

Trotting with Thankfulness



Participants in the Thankful Trot 1 Mile Fun Run take off from the start at Community Chapel, where the inaugural event was held Saturday morning, Nov. 22. The event was held to raise money for local nonprofit food programs. See more photos on page 8.

Photo by
Scott Swanson

Hometown
Newspaper of
**MICHAEL
STANDLEY**



**OUTDOOR WORKOUT
FOR WRESTLERS
KICKS OFF SEASON
PAGE 9**



**OCTOGENARIAN
VOLUNTEER IS
STALWART AT SHEM
PAGE 11**

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SHHS awaits final decision on potential move to 3A

By Scott Swanson
Of The New Era

When the Oregon School Activities Association Classification and Redistricting Committee holds what likely will be its final meeting this Monday, Dec. 1, at OSAA headquarters in Wilsonville, Sweet Home High School is likely to find itself competing in a new division in athletics and music.

That's because the Huskies are on a list of schools requesting a move down in classification, which have had difficulty competing in various sports at the 4A level. The Redistricting Committee's latest draft proposal, which came out of its Nov. 19 meeting, has Sweet Home moving down to the 3A Division.

"It's not 100% yet, but if things shake out the way we think they might, then we would likely be a 3A school in our team sports," said Athletic Director Dan Tow.

Sweet Home is dominant in wrestling and swimming at the 4A level (and below in swimming, which combines 1A, 2A, 3A and 4A schools in a single division). The Huskies played for the state championship in volleyball in 2019 and won a pared-down state tournament (that didn't include some of the perennial contenders) in 2021 during COVID. Sweet Home's volleyball and softball teams are regular state tournament qualifiers, which usually means they finished in the top three in the league.

The Huskies are also gaining ground in track and field and cross-country, with a young team that has started to turn heads as a contender in the tough Oregon West Conference, in which most top finishers also finish high in the state championships. Cheer in Sweet Home is also a regular contender at the state level.

Football teams in Oregon are

assigned to special regions; Sweet Home is in Special District 3, which is a combination of Sky-Em and Oregon West teams, and, this year, 5A-Division Crescent Valley, which is playing down for the same reasons that Sweet Home is seeking redistricting.

"Football has an ad hoc," Tow said. "We were four and five this year, quite a bit better. Prior to that, our football team had, you know, a two-win season, a zero-win season. So anyway, but football has its own special league."

But not so for soccer, basketball and baseball. They all have perennially finished in the depths of the powerful Oregon West League, which regularly sends teams to the state finals in nearly every sport.

Tow said coaches in those sports have expressed interest for "as much as two years, something like that," in requesting a move down.

Criteria for "playing down," as it is called, include perpetual losing as well as poverty rates. Sweet Home rates high on both counts, Tow said – particularly, soccer and girls basketball (see chart).

"One of the main criteria for the OSAA to qualify to play down is that your team sports – not your individual sports – had a 20% or lower winning percentage in the previous four-year period. We've been just over 20% – we're 20.8."

Based on the number of SHHS students who receive free or reduced-cost lunch, he said, "we're one of the highest in the state."

Tow said after conversations with coaches and Principal Ralph Brown, the school decided to make the request.

"Not everyone was in favor, but a large number of our coaches were very much in fa-

See Redistricting, Page 8

Thursday, Nov. 27



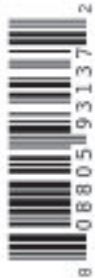
**The New Era will be
closed Thursday and
Friday. We will return
on Monday, Dec. 1.**

Packing Thanksgiving Boxes for Needy



Members of the Sweet Home High School Leadership Class pack food boxes during the school's annual Thanksgiving Food Drive last week. Students collected enough food for 60 families during the drive. The boxes were delivered Monday, Nov. 24, in time for Thanksgiving.

Photo courtesy of
Ryan Adams





Happy Thanksgiving

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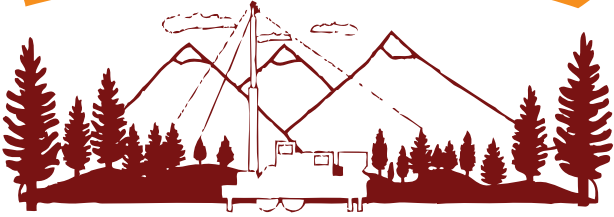
The New Era went with Jeff and Irene Warren, and Ben and Micheal Mattheisen on a cruise to Canada. Here they are at a stop in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

HAPPY

Thanksgiving

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OBITUARIES

Delbert Goss
Sept. 13, 1935 - Nov. 15, 2025
Delbert “Bert” Frances Goss, 90, of Sweet Home, passed away, Nov. 15, 2025 with family by his side.
He was born on Friday the 13th in September 1935 in Mount Hood to Odie Earl and Daisy Mildred (Chandler) Goss.
Bert was a lifelong member of the Church of Christ, admired for his faith, artistry, gardening, love of rocks, and kindness.
Bert had seven siblings: Eleanor, Erlene, Bucky, Carol, Phillip, Gayla, and Kelsey.
He married Virginia Leona Baxter in 1955 and they raised six children:



Tom, Delbert, Earl, Brenda, Ron and Bryan, along with 18 grandchildren, 29-plus great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.
After Virginia Leona’s passing, he married Leona Kropf in 2013.
A memorial service will be at 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, at Sweet Home Funeral Chapel.
Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling the arrangements.
James Shuell Sr.
Nov. 16, 1947 - Nov. 11, 2025
James Michael Shuell, Sr. 77, passed away Nov. 11, 2025, surrounded by his wife and children.
He was born Nov. 16, 194, in Oregon City to Richard and Mary Jane Shuell. He lived in Oregon City until his retirement to Sweet Home in 2020 with his wife, April.

ing wife, April, his 5 children: Tressa, Tymalaya, James Jr, Anthony and Tyler, 15 grandchildren and six great grandchildren.
Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling all arrangements.
Death Notices
John Flick
Sept. 17, 1952 - Nov. 19, 2025
John Patrick Flick, 73, of Sweet Home passed away Nov. 19, 2025.
Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling the arrangements. For updated information, visit www.sweethomefuneral.com.
Joyce McNelly
March 18, 1944 - Nov. 21, 2025
Joyce Kate Waldroup McNelly, 81, of Lincoln City passed away Nov. 21, 2025.
Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling the arrangements. For updated information, visit www.sweethomefuneral.com.
Donna Shortreed
March 8, 1926 - Oct. 22, 2025
Donna Alice Shortreed, 99, of Sweet Home, passed away Oct. 22, 2025.
A graveside service will be noon Saturday, Nov. 29, at Gilliland Cemetery.
Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling the arrangements. For updated information, visit www.sweethomefuneral.com.



The ICEBOX Performer Of The Week



This week’s **ICEBOX Performer of the Week** goes to Chelsea Nicholson from our boxing & crating team!

Her area is where a lot of the action happens—where units fresh out of testing are prepared and sent out for shipping. It can get congested fast, but Chelsea keeps it clean, organized, and moving.

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TEMPERATURES				
DATE		HIGH	LOW	PRECIP
November 20	20	54	35	0.27
November 21	21	48	34	0.02
November 22	22	46	37	0.00
November 23	23	46	38	0.06
November 24	24	51	35	0.00
November 25	25	48	42	0.11
November 26	26	54	41	0.18

PRECIPITATION		
Year to date:	24.02	
November 27, 2024:	29.89	

FORECAST			
DAY	WEATHER	HIGH	LOW
Thur	Showers	53	43
Fri	Showers	50	38
Sat	AM Showers	47	31
Sun	Partly Cloudy	46	31
Mon	Partly Cloudy	47	34
Tues	Partly Cloudy	47	35
Wed	PM Showers	47	33

LAKE LEVELS	
Foster Reservoir:	615.3
Green Peter Res.:	778.7

TODAYS FIRE DANGER IS
LOW

The fire danger information provided is current at the time of publication. For the latest and most accurate updates, please visit: oregon.gov/odf

PUBLIC SAFETY

Information for the Public Safety report and Courts in The New Era is sourced from local law enforcement and fire agencies. Addresses provided generally denote the location of the incident or arrest, occasionally indicating the origin of the call. Incident details, which may not always be available from agencies in time for publication in our weekly paper edition, are often updated online at sweethomenews.com as information becomes available. Also, due to space limitations in our paper editions, content may be restricted to the most recent information, and a more extensive version of the Public Safety Report will be available at sweethomenews.com. It is crucial to emphasize that our reporting of an individual's arrest or citation for a crime does not imply guilt. Determination of guilt can only be established through legal proceedings in court. We commit significant effort to following through as cases move through the judicial process. Following is a list of abbreviations that may appear in our log reports: LCSO (Linn County Sheriff's Office); SHPD (Sweet Home Police Department); OSP (Oregon State Police); LCCC (Linn County Circuit Court); LCJC (Linn County Justice Court); SHMC (Sweet Home Municipal Court); LMC (Lebanon Municipal Court); AMC (Albany Municipal Court); FTA (failure to appear); FTC (failure to comply). A roman numeral listed after a charge means that the charge is that numbered-degree: theft I (first-degree theft).

Nov. 21
7:57 a.m. - Caller reported aggressive geese in 4100 block Main St. who charge her whenever she walks by. Officer responded, contacted owner, who was advised of complaint.
10:22 a.m. - Caller reported one vehicle backed into another in drive-thru in 2000 block Main St. Officer responded, drivers exchanged info. Damaged estimated at under \$2,500.
10:47 a.m. - Caller reported theft of vehicle from 2100 block Main St. Described as green four-door 1999 Mazda Protege, license 245QSQ. Report taken.
11:15 a.m. - Caller reported scam in 1500 block Tamarack St. Officer contacted caller, information noted.
11:24 a.m. - Dustin Garrish, 28, Thomas Garrish, 25, and Riley Clark, 23, all of Albany,

cited for riding without ATV Safety Education Card. 25000 block West Brush Creek Rd.
11:43 a.m. - Shelby Jordan Anderson, 28, of Sweet Home, cited for driving uninsured and for expired registration, Main St./22nd Ave.
11:44 a.m. - Caller reported theft of chainsaw from truck bed in 1200 block Nandina St. Officer responded, report taken for theft II.
12:14 p.m. - Makhaila Dolores Horn, 19, of Sweet Home, cited for speeding, 95/55, following too close, and failure to carry proof of insurance. Santiam Hwy./Horseshoe Loop.
12:26 p.m. - Deputy responded to report of campfire in Pioneer Park, 200 W. Park Ave., Brownsville.
12:58 p.m. - Brandy Lee Dozier, 40, arrested by Curry County Sheriff's Office on SHMC warrant for FTC in

criminal driving case. Cited to appear Dec. 10.
1:07 p.m. - Caller reported his mother was assaulted, choked by male in 2200 block Long St. Male had left in victim's vehicle. Officer responded, report taken for domestic violence-assault IV, strangulation. Female transported by medics.
1:38 p.m. - Caller reported FedEx driver ran over her patio furniture in 4200 block Main St. Officer responded, information noted.
2:44 p.m. - Neil David Van Epps arrested on LMC warrant for probation violation, 43100 block N. River Dr. Cited and released.
3:47 p.m. - Caller reported female in 1200 block 46th Ave. who needed to be trespassed. Officer responded, located female, who was trespassed.
3:49 p.m. - Caller reported brother being taken advantage of by caregiver in 300 block Boulder Ridge Dr. Officer responded, investigation continuing.
7:31 p.m. - Drema Marie Fowler, 60, arrested on SHMC warrant in criminal case, LCCC warrant in DUII, resisting arrest case, 1200 block Nandina St. Cited and released. Arrest came after caller reported neighbor videoing her at that location.
7:35 p.m. - Deputy made attempt to stop speeding vehicle in 200 block N. Main St., Brownsville. Report taken for elude.
7:53 p.m. - William E. Brinton, 61, arrested on LMC warrant for contempt of court, cited for driving while suspended, Main St./22nd Ave. Cited and released.
9:05 p.m. - Driver cited for speeding, 37/25, 600 block N. Main St., Brownsville. Sheriff's log did not include name, which will be updated online when it becomes available.
10:13 p.m. - Driver cited for speeding, 41/25, 500 block N. Main St., Brownsville. Sheriff's log did not include name, which will be updated online when it becomes available.

Nov. 20
5:39 a.m. - Caller reported vehicle with no headlights, just a flashlight taped on the front, in area of Main St./49th Ave. Officer responded, but was unable to locate the vehicle.
7:06 a.m. - Caller from Mr. Lucky's Deli, 1207 Long St., reported transients using business's trash and restrooms. Officer responded, trespassed males from location.
7:31 a.m. - Caller reported male recording, being argumentative with staff at FAC, 1450 24th Ave. Officer responded, male was trespassed.
See more and updated Public Safety Reports at sweethomenews.com

CIRCUIT COURT

Warrants are out on the following individuals: Travis Alexander Ayres, Raymond Paul Binford, Lloyd William Bly, Kristina Larizza Boswell, Hope Marie Connors, Christopher Frances Ciullo, Kelsey Nicole Ciullo, Jacob Scott Fisher, Ashlee Dee Flanagan, Sean Doyle Gay, Nicholas Gregory Godell, Aaron Thomas Halvorson, Noe Hernandez-Reyes, Michael Trevor Hilton, Daniel Henry Johnson, Tyler Bruce Lanz, Charles James Marvel, Thomas Junior McCarthey, Bryce William McGowan, Eric Wayne McKnight, Carrie Lynne Miller, Thomas Elbridge Miller, James

Keith Mortensen, Nicholas Alan Nelson, Daniel Austin Phillips, Sean Ever Robinson, Tammy Lavonn Robinson, James Ryan Routon, Joshua Alexander Williams
Belle Eden Anway, 18, charged Oct. 27 with DUII (liquor) and reckless driving.
Elijah Lucas James Buckland, 23, placed in the diversion program after pleading no contest to DUII (liquor) with a .11% BAC.
Emory Jordan Jamison, 29, placed in the diversion program after pleading no contest to DUII (liquor) with a .15% BAC.

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Crossword KEY
Puzzle on page 13

Grid letters: B, B, L, O, R, E, B, O, S, H, C, O, L, A, A, C, I, D, S, T, H, E, J, E, F, F, E, R, S, O, N, S, L, P, G, S, I, N, A, B, A, S, B, I, L, E, B, I, T, U, M, A, S, C, O, T, C, H, W, H, I, S, K, E, Y, E, R, A, S, O, A, F, A, L, I, C, E, B, I, B, P, P, B, A, G, H, A, A, B, L, E, R, T, A, O, S, N, E, E, D, Y, L, I, T, Y, S, S, T, I, C, Y

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W/S/G PAID!

\$1300 2 1.5 1020
RENT BED BATH SQFT

SUDOKU KEY
Puzzle on page 13

Grid numbers: 3, 7, 5, 1, 6, 2, 9, 8, 4, 9, 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 7, 6, 3, 4, 6, 8, 7, 3, 9, 2, 5, 1, 6, 4, 3, 8, 9, 1, 5, 2, 7, 7, 5, 9, 2, 4, 6, 1, 3, 8, 8, 2, 1, 5, 7, 3, 4, 9, 6, 1, 3, 6, 9, 2, 4, 8, 7, 5, 5, 9, 4, 3, 8, 7, 6, 1, 2, 2, 8, 7, 6, 1, 5, 3, 4, 9

FROM OUR FILES



Eight families will have a grateful Thanksgiving this year in 1975, thanks to high school students who contributed enough food and money to provide food baskets for them. Pictured here are Kathy Rice, Julie Wagner and Rhonda Weld.

Nov. 30, 1950

A runaway auto wheel came to rest in the display window of Lew's Sporting Goods store, spraying the corner at 12th and Main with shattered glass and causing an estimated \$65 in damage. The driver of a Model A sedan was east-bound on Main when he saw his left rear wheel sail past him in front of Gilbert's Supermarket. The wheel bounded 225 down the street, bounced from the curb to the marquee of Lew's and ricocheted down through the plate glass window. It stopped atop a camp stove as part of an unscheduled window display.

Mr. and Mrs. Wright returned home from a Thanksgiving visit in Portland to find someone had forced entry through a back window and helped themselves to about \$25 worth of pantry items, as well as a turkey.

Nov. 26, 1975

The Committee for a New County decided to unofficially establish Santiam County, even though it will not be sanctioned by law. Mollie's Bakery was designated as the unofficial courthouse, and there will be an unofficial election, newspaper of record and elective offices. The new unofficial county will be within the bounds of the

Sweet Home School District, and a sign on Hwy. 20 will read, "Welcome to Santiam County, Formed 1976." A county flag is being designed and "By Dam, Vote Santiam" bumper stickers and buttons will be for sale. A petition to officialize the county is still being passed around.

Eighty people participated in the first annual Turkey Trot by Sweet Home Parks and Recreation. Six turkeys were given away as prizes. The object of the turkey trot was to run as close as possible to a pre-race predicted time. Three boys - Donald Epperson, Steve Swank and Raymond Bauslaugh - each ran within one second of their predictions, while third-grader Diane Kennedy was only four seconds away from her prediction.

Nov. 29, 2000

Voters approved a \$1.9 million bond measure allowing Linn-Benton Community College to begin construction of a one-stop center in Lebanon serving East Linn County. In Sweet Home, the school district is expected to present a multi-million dollar bond to voters in March for building improvements and construction. If passed, the college would work with the district to develop an on-site college center in the high school.

Editorial: Thanks for another year

By Scott Swanson
Publisher

This is Thanksgiving week and I'm thankful to be writing this column.

I'm thankful for God's provision for The New Era, which was on the brink of financial collapse at this time last year. I know some might offer other explanations, but there's no doubt in my mind that the recovery of this newspaper from near demise a year ago has been bigger than just me and Miriam, my wife.

Readers will, no doubt, recall how, nearly a year ago I wrote an editorial outlining the problems the newspaper and its staff were facing and the fact that its demise was imminent - outside of a financial infusion from the community. We needed help.

The community stepped up to help - big time.

The day after the editorial appeared, several people were lined up outside our front door when we opened in the morning and they were just the beginning of a community response that, all told, numbered some 150 people who stepped up with checks or cash donations.

Plus, some local businesses purchased advertising, which has helped sustain us through the year.

It became pretty clear pretty quickly that the community definitely still wanted its newspaper and we were going to go for it.

When Miriam and I returned, officially, on Jan. 1 of this year - we'd already been volunteering for a couple of months, simply to keep things afloat while we determined whether it was even feasible to move forward. We knew we had our work cut out for us. By Thanksgiving of last year, we'd had a chance to survey the situation, which was dire, and which resulted in that editorial.

Not only did we have to rebuild the financial side of the business, but we needed help on the editorial side, which produces the stories and photos you read each week. The newspaper staff, which has never been large, had shrunk noticeably from the size it was when we had sold the operation in the summer of 2023.

We're very thankful for the volunteers and freelance writers and photographers who have stepped up to help us cover the community

events and sports when our "official" staff has been spread too thin to get to everywhere at once, so to speak. (You can tell who these people are when you see stories bylined "For The New Era" or photos with the credit "Courtesy of So-and-So.") Without them, the quality of our coverage would be greatly diminished.

We're very thankful for the support the community has shown. When the money poured in, a group of community leaders agreed to serve as an "accountability committee" to whom we reported how we were using the funds that had been donated, which lasted about three months - just long enough for us to rebuild some of the advertising and other revenue sources that had languished.

Over the past year, people have constantly asked us how things were going with the newspaper. They let us know they care, and we appreciate that because, in the end, as I've said more than once in the past, The New Era is the Sweet Home community's newspaper. Our role is to operate it.

Challenges Still

When we returned to The New Era, Miriam and I were very aware that the landscape for newspapers has changed drastically even since we took over the operation of The New Era in 2005.

Google and social media have siphoned off a large portion of the advertising dollars that used to go to newspapers, and although advertising remains a major revenue source for us, it takes a lot of effort to stay on top of the water, financially.

Thankfully, we have a seasoned and dedicated staff who know how to do a lot with a little, and who have helped us recover.

But it was clear to us when we returned that we need to find a way to improve the business side of the newspaper - which is what pays for the editorial staff who produce the news, sports and other community coverage you see each week.

