness crisis your community is experiencing. I want to assure you that I am absolutely committed to addressing homelessness in every corner of our state. It will take ongoing, active partnerships with leaders across Oregon to address the homelessness crisis and you have my commitment to be that partner."

Gov. Kotek also noted that unsheltered homelessness in Linn County increased by 104% between 2017 and 2022. Linn County's declaration may also help the City of Sweet Home, which also approved an emergency homeless declaration and recently opened a homeless encampment on property donated to the city by Linn County.

The Legislature approved \$200 million toward Gov. Kotek's homelessness plan:

- \$55.4 million for landlord incentives and mass leasing programs
- \$33.6 million for rent assistance
- \$27 million for rural counties
- \$25 million for homeless youth
- \$23.8 million for shelter beds
- \$20 million to produce modular affordable housing
- \$5 million for tribes
- \$5 million for culturally responsive organizations
- \$5 million to house farmworkers
- \$3 million revolving loan fund
- \$2 million for trash pick up

Large subdivision planned for Mill City

Santiam Meadows/Greenlight Development

Editor's Note: Linn County has supported recovery efforts in the Santiam Canyon since the devastating fires of September 2020. Linn County has waived almost \$120,000 in building permits for families rebuilding on the Linn County side of the fire area.

By James Day
Canyon Weekly

MILL CITY — The largest post-fire development in the Santiam Canyon is moving forward. Santiam Meadows, which at buildout likely will contain up to 66 units, is planned for 15 acres of land just south of Highway 22 in Mill City.

The project is fueled by a collaboration between Mill City, Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), Marion County and several grant-writing agencies. And although tough questions remain to be answered concerning the project, officials sound confident that the subdivision will become a reality. OHCS, the state's housing agency, provided a grant to pay for the land purchase. Marion County identified the site, negotiated the purchase and is working with a consultant on an infrastructure site plan. Grants, one for \$18 to 20 million to take care of site development and a \$300 million federal disaster recovery community development block grant, hopefully will take organizers the rest of the way.

The \$300 million grant might be available as soon as this spring, said Marion County officials.

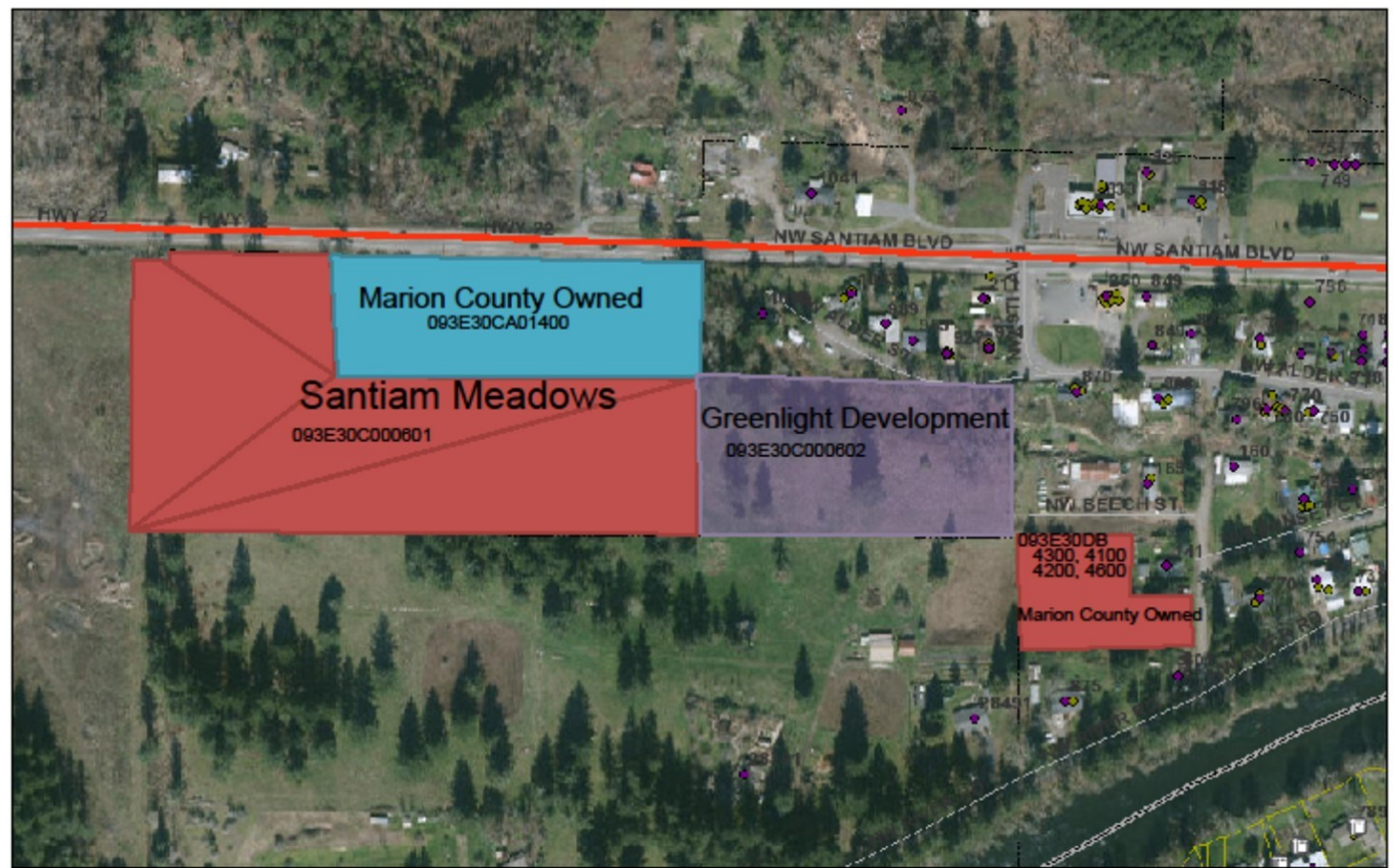
"Currently, we have around 300 wildfire-affected households in Marion County who don't have a place to call home," said Marion County Commissioner Danielle Bethell, a key figure in the housing plan. "This money is not just going to purchase land, it's going to give us the opportunity to create affordable, long-term housing that works for this community that was devastated by the wildfires."

The Beachie Creek and Lionshead fires on Labor Day weekend in 2020 scorched 400,000 acres, destroyed more than 1,500 structures and virtually leveled Detroit and Gates, with Mill City, Idanha and Lyons suffering moderate to extensive damage. Five people were killed.

One goal for the new housing is to make it affordable. Delia Hernandez of OHCS noted that who ultimately purchases the units "is to be determined, but OHCS participation requires that a significant proportion be made available to low- and moderate-income individuals."

The current plan calls for 59 of the units to be single family homes, a combination of 3-bedroom, 2-bath and 4-bedroom, 2-bath, with seven duplexes. The acreage currently is mostly pasture and includes one parcel that had a home that burned in the wildfires, said Mill City Mayor Tim Kirsch.

The mayor added that "the city is not involved with the development at this



2/27/2023, 10:59:39 AM

- Sales
- Address
- ◆ Permits
- Elevation Certificates
- ★ LOMAs
- Railways
- Highways
- Roads
- City Limits
- ▭ Tax Lots
- ▭ County Boundary

1:4,514
0 0.03 0.06 0.11 mi
0 0.04 0.09 0.17 km
Linn County GIS

Map created using the Linn County Oregon web mapping application

Here is an aerial map of the site for Santiam Meadows. Also on the map is Mill City's Greenlight development, which is expected to include 54 apartments and/or townhouses. Credit: Mill City

time other than the usual planning process. We are working to expand sewer capacity, (which) is needed to support all potential developments throughout the city."

The North Santiam Sewer Authority, working with \$50 million in federal COVID-19 relief funds, is planning a four-city sewer system that would connect

Mill City, Gates, Detroit and Idanha.

The project is years away, perhaps to at least 2026 for the Mill City-Gates phase and 2027 or beyond for the Detroit-Idanha piece. The key for Santiam Meadows is to make sure the sewer piece is in place so that folks can start moving into the houses.

No timeline is available yet for the start of construction at or completion of Santiam Meadows. The subdivision would be built in accordance with the Mill City development code and would produce new street access to the west side of Mill City off of Highway 22 as well as add streets, curbs, gutters and sidewalks. The land for Santiam Meadows is located south and west of the 76 gas station at 250 NW Ninth Ave.

An additional parcel between the Santiam Meadows plots has been set aside for Mill City's Greenlight development, which is planned to include 54 apartments and/or townhouses on the 4.3-acre parcel Greenlight will benefit from the same infrastructure improvements as Santiam Meadows.

Paying for and building that infrastructure in advance with county funds will bring down the costs of the homes be-

cause the builder would not have to include those items in the overall development package.

QUOTABLE

"Currently, we have around 300 wildfire-affected households in Marion County who don't have a place to call home,"

Marion County Commissioner Danielle Bethell

SIMPLE FORMULA FOR LIVING

Live beneath your means.
Return everything you borrow.
Stop blaming other people.
Admit it when you make a mistake.
Give clothes not worn to charity.
Do something nice and try not to get caught.
Listen more; talk less.
Every day take a 30 minute walk.
Strive for excellence, not perfection.
Be on time. Don't make excuses.
Don't argue. Get organized.
Be kind to unkind people.
Let someone cut ahead of you in line.
Take time to be alone.
Cultivate good manners.
Be humble.
Realize and accept that life isn't fair.
Know when to keep your mouth shut.
Go on an entire day without criticizing anyone.
Learn from the past. Plan for the future.
Live in the present.
Don't sweat the small stuff.
It's all small stuff.

becomingminimalist

Old warrants ... From Page 1

Mr. Cochell was placed under the "supervision of his uncle A.D. Wheeler, that he shall go to work and shall make restitution for his depredations."

On February 10, 1937, Sheriff Shelton was authorized by Gov. Norblad to extradite Edgar Graham from Washington State.

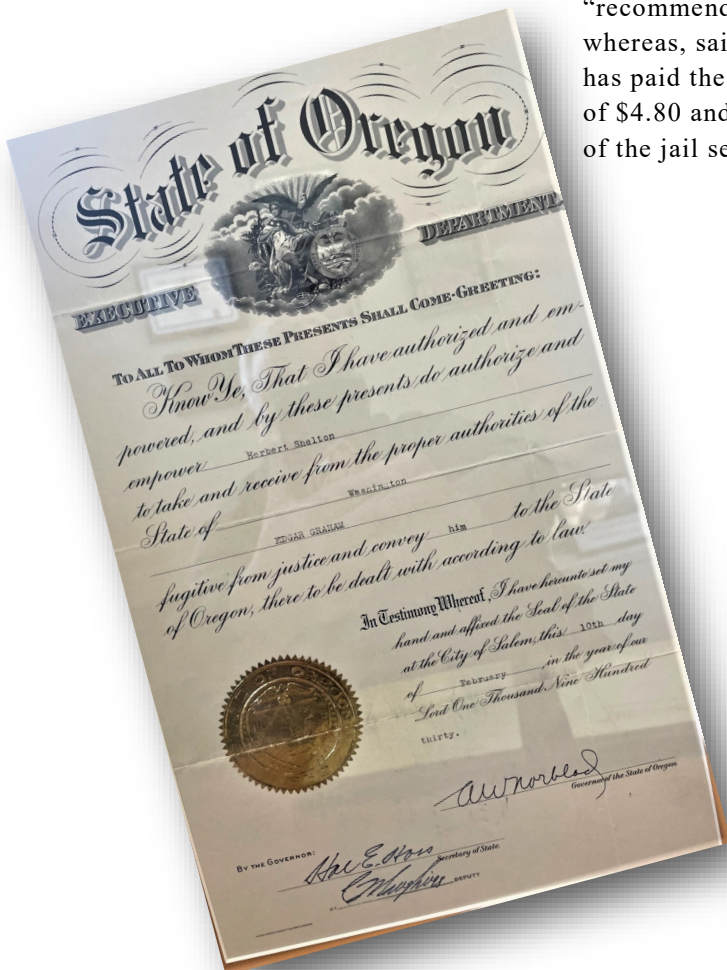
Graham had been charged with "seduction" in Linn County and fled

to Washington State.

In October 1937, Maynard Werner was convicted of "larceny of a watch" and was sentenced to 90 days in the Linn County Jail, plus a fine of \$25 plus \$4.80 in fees.

On December 14, 1937, Mrs. Lettie V. Good, secretary of the Oregon Prison Association notified Gov. Charles Martin that this was Mr. Werner's first arrest and "recommends clemency and whereas, said Maynard Werner has paid the fine of \$25 and costs of \$4.80 and has served 44 days of the jail sentence imposed".

"I always find it fascinating to find out more about local history; how people lived on the same ground I stand on; or what their problems were back then," Sheriff Michelle Duncan said. "It honestly seemed so simple compared to today. These documents are a history of our local justice system, displaying how the District Attorney, Sheriff and even the Governor's Office all worked together whether it was to serve justice in finding a fugitive or issuing pardons on what in our world today, would seem harsh sentences for minor offenses. I am glad we were able to preserve these important documents of Linn County history."



Avoid the "Financial Hardship Department" Email Scam

By Ellen Rosenblum
Oregon Attorney General

SALEM — Have you received an email from the "Financial Hardship Department" lately?

The Financial Hardship Department email is a scam with one goal – to infect your device with malware and steal your personal and financial information.

The email claims to be from a government agency or organization that offers financial assistance to those in need. The email says you have been approved for financial support and to call a phone number to finish enrolling in the program.

However, it is all fake. The scammer merely wants to steal your personal and financial information. Here is what a Financial Hardship Department scam message looks like: Hi it's Shela with the Financial Assistance Department. We tried reaching you at your home and did not hear back ... I'm not sure if you've spoken to an assigned agent yet, but I do see that you're pre-approved for our Hardship Program, so what I'm going



Ellen Rosenblum
Oregon Attorney General

to do is keep this in a pending status. And if you have about five minutes today give me a call so we can go over the details. My phone number is: 855-455-5177, Thank You, Shela Montalbano
Legitimate financial institutions and government agencies do not ask for personal information over the phone, through email or via text message, especially without verifying the identity of the person they are speaking with. If you receive a phone call, email, or text message like the Financial Hardship Department scam:

- Do not reply to the email or call the phone number provided in the message.
- Do not click on any links or download any attachments provided in the email. They may contain malware or viruses that can harm your device.
- Do not provide any personal information, such as your Social Security number, bank account

information, or credit card information.

If you have already responded to the scam email or provided personal information to the scammers, contact your bank or credit card company immediately to report any suspicious activity and protect your accounts.

You may also want to consider placing a fraud alert or credit freeze on your accounts to prevent any unauthorized access. And, as always, file a complaint with the Oregon Department of Justice online at www.oregonconsumer.gov or by calling 1-877-877-9392.

Working on the Crawfordsville Covered Bridge

Courtesy Scott Swanson
The New Era

Linn County Road Department crew members, as seen in the first photo, were inspecting the bridge, which needs repairs, Rob Kennedy, lead person for the county Bridge Crew, said.

The 105-foot Howe truss-type bridge, built in 1932, was bypassed by Highway 228 in 1963 and is now managed by the Linn County Parks and Recreation Department as a pedestrian bridge across the Calapooia River.

March 1, Kennedy said that the bridge crew was checking the facility on behalf of the Parks Department. He said that some of the beams have been damaged by leakage, and that the goal is to get a tarp on the bridge "when we get



some nicer weather" to protect it from the rain.



Deitz Peters of Lebanon, a member of the Grand Ronde tribe, displays Native American clothing and crafts that will be worn and on display at three Native Cultural Encampments this summer in Linn County Parks.

3 Native Encampments this Summer in Linn County Parks

Deitz Peters loves telling the stories of his people — members of the Grand Ronde tribe — that have been passed down from generation to generation.

He is also skilled in hand-beading clothing and jewelry and performing on handmade flutes.

Now, Peters and other Native Americans like him pass those stories, as well as their music and dancing traditions on to anyone who wants to learn more about Native American culture.

For several years, Peters and others have hosted Native Cultural Encampments at Linn County Parks. This summer, there will be three encampments: June 23-25 at Roaring River, July 28-30 at Waterloo County Park and August 25-27 at Cascadia County Park.

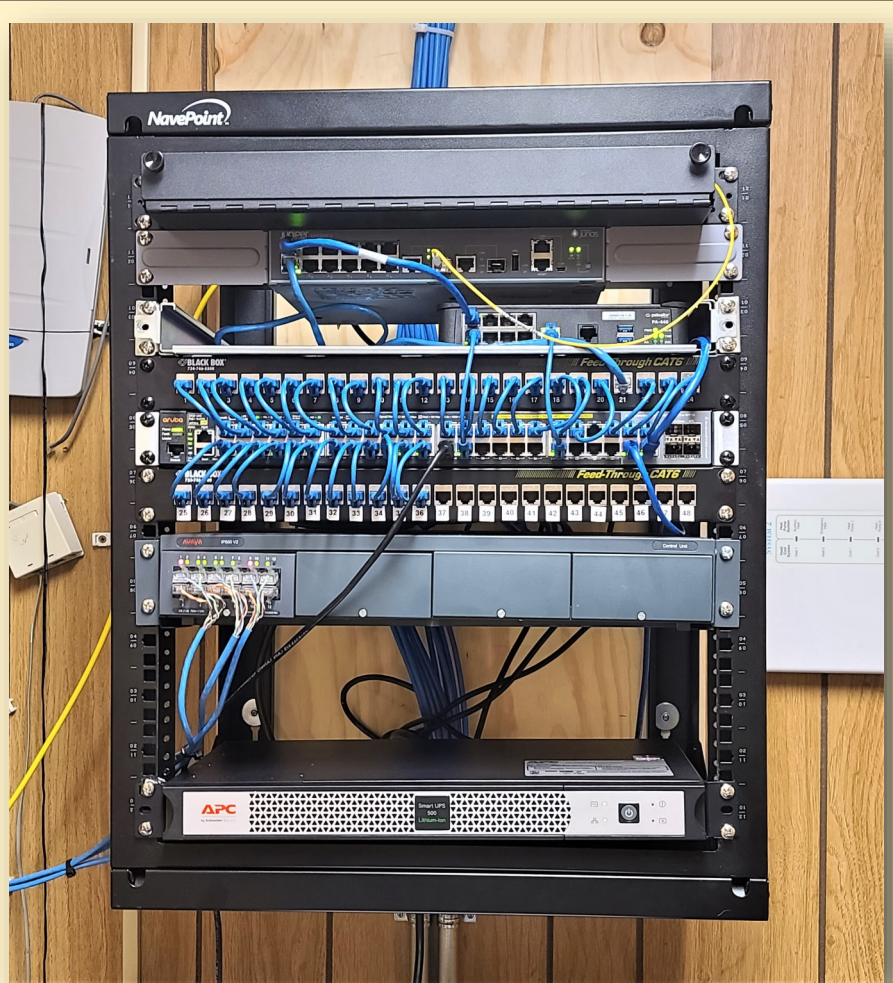
Plus, Peters and his fellow story tellers will also be at LaPine’s Frontier Days June 30-July 4 and the annual Flutestock Festival in Elkton on July 14-16.

Each encampment will feature daily prayers, a welcoming morning ceremony that includes time for questions and answers, craft making as well as crafts and other items for sale.

