



## Enjoy summer, but be safe

**W**ith summer in full swing and many people taking vacations, I'd like to take

this opportunity to thank all Linn County employees for their dedication and commitment to serving our citizenry.

It's also a good time to remind each other that personal safety and family emergency preparedness should be a component of our summer travel plans.



**Darrin  
Lane**

Please take a moment to plan for your safety and security when taking a road trip or camping, hiking, etc. Being prepared will not only keep you safe, it will also lower your stress level if something unexpected happens.

It may sound cliché, but these tried and proven techniques work:

- Take some extra bottled water in your car along with some snacks and a blanket.
- Keep a first aid kit and fire extinguisher in your vehicle as well.
- A working flashlight and charging cables will ensure you can deal with unexpected delays in travel.
- Don't forget work gloves and a change of clothes.
- Some basic repair tools including pliers, screwdrivers and some duct tape.
- Nonperishable foods— that don't require a can opener or fire — and medicines.
- Maps, cell phone and charger

Enjoy your time off and stay safe!



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

### Would you like to receive the newsletter?

Please send your email address to Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us) or call 541-967-3825.



Health Services Emergency Manager Neva Anderson talks about the Labor Day 2020 fires that caused the county to develop an emergency evacuation shelter at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center.

## Ready for fire season

### Table top session reviews good/bad of 2020 fire evacuation efforts

By Alex Paul  
Communications Officer

**O**regon fire season has arrived in full force and Linn County staff members have already begun planning to set up an emergency evacuation shelter if the need arises locally.

July 20, county staff members were joined by representatives of Samaritan Health Services, OSU Extension, the Albany Fire Department and the Salvation Army to discuss the pros and cons of an emergency shelter in place last September and plan for future needs.

Facilitating the meeting was Neva Anderson, Linn County Health Services Emergency Manager; Erik Anderson, emergency planner; and Sarah Daniels, volunteer coordinator.

The September 2020 shelter was put together with virtually no warning, although fires were burning in the Opal Creek Wilderness Area and near Madras. The Labor Day weekend was normal, until 60 to 80 mile per hour winds whipped both fires into a frenzy, eventually pushing them together into a fire that consumed more than 400,000 acres and devastated the North Santiam Canyon area.

In all, the fire destroyed more than 1,500 structures in Linn County and claimed nine lives.



Health Services Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Daniels makes a point during a table top review and planning session July 20 at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center.

Linn County's effort started with a pop-up canopy in the Fair & Expo Center parking lot, but quickly grew to encompass much of the main building, plus the livestock barns.

Neva Anderson said the shelter operated from Sept. 7 to 18 and served 750 people and more than 1,000 animals. It operated 24/7. It served people from Linn, Lincoln, Jackson, Clackamas and Marion counties. In all, more than 2,000 volunteers and county staff members participated.

Linn County was fortunate to have used COVID-19 funds to purchase 200 cots, Erik Anderson said. Some 150 cots were set up including 35 for medically fragile persons.

"We learned it's important to provide social assistance as well as food and water," Neva said. "We celebrated birthdays and other special events. It provides some normalcy."

Erik Anderson said that even though there were plenty of cots, many people

preferred sleeping in their vehicle in the parking lot.

Here's what the emergency providers learned:

- The fairgrounds is a large campus. Security is important inside and outside buildings.
- Wrist bands are vital to keeping track of who belongs in the shelter.
- Providing mental health and spiritual services is important.
- The county has ordered a new shower that is ADA accessible, via grant funding from the Region 2 Healthcare Coalition.
- Community partnerships — established before any disaster — are vital.
- Because wildfires can be burning

Table top ... See P. 3



## We want your photos of Linn County

Linn County is truly a beautiful place to live and we want our new county website to reflect that beauty.

We are soliciting photos from throughout the county — from Albany to the Santiam Pass and Mill City to Harrisburg — as we develop a new website in the coming months.

We need scenic photos, people at work and play, our many community festivals — Sportsman's Holiday and the Oregon Jamboree to the Fourth of July parade in Harrisburg.

Please send high-quality photos to Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer at [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us).

Please include name of photographer and location of the photo.

## Linn County Board of Commissioners

**Roger Nyquist**



**Sherrie Sprenger**



**Will Tucker**



Call 541-967-3825



Linda Lindsey, Commissioners Sherrie Sprenger, Roger Nyquist and Will Tucker during tree planting ceremony July 6 in honor of former Linn County Commissioner John K. Lindsey, who died March 9.

## Lindsey honored with memorial tree

ALBANY — Former Linn County Commissioner John K. Lindsey was an outspoken advocate for his family, the citizens of Linn County and small business owners, fellow elected officials, coworkers and family members said July 6 as a redwood tree was planted in his honor on the courthouse lawn.

It would have been Lindsey's 55<sup>th</sup> birthday, 22 of those years spent as a county commissioner. Lindsey died March 9 after a year-long battle with cancer.

"John had lots to say and he said it," Board Chair Roger Nyquist said.

Nyquist called Lindsey, "a great guy to work with ... he left us way too soon. I'm sure he is here today in spirit and in memories. He was definitely the tree guy."

Commissioner Will Tucker served with Lindsey for a dozen years, retired and was appointed to fill out the remaining two years of Lindsey's term of office.

"John would have been extremely interested to know that private timber companies have salvaged about 50% of their burned trees from last September's wildfires while the BLM has only cleared rights-of-way and roadways," Tucker said.

Tucker presented Lindsey's widow, Linda, with a plaque in his honor.

Commissioner Sherrie Sprenger said there has been a huge outpouring of heartfelt comments about Lindsey from people all around the state.

"John's passing has had a significant impact all over the state, not just in Linn County," Sprenger said.

Linn County Clerk Steve Druckenmiller and Lindsey were not only fellow elected officials, but dear friends for many years.

"He had a huge heart," Druckenmiller said. "He loved Linn County and he loved people. Everything he did he did with his heart in it."

Druckenmiller said he might well have been Lindsey's toughest critic. They would discuss and hash out Lindsey's thoughts on issues and Druckenmiller would remind Lindsey he was but one of three votes.

"He would always say it is a great board of commissioners and there was never animosity about issues," Druckenmiller said. "They would tackle

something and then move on to whatever the next issue was waiting."

The tree was planted on the north side of the courthouse and can be easily seen through the window in Lindsey's former office.

Lindsey was serving his sixth four-year term as a county commissioner.



Commissioner Will Tucker presented Lindsey's widow, Linda, with a memorial plaque.

Lindsey served in the U.S. Navy during Operation Desert Storm and was a staunch advocate for veterans.

He enjoyed playing and listening to music and anything to do with his children and grandchildren.



## Ouch!

Sean McGuire of General Services installs small concrete spacers called dobies that hold up rebar mesh in a new concrete sidewalk on the south side of the courthouse. Concrete was poured on July 22.



**Congratulations to LCSO**

**Search and Rescue grads**

Sheriff Jim Yon said they all worked very hard and should be proud of their accomplishment. Not everyone makes it to graduation because we only want the very best for our citizens. We are proud to have these amazing kids as a part of the team! This year's graduates were: Andre Alvarez, Blake Arthur, Clayton Crawford, Maxwell Fulton, Drew Funk, Hannah Gjesdal, Elizabeth Kinkade, Troy Larsen, Maximillian Nowak, Odin Paris and Layden York.



**Fire planning ... From P. 1**

- at several locations at the same time, it is important to be self-sufficient and not have to rely on the Red Cross to provide services.
- Linn County was fortunate that seasonal parks staff were still available to help.
- Charles De Jesus and the Salvation Army crew provided three meals a day. Assistance from the LBCC Culinary program was greatly appreciated.
- The county needs to make sure key staff have Incident Command training and that there are back-ups.
- There are 21 long-term care facilities in Linn County. How can county staff assist with medically fragile residents?
- Linn County was fortunate that State Rep. Shelly Boshart-Davis, who is also a farmer, was able to volunteer in the livestock area. It's important to have someone on-site who understands livestock, what food they can and can't eat and how to provide proper care for them.
- Local farm stores made sure there was plenty of feed on hand at all times.
- Linn County has developed "go boxes", pre-filled with necessary supplies and will get vests like firefighters use, filled with emergency medical supplies.
- Donations were overwhelming — from food to clothing — but it is important to convey a message that only good, useable clothing is needed and that home-cooked meals cannot be used due to temperature concerns and the inability to gauge sanitation conditions.
- A communications system within the evacuation center — and in vehicles — and outreaching into communities is important, including being able to provide the community with timely lists of shelter needs as they change rapidly.

The next steps will include identifying Linn County staff members who can assist with development of an Incident Command Team and provide training to them.

- Neva Anderson said permanent staffing for a Health Services Preparedness and Response Team will be identified and should begin meeting with community partners, such as the OSU Extension Service, to determine what types of improvements can be made in the livestock area.
- The team will also need to develop a check and balances inventory system — restocking of blankets and pillows for example — to ensure operational readiness.

"Overall, we need to continue to make system improvements and policy development to ensure continuity of operations at the shelter site," Anderson added.



**Website project moving forward**

Linn County IT Director Steve Braaten talks to the Board of Commissioners about seeking Requests For Proposals to develop a new county website during the board's July 20 meeting. Braaten said the project could cost upwards of \$100,000. The current website is about 30 years old and does not meet the needs of several county departments.

**Looking for foster care families**

Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc. is establishing therapeutic foster care services in our area.

These services will provide much-needed services for youth by offering safe, therapeutic care for young people who are experiencing behavioral or mental health challenges.

Are you interested in fostering?