There have been other challenges as well. Our newspaper is printed in Klamath Falls because we have few other options any more. Most of the printers who once handled newspapers have ceased doing so.

That's why our page sizes are smaller than they used to

be - we literally have to take what we can get. I'm often disappointed that we don't have more space in the newspaper for all the great photos we could be putting in, and for the Public Safety and courts reports. We put them online in full at sweethomenews.com, but that doesn't help everyone. Advertising equals pages - that's the simple formula.

We've seen Sweet Home businesses owned by local people slowly disappear, usually due to retirements, and many of the retailers who have moved into town are chain stores. They have local staffs, but the owners are far, far away. And they show little interest in supporting or participating in local community efforts, including its newspaper.

What's Next?

As many readers know, we started a monthly community newspaper in Lebanon in 2016, the Lebanon Local, in response to increasing signs that the long-standing Lebanon Express, which was at one time a thriving newspaper, was circling the drain. It ceased publication not long after.

Our goal all along was to turn that into a weekly for Lebanon, but it didn't happen.

It's become clear to us that the best solution for providing a financially stable operation for your local newspaper is to expand it to cover the entire east Linn County. So we plan, on Jan. 1, to combine Lebanon Local with The New Era to form a (hopefully) larger newspaper that can benefit from a wider business community - both Lebanon and Sweet Home, and will provide better coverage for Lebanon than our monthly has been able to over nine years.

There will be some changes, particularly in sports coverage, which I'll detail more thoroughly next month, but I think - and many people in Sweet Home have told me this as well, that this will actually be a true win-win for the readership of both newspapers, hopefully resulting in more staffing and coverage of the entire east end of the county - and more financial stability.

More on that to come.

Given what's happened over the past year, though, I'm grateful that we still have The New Era in which I can tell you that.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It takes a thief
Editor:

Our non profit group makes and sells wreaths this time of year.

Every year for the last six years, the first wreath is placed on the grave of a wonderful friend to honor her.

Last Monday, I took that wreath and placed it on her grave. Two days later her husband went to visit the grave and the only thing there was the red ribbon. Someone had stolen the wreath.

It's bad enough to be a thief

but to steal something from a grave is a new low.

I'd hope you would feel shame, but I doubt it. You not only stole something, you hurt the people who created the wreath in her honor.

Mary Betts
Foster

The New Era

A LOCALLY OWNED NEWSPAPER

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Songs of the Santiam: Local poet’s work preserves history

By Roberta McKern
For The New Era

At the East Linn Museum, we have been browsing through a book of poetry entitled, “Songs of the Santiam,” written by William Ralph Mealey, a well-known resident of the Foster area before the Santiam’s song was altered by the building of the Foster dam reservoir.

Bill composed rhyming verses throughout much of his life, although he was best known as a lumberman and a farmer. Writing poetry was an intellectual pursuit, one in which he could be in touch with his memories of the past and especially with his love of the Santiam River and its natural charms.

Born in 1870, Bill died in 1948, but fortunately for us, his grandson compiled his poems into “Songs of the Santiam.”

For many years, Bill and his brother, Orange Judd Mealey, operated a sawmill east of Foster. Their parents had earlier

run a roadhouse for travelers going along the river to and from the Santiam Pass on the toll road, so Bill knew the river from a young age particularly from hunting and fishing along it.

There had even been a post office with the Mealey mark with Judd as postmaster. (Post offices were fairly easy to get in the late 1800s if an area had a seemingly growing population.) When Bill and Judd took off for the Alaskan gold fields, the post office closed, ending the “Mealey” post mark in 1898.

Although Judd was close to Bill and had been in Alaska with him, in Bill’s poems about the Copper River, Judd is not mentioned. The poems are autobiographical, for the most part. We speculate that Bill had a reluctance to include those he knew, perhaps feeling it would be an invasion of their privacy.

The Alaska trip fueled some of Bill’s poetry. Before their return to Oregon, they had

dragged a sled about 1,000 miles and Bill was inspired by their experiences along the Copper River, including survival through a terrible storm with only a flimsy tent and warm blankets to prevent death from the wind and intense cold. Several poems feature the Copper River.

The gold of Alaska did not glitter for Bill and Judd.

The waters of Bill’s favorite Oregon river offered a different opportunity, and the two constructed a sawmill on the Santiam east of Foster. Though the numerous rumors claimed that Bill and Judd had come back with pockets full of gold, Bill said not so.

But it stimulated his creative mind.

One poignant and very personal poem does appear in the book. Written after the death of his wife, Fanny Hamilton Mealey, following the birth of their sixth child, Bill departed from his usual aloofness to envision her beautiful blue eyes.

Their memory haunted him.

She had been his great love. He did not remarry.

Nearly 100 years later, the late Rachel Fanny Vogel visited the museum and the Mealey family history there. Large photographs of Bill and Fanny hang among pictures of early East Linn settlers arranged around the main room. (She also volunteered in the research room and she said her father would work all day and come home and sit at his typewriter composing his poems.)

For Bill, writing poetry had much to do with the heart’s longings. Returning to the renewing quality of nature formed one of his main themes.

In 1924, the mill burned. Sometime later, it featured in one of Bill’s poems entitled, “The Fir Has Claimed Its Own.” The mill’s remains had been overgrown by a fir tree and the site was going back to nature.

Bill might stress the importance of hard and steady work, but his verses often stressed his longing to be on the river

fishing, or hunting. In various poems, trout ranked high, although deer, grouse, and or a young bear, fed on huckleberries, could appear on the menu.

There was practicality regarding Bill’s views on the wild.

His poems also lean strongly towards farming. Indicating that he had a sense of humor, he invented an alter ego, a Scotch-Irish farmer of a respectable age named William Andrew McQuirk.

“Uncle Billy,” as he became called, had a Calvinistic view of hard work – it’s good for you – and, like Bill, a longing to visit a trout pool for a good mess of fat fish which would fry just right. Through Uncle Billy, Bill could regret the modern age which included tractors, cars, and motion picture shows. Uncle Billy believed in plowing with a steady, plodding horse. He wasn’t overly fond of the automotive age and he found the actions of actresses and ac-

See Local Poet, Page 6

December 2025					
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
Exercise 8:30 Crafters 10:00 Dominoes 11:00 Meals on Wheels Senior Meals 12:00 Bridge 1:00	Qi Gong 9:00 Jolly Stitchers- Quilters 10:00 Meals on Wheels Senior Meals 12:00	SALT 10AM Exercise 8:30 Painters/Paper- crafters 10:00 Lunch 11:30 Ponytail 1:00	Qi Gong 9:00 Jolly Stitchers- Quilters 10:00 Bible Study 10:00 Pinochle 1:00	Exercise 8:30 Meals On Wheels Senior Meals 12:00	<i>SALT- Seniors and Law Enforcemnet together meeting Wednesday Dec., 3rd! Silent Auction during lunch Wednesday Dec. 17th!!</i>
Exercise 8:30 Crafters 10:00 Dominoes 11:00 Meals on Wheels Senior Meals 12:00 Bridge 1:00	Qi Gong 9:00 Jolly Stitchers- Quilters 10:00 Meals on Wheels Senior Meals 12:00	Exercise 8:30 Painters/Paper- crafters 10:00 Lunch 11:30 Ponytail 1:00	Qi Gong 9:00 Jolly Stitchers- Quilters 10:00 Bible Study 10:00 Pinochle 1:00	Exercise 8:30 Meals On Wheels Senior Meals 12:00	
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For where two or three are gathered together
in My name, I am there in the midst of them.
-Matthew 18:20

LOCAL POET
From page 5

tors on the silver screen deplorable.

Bill had Uncle Billy McQuirk talk in the vernacular. The vernacular was meant to reproduce the speech of poorly educated people. Most of us had teachers who discouraged us from using words such as ain't, git, jist, and I'm agoin. It was often used to poke fun at what was rural versus the urban.

It was a very popular way of writing poems in the late 1800s and early 1900s and writers looking for realistic accuracy considering dialects, could drop so many g's, make so many contractions, and create so many strange spellings as to become undecipherable

But William Andrew McQuirk missed that fate. Even if he is sometimes critical of life, he knew the value of bacon and eggs and a good night's sleep, not to mention a successful day of fishing resulting in a mess of those fat trout.

John P. Russell edited and then owned The New Era for part of the time Bill was writing verse, and he and Bill were good friends. (The museum has their matching typewriters sitting side by side below the pictures of Bill and Fanny. "Standards" have an innovative circular arrangement of the keys where the typefaces strike paper. The "Standards" are remarkable for not being very standard.)

John Russell also did sketches for The New Era using the vernacular, although when he produced one for the paper about Bill, he did not do so.

It seems likely Russell encouraged Bill's poetic production. Many of Bill's poems could be used to mark holidays in The New Era. These include tributes to George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, as well as ones to the honored dead, those soldiers killed in our nation's various wars.



William and Fanny Mealey

One such poem includes men dressed in uniforms of grey, blue, and khaki representing Confederates from the American Civil War, along with the Yanks from the Grand Old Army of the Republic, and those boys in khaki representing World War I and perhaps World War II depending on when the poem was written.

When Bill died in 1948, the latter war was still ending, considering the occupations of Japan and Germany.

It strikes us that Bill's friendship with Russell may have led to his becoming known as the "Poet of the Santiam."

He also wrote about Sweet Home, mainly a lament regarding the proposed damming of his favorite river. In the 1940s such a proposal was made with the dam situ-

ated north of the town at the Narrows. All Sweet Home and up the valley would be drowned; Bill and the town were against it.

Bill wrote of having a cabin up a hill where he could escape to tranquility. In poems, the usual mess of trout featured as a satisfying meal. For his bed, hemlock boughs sufficed with his folded jacket for a pillow. There he might remember instances about which he wrote such as the trips seeking gold in Alaska's Copper River.

Many years after his 1898 experiences, he wrote of visiting abandoned diggings on Quartzville Creek when his knowledge of earlier times let him see where gold seekers had moved rocks and gravel around and he'd found a worn-out sluice box discarded in the bushes.

The poem was one of several in which he realized time does not go backwards.

Many times, in the Poet of the Santiam's verses, solitude stirred the secret longings of the human heart.