There will be dancing and music and on Sunday, to conclude each encampment, people are invited to share in a feast.

Participants will wear Native American regalia — they are not called costumes — including caps and headdresses made from American Bald Eagle feathers.

All of the encampments are free to the public and open children and adults alike.



A freshly installed computer rack.

Fiber optics ... From P. 1

The most recent upgrade was at the Lebanon Justice Courts in Lebanon. The next planned sites for fiber improvements will be the Washington Street and Armory sites, both in downtown Albany.

Due to broadband limitations in Sweet Home, the IT Department is researching how to add broadband improvements at the Sweet Home Health Center.

Braaten estimated the total cost so far have been well under \$100,000 and is not a part of the new Build Back Better Infrastructure Bill.

Armstrong and Hooper’s jobs are to configure incoming network connections and set up switch connections at the county buildings.

“Basically, we need to make sure the county’s equipment can work with a variety of different network hardware protocols,” Armstrong said. “We also need to ensure these connections communicate securely by using our robust security infrastructure.”

Armstrong and Hooper have years of experience at their craft, but say they “never stop learning to meet technology needs for Linn County”

They are especially proud of their work at Clear Lake Resort, even though it didn’t involve fiber optics.

The resort is about 45 miles east of Sweet Home and sits in an area with no cell phone service.

Resort staff in the past had to rely on older satellite internet technology.

Linn County recently upgraded this connection to a Starlink internet connection that also now carries VoIP telephony at the resort.

“It’s amazing how clear the sound is,” Armstrong said. “It’s just like using a regular phone, but over a satellite internet connection.”

The Starlink equipment not only automatically tracks the satellite to ensure good reception, but it also features a built-in heating system that keeps ice and snow at bay — much needed in the Cascade Mountains.

APRIL IS
National Child Abuse Prevention Month

childwelfare.gov/preventionmonth

Children's Bureau Child Welfare Information Gateway #ThrivingFamilies

OSU Extension — Linn County

New program reaches out into local Latino family food histories

By Alex Paul
Linn County Reporter

TANGENT — OSU-Extension-Linn-Benton Nutrition and Outreach Coordinator Tina Dodge gets excited when she talks about a new program she hopes to implement with mid-valley Latino families.

OSU Extension-Linn County has added two new education outreach specialists, Iris Carrera and Alli Studnick and is developing a program that will capture on paper and perhaps video, the family recipes enjoyed by Latino families for decades.

The new staff members join Diana Camacho-Figueroa. Dodge said the new program is called “Like Water For Chocolate” or “Como agua para chocolate”.

“We want to engage second generation family members to document their family recipes,” Dodge said. “We are going to support families’ to document their oral history and hope it carries forward. There is a learning value when you do something yourself. We want to help children or grandchildren to work with their family members and document their recipes.”

And Dodge said, the youth will then cook using those family recipes for their parents.

“That’s when you really learn,” she said. “And the hope is that this healthy family practice of home cooking carries forward.”

A key part of the project will also be shopping for the food used in the recipes.

Dodge added that with her new post-pandemic staff, she also wants to complete a nutritional education needs assessment, like one completed 12 years ago among the mid-valley’s Latino population.

“We would like to address food insecurity issues,” Dodge said. “And, we would like to use this information to help local food pantries engage the Latino population.”

Dodge said that by and large, Latino families know how to cook and stretch their food budgets. What would be helpful is providing them with education about localized foods they did not grow up cooking in their home countries.

“Our growing season is so much different and we have such a broad variety of foods,” Dodge said. “And, even if the foods are canned or frozen, they were picked at the height of their readiness. It’s all good, nutritious food.”

Dodge said it also appears that as Latino



Diego Nieto, Healthy Communities Coordinator for the Linn County Health Department teaches OSU Extension-Linn County staff how to make the traditional Spanish dish Tortilla Espanola (bake this and it would be an Italian fritata) recently at the Extension Service office in Tangent. OSU Extension-Linn County is expanding its outreach into the mid-valley’s Latino community, including how to cook traditional meals.



Iris Carrera



Diana Camacho-Figueroa



Alli Studnick

families acclimate longer into the U.S. communities, second or third generation family members gravitate away from home-cooked family recipes to fast food, just like their Anglo counterparts.

“We work more hours in the United States than any other country and that is why convenience foods are so enticing,” Dodge said.

Dodge has worked at OSU Extension-Linn County for

19 years.

“I’ve learned you can’t assume anything,” she said. “Program plans need to reflect the strengths of the community you are serving. I’d like to find out if food insecurity has gone up or down since 2008. Previously, we learned there is more food insecurity in Linn County than other counties and there is more food insecurity in rural areas.”

QUOTABLE

“Program plans need to reflect the strengths of the community you are serving.”

Tina Dodge

LINN COUNTY
YOUTH LIVESTOCK
AUCTION

Scholarship

APPLICATION:
www.lcyla.com/scholarships

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS
INVOLVED WITH 4-H/FFA AND
THE YOUTH LIVESTOCK
AUCTION ARE INVITED TO APPLY

APPLICATIONS DUE BY
MAY 5, 2023

Buzz of native bees - BEEvent attracts a crowd

Ranee Webb
OSU Extension Service

About nine years ago, Barbara Fick, then a Linn County Extension agent, was talking to retired entomologist and Master Gardener Volunteer Rich Little about increasing awareness of pollinators. That conversation led to the creation of a conference that is now the largest pollinator conference in the Pacific Northwest.



Bee enthusiasts were happy to get back together during the annual BEEvent Conference held March 4 at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center.



BEEvent Pollinator Conference is held the first Saturday in March with a primary mission to provide information to the general public about the plight of pollinators, both native and non-natives. We provide knowledge and materials to ordinary citizens to help them make their spaces friendly to pollinators, and so that they can become informed advocates. A secondary, but very important, purpose is to raise funds to support the outreach programs of the Linn County Master Gardeners Association to educate the public in healthy and productive gardening practices.

This year's event was recorded, so soon those who purchased tickets will be able to re-watch the talks and the video of the conference will also be released to those who have chosen to just purchase a ticket to watch the speaker's presentations at their leisure.