Are you part of a work or community group that you could connect GOBHI with to help spread the word? GOBHI team members would like to connect with you. A phone call or email to ex-

**Protect your home with defensible space**

- Clean roofs and gutters of dead leaves, debris and tree needles that could catch embers.
- Replace or repair any loose or missing shingles or roof tiles to prevent ember penetration.
- Reduce embers that could pass through vents in the eaves by installing 1/8th-inch metal mesh screening.
- Clean debris from exterior attic vents and install 1/8th-inch metal mesh screening to reduce embers.
- Repair or replace damaged or loose window screens and any broken windows.
- Screen or box-in areas below patios and decks with wire mesh to prevent debris and combustible

materials from accumulating.

- Move any flammable material away from wall exteriors — mulch, flammable plants, leaves and needles, firewood piles — anything that can burn.
- Remove anything stored under decks or porches.

Learn more at [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org).



**Share the road safely with farm equipment**

With harvest season in full swing in the mid-valley, the Linn County Sheriff's Office is offering some farm equipment road safety tips.

"You are going to see a lot more farm equipment traffic on the road now through the end of September," said Sheriff Jim Yon.

Here are a few things to keep in mind to keep you and the farmers safe:

- Farm equipment is becoming larger and larger each season. This means the equipment is likely to take up a bigger portion of the road than you may have seen in years past.
- Most farm equipment is equipped with multiple lights on all sides and large triangle signs to help make them as visible as possible while on the roadway.
- When you approach farm equipment from the rear and the equipment is moving at a slow pace, people are going to want to pass. Always assume that the driver cannot see you. If you are going to pass, make sure you are in a designated passing area. Since the equipment can be very large, make sure you look further up the road than you normally would when passing a vehicle. Once you have passed the farm equipment make sure to give extra space before returning to your lane.
- When you approach farm equipment from the front make sure you slow down. Check to see if other vehicles may be passing the farm equipment.

# Linn County Fair draws record crowd

*More than 34,000 people attended over 3 days*

By Alex Paul

Communications Officer

**A**LBANY — A record crowd of 34,330 people attended the Linn County Fair that ended July 17.

And making the number even more amazing is that the fair ran for three days, not the usual four as in past years, according to Fair & Expo Center manager Randy Porter.

The previous attendance record was 33,707 set in 2018.

“It was an absolute homerun,” Porter said. “People were tired of being cooped up for the past 18 months. They wanted to get out of the house, spend a little money and have some fun. They did just that.”

Temperate daytime temperatures from the mid-70 to mid-80 degree range, and cool nights, were an added bonus for fairgoers.

## Quotable

*“It was an absolute  
homerun ... ”*

Randy Porter

Attendance by day was 8,445 on Thursday, 8,392 on Friday and 11,893 on Saturday.

Porter said food vendors had outstanding sales, up more than 55%, beer sales were up 85% and the Davis Northwest Carnival saw a whopping 177% increase in business.

“I want to thank all of the staff and volunteers who worked hard to make this happen,” said fair board president Kris Latimer. “We were constantly adjusting things right up until a couple weeks ago.”

The community came out in such a huge way, Latimer added.

“Families wanted to celebrate with good wholesome fun,” Latimer said. “The turnout and support for the Youth Livestock Auction was over the moon. You never know what will happen when you open up something like this after a year off. I was truly blown away by how well every-



**Above:** Fair Board members pose before one of three nightly concerts. Row one: Ed Perlenfein, Kris Latimer, Steve Mote and Kerry Johnson. Row two: Roger Nyquist, Dr. Michael Huber and Damon Martin. **Left:** Fair & Expo Manager Randy Porter, seated, talks with Kevin Hamilton of the Road Department about traffic flow issues around the fairgrounds. **Below:** Members of Search and Rescue staffed the LCSO booth. **Below left:** Scott Schuler and gang from KRKT radio gave away several prizes every night.



thing went, how folks came out to just have a good time. I couldn't be more proud of everyone.”

The Linn County Youth Livestock Auction smashed previous records, with 249 lots bringing a total \$1.15 million. The top selling animal was a

lamb raised by Weston Tenbusch, of rural Brownsville, who has Cerebral Palsy. It brought \$200 per pound for a grand total of \$27,400 from two bidders.

Nightly main stage entertainment included Blue Oyster Cult, Matt Stell and Tyler Farr.

“This was truly a community celebration,” Linn County Commissioner and fair board member Roger Nyquist said. “It was heartwarming to see anything kid-related get such positive response. Participation was through the roof.”

Nyquist said the fair board will likely continue with the three-day fair format.

“We need to work with the Albany Parks Department to be able to use Timber Linn Park for more parking due to the huge attendance numbers,” Nyquist said. “The numbers across the board are record breaking and if that continues, we will need that extra parking space.”

In addition to Latimer and Nyquist, fair board members are Ed Perlenfein, Steve Mote, Damon Martin, Michael Huber and Kerry Johnson.