At the East Linn Museum, we are grateful to have a copy of Bill Mealey's "Songs of the Santiam." Like many of his poems, artifacts in the museum and collections inspire us to look back and wish we could actually return to the past. But even if we can't go back, we can remember through Bill's poems and perhaps be inspired to look into our own histories while putting together a verse or two. We can appreciate and be inspired by the Poet of the Santiam.

The museum will be closed for the months of December and January, opening again in February.

So, we wish you happy holidays!

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Fire chief: Government shutdown caused some 'full-on panic'

By Scott Swanson
Of The New Era

The 43-day government shutdown created some anxious moments for the Sweet Home Fire and Ambulance District, Fire Chief Nick Tyler told district board members Tuesday night, Nov. 18.

As the shutdown continued, he said, he was faced with possible layoffs as Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements from the federal government dried up in October and early November.

Tyler said that with a week left in October, the department had received \$13,000 in ambulance revenue, which was about one-tenth of its normal receipts for a month.

He said he started scrutinizing all the department's spending and "we cut spending on anything above \$500."

"I was looking at everything. It was full-on panic."

He told board members that although some money has trickled in from California, the district is still owed some \$722,000 for firefighting operations in other parts of the state and the nation.

The resumption of federal government operations has started to trickle in, Tyuler said, adding that the district had collected \$118,953 as of the meeting.

Also, he said, the district is waiting for reimbursements for the seismic retrofits to Station 23 in Crawfordsville. He told board members SHFAD had only received 12% of the full \$722,000 it expected to receive from out-of-district firefighting and seismic grants.

"I'm in a much better mood right now," he told the board. "I don't think we're looking at layoffs."

He confirmed later that the district had received all \$400,000 that it was owed from the California wildfires.

Board members also unani-

mously authorized the district to spend \$550,000 each for two Type 6 brush engines, which, Tyler said, will be the final large purchases from the \$3.33 million seven-year bond voters approved by voters in May 2024.

Lt. Josh Bondesen said the company he has been working with, Rebel Brush Trucks of Henderson, Nev., has cut the prices for the vehicles from "the \$340,000 range," which the department, especially Tyler, "was not too excited about," to \$275,000 each.

Rebel can deliver the vehicles within six months, and will pay \$1,000 for each week it exceeds that deadline, which far exceeds other dealers, he said.

The district had come up with "things we could do on our own that would save us considerable money," and had cut some features "we don't

particularly need" Bondesen said, and Rebel's CEO agreed to the \$275,000 price.

"There's nothing else we need to add or take away that's going to be big-ticket, price-wise," he said. "I was very happy they worked with us."

The brush trucks will be the Elite package, mounted on flatbeds.

Tyler noted to the board that when Sweet Home shows up at wildfires with quality equipment, that can be a recruiting tool for the department.

The district has already ordered two ambulances, which are scheduled to be delivered in February and September of next year, and has purchased a wood chipper for the Wildfire Risk Reduction Program.

Tyler said the only remaining items are upgrades to the department's radio system.

In other action:

• Board Member Jim Yon volunteered to serve on a Health Insurance Committee that will review the district's health insurance for its employees. Assistant Chief George Virtue will also serve on the committee, along with two union representatives. Tyler said a staffer from WHA Insurance Agency Inc. of Eugene, the district's insurance provider, will

assist the committee.

• Heard from department Chaplain Michael Caruso that he and his wife have responded to "60-plus" calls this year. He said they make rounds each week to check on staff, "how they are doing." Also, Caruso reported, he and his wife are taking classes in stress adaptive protocol and counseling.



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Sweet Home League Finishes Over Past 10 Seasons

	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2019-20	2020-21	2018-19	2017-18*	2016-17*
Boys Soccer	0-9-1	0-10	1-9	0-10	0-10	0-12	0-5	0-12	2-5-3	4-4-2***
Girls Soccer	0-10	0-10	2-8	1-8-1	0-11-1	2-8-2	0-4-1	1-10-1	2-8	5-5****
Boys Basketball	***	0-10	1-9	0-10	0-12	6-6	3-3	2-10	3-7	1-9
Girls Basketball	***	1-9	0-10	1-9	6-6	1-11	2-6	0-12	0-10	0-10
Baseball	***	3-12	1-14	1-14	3-12	***	5-7	13-5	10-5**	11-4

*Sky-Em League **Tied for second in league (last playoffs appearance)
***Third-place finish in league
****Tied for third with Elmira with identical (5-5, 8-6-1 records, but lost tiebreaker)

REDISTRICTING

From page 1

vor of petitioning to go down and seeing what that would look like.”

“It would be a good move for a lot of our sports,” he said. “I don’t like it very well for cross-country and track, though it’d be OK. We were pretty good this year. I wish we could keep track and cross-country and softball where they are.”

Not Necessarily Permanent

Tow noted that the move could only last a couple of seasons, depending on how the Huskies do.

“It can change, year-to-year, so it’s not a done deal for four years. I would think that we would play down for two years, but that’s not etched in stone.”

The redistricting committee will meet Dec. 1 and is expected to finalize its proposal on moving teams around in the state. Their recommendations will then go to the Executive Board on Dec. 15.

The committee, which has met six times since Aug. 11, is made up of 15 school representatives representing all the size classifications in the state, as well as four OSAA staff members. The 4A Division representative is Nathan Stanley, principal of North Marion High School, which is a member of the Oregon West Conference in which Sweet Home currently competes.

The committee has bounced back and forth between returning to five divisions from the current six, but seems to have settled on maintaining the current six divisions. In

that process, Sweet Home has been moved back and forth between its current OWC and the 3A Division Mountain Valley Conference, which currently includes three fairly recent conference rivals: Elmira, Sisters and La Pine, along with Creswell, Pleasant Hill and Harrisburg. The committee has produced seven draft proposals, the most recent of which Oct. 29 would remake the Mountain Valley Conference to add Sweet Home and Trinity Lutheran of Bend, which is requesting a move up in classification. Elmira would move from the 3A back to the 4A Sky-Em League.

The committee appears to be determined to move Central, which about 15 years ago was a league opponent of Sweet Home before moving to the 5A Division, to the Oregon West League; every realignment proposal since September has had the Panthers in the OWC, and one added Crescent Valley, while moving Sweet Home to the Mountain Valley Conference.

Coaches in sports that have struggled in the OWC said they expect to be more competitive when not constantly playing some of the state’s top teams.

“I would say that the proposal would definitely increase our competitiveness across many of our sports programs,” said girls basketball coach Erika Evans. “But, of course, we don’t know until it happens. Our proposed league would greatly increase our travel, though, so you never know how that may play into the equation as well.”

Tow also said he expects the move to “definitely increase our competitiveness across many of our sports programs. But, of course, we don’t know until it happens! Our proposed league would greatly increase our travel though, so you never know how that may play into the equation as well!”

Tough 4A Opposition

Boys soccer Head Coach Eric Stutzer noted that Sweet Home plays in one of the toughest soccer leagues in the state – at any level, and this year the Huskies’ 23-player roster was composed largely of underclassmen..

“Redistricting will help our program,” he said.

“To put it in perspective, Stayon played North Marion and won the state championship this season. Over the last 11 seasons in which a championship was played, a team from our league took the state championship eight times. In only one of those seasons, was a team from our league not represented in the state championship game. In five of those championship games, two teams from our league played each other.

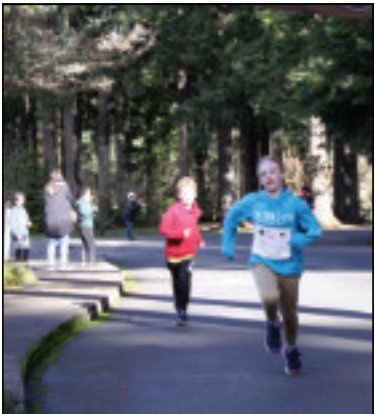
“We are in a dominant league where in every league match, a team is potentially playing the eventual state champion. This reality has made us better, but it has also been highly discouraging for our players who are consistently not competing against the same level of experience.”

Sweet Home is 30 miles distant from I-5 and a metropolitan area, while other teams, such as Stayton and North



Photos by Jessica Sands

Participants in the Thankful Trot, above, start the 5K (3.1-mile) fun run Saturday, Dec. 22. The race was truly a fun run, without official timing, but the winner was Joseph Meeko, below left, closing in on the finish. Below right, Linlelon Boyer and Conely Stutzman come down the home stretch. The event, organized by Haley Johnson, who said the turnout was “amazing,” drawing some 100 participants. See more photos at sweethomenews.com.



Marion, either have easy access to opportunities for club play or have a strong population of soccer aficionados.

“We don’t have strong youth programs for soccer in our community, so many of our athletes join during their freshman year with little to no competitive experience or skills, in contrast to our opponents, who have been playing together competitively much of their lives,” Stutzer said.

“I strongly believe that redistricting will help level the playing field for us, but we are still going to need to focus on youth development and intentionally create opportunities to up the level of competitive play in those programs.”

Stutzer added that the schools in the Mountain Valley Conference – Creswell, Sisters and Pleasant Hill – have strong youth feeder programs, which means Sweet Home will need to continue to focus on player development and building feeder programs and reaching out to younger children.

‘Not a Walk in the Park’

Baseball Coach Evan Teter, who played his high school ball at Siuslaw, which was moved to the 3A Division several years ago and is to remain there, agreed.

“We feel it will allow us to compete for a league title right away,” said Teter, who has held

See Redistricting, Page 14

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Coach Steve Thorpe, above center, is surrounded by his wrestlers Saturday, Nov. 22, during their annual outdoors workout, which is intended to reinforce concepts of teamwork and taking care of each other in difficult situations. For more photos, visit sweethomenews.com. At lower right, Thorpe urges on junior Riley Vaughan as he struggles to hoist some heavy weight. Photos by Ryker Burr



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Dillan Davis, Luke Rosa named MVPs for resurgent football program

Dillan Davis and Luke Rosa were named Sweet Home's football Most Valuable Players at the team's awards dinner Sunday, Nov. 16.

Coach Ryan Adams summarized the Huskies' season, in which they went 7-3 overall and 3-2 in Oregon West Conference play, as one that included some "hiccups," but resulted in a team that "continued and cemented their legacy."

Although Sweet Home's first post-season game since 2019 was the result of a forfeit by Philomath, Adams emphasized that his Huskies got to experience a varsity football winning season for the first time. But it took some time to adjust to a new reality, particularly during the first three games, which they won on their way to a 5-0 start.

"It was different than what they expected, or maybe even what was their role last year," he said.

"The first three games, you know, we were able to come out with wins, but the kids kind of struggled with stuff off the field. But once we got to that fourth and fifth game, I felt like our team really kind of settled into to our roles, and knowing what was expected of each person, and that allowed us to, in my opinion, play two of our best games of the year at North Bend and at home against Marist."

The Huskies showed "a ton of confidence and hunger" going into the game against Marist, and thought they struggled at Junction City and Crescent Valley, "it's just another thing that we got to experience that the kids never have, being on a high like that and then having to turn around and play another really good team," Adams said.

"We had our opportunities, but it was really cool experience to kind of see

how our community responded and stuck with us after that."

He said he was particularly proud of the way Sweet Home played in the second half of a tough game at Philomath, then on the road at La Grande in the playoffs.

"It was, honestly, one of the most fun weeks of football that I've ever had coaching," Adams said. "A really fun trip and we had a really good game - huge momentum swings. Keeghan (Gittins) was able to hit a big-time kick, the first time he's ever been in that moment, the first time we were ever in that moment since I've been a coach. And he knocked that through."

Although the Huskies lost, the season ended with the team's first winning season since 2018 and its first playoff appearance in six seasons.

"Just a lot of firsts for a long time, but more importantly, this team continued and cemented their legacy," Adams said. "That's something for this program to build on and progress towards for the years to come."

The coach said he was particularly thankful for support from the coaches' wives, "just how instrumental they all were to kind of change in the trajectory of this program and then the parents and the players for their role in all of it."

"We had a ton of community support, and a lot of that was driven by our senior parents, and that that made, you know, one of the most fun seasons that I've been able to have."

Team Awards

The team awards were voted on by the players and presented by the coaching staff.

Adams said Rosa and Davis provided



Football Award winners are, in front, from left, Bridger Royer, Riley Vaughan, Dillan Davis, Logan Estep, Gabriel Meadors and Brennen Eldridge. In the second row, from left, are AJ Rodriguez, Martin Chelstad, Luke Rosa, Bradyn McClure, Alex Bachand and Kaeson Walker. In the rear, from left, are Gunner Summers, Gavin Tyler, Kellen Hartsook and Daniel McCubbins.

a "foundational cornerstone for our team this year."

Davis, a senior, was unquestionably the team's offensive spark plug, scoring eight touchdowns and making some big plays along the way, some of which turned games for the Huskies. He was also named **Best Offensive Back**.

"As anybody that watched any of our games knows, he was our big time playmaker," Adams said. "And yeah, we tried a bunch of different ways to get him the ball. And more times than not, he did a lot of fun things with it."

Davis finished with 27 catches for

527 yards and carried 18 times for 121 yards and a touchdown, and a punt return for a touchdown.

Rosa, also a senior, led the team in tackles with 96 from his inside linebacker position, including 59 solo stops, eight for losses, a forced fumble and three fumble recoveries. He was also named the **Top Defensive Back**, along with junior defensive back Bradyn McClure, who had 23 tackles, 20 of them solos, three interceptions - one of which he returned for a touchdown, a

See Football, Page 14

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Octogenarian volunteer Dean Hummer is stalwart at SHEM

By Satina Tolman
For The New Era

At nearly 83 years old, Dean Hummer begins four mornings a week the same way – with a welcoming smile, a steady pace, and a determination to help fill food boxes at Sweet Home Emergency Ministries.

“The thing I enjoy so much is volunteering with SHEM,” Hummer said with a smile. “It gives me something to focus on rather than myself. I like getting out and helping people.”

For more than a decade, volunteers have affectionately nicknamed one aisle inside the pantry “Hummer Lane,” the stretch where Hummer moves quickly and cheerfully, gathering items for dozens of families and individuals who need a little extra help. Her compassion is as steady as her work ethic, and she steps willingly into any job that needs doing.

“She is the very best of us,” said SHEM Director Cindy Rice, who has worked beside Hummer for years.



Photo courtesy of Satina Tolman
Dean Hummer works in the food pantry at SHEM, preparing for another food giveaway by the organization she’s volunteered with for more than a decade.

Hummer’s volunteer work extends beyond food boxes. As colder weather arrives, she also helps pack Ziploc bags filled with warm hats, gloves, and scarves for anyone who needs them. The bags are free at SHEM’s Carmen’s Closet. They once hung from a “Giving Tree” outside, but volunteer Dean Hummer, Page 12



Dr. Michael W. Stoner

Q: Do I have dry eyes or allergies?

A: Although allergy season is in full swing some people who have allergy type symptoms may in fact have dry eyes. There are specific eye drops for allergies and dry eyes. It's important to use the correct drop or you may make your symptoms worse. Education or evaluation can facilitate the right treatment. Dry eye is an inflammation type condition in which there are insufficient tears to lubricate and nourish the eye. Tears are necessary for maintaining the health of the front surface of the eye and for providing clear vision. People with dry eyes either do not produce enough tears or have a poor quality of tears. Dry eye is a common and often chronic problem, particularly in older adults. The primary approaches used to manage and treat dry eyes include adding tears, conserving tears, increasing tear production, and/or treat the inflammation of the eyelids or eye surface that contributes to the dry eyes. Ocular Allergies is the abnormal response of sensitive eyes to contact with allergens and other irritating substances. Pollen in the air is the most common cause of allergy symptoms but other things in the air such as smoke, animal dander or fumes may also trigger an allergic response. The primary approach to manage ocular allergy is avoidance of allergic triggers, cool compresses, eyewash, oral anti-histamines or eye drops specific for allergies. Most eye drops used for dry eyes are mainly used to increase volume of tears. Drops used for ocular allergies have an anti-histamine component, which reduces the effects of histamine but also dry the eye. Using an ocular allergy drop will make a dry eye problem feel worse. If you are unable to find relief you should have your eyes evaluated to determine what condition you have and the best treatment options available to you specifically.

Advanced Family Eyecare | Michael W. Stoner, O.D.
2245 Long Street, Sweet Home • 541-367-2188



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Sweet Home Senior Center

December

menu

3: WHITE CHICKEN CHILI

Savory white bean and chicken chili, served with cornbread, coleslaw, dessert

10: GRILLED CHÉESE & SOUP

Everybody's favorite grilled cheese sandwich, served with homemade tomato soup, potato chips, dessert

17: CHRISTMAS HAM

Our annual Christmas lunch with glazed ham, sweet potato casserole, bacon ranch green beans, cornbread stuffing & gravy, Black Forest cake. Please sign up for this lunch

There will be no Wednesday lunches on Christmas Eve & New Years Eve, Dec. 24 & 31. We wish you the very Happiest Holiday!

Christmas Lunch Dec. 17

Please sign up for the lunch on December 17, both dine-in and to-go, by Friday, Dec. 12. No walk in to-go orders on the 17th. Sign up sheet at Wed lunches and the senior center reception desk.

\$6 dine-in \$6.50 take-out

Lunch served 11:30 - 12:30

Remember to call at least a day ahead if you plan to get 3 or more to-go lunches.

541-367-4775

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

YOUR HOME TOWN DRUG STORE



DRIVE THRU PHARMACY

ECONOMY DRUGS

Located inside Thriftway | 541.367.6777

Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 6p.m. | Saturday 9a.m. - 5p.m.

TRANSPORTATION

Dial-A-Bus – The Sweet Home Dial-a-Bus is a curb-to-curb transportation system within the Sweet Home area within the School District #55, from Crawfordsville to Cascadia and as far west as Santiam Terrace. Rides are \$1 within a five-mile radius of our office at the Sweet Home Senior Center. Over five miles, the charge is \$2. Ten ride tickets are available for \$10. Caretakers riding with a passenger ride at no charge. Call 24 hours in advance to schedule a ride at (541) 367-4775.

Linn Shuttle – The Linn Shuttle operates on a scheduled route, traveling from Sweet Home with stops in Lebanon and Albany. It leaves 10 times a day, Monday through Friday, and six times a day on Saturdays, from the Sweet Home Senior Center 880 18th Ave. Any requests for route deviations must be cleared through the Transportation Director. Rides are \$1 each way. Through an agreement between Linn-Benton Community College and Linn Shuttle, LBCC students ride free of charge upon showing their current ID card. Multi-Ride tickets are available from the bus driver and at the office. The mission of the Linn Shuttle is to provide a safe transportation service that supports the economic, social, transportation and environmental needs of the community it serves.



Wolthuis Family Dentistry

Q: What are the worst drinks for my teeth?

A: Ironically, many of the foods and drinks we enjoy the most aren't good for us at all.

- 1. **SODA.** Two of the most harmful things for our teeth are sugar and acid, and carbonated beverages are full of both! The teeth literally start dissolving under the attack of the acid, leading to cavities.
 - 2. **SPORTS DRINKS.** Like soda, they are often full of sugar and are highly acidic. One study showed that lemon-lime Gatorade dissolved more tooth enamel than any other drink, including Coke.
 - 3. **FRUIT JUICE.** After reading to this point, you probably know why this is on the list. Juice has lots of sugar and acid too. While it could be considered a healthy option, most fitness experts will advise you not to drink your calories. Eat the entire fruit instead, and enjoy the health benefits of the fiber.
- Drink lots of water, maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle, and see your dentist regularly, to be sure your teeth stay in good shape!

COMPLIMENTARY ORTHODONTIC CONSULTATIONS (reg. \$85)

Wolthuis Family Dentistry | Ivan H. Wolthuis, DMD, MAGD
1524 Long St. Sweet Home, OR • 541-367-2931 • www.SweetHomeDental.com

MEMBER OF: American Dental Association, Oregon Dental Association, Southern Willamette Dental Society, Academy of General Dentistry (Master), International Association of Orthodontics

DEAN HUMMER

From page 11

teers stopped after vandals repeatedly tore the bags down and scattered them in the street. Now, clients can come inside and ask for one.

Hard work is something Hummer has never shied away from. Before retiring, she worked at Willamette Industries' plywood mill and later at the Albany paper mill, where she ran the United Way campaign and operated the string machine.

"You have these big, huge 10- to 12-ton rolls of paper that would be put on the machine and cut into small shipping rolls," she said. "We made bag paper and box paper."

Service also defined her years raising three sons. She volunteered with Cub Scouts, Little League, the chess club, and more.

"I just kept following them around to whatever they were interested in," she said.

Her giving hasn't slowed since. Hummer has sewn and donated more than 3,000 baby quilts to several agencies, including SHEMA, Albany CASA, Corvallis CASA, Fish of Albany, Abria Medical Clinic, Albany Helping Hands, the Sweet Home Fire Department, and the Sweet Home Pregnancy Center.

Born in Cassville, Mo., Hummer's early life was marked by frequent moves and challenges. She attended 13 different schools as her family relocated often, beginning first grade in Sweet Home in the building that now serves as the School District office. She eventually returned to Sweet Home and graduated from Sweet Home High School, with 11 other schools in between. Hummer is the second oldest of six siblings. Her oldest brother has passed away, but the remaining five live in Oregon and remain very close. She credits their mother for keeping the

family close-knit.

"She always wanted us to get together for holidays and we got together quite often. She was a good mom and wanted us all to stay close," Hummer said. Her childhood, she said, "was not an easy one," but her mother instilled in her the compassion that would guide her life.

"My mother was an angel," Hummer said. "She went through a lot and taught us kids to be helpful. She was caring, made us who we are, and was always there for us."

At 18 years old, Hummer married her husband, Donald. The two first met while picking beans and berries in the summer fields as teenagers, earning money for school clothes. After marrying, they moved to Sweet Home – the place they have called home for 63 years. Donald, who is now retired, spent his entire career working for Willamette Industries at the plywood mill.

Of their decades-long marriage, Hummer said, "We worked together; our family was close. Our boys were always the center of our lives when they were home. We love to get together for the holidays. We will have 30 people here for Thanksgiving and Christmas."

Together, they raised three sons: two now living in Millersburg and one in North Carolina, who plans to return to Oregon next year. Hummer said she is thrilled at the thought of having all her boys close again. She also enjoys her six grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Despite a full family life, Hummer remains committed to SHEMA, especially as demand for services continues to grow.

"We really need more volunteers," she said. On a recent morning, only six or seven volunteers staffed the pantry – far fewer than the ideal 12.

"Sometimes during our

two-and-a-half-hour shift, we fill 60 or more boxes. Myself and one other person fill the boxes when people come in with their lists."

Volunteers sort and prepare food, stock shelves, divide donations, and fill boxes. Extra help is also needed for building repairs and maintenance – responsibilities Rice often shoulders herself. Hummer admires her friend and fellow SHEMA volunteer: "She does too much and needs more help. She is amazing."

Volunteering is optional, but clients are always welcome to help.

"We have two clients currently who also serve as volunteers," Hummer said. "It is great to see people who can help, help."

Not everyone can give back due to time constraints or physical limitations, but there is usually something to do. For example, if someone cannot stand for long or walk much, they can sit at the table and sort items, count inventory, or pack grab bags. Hummer hopes others in the community will consider joining the effort.

"If you're able and if you can, it is a very rewarding thing to do," she said. "If you have the time, volunteer. Give Cindy a call."

SHEMA is open from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday. Volunteers typically work from 8 a.m. to noon. The pantry closes on the second Saturday of each month to allow volunteers time with their families. They are located at 1115 Long St., next to the Sweet Home Fire Station. Their phone number is (541) 367-6504.

After more than a decade of service – and a lifetime of giving – Hummer said she feels grateful to still be part of the effort.

"I enjoy it," she said. "It keeps me going."



DIAL-A-BUS

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MON-FRI 7 AM - 4 PM
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OFFICE HOURS 8-4



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SHOP LOCAL- 4 TRIPS A DAY
THROUGH TOWN

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SAT 7 AM - 7:30 PM - 6 ROUTES PER DAY
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LEBANON:

WALMART
LBCC
PARK & OAK

ALBANY:

LBCC MAIN CAMPUS
TRAIN STATION
HERITAGE MALL
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541-367-4775 | LINNSHUTTLE.COM | f FIND US ON FACEBOOK

Sweet Home Community Center

880 18th Ave
(541) 367-4775

Senior Activity Center Hours:

Monday-Friday,
8 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Senior Center Board of Directors

Murya Scherer, President
Shirley Schumacher, Vice President
Pam Barbee, Secretary
Sally Pelham, Treasurer
Ken Bronson, Parliamentarian
Linda Anderson, Director
Danny Bidwell, Director
Tonni Hutchinson, Director
Ruben Rivas, Director
Bob Weidner, Director
Jean Holcomb, Director
Dawn Mitchell, Executive Director

Public Notices

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON FOR THE COUNTY OF LINN

CITY OF ALBANY, a municipal corporation, Plaintiff, v. SCOTT KEVIN HEINZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF MARY J. JENKINS, OLIVIA RENAE MAZONE, CSO FINANCIAL, INC., STATE OF OREGON, SHARLA RAE VALENCIA, and JOHN PATRICK FLICK, Defendants.

Case No. 25CV52256

COMPLAINT FOR FORECLOSURE NOT SUBJECT TO MANDATORY ARBITRATION AMOUNT OF CLAIM: \$570,710.50

FILING FEE: \$594

At all times material herein, Plaintiff the City of Albany ("Plaintiff") was and is a municipal corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the state of Oregon.

At all times material herein, Defendant, Scott Kevin Heinz was the record owner or reputed owner of the real property and the improvements thereon commonly known as 2205 Front Avenue, NE Albany Linn County, Oregon 97321 ("Property"), more particularly described as follows:

Lot 22, Block 21, BURKHART PARK ADDITION, in the City of Albany, County of Linn and State of Oregon, together with that portion of vacated alley which injured by ordinance, Recorded in Book 193, Page 507, Linn County Records. Also known as 2205 Front Ave NE, Albany, Oregon 97321.

Upon information and belief Plaintiff alleges that no party named herein is engaged in active military duty or naval service of the United States as defined in the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act ("SCRA") as amended. To the best of Plaintiff's ability, Plaintiff has conducted a search for the named Defendants. Upon information and belief Plaintiff alleges that no party named herein is a minor or otherwise incompetent.

Plaintiff filed a municipal lien ("Lien") against the Property in the records of Linn County, Oregon, to secure payment of the abatement of a derelict structure in the sum of \$570,710.50. A copy of the lien is attached hereto as Exhibit "1".

The Lien is subject to foreclosure. Plaintiff declares that the entire balance of principal and interest is now due and payable. Currently, \$570,710.50 is immediately due and payable and is secured by the Lien on the Property.

Defendants may claim some interest in the property. Any such claim is junior to Plaintiff's Lien. No other proceedings are pending for the collection of the debt or the foreclosure of the Lien. Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law.

More than 15 days prior to filing this Complaint, Plaintiff mailed a notice to Defendant stating that Plaintiff intended to commence suit to foreclose its lien unless the lien was paid within 15 days of the notice. A copy of the notice is attached hereto as Exhibit "2" and incorporated by reference herein.

WHEREFORE, plaintiff prays for a judgment of this court:

(A) Granting judgment to Plaintiff against Defendant in the amount of \$570,710.50.

(B) Declaring that the Lien be foreclosed as a valid lien against the Property described above, and declaring that the Lien is senior to any interest of named Defendants in the Property;

(C) Foreclosing Plaintiff's Lien and ordering the sale of the Property by the sheriff of Linn

Public Notices

County in the manner prescribed by law;

(D) Applying the proceeds received from the sale first toward the costs of sale, then toward satisfaction of Plaintiff's judgment, including costs and attorney fees and any surplus to be party or parties who may establish their right thereto;

(E) Declaring that Plaintiff will not be entitled to monetary damages, attorney fees, costs, or disbursements against junior interest claimants who do not contest this action;

(F) Ordering that Defendant and all persons claiming through Defendant are forever foreclosed of all interest in the property.

(G) Granting such other and further relief as the court deems equitable.

DATED this 5th day of November 2025.

M. Sean Kidd, OSB #091224

Attorney for Plaintiffs

260 Ferry Street SW, Ste 202

Albany, OR 97321

(541) 926-5505

sean@longdel.com

(11/5, 11/12, 11/19, 11/26)

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON FOR THE COUNTY OF LINN

CITY OF ALBANY, a municipal corporation, Plaintiff, v. SCOTT KEVIN HEINZ, UNKNOWN HEIRS OF MARY J. JENKINS, OLIVIA RENAE MAZONE, CSO FINANCIAL, INC., STATE OF OREGON, SHARLA RAE VALENCIA, and JOHN PATRICK FLICK, Defendants.

Case No. 25CV52256

SUMMONS

TO: Unknown Heirs of Mary J. Jenkins

You are hereby required to appear and defend the complaint filed against you in the above entitled action within 30 days of the date of first publication which is November 5, 2025, along with the required filing fee, and in case of your failure to do so, for want thereof, plaintiff will apply to the court for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

NOTICE TO THE DEFENDANT: READ THESE PAPERS CAREFULLY!

You must "appear" in this case or the other side will win automatically. To "appear" you must file with the court a legal paper called a "motion" or "answer." Forms may be available through the court above or online at www.courts.oregon.gov/gorms. This must be given to the court clerk or administrator within 30 days along with the required filing fee. It must be in proper form and have proof of service on the Plaintiff's attorney or, if the Plaintiff does not have an attorney, proof of service upon the Plaintiff. Service rules are in the Oregon Rules of Civil Procedure (ORCP) Rule 9. If you have questions, you should see an attorney immediately. If you need help finding a lawyer, you may call the Oregon State Bar's Lawyer Referral Service at (503) 684-3763 or toll free in Oregon at (800) 452-7636.

Dated: November 5, 2025

M. Sean Kidd, OSB #091224

Attorney for Plaintiffs

260 Ferry Street SW, Ste 202

Albany, OR 97321

(541) 926-5505

sean@longdel.com

(11/5, 11/12, 11/19, 11/26)

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON FOR THE COUNTY OF LINN Probate Department

In the Matter of the Estate of PHYLLIS JOYCE SCHMITZ, Deceased.

Case No. 25PB10155

NOTICE TO INTERESTED PER-

Public Notices

SONS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on November 20, 2025, Heather Jean Search, was appointed as Personal Representative of the above-referenced estate. All persons having claims against the estate are required to present them, with vouchers attached, to the Personal Representative or to Stacey D. Mealer, Attorney, at the addresses listed below, within four months after the date of first publication of this notice, or the claims may be barred.

All persons whose rights may be affected by the proceedings may obtain additional information from the records of the Court, the Personal Representative, or the attorney for the Personal Representative.

Personal Representative:

Heather Jean Search

2415 S. Santiam Hwy

Lebanon, OR 97355

(541) 619-8690

Attorney for Personal Representative:

Stacey D. Mealer, Attorney

OSB#023915

PO Box 81 ~ 1195 Main Street

Suite 2

Sweet Home, OR 97386

(541) 270-2406 ~ Mealer@actionnet.net

(11/26)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Mill Race Storage will hold a public auction on Nov. 29, 2025, under ORS. 87.685-87.695 and sell property contained within the assigned unit of the parties listed below:

A. Pagauga unit# B010, E. Wright unit# D014, A. Sater unit# B008, B. Triller unit# G013, The auction will be listed and conducted on: www.lockerfox.com Purchases must be paid in full by cash or money order at the time of pickup at:

Mill Race Storage

550 NE Laredo Way

Lebanon, OR 97355

(11/26 - 12/3)

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE STATE OF OREGON, COUNTY OF LINN, IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF ALICE M. JAMES, DECEASED, CASE NO. 25PB09905, NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed and has qualified as the Personal Representative. All persons having claims against the estate are hereby required to present the same, with proper vouchers, within four months after the date of the first publication of this notice, as stated below, to the Personal Representative at PO Box 667, Albany, OR 97321, or they may be barred. All persons whose rights may be affected by the proceedings in this estate may obtain additional information from the records of the court, the Personal Representative or the attorney for the Personal Representative. Date of first publication: November 26, 2025.

James A. James, Personal Representative of the Estate of Alice M. James, Deceased. Michael G. Cowgill, OSB #781682, Weatherford Thompson, Attorneys for the Personal Representative, PO Box 667, Albany, OR 97321, (541) 926-2255.

(11/26)

NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that ROBIN L. EVENDEN has been appointed Personal Representative of the ESTATE OF DEBORAH ANN MARTIN, Deceased, by the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for Linn County under Case No. 25PB09562 All persons having claims against the estate are re-

Public Notices

quired to present them, with vouchers attached, to the said Personal Representative at Stayton Law, 582 E Washington St, PO Box 248, Stayton, OR 97383, within four months after the date of first publication of this notice, or the claims may be barred.

All persons whose rights may be affected by the proceedings may obtain additional information from the records of the court, the Personal Representative, or the attorney for the Personal Representative.

Dated and first published November 26, 2025.

Personal Representative:

Robin L. Evenden

225 Timber Ridge St SE #169

Albany, OR 97322

Attorney for Personal Representative:

Jennifer L. Tiger, OSB#990890

Stayton Law

582 E Washington St

PO Box 248

Stayton, Oregon 97383

Lebanon, OR 97355

(11/26)

Fall Cleanup

Fall Cleanup: Moss treatment, gutter cleaning, yard cleanups, trimming, pruning, blackberry removal. Jesse's Yards 503-871-7869

(10/23 - 2/9)

For Sale

Exceptional 2007 Ford Explorer Trac. 130K Miles. Full Power 4.8 V8 Canopy, has been towed by motorhome. Asking \$8,500 OBO Loren

541-405-5859

(11/19 - 11/26)

Services

Palma's Painting and Misc. offers Interior painting, pressure washing, epoxy floors, etc. CCB# 205493 call 541-220-8068

(10/23 - 12/3)

1611 King James Bible

Interested in the 1611 King James Holy Bible?

Take a look at kjbm.org.

Authentic 1611 facsimile, Gothic font, softcover

Questions or local showing: text/call Lebanon 541-401-5654 / Phoenix: 661-373-5378.

Statewide Notices

SERVICES: DIVORCE \$130. Complete preparation. Includes children, custody, support, property and bills division. No court appearances. Divorced in 1-5 weeks possible. 503-772-5295. www.paralegalalternatives.com legalalt@msn.com.

SERVICES: Donate your car, truck, boat, RV and more to support our veterans! Schedule a FAST, FREE vehicle pickup and receive a top tax deduction! Call Veteran Car Donations at 1-866-695-9265 today!

SERVICES: Get a break on your taxes! Donate your car, truck, or SUV to assist the blind and visually impaired. Arrange a swift, no-cost vehicle pickup and secure a generous tax credit for 2025. Call Heritage for the Blind Today at 1-844-533-9173 today!

SERVICES: We Buy Houses for Cash AS IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Get your fair

Statewide Notices

cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 1-866-249-8679.

SERVICES: We buy 8,000 cars a week. Sell your old, busted or junk car with no hoops, haggles or headaches. Sell your car to Peddle. Easy three step process. Instant offer. Free pickup. Fast payment. Call 1-855-980-4382.

SERVICES: The bathroom of your dreams in as little as 1 day. Limited Time Offer - \$1000 off or No Payments and No Interest for 18 months for customers who qualify. BCI Bath & Shower. Many options available. Quality materials & professional installation. Senior & Military Discounts Available. Call Today! 1-844-847-9778.

SERVICES: Jacuzzi Bath Remodel can install a new, custom bath or shower in as little as one day. For a limited time, waiving ALL installation costs! Additional terms apply. Subject to change and vary by dealer. (Offer ends 12/31/25.) Call 1-855-341-5268.

SERVICES: Prepare for power outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 5-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-877-557-1912 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

SERVICES: Portable Oxygen Concentrator May Be Covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 855-839-0752.

SERVICES: No more cleaning out gutters. Guaranteed! Leaf-Filter is backed by a no-clog guarantee and lifetime transferable warranty. Call today 1-855-536-8838 to schedule a FREE inspection and no obligation estimate. Plus get 75% off installation and a bonus \$250 discount! Limited time only. Restrictions apply, see representative for warranty and offer details.

SERVICES: Get DISH Satellite TV + Internet! Free Install, Free HD-DVR Upgrade, 80,000 On-Demand Movies, Plus Limited Time Up To \$600 In Gift Cards. Call Today! 1-866-373-9175.

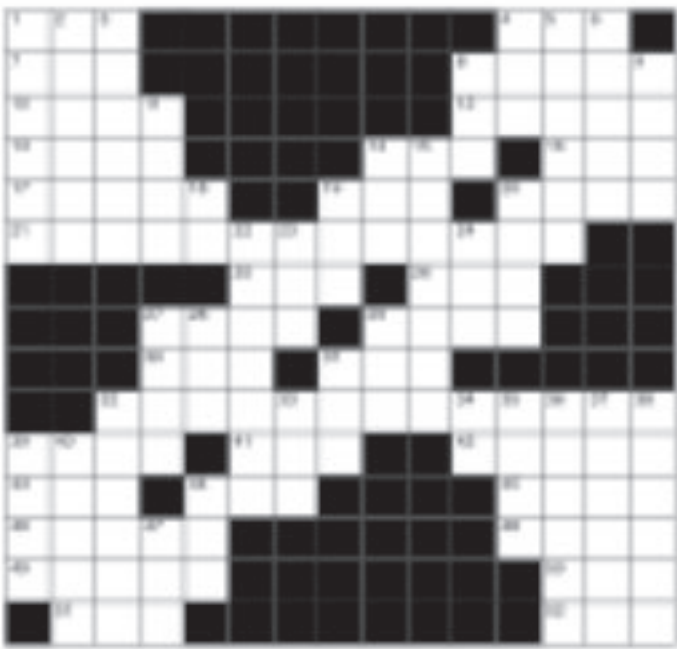
SERVICES: DIRECTV OVER INTERNET - Get your favorite live TV, sports and local channels. 99% signal reliability! CHOICE Package, \$84.99/mo for 12 months. HBO Max and Premium Channels included for 3 mos (w/CHOICE Package or higher.) No annual contract, no hidden fees! Some restrictions apply. Call IVS 1-855-602-2009.

SERVICES: Get Boost Infinite! Unlimited Talk, Text and Data For Just \$25/mo! The Power Of 3 5G Networks, One Low Price! Call Today and Get The Latest iPhone Every Year On Us! 844-955-3417.

NEED COPIES, FAX, PRINTING?

**THE NEW ERA
1313 MAIN ST.
SWEET HOME**

CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS

1. "Be back later"

4. Zhou-dynasty state

7. Misread

8. ___ and gagged

10. One of Laban's flocks

12. Ivory Coast village

13. Caffeinated beverage

14. Without union

16. Intention

17. Sulfate and citric are two

19. Supplement with a fluidly

20. R & R

21. George and Waver

25. Liquefied petroleum gas

26. Immortal act

27. Ancient Greek sepioid
28. Acid digestion

30. Comedy routine

31. Actress Thurman

32. Adult beverage

38. Assured of time

41. An awkward stupid person

42. ___ Walker, "The Color Purple"

43. Cover babies' chests

44. Puts per billion (abbr.)

45. Ottoman military title

48. More skilled

49. Native to New Mexico

49. Indigest

58. Illuminated

51. Very fast airplane

52. Devoid of credibility

CLUES DOWN

1. Canadian Outlawed

2. Wren by women

3. "Naked Gun" actor Nathan

4. Precovers fatty acids

5. Murals

6. Not invited

8. Show ___ entertainment

9. Darkens

11. Pilgrimage

14. Danish brew

15. Savior

16. Sliding between smooth and rough

19. Electromyography

20. Harry's wife Bulger

22. Hairstyle

23. Flashes per second
24. Stealer novel

25. Basics

26. A person's life story

28. Luxury automobile

31. Ultrahigh frequency

32. Island and atoll are two

33. Tuna

34. Farm state

35. Fence post

36. Rwandan capital

37. Chomsky's

38. In a state of turbulence

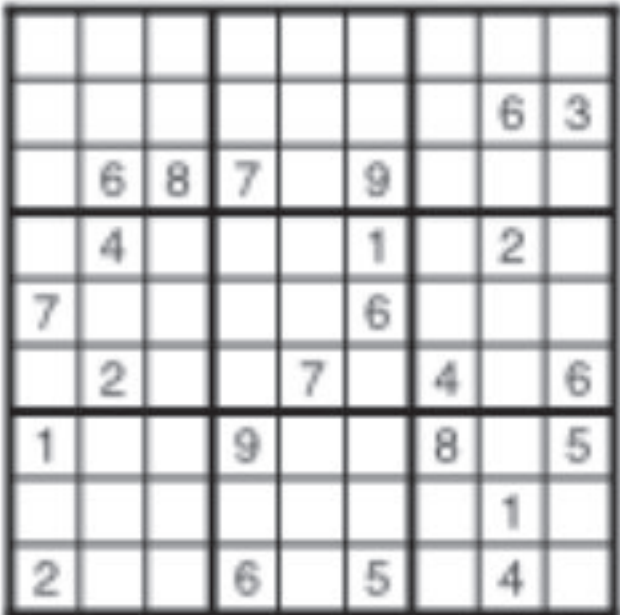
39. Aisha ___, Israeli politician

40. Flowering plants

44. Inquire too closely

47. Run up in New York

SUDOKU



Level: Advanced

FOOTBALL

From page 10

forced fumble and a fumble recovery.

"Bradyn McClure was probably our best shut-down corner," Adams said. "We consistently put him on the (other team's) best receiver."

Best Defensive Lineman was junior Kellen Hartsook, who "was our enforcer there, the one creating havoc, the best at shedding blocks and getting after the running back, getting after the quarterback," the coach said. "He made a lot of big-time plays for us around the line of scrimmage."

Best Offensive Lineman was junior Gavin Tyler, who also received the **Sled Dog Award**, which was introduced to the awards list by Assistant Coach Chad Bach, Adams said.

"It really just talks about that team kind of dynamic as a group, you know, pushing us forward. Gavin was voted the sled dog for his consistency and his leadership amongst that group? And, the same with his offensive line award - he was just the most consistent lineman all year long, just how he approached every single day and then every single game."

Most Improved were seniors Alex Bachand and Gabriel Meadors. Bachand didn't play last year, then played inside linebacker this year, "which is an extremely difficult position to play, let alone if you miss a year,"

Adams said. "He improved tremendously for us and became kind of a really good rotation player for us in that spot."

Meadors didn't get a lot of playing time at left guard in 2024, "but this year, he really owned and kind of dominated that left guard spot for us. And it was a ton of fun to watch him take ownership of that position."

Most Inspirational were juniors Kaeson Walker and AJ Rodriguez.

Rodriguez, Adams said, had to deal with adversity off the field, but "you would never know it, because every single day that kid has a smile on his face, trying to be as best as he possibly can and help in any regard."

Walker, he said, "was kind of our hype man before games, our emotion leader in the locker room. He really helped get guys ramped up."

Also new this year were the **Gravy Train Awards**, named after Assistant Coach Ryan Graville, "because of the kind of person that he is, the kind of community member - really, he just operates his whole life on a servant leadership kind of mindset," Adams said.

"And that's really what we want to do, really what we want to embody within our program, servant leadership - the 'we' over 'me' kind of thing."

The award was given weekly and the recipients wore a white jersey in practice each week. They were: Martin Chelstad,

Brennen Eldridge, Logan Estep, Daniel McCubbins, Luke Rosa, Bridger Royer, Gunner Summers and Riley Vaughan.

Third-year letter winners were Dillan Davis, Kellen Hartsook, James Hearick, Bradyn McClure, Daniel McCubbins, Bode Nichols, Luke Rosa, Lynkin Royer, Gavin Tyler, Kaeson Walker and Kyle Zajic.

Second-year letters went to Keeghan Gittins, Liam Martin, Gabriel Meadors, Bridger Royer and Trenton Templin.

First-year lettermen were David Anderson, Alex Bachand, Sam Barringer, Martin Chelstad, Eli Cruz, Brennen Eldridge, Logan Estep, Rafe Hayes, Kolton Pollock, Kyle Porter, AJ Rodriguez, Gavin Richey, Jeremiah Steagall, Gunnar Summers, Mason Tyler and Gabe Wright.

Junior Varsity Participant certificates went to Luke Adams, Gavin Baker, Thomas Bandy, Lukas Banker, Zeplin Berg, Ryder Cummings, Boone Cupp, Zach Davis, Brayden Driver, Braden Eggers, Michael Eggers, Mason Flores, Brodee Gay, Ernie Hicks, Aiden Leopard, Hunter McClure, Bryson Mumford, Ryder Oakley, Landon Phinney, Landen Pruitt, Macen Rosa, Murphy Savolt, Jaicob Shaw, Jake Smith, Brodie Starha, Ean Tackett, Marshall Van Dijk, Marcus Warthen and Austin Weinman. The JV team finished 7-1.

REDISTRICTING

From page 8

voluntary baseball skills training sessions throughout the offseason. "We are getting better and better each year. The Oregon West Conference is a very competitive conference year in and year out. Looking at the past few years, our programs have gone through a lot of tough times."

He added that although some might view a move to the 3A as a "downgrade," the 3A has high-level programs.

"This will not be a walk in the park," he said. "I think it could serve as a confidence boost for our athletes, but we aren't walking into this new potential level thinking we will dominate from the get go simply because of the level."

Teter's players have consistently been putting in offseason time on building skills and he said that work should bear fruits - at any level the Huskies are playing at.

"A league change or redistricting alone won't immediately change our ability to competitively compete," he said. "It will take commitment, time investment, and hard work in the off season. If we can effectively accomplish that goal, then we will see positive change that will ultimately result in a higher level of competitive play."

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Klumpf named boys soccer MVP after gauntlet season

By Satina Tolman
For The New Era

The Sweet Home High School boys soccer team closed its season Nov. 10 with an awards banquet that celebrated progress, perseverance, and character after a challenging year in one of Oregon's toughest leagues.

Head coach Eric Stutzer reflected on the season, noting that competing in a conference that includes both North Marion and Stayton – teams that played for the 4A state championship, with Stayton winning 1-0 – tested the Huskies' resilience.

Despite the difficulty, he said, the team responded admirably, earning a tie against Cascade, picking up a few wins, and showing steady improvement with a roster that was more than half first-year lettermen.

Many players began the season with little or no soccer ex-

perience, yet several earned starting varsity positions by year's end. Stutzer said the team's growth was evident in the way it battled opponents such as Newport, holding that playoff team to a close 4-1 match at home. "From beginning to end," he said, "they came a long way."

Sweet Home's 23-player roster was composed largely of underclassmen, and Stutzer believes there's a strong foundation for the future. The program is expected to move to the 3A classification next season, with a 90% likelihood, according to Stutzer. (See related story on page ##.)

Leadership and Dedication

The Huskies will graduate six seniors this year: Cannon Klumph, Elisha Scofield, Keeghan Gittins, Ben Perry, Kyle Petrait, and Daniel Sullivan.

Klumph, a four-year letterman and team captain, was



Boys soccer award winners and honorees are, from left, Isaiah Scofield, Keeghan Gittins, Memphis Gay, Cannon Klumph, Dominique Daniel, Noah Valdez, Kyle Petrait, Xander Blom, Arln Lynn, Elisha Scofield and Malakai Walls.

named Most Valuable Player.

Stutzer said the team struggled whenever Klumph was sidelined with an injury, crediting his organization and communication as essential to the Huskies' on-field cohesion. Because multiple players were strong MVP contenders, Stutzer opened the vote to the team, and the players overwhelmingly agreed that Klumph was their most indispensable teammate.

Scofield and Petrait shared the Coach's Award. Scofield, also a team captain and four-year letterman, was recognized for his initiative beyond the field – he led student-run soccer programs in local elementary schools, coordinating directly with principals and bringing younger students into the sport. Petrait earned his first-year letter after a year of remarkable growth.

Stutzer said Petrait approached him before the season, promising he would earn a starting spot, and through tireless off-season practice, he did just that. His work ethic and determination, Stutzer said, made him "an inspiration to me as a coach."

The Mr. Husky Award, given

to the player who best represents Sweet Home pride and character, went to Memphis Gay, a three-year letterman known for his positivity and team spirit.

Stutzer described Gay as the kind of teammate "you're proud to call your own," noting that he often led cheers at junior varsity games and embodied the heart of the program.

Noah Valdez, who joined the team without prior soccer experience, was named Most Improved Player after advancing to varsity within his first eight days of practice. Stutzer credited Valdez's defensive instincts—carried over from his basketball background—for making him a key factor in several matches, especially against Cascade.

Senior Keeghan Gittins received the "Slow Feet, Don't Eat!" Award, which honors relentless effort and dedication. Gittins, who also played football, scored four goals and added an assist this season. He earned respect across the league, even drawing a first-team vote from the Stayton coach – an uncommon recognition.

New Leadership

Gittins joined sophomores Felix Lopez and Kace Stevens in receiving All-League Honorable Mention recognition. Lopez contributed four goals and two assists, impressing coaches with his understanding of the game and leadership potential. Stevens anchored the defense, consistently shutting down strong attacks, especially during the match against Newport.

Captains Klumph and Scofield passed the leadership role to Logan Andersen, a three-year letterman selected through a formal interview process that mirrors professional job interviews.

Stutzer said the process helps players develop communication and leadership skills, emphasizing that the captaincy is "not a popularity contest, but a responsibility."

Coaching Beyond Competition

Stutzer, who has been part of the Sweet Home soccer program since 1998 and head coach for the past decade, said his coaching philosophy has evolved from focusing solely on wins and losses to prioritizing player development and personal growth.

He recalled a moment after a game against North Marion when the opposing head coach stopped the Sweet Home bus to commend the team for its sportsmanship and positive attitude.

For Stutzer, that gesture reflected the true goal of the program: building young men who can face adversity, support one another, and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Stutzer explained, "It's not just a job for me, and it's not just about winning or losing; it's about making a difference in society and getting students and young men through a program who are going to be meaningful contributors in society and understand what it means to live life well. It's about developing men who will be successful in life, who understand what it means to work hard, lead, and make a difference."



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