The focus of the 2023 9th annual BEEvent Pollinator Conference was "Adapting Your Garden to the Coming Climate Changes." About half of those who attended were first time attendees and people came from Linn, Benton, Lane, Marion, Yamhill, Clackamas, Multnomah, Clatsop, Jefferson and Douglas Counties. One attendee was from Idaho. Most were home gardeners and about one-third were also master gardeners. Linn County

Key note speaker, Dr. Brooke Edmunds,

OSU Extension Community Horticulture Faculty for Marion/Polk/Linn/Benton Counties focused on "Adapting Your Yard and Garden to Climate Change". She shared various studies that enlightened us about how

changes, including fires, are affecting pollinators. Dr. Sandro Debano, OSU Dept. of Fisheries, Wildlife & Conservation Sciences, had an interactive presentation on

myths and facts as she showed how some plants help native bees including the 80% of bees who are ground-nesting bees. Linn Master Gardener, Rich Little, a retired entomologist, shared observations on changes that we are seeing at various sites around the Linn-Benton area. Ranee Webb and Susan Morton, Linn Master Gardeners, covered the native blue orchard bee and best practices for managing them in your yard. We always include information about the native bees and especially the blue orchard mason bee. She is a very effective pollinator. Just seven female mason bees can pollinate as much as 500 non-native honey bees.

One attendee said: "Presenters were very good with engaging & interest-

QUOTABLE

"Once again, the conference was awesome. I drive up from Roseburg and it is always worth it."



ing material. Appreciate that the speakers were able to provide broad material for the home gardener". Another comment was from a repeat attendee: "Once again, the conference was awesome. I drive up from Roseburg and it is always worth it." Another commented: "Great job having closed caption on the video and for having a space set aside for those who would benefit from being up front. As a mom with a deaf son and daughter-in-law, you have no idea how helpful that was. Thanks for being so supportive."

Over the past nine year the conference's lineup of keynote speakers has included incredible researchers. It has included Rich Hatfield, senior conservation biologist of the Xerces Society, who spoke at the 2016 conference;

Robbin Thorp, distinguished emeritus professor of entomology at the University of California, Davis, who spoke at the 2017 conference; and Olivia Messinger Carril from New Mexico, co-author of "Bees in Your Backyard," who spoke at the 2020 conference and in 2021, James Cane, research entomologist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service in Logan, Utah. Cane has been studying bees for 30 years and is known for having applied his long-term interest in bees to help measure, understand and mitigate human factors that can shift nesting and foraging opportunities for bee communities.

We think we have had a major impact as we share expert knowledge about various pollinators.

For more information visit our website at <https://LinnMasterGardeners.com>.

Young people invited to Design County Fair T-shirt

OSU Extension and Coastal are looking for submissions for the "BEST" design for the front of the 2023 Linn County Fair T-shirt. The contest is open to all Linn County 4-H and FFA youth attending fair. Requirements:

- Submit one design per contestant by May 31.
- The design must be an original work. Absolutely no tracing or copying designs.
- Design must use only one color.
- Entries must be submitted as a PDF or JPG file format.

If selected, the contest winner will:

- See their design printed on the t-shirts passed out at fair.
- Receive a \$50 Coastal gift card.
- Meet with a professional designer from NoDinx to help prepare the final image.
- Be highlighted in our Growing newspaper and on social media.

Submit your designs at: <https://beav.es/SxF>

Questions? Please reach out to Michele Webster at Michele.Webster@oregonstate.edu

OSU EXTENSION LINN COUNTY
GIVE US YOUR BEST DESIGN!

COUNTY FAIR T-SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST

All 4-H and FFA youth attending
Linn County Fair 2023

WIN the following:

- Printing on all Coastal Farm t-shirts given out at fair
- \$50 Coastal gift card
- A meeting with a professional designer from NoDinx to help with final image
- Highlight in Growing newspaper and social media



Requirements:

- Submit design (1 per contestant) by May 31st
- Must be original work, no tracing or copying designs
- One color to be printed on front of color shirt
- Entries must be submitted as a pdf or jpg
- Upload entry to <https://beav.es/SxF>



OSU Extension Service prohibits discrimination in all its programs, services, activities and materials

Law enforcement groups, DNA tools solve missing woman's case

Oregon State Police

The remains of a woman found 13 miles east of Sweet Home nearly three years ago have been identified, Oregon State Police announced in a news release posted Tuesday, March 7, to Facebook.

The Linn County Sheriff's Office, with assistance from Parabon NanoLabs and the Oregon Medical Examiner's Office, identified the woman as Grace Lorna Narvaez-Weaver, who had last been seen at a downtown Olympia, Washington, post office in July 2019, according to a March 2021 tweet from the Olympia Police Department.

Her "partially skeletonized" remains were discovered Friday, April 3, 2020, in a remote, wooded area near Gordon Road. Responding law-enforcement officials, which included the LCSO, recovered the body, plus several distinct articles of clothing, but found no identification. Police said that an examination determined that she was likely between 30 and 50 years old.

The Oregon State Medical Examiner's Office uploaded the case into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System and submitted a bone sample to Bode Technology. However, when the resulting profile was uploaded into the Combined DNA Index System database, no matches were found.

The Clackamas County Sheriff's Office created a forensic illustration of the body's physical characteristics for press releases and as the main NamUs profile picture.

Despite the Linn County Sheriff's Office's efforts, police said, no leads produced results. In response, the Oregon State Medical Examin-



Parabon NanoLabs generated this 2021 2-D approximation of facial features and pigmentation of a woman found dead in an area off Gordon Road, 13 miles east of Sweet Home, in April 2020. She was identified in March 2023 as Grace Lorna Narvaez-Weaver of Washington. Courtesy Oregon State Police.

er's Office used grant funding from the National Institute of Justice/Bureau of Justice Assistance to perform DNA techniques, sending a tooth sample to DNA Labs International while a different type of DNA profile was produced for Parabon NanoLabs.

Parabon issued a report with additional physical features, predicting that the woman was of both Northern European and African descent, with fair skin, green or hazel eyes, light brown hair and likely "some" freckling. This information, along with the image that accompanied the report, was uploaded to the NamUs website.

In August 2022, Parabon authored an investigative genetic genealogy report with what the OSP called "the strongest investigative lead

yet." It suggested that the woman was Grace Lorna Narvaez-Weaver, who went missing in Washington in 2019. A 2008 photo was included, which the OSP in its 2023 news release described as "striking" in its resemblance.

The following month, police said, Linn County Sheriff's Office detectives contacted Narvaez-Weaver's family. One member provided a DNA sample, which was then compared to the unknown woman's. According to the OSP, they shared a significant amount of DNA consistent with a parent/child relationship.

"Grace's case is an excellent exam-

ple of how advanced technologies like investigative genetic genealogy and phenotyping can be used to help resolve a case before it goes cold," CeCe Moore, Parabon's chief genetic genealogist, said in the release.

"Collaboration and dedication were key to finding a resolution," Oregon State Forensic Anthropologist Dr. Nici Vance said. "We hope that the return of Grace to her family provides a level of peace now that her whereabouts are no longer a mystery."

Police said that the investigation into Narvaez-Weaver's death is ongoing.

QUOTABLE
"Collaboration and dedication were key to finding a resolution ..."
Dr. Nici Vance
State Anthropologist

Did You Know?
April 3rd - 7th is National Public Health Week.
Follow Linn County Public and Environmental Health on Facebook for daily information.

Join us!
Linn County Young Women's Fire Camp

Free 2 day academy
July 8th and 9th

See what it is like to be a firefighter!

Girls aged 14-19 are invited to attend a free, two-day event taught by women firefighters. The academy is held this year at Halsey Fire Department

Any Oregon girl can apply! | Free tshirt and meals provided | Applications due May 1st

For more information and applications visit:
www.Lebanonfire.org | www.facebook.com/LCYFA

St. Patrick's Day fun



Left: Mandi Funk and Jessica Martinez East Linn WIC team.



Above, left to right: Sarah Alloway, Benton County CSR; Kelsey Wray, Benton County Health Navigator; and Mandi Funk, Linn County Health Office Special-



Above: Leah Brunson (WIC Supervisor), Mayra Vega (Bilingual Health Aid WIC), Serena Stearns-Garland (Registered Dietitian WIC), Brandy Tarr (Nutrition Educator WIC).



Paul Hermens, Printing & Supplies, turned the big "double nickel" on St. Patrick's Day and says he is looking forward to restaurant discounts.



Above: There was lots of "green" going on at the OSU Extension-Linn County office in Tangent, both plants and staff members including Laurie Gibson, standing, and Jody Hill.

St. Patrick's Day fun



Left: Michelle Valenzuela and Breeanna Oxford in the Treasurer's Office had a good time.



Right: The pride of Windy City, Lily Daudert, IT Department, shows off a green Chicago Cubs' T-shirt and other St. Patty's regalia.



Left: Nate Mattson, was rocking it with green T-shirt and hat while he served up tasty treats at the Mad Platter Café.



Above: Dana Wikner, Alcohol and Drug Department, His T-shirt reads: "It's Not a Dad Bod, It's a Father Figure."



Forest Service staff gear up for fire season; long-term repairs

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — The U.S. Forest Service is gearing up for heightened wildfire protections in 2023 and will also begin an extensive, \$78 million multi-year fire damage recovery program, Willamette National Forest staff told Commissioners Roger Nyquist and Will Tucker Tuesday morning.

Commissioner Sprenger was not present.

Forest Supervisor Dave Warnack introduced Duane Bishop, Deputy Forest Supervisor; Michelle King, Detroit District Ranger; Nikki Swanson, Sweet Home District Ranger; Christ Donaldson, Deputy Fire staff; and Brett Blundon, Disaster Recovery lead.

Blundon is heading up a Disaster Recovery Team and said that 21% of the Willamette National Forest has been affected by wildfires between 2020 and 2022. That breaks down to 196,000 acres in 2020, 42,000 acres in 2021, 127,000 acres in 2022 for a total of 365,000 acres.

Blundon said that Congress approved \$1 billion for forest recovery programs and Region 6 will receive \$250 million due to the extensive wildfires in recent years.

The Willamette National Forest team compiled a list of projects that totaled more than \$100 million and \$78,640,000 was approved.

Priorities will be:

- Public safety and access: \$43.8 million. Remove danger trees within one tree height of roads; treat weeds; reconstruct fire-damaged roads; replace and increase culvert sizes to accommodate increased flows due to fires.
- Infrastructure: \$21.1 million. Includes replacing housing at the Detroit Ranger District that was destroyed by fires.
- Reforestation and planting severely burned areas: \$8.4 million
- Restoration: \$1.47 million
- Additional asset surveys of all lands: \$515,000
- Additional temporary staffing: \$3.27 million

All permanent staff has been assigned and offers have been made to temporary staff.

Priority recovery projects include:

- Holiday Farm Fire roads risk reduction: \$5.2 million.
- Beachie Creek/Lionshead fires roads risk reduction: \$20 million.
- Gales Fire roads risk reduction: \$7 million.
- Detroit Housing reconstruction: \$9 million.
- McKenzie River priority road reconstruction: \$5 million.



Above: Dave Warnack, Willamette National Forest supervisor, introduces his team to the Linn County Board of Commissioners. **Below:** Sweet Home District Ranger Nikki Swanson.



Donaldson said the Willamette National Forest does not have a “let it burn” policy in wilderness areas, but added it can be extremely difficult to fight fires there due to terrain issues.

Donaldson said forest managers have traditionally focused on post-time sale slash reduction as a top fuels management priority. They are now placing a higher priority on fuels reductions as a whole, identifying potential fire risk areas early.

Donaldson said the Forest Service has been working closely with Giustina Resources and Cascade Timber Consulting, which have timber lands adjacent to wilderness areas. The Forest Service is committed to a multi-year road improvement program in those areas east of Sweet Home.

Donaldson said there will be three 20-person fire teams in the area this summer and next summer they will expand to 25-person teams. An interagency fire school will be held in Sweet Home along with the Oregon Department of Forestry and aviation resources such as hel-

icopters and airplanes will not be stationed locally, but will be on call.

Commissioner Nyquist said the Forest Service needs to make timber harvesting a higher priority to both reduce fire opportunities and to create revenues for both Forest Service programs and counties that

relay on federal payments.

“The National Forests are growing fuels faster than harvesting them,” Nyquist said. “In sports, that’s called playing from behind all of the time. This needs to be reviewed vigorously internally.”

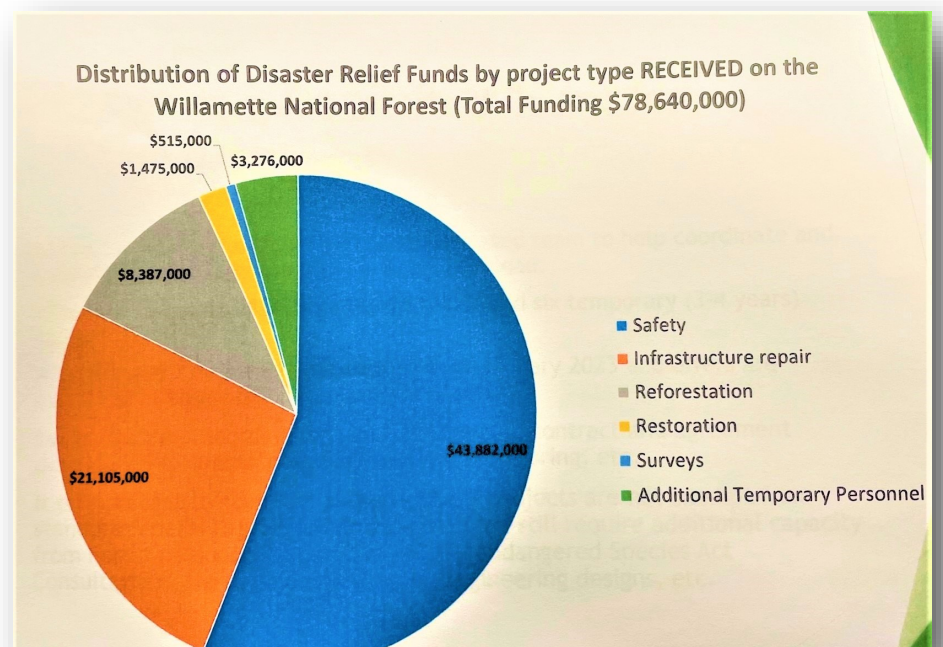
Commissioner Tucker said he wants to go on a tour of the forest lands with staff and he’s also concerned that aircraft are not being staged locally.

“Fire season starts earlier in California and that becomes a priority,” Tucker said.

He also pointed out that the Freres family in the Santiam Canyon lost a majority of their timber lands and have already harvested what they could and replanted, while the Forest Service is just starting, nearly three years post-fires.

Tucker emphasized that he believes all fires should be attacked as quickly as possible during fire season.

Donaldson said a contract to use the Weyerhaeuser helicopter has been renewed.



Yevonne Montoya looks forward to farming, animal rescues

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — There are many things Yevonne Montoya is going to miss about working 21 years in the payroll department for Linn County, but one thing she definitely won't miss is implementing new software programs.

QUOTABLE

"I think of our employees as my customers. I treat them just like customers and I want to help them the best I can."

Yevonne Montoya

"I implemented software systems when I was with Young & Morgan, Chemeketa Community College and twice for Linn County," Montoya said. "I don't ever want to do it again."

However, she will miss the people she has worked with at Linn County and her prior jobs.

"I think of our employees as my customers," Montoya said. "I treat them just like customers and I want to help them the best I can."

Born in Michigan, her family moved to Sweet Home when she was six years old. She graduated from Sweet Home High School in 1976 and said it was an aptitude for math that set her on a career with numbers.

Her mother managed the Ben Franklin store in Sweet Home and Montoya — family name Debrie — learned about work and numbers from her at an early age.

She was recruited to work in the office at Young & Morgan in the Santiam Canyon,



Above: On behalf of his himself and his fellow commissioners, Roger Nyquist presented Yevonne Montoya with a plaque commemorating her 21 years of service in the payroll department with Linn County during a party in her honor March 23. **Above right:** Montoya with coworker Cathy McGinnis. **Right:** Yahoo, retirement!

where she was the office manager and responsible for HR and payroll for 11 years.

"I was the only woman and I removed a lot of wood slivers for guys," she laughed.

She spent 11 years at Chemeketa Community College and now 21 years with Linn County.

Montoya won't be lacking for things to keep her busy.

She lives on a 6 ½-acre farm near Scio, along with one cow, several free-range chickens, an apple and pear orchard and numerous rescue animals.

"I have a big garden and I guess my hobby is canning and dehydrating things," she said.

For about 10 years, Montoya competitively showed champion Cavalier King



Charles Spaniels.

Although she has visited France, Montoya says extensive travel probably isn't high on her wish list during retirement.

"I am really a home body," she said.

Montoya said she enjoys finding out how things work and fixing them.

"I like challenges, the nuts and bolts of things and that is what made my job so interesting for so long," she said. "This has been my best job ever."

Brooke Shepard is new nurse at Linn Juvenile Detention Center

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — Brooke Shepard was just 11 years old when she realized she wanted to be a nurse when she grew up. She is living that dream and since mid-March has been the new nurse at the Linn County Juvenile Detention Center.

"I like helping people, making them feel better and listening to them," Shepard said.

A South Salem High School graduate, Shepard graduated with an LPN degree from Institute of Technology in Salem in 2013.

She has gained a wealth of knowledge and skills since graduation, working at a memory care facility, a Salem Urgent Care and now the Detention Center.

"This is a nursing job where you don't have to deal with insurance

issues," she said of her new role.

"Plus, I have always liked kids."

Shepard meets with every young person who comes into the Detention Center and works with a doctor who comes in twice a week. She's also on call, which she likes, because "you really get to know your patients."

She is adjusting to the flow of young people in and out of the facility. "I like the fact that I never know what is coming up when I come to work," Shepard said. "It's new every day."

When she isn't working, Shepard enjoys hiking around Multnomah Falls and Silver Creek Falls, swimming, painting ceramics and crocheting.

She has two sons, 11 and 7, who enjoy playing soccer, video games and as a family, watching TV series, currently the "Mandalorian."

Shepard says one of the most satisfying parts of her new job is being able to "talking with the kids."



The Linn County Juvenile Detention Center has welcomed LPN Brooke Shepard as the facility's new nurse. She has brings 10 years experience to her new role.



Dani Crabtree Linn County Public Health- Tobacco Prevention Coordinator.



Serena Stearns-Garland RDN, LD- Linn County WIC and Diego Nieto Linn County Public Health -Healthy Communities Coordinator.

Celebrating nutrition

Serena Stearns-Garland
For the Linn County Reporter

Linn County Public Health celebrated National Nutrition Month in March. The theme was “Fuel for the Future” featuring plant-based and locally sourced food and focusing on sustainability. Our joint staff collaborative meeting included presentations from local partners, a hands-on quick pickling vegetables demonstration, food and nutrition demonstration by Samaritan hospital, and a sharing table with donated items from our pantries, as well as, a local plant nursery. Fun was had by all while



Left to right: Amanda Wilkerson -Linn County Maternal Health Nurse, Megan Dunn Linn County Public Health Lactation Consultant, Juana Lopez-Gonzalez- WIC Nutrition Educator, Brandy Tarr- WIC Nutrition Educator, Jessica Martinez- WIC Nutrition Educator, Liza Walker- Linn County Maternal Health Nurse, Tania Bailey- Linn County Maternal Health Nurse, Emily Middleton-Linn County Maternal Health Nurse, Monica Boylan -Linn County Maternal Health Nurse Supervisor, Leah Brunson-

Left: Serena Stearns-Garland RDN, LD -Linn County WIC and Athena Nofzinger RDN, CSO, LD Samaritan Health Services.

A tale of one lucky duck

It isn't as though any two Monday mornings are ever alike at the Linn County District Attorney's Office, but March 27 was an especially memorable Monday.

An errant duck — yes, we said duck — caused some excitement for all involved, attorneys and duck as well.

According to Operations Supervisor Robin Beechert, the duck flew into Alex Olenick's office and luckily he was in court. The female duck immediately took shelter under his desk.

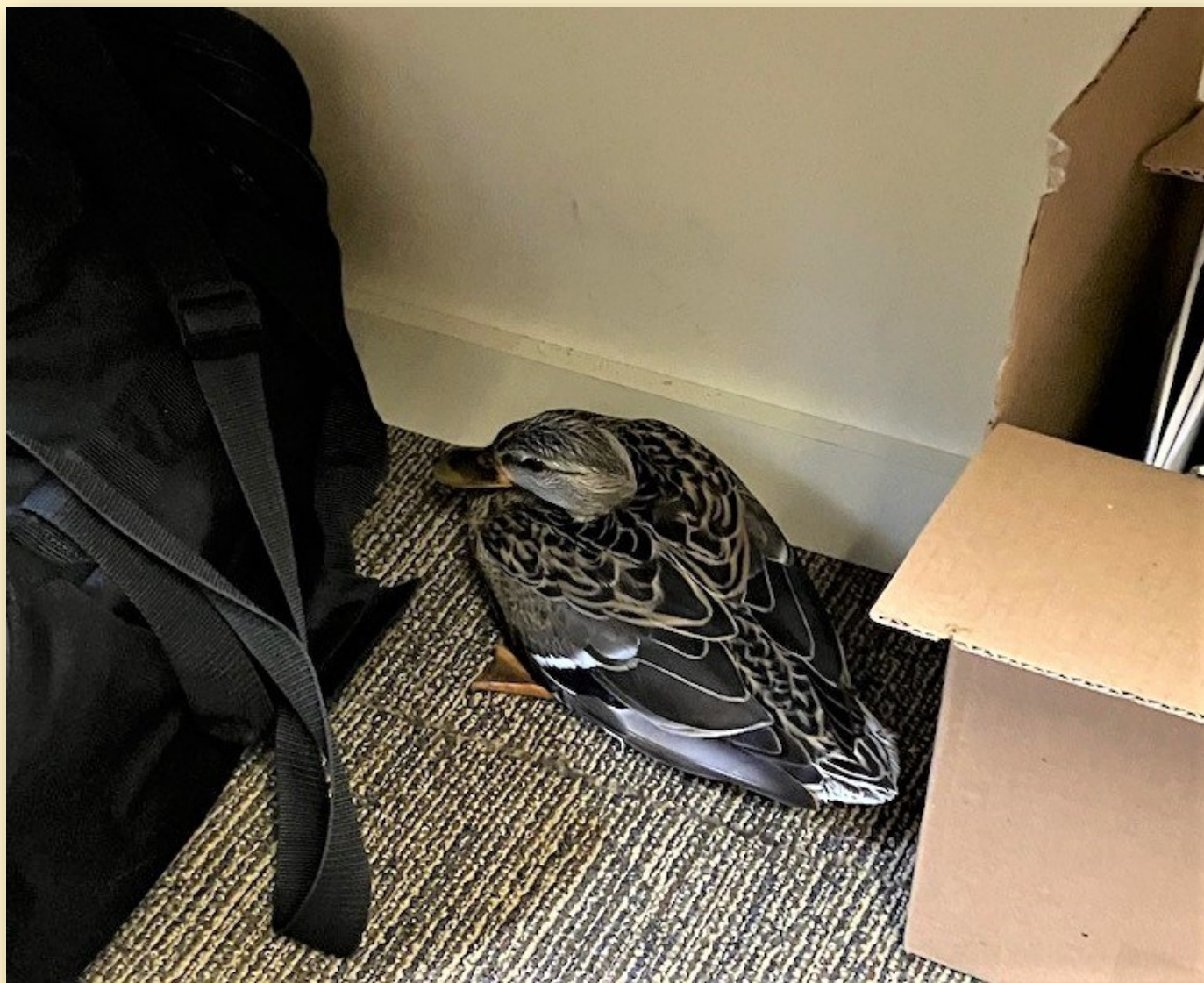
"We didn't see any obvious injuries to her, but we weren't sure she was OK," Beechert said. "We called General Services and Greg Hart came over to help us remove the duck. As soon as he took her outside, she flew off. Her mate was sitting on the big rock on the courthouse lawn and he flew off with her."

Hart said he saw a bunch of ducks near the Courthouse, when he was walking outside. He heard a woman gasp — which likely was when the duck went through the window — and was notified of the incident.

He was fully prepared to deal with a dead duck, but was pleasantly surprised to see the duck was alive and well.

"As soon as I opened the box outside, the mallard came over and they took off," Hart said. "She seemed fine."

Beechert said there definitely was a happy ending to an untypical Monday morning.



Above: A female duck hides comfortably in Attorney Alex Olenick's office after shattering a window in the Linn County District Attorney's Office March 27.



Left/right: Damage to a window in the Linn County District Attorney's Office March 27. Greg Hart quickly reunited the female duck with her partner, who had wisely not joined her on her adventure with the legal profession.



Right time, right place for Linn County Search & Rescue

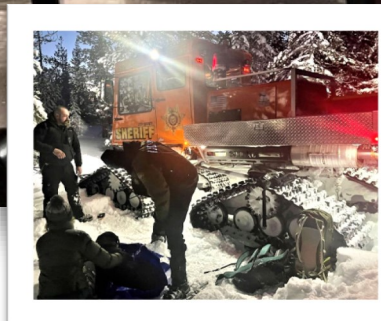
From training to a real life Search and Rescue mission.

Recently, deputies from the Linn County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue team were receiving winter survival and snow vehicle operator training at Ray Benson snow park near Hoodoo.

During the very last hour of their training, Linn County dispatch received a call from two cross-country skiers who needed help because their dog was injured and couldn't walk.

Since the team was in the area, they drove the four miles in deep snow to the area the skiers were last reported. Search and rescue members then snowshoed about 100 yards down the trail, and we were able to locate the two skiers and their injured dog. The dog was laid on a tarp which was used as a sled and pulled back to the SnoCat.

The two skiers and their dog Bodie were rescued and taken back to their car at Ray Benson Snow Park. This was a great way to end a week of training by applying it in the real world.



Bodie and his owners were very happy to be helped by the LCSO Search and Rescue team that was practicing near Hoodoo recently.