

Scholarship dollars flow in Christmas Tree sale

By Scott Swanson
Of The New Era

It was a big night for the Sweet Home Alumni Foundation as it hosted nearly 250 people Saturday night, Dec. 6, at its 2025 Christmas Trees for Scholarships Auction.

"We were very pleased with everything," said Mary-Sue Reynolds, a SHAF board member and one of the organizers of the event held at the Boys & Girls Club. She said the attendance was very close to the goal of 250, though an exact count was not available at press time for The New Era.

"We were thankful for those who came last-minute."

Auctioneer Jeremy Powell, who has done the selling at most of the 22 auctions since 2004, sold 16 trees for a total of \$22,750, including two that sold for \$3,000 or more out of the 11 that went for \$1,000 or more.

The top tree sale was \$3,500, for a tree themed "24 Karat Christmas" sponsored by Home Smart "The Wendi Melcher Team" and Fun Forest Inc., and decorated by Wendi Melcher, Heather

See Auction, Page 8



Photo by Scott Swanson
Auctioneer Jeremy Powell, right, works the crowd as he sells a themed tree at the Sweet Home Alumni Foundation's annual Christmas Tree Auction Saturday night. See many more photos, including the 16 trees sold at the event, which raised some \$50,000 for scholarships.

Teen killed, 11-year-old severely injured in crash

By The New Era Staff

A Lebanon teen was killed and a Lebanon girl was severely injured Friday evening, Dec. 5, in a two-vehicle collision at the intersection of McDowell Creek Drive and Berlin Road north of Sweet Home.

Linn County Sheriff Michelle Duncan said Linn County Dispatch received a 911 call reporting the collision, with occupants trapped, at approximately 9:06 p.m.

Deputies arrived and located a 2017 Ram 3500 that had been struck in the intersection by a 2002 Mazda B-Series pickup. Deputies learned that the operator of the Mazda, Zayne Hannah-Gray, 19, of Lebanon, sustained fatal injuries in the crash.

A passenger in the Mazda, whom the Sheriff's Office did not name, was transported to Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center with life-threatening injuries.

The operator of the Ram 3500, Jeff Gainer, a local chef who operates Cheffry's Gourmet Grub, also was transported to Good Sam



Photo by Mack Knebel
Emergency responders work at the scene of a crash at the intersection of McDowell Creek Drive and Berlin Road that killed a Lebanon teen and injured three other people Friday night.

with serious injuries, the Sheriff's Office said. His daughter, Aurora, 11, a passenger in the pickup, was transported to Legacy Emanuel Medical Center in Portland with life-threatening injuries.

According to Duncan and individuals who were at the scene, an investigation revealed that the Ram 3500 was struck at a high rate of speed on the passenger side by the Mazda, which was northbound on Berlin and

failed to stop at the posted stop sign. The Ram was traveling eastbound.

Alcohol has also been determined to be a factor in the crash, Duncan said. Due to the seriousness of the

See Crash, Page 12

Hometown Newspaper of
APRIL SEWARD



**INSIDE:
WINTER SPORTS
PREVIEW**



**SINGING
CHRISTMAS TREE
DRAWS CROWDS
PAGE 2**

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OBITUARIES

Dixie Maddox
Oct. 31, 1934 - Dec. 4, 2025
Dixie Lee Maddox, 91, of Sweet Home passed away in Albany on Dec. 4, 2025. She was born Oct. 31, 1934, to June (Lancaster) and Lawrence Renne in Cottage Grove. She married Elton L. Rinehart and they lived in Myrtle Creek for many years before divorcing. In 1983, she married Warren Maddox in Canyonville and moved to Sweet Home in 1990.

Dixie worked as a CNA for several families over the years and retired in 2014. She loved to work and care for her flowers.

She is survived by her daughter, Nancy G. Bonham of Eugene; stepdaughter Florence Gonzalez; sister Janice

Heffner of Bend and brother Dennis Renne of Idaho; four grandchildren, and two step-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her son, Daniel L. Rinehart (2014); husband Warren Maddox (2017); son Gerald "Gary" Rinehart (2022); and siblings Marvin Renne and Darlene Hendrickson.

Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling the arrangements.

Death Notices
Raymond Maynard
Feb. 7, 1940 - Dec. 3, 2025

Raymond "Ray" Maynard, 85, of Sweet Home passed away Dec. 3, 2025.

Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling the arrangements. For updated information, visit www.sweethomefuneral.com.



CORRECTIONS

Due to a layout error, our National Honor Society report in the Dec. 3 edition switched two photos. Below is the corrected information for the two students.



Aaliyah Brown

Aaliyah, 16, is the daughter of Jessalyn Sevier and Charles Brown. A junior, she is maintaining a 3.90 GPA. Aaliyah plans to attend college to become an ultrasound technician. Students, she says, "need to be focused and disciplined when it comes to school so their work doesn't pile up and they don't get behind."



Natalie Smith

Natalie, 17, is the daughter of Bethany and Brent Smith. A senior, she is maintaining a 3.50 GPA. Natalie plans to study special education and become a BLS teacher. To do well in school, she says, "dedication and motivation" are critical.

Singing Christmas Tree

Members of the Children's Choir, above, sing "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" during the Friday night performance of the Sweet Home Singing Christmas Tree. It was the 43rd year for the Singing Christmas Tree, a 33-member choir directed by John Kluttz. The three shows drew large crowds, averaging nearly 200 per performance, well above recent years. Below, Deena Bechtel introduces Santa, who made his regular appearance. A video of the concert can be seen at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWTCS_o86bE. See many more photos at sweet-homenews.com.

Photos by Scott Swanson



Local holiday fun on the docket this weekend

It's Christmas time in Sweet Home and things kicked off Saturday, Nov. 29, with the city Tree Lighting at City Hall. There's a lot more to come and here are some events to look forward to and participate in:

Let It Glow Holiday Lights
Decorate your home — or nominate a festive favorite — to be included on a Holiday Lights Map produced by the Chamber of Commerce. Each home entered is automatically added to a raffle for a gift card from local Realtor Karla Hogan. A raffle drawing will be held Dec. 20. No judging, just community cheer!

Register on the Chamber of Commerce website at www.sweethomechamber.com/events/eventcalendar.

Christmas bell ringers needed

Sweet Home Emergency Ministries is seeking bell ringers to staff Salvation Army donation buckets during the holiday season in Sweet Home.

Individuals, businesses, churches, civic groups or school groups are invited to sponsor a Tuesday or Saturday, through Dec. 20, at the Sweet Home Bi-Mart (west-end exit) from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Four-hour slots can be divided up as sponsors wish, but they must be staffed during that period.

Proceeds go to SHEM programs that provide backpacks and supplies to local children in the fall.

SHEM staff will deliver and pick up the bell and kettle stand for each stint. Ringers are free to wear holiday attire, sing carols and generally provide festive cheer. Sponsors are wel-

come to bring a modest sign to display their group or business name.

For more information or to reserve a date, contact Cindy Rice at (541) 409-2803 or Julie Dedman at (541) 409-9093.


School choir, band performances

Sweet Home's school choirs and bands will perform their winter concerts over the next two weeks.

The choir concert, which will include sixth-grade, junior high and high school choirs, will be at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 11, in the high school auditorium, 1641 Long St.


The band concert, which will also include sixth-grade, junior high and high school bands, including the jazz band, will be at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 18, also

See Holiday Events, Page 6

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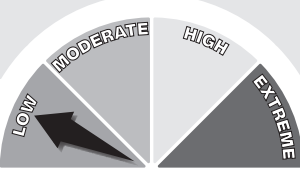
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TEMPERATURES				
DATE		HIGH	LOW	PRECIP
December 2		53	35	0.00
December 3		44	35	0.00
December 4		52	38	0.00
December 5		55	51	0.01
December 6		57	47	0.33
December 7		57	47	0.00
December 8		57	53	0.22

PRECIPITATION		
Year to date:		25.09
December 4, 2024:		32.06

FORECAST			
DAY	WEATHER	HIGH	LOW
Thur	Partly Cloudy	60	44
Fri	Partly Cloudy	56	40
Sat	PM Showers	56	42
Sun	Showers	54	45
Mon	Rain	57	49
Tues	Showers	55	48
Wed	Showers	58	48

LAKE LEVELS	
Foster Reservoir:	614.9
Green Peter Res.:	805.3



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).

Dec. 7
12:48 a.m. - Charles Fredrick Nixon, 57, cited for no valid operator's license, driving uninsured, Main St./15th Ave. Warned for expired registration, failure to maintain lane.
1:17 a.m. - Hit and run reported in area of Harrison/Manning roads. Officer did not observe damage.
7:44 a.m. - Renee Irene Weidner arrested on LJC warrant for harassment after caller reported female banging on windows and doors in 1100 block Elm St. Cited and released, trespassed from location.
8:54 a.m. - Caller reported customer damaged fueling station in 33100 block Hwy. 228, Halsey. According to LCSO, two offenders removed the fuel selection buttons from a gas pump and spray painted a trash can. Report taken for criminal mischief.
10:26 a.m. - Caller reported

male threw metal ball at her head, 1000 block Mountain View Rd. According to SHPD, an adult female sustained a head injury and was treated by medical personnel. Officers documented evidence at the scene and interviewed witnesses. During the initial investigation, officers received information indicating that a metal object may have been involved. However, according to SHPD, that item has not been recovered, and detectives are continuing to work to determine exactly what occurred. The case remains an active investigation. No arrests had been made as of Monday. Report taken for assault II.
11:49 a.m. - Overdose reported in 40900 block Hwy. 228. Deputy responded. Further information unavailable.
1:34 p.m. - Deputy responded to stranded motorist in ditch in area of 1st St./

Seefeld Dr, Halsey. Friends arrived to pull her out.
1:49 p.m. - Caller reported that people have built shack and are living on his property in 1000 block Nandina St. Also reported chainsaw, described as a red Bauer 24-inch model valued at \$90, was stolen. Report taken for theft III. Officer advised male that he needed to leave transient camp on city property at 1400 Nadina St. Investigation continuing.
5:17 p.m. - Caller reported a male, estimated at 17 to 20 years old, came to his door in 800 block Maple St. claiming to be a Cub Scout selling wreaths. The caller purchased one for \$40. The wreaths were never delivered and other community members reported similar experiences. Report taken for fraud.
9:30 p.m. - Caller from 33100 block Hwy. 228, Halsey, requested welfare check on customer. Deputy responded and transported customer to local hospital per customer's request.
Dec. 6
12:23 p.m. - Caller reported male standing on sidewalk at Long St./12th Ave. "being creepy." Officer responded, encouraged male to move along.
2:03 p.m. - Caller reported two males fighting in 1500 block Main St. Officers responded, determined altercation was more verbal than physical, trespassed male from

location.
2:49 p.m. - Caller reported she had someone watching her animals in 300 W. Holley Rd. and that she had concerns about how well they were being cared for. Officer responded, determined there was no evidence of a crime. Investigation continuing.
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, Faron Walter Kennedy, 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, Bradley Marion Pugh, Sean Ever Robinson, Tammy Lavonn Robinson, James Ryan Routon, Joshua Alexander Williams
Colten Austin Collier, 20, charged Dec. 1 with theft III,

6:13 p.m. - Officer responded to disturbance in 200 block W. Blakeley Ave., Brownsville. According to LCSO, siblings were in argument over online gambling game in which one sibling allegedly had spent the other's money and lost a substantial amount. An agree-
See Public Safety, Page 10
CIRCUIT COURT
possession of alcoholic beverages by person under 21, possession of alcoholic beverages by person under 21 while driving, DUII (liquor) and criminal mischief II.
Jared William Dawson, 25, filed an appeal after being found guilty through Linn County Justice Court on Nov. 10 of speeding 120/55 on May 2 on Hwy. 228.
Patrick Anthony Douglas Lovato, 33, sentenced Dec. 1 to 30 days jail and \$200 in fines after pleading guilty to resisting arrest and failure to report as a sex offender. A second count of failure to report was dismissed.
Charges against **Nina Rachael Willis, 44,** of burglary I, theft III and unlawful possession of meth were dismissed with prejudice following the defendant's death.
John Merritt Wise, 61, placed in diversion program after pleading guilty to DUII (liquor).



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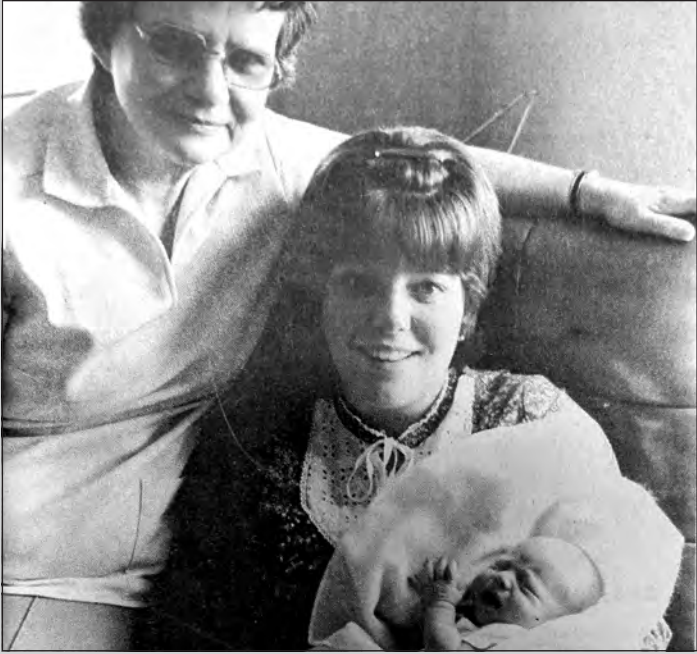
Crossword KEY
Puzzle on page 9

I	N	S	E	T	S	A	V	A	N	T				
I	N	S	U	B	O	R	D	I	N	A	T	I	O	N
M	S	R	A	T	I	O	N	A	L	E	M	E		
A	T	A	N	C	O	G	E	N	A	W				
M	E	M	S	M	E	R	E	S	S	A	T	E		
P	A	C	I	D	S	A	C	D	O	L				
N	A	H	A											
D	A	Y	E											
S	A	T	R	A	P									
E	Y	E	P	A	C									
P	L	E	A	N	A	S	U	A						
T	I	R	D	I	U	D								
E	G	D	E	C	R	E	A	S	E	S	I	L		
T	H	R	O	W	I	N	T	H	E	T	O	W	E	L
T	O	R	S	O	S									

SUDOKU KEY
Puzzle on page 9

9	2	5	8	1	6	4	7	3
7	4	1	9	3	2	5	8	6
6	3	8	7	5	4	9	1	2
2	5	3	4	8	1	7	6	9
8	9	4	3	6	7	1	2	5
1	6	7	5	2	9	8	3	4
5	7	2	1	9	3	6	4	8
3	1	9	6	4	8	2	5	7
4	8	6	2	7	5	3	9	1

FROM OUR FILES



On Dec. 5, 1975, Debbie Watkins celebrated her 25th birthday by giving birth to her daughter, Rebecca Marie. Ironically, not only does the newborn share her mother's birthday, but it's the same as her grandmother (1921) and great-grandmother (1870), as well.

Dec. 14, 1950

The Linn County telephone exchange will install 40 new suburban lines for Sweet Home and Lebanon. Each line carries a maximum of 10 customers, serving 400 telephone users in rural Linn County. Twenty lines are reserved for Sweet Home. Additional Sweet Home long distance lines to Albany and Lebanon will soon be erected.

City Council accepted a petition from Wayne Roberts bearing 41 signatures of residents owning property along 7th Avenue and A Lane who seek paved streets. The city engineer will survey and plat prior to creating an improvement district. The project will include asphalt paving, installation of curbs and drainage pipes.

Dec. 11, 1975

New arrivals to Sweet Home are the Cambodian family of Sen Khe Khlev, who are related to the Saing Santoon family brought here last month. Sen's family arrives from a refugee camp in Arkansas and are sponsored by St. Helen's Catholic Church. Sen worked 15 years as a policeman in his country.

Heavy rainfall caused flooding around a lot of

homes this week, but Robert and Clara Scheidt say their home floods every year. Their home is located just below Foster Dam, and they blame Linn County and the Corps of Engineers for their problem - Linn County for not cleaning out drain ditches, and the Corps for building a road above their home during the dam's construction.

Dec. 13, 2000

City employees began removing the soil from the Main Street median strip in an effort to get rid of the horsetail weed, which has caused complaints of sight obstruction. Drainage rocks will be installed, along with some fresh soil and low-maintenance plants. Also featured will be lamp posts with bars for hanging banners and potted flowers.

The school board determined it was okay for teachers to show portions of R-rated films in class for educational purposes. School policy indicated PG and PG-13 films could be shown with parental consent, so the board agreed to add R-rated films to the policy. The subject came up after a parent complained that two films were used in class: clips from "Saving Private Ryan" and "Rosewood."

Opinion: Resurgence of public participation a healthy sign

By Scott Swanson
Publisher

One of the things that's struck me in returning to The New Era is how the community has rebounded from COVID.

Even in the summer of 2023, when we thought we were "re-tiring," things were not back to "normal."

One gauge of that, at least for me, was that when I would go to a school campus to report, many kids would just ignore me if I greeted them as I walked by in the halls.

Now, I'm certainly not the most magnetic personality in the world, but I often got the sense that these kids were bothered that I was even trying to give them attention.

"Hey, how's it going?"

Stony stare straight ahead.

After all, we didn't know each other, so why would I be talking to them?

That's changed - not universally, but youngsters now seem a lot more relaxed to me than they did even a few years ago and that's good news. Yeah, they're still more interested in TikTok than, say, greeting me, but they seem more open to communicating with a stranger, and it's not just because I subbed some of their classes while I was away from

newspapers.

Participation in sports was on the upswing by then, but it wasn't really what it had been in, say, 2019 - at least the athletic maturity wasn't there yet. We're really starting to see some real differences now, I think. It's nice to see the COVID pandemic growing rapidly smaller in the rear-view mirror.

But it's not just the youngsters.

I bring this up because I've been reminded recently of the importance of community interaction.

What triggered this was Lebanon's travails with its football stadium, which you may have read about earlier this fall. (If you didn't, you can at www.sweethomenews.com/lebanon-high-school-asks-for-help-to-capture-1-million-prize).

In considering what life in Lebanon must be like without a facility to host football games, graduation and other sports and community events, I started reflecting on the importance of community events.

In today's world, I think that's become particularly true. The value of youth sports is multiple but one that's key is how these activities provide a distinct social bond in Sweet

Home, Lebanon, Harrisburg, Scio, Philomath, Junction City and thousands of other small communities across the nation.

And, in Lebanon's case, when you don't have a facility in which to gather to have that community, that fan experience, well, you're up a creek.

I was reminded again of the value of community earlier this fall when Sweet Home celebrated its Homecoming Week with an historic football victory over a foe the Huskies had not defeated in recent memory.

Thankfully, the stands were packed and the Sweet Home faithful were lined up, five deep, around the bend in the track - as one old-timer noted to me, "just like the good old days."

It was good to see. But it was just of many examples.

My wife and I were at the Christmas Tree Auction Saturday night and, although it might not have been a record-setting night in terms of cash flow, it was a good one, organizers said. It was pretty much a sell-out and people clearly were having a good time. I did (which sometimes isn't the case, I have to admit).

But as I drove around earlier in the day, I noticed what seemed to be more than usual foot traffic on the sidewalks earlier that day. People appeared to be out and about, going to the bazaars, flocking to the Evangelical Church men's Christmas Tree sale. OK, that was a bad pun.

Granted, I'm just speaking anecdotally here - I didn't grill the proprietors to see how they did, but the general sense I got was that people aren't huddling in their houses. And that's a good thing.

There was a big crowd Friday night at the Singing Christmas Tree performance, bigger than a lot of ones I remember.

Earlier this year, National Night Out and the reincarnated Sweet Home Rodeo were big successes. So was the Jesus Festival. And the Harvest Festival. Those were all events that brought the community together.

In this holiday season, you can pat yourself on the back if you participated. And if you haven't, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved in something beside your TV screen. The Parade of Lights is one, on Saturday night. See details on it and other holiday events starting on page 2.

In an age in which there's way too much paranoia and hostility in public, it's just nice to see people getting along and having fun together.

Hope your holiday season is full of healthy fun!

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Seasons begin on hardwood

Sweet Home's boys and girls opened their 2025-26 basketball seasons Wednesday, Dec. 3, against Elmira. At left, Damon Lawrence looks for a lane to pass under intense pressure from the Falcons, who escaped with a 44-22 win. Below, Bradyn McClure puts up a shot under pressure. At right, Brooke Elder puts some defensive pressure on Elmira's Brianna Anderson while, below, Aaliyah Brown drives into the key for a shot. Read more about the teams' prospects for the season in the Sports Preview in this issue. See more photos at sweethome-news.com.

Photos by Scott Swanson



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CHRISTMAS SHOPPING GUIDE



HOLIDAY EVENTS

From page 2
in the auditorium.

There is no charge, but
donations are accepted.

Pajama collection

The Sweet Home Cham-
ber of Commerce will be a
collection site to accept do-
nations of pajamas for
youth in Linn County foster
care.

All sizes are needed, from
newborn to XXXL. This is
CASA's annual pajama drive.
For more information, visit
linncasa.org/pajama-drive.

The chamber is open
Tues-Fri, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., lo-
cated at 1575 Main St. Do-
nations accepted until Dec.
12.

Jesus' Birthday Party

Sweet Home Evangelical
Church will host Jesus'
Birthday Party from 10 a.m.
to 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 13,
at the church Activity Cen-
ter, 1347 Long St.

Parking is also available
off Kalmia Street at 14th Av-
enue.

The free event is open to
all children. The celebration
of the first Christmas will
include a Shepherd's Pond,
face painting, cookie deco-
rating, gift and card making,
a prize ball and games.

Gingerbread competition

Got baking skills? Demon-
strate them at the seventh
annual Gingerbread Com-
petition sponsored by Jule-
gard: The Christmas Farm
and the Sweet Home Cham-

ber of Commerce.

Entries will be judged on
Saturday, Dec. 13, in the fol-
lowing categories: Child (5-
8), Youth (9-12), Teen (13-
17), Adult (18-plus), Group/
Family and People's Choice.

Entries can be dropped off
between 1 and 3 p.m. at the
Chamber of Commerce,
1575 Main St. Judging be-
gins at 3:15. Public viewing
and People's Choice voting
will take place from 4 to 7
p.m.

For more information and
to sign up, visit [sweethome-
chamber.com/events/event-
calendar](http://sweethome-chamber.com/events/event-calendar).

Parade of Lights

The annual Parade of
Lights will start at 6 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 13, in down-
town Sweet Home along
Main and Long streets.

This year's theme, "Can-
dyland," celebrates the
sweetness of Sugar City
with gingerbread- and
candy-themed floats.

Those interested in par-
ticipating with their own
float may contact the
Chamber of Commerce by
calling (541) 367-6186,
emailing [Info@SweetHome-
Chamber.com](mailto:Info@SweetHome-Chamber.com), or stopping
in at 1575 Main St. during
office hours, Tuesday-Fri-
day 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Participants are encour-
aged to incorporate ginger-
bread and candy elements
into their floats, such as gin-
gerbread houses, candy
canes, gumdrops, lollipops,
and candy swirls. Bright,

colorful lighting is a must. A
minimum of 1,000 lights per
float is recommended to en-
sure that gingerbread and
candy designs shine in the
nighttime parade. Oversized
props and costumes are en-
couraged.

**Carol Service on Elm
Street**

Elm Street Baptist Church
will host its annual Christ-
mas Carol Service at 5 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 14, at 1150 Elm
St.

The public is invited. This
is a participation event, in-
cluding the congregational
singing of a variety of tradi-
tional Christmas carols,
Scripture readings and a
short message all focused
on the celebration and
meaning of the advent of Je-
sus Christ.

Food will be served after
the service.

Christmas Singalong

A Christmas Singalong
will be held at 6 p.m. Friday,
Dec. 19, at RezRock church,
1621 53rd Ave.

Join in a fun night of
singing favorite carols, and
indulging in cookies, hot
chocolate and some hot
coffee. There is no charge.

'The Innkeepers' on Stage

"The Innkeepers," a drama
based on the story of the
Nativity from a fresh per-
spective, will be staged four
times on Dec. 20-21 at Sweet
Home High School Audito-
rium, 1641 Long St.

The musical play is written
by local resident and author
Satina Tolman and features
music composed by local
artists. Show times are 3
p.m. and 7 p.m. on both Sat-
urday and Sunday, Dec. 20
and 21.

Admission is free but do-
nations are accepted. The
event is sponsored by
SHOCASE.

**Miracle of Christmas
Drive-Thru**

Community Chapel at
Ames Creek will host The
Miracle of Christmas from 6
to 8 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 21, at
42250 Ames Creek Road.

Participants will drive
through the free lighted
event in their vehicles as
volunteers serve up cookies,
hot chocolate, candy canes
and pillowcases for kids 12
and under, as well as Bibles.
The focus will be the story of
the birth of Jesus Christ.

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Festive trees bring Brownsville together

By Sarah Brown
Of The New Era

The city of Brownsville entered the holiday season this weekend with its annual Festival of Trees, a spirited community-wide effort supporting local businesses and organizations.

As many as 26 Nordmann fir trees were decorated in various themes and placed on display inside businesses and organizations downtown where visitors were invited to place a bid for their favorite tree.

It was an opportunity for individuals, business owners and clubs to show their artistic flair, as well as an opportunity for visitors to browse downtown shops they may never have been inside before.

The decorated Christmas trees included themes such as "Christmas at the Cabin," "Candyland," "Baby, It's Cold Outside," "Victorian Punk" and more. Sweet Home's P.E.O. Club also joined in the fun, decorating "There's Snow One Like You," which was on display at the historic Moyer House.

The trees were auctioned off over the course of two days, Friday and Saturday, Dec. 5 and 6. Proceeds this year benefit the Brownsville



Photo by Sarah Brown
A Christmas tree "In Memory of Maureen Rose" sits on display at the Moyer House.

Community Library and Sharing Hands food bank.

Hosted by the Brownsville Women's Study Club, the event kicked off the Brownsville Chamber of

Commerce's Home for the Holidays weekend festivities, which included the city's tree lighting, a holiday lights contest, craft bazaars and, of course, pictures with Santa.



Photo by Sarah Brown
"There's Snow One Like You," decorated by the Sweet Home P.E.O. Club, sits on display inside the Moyer House.

The 3rd Annual Christmas Production of

The Innkeepers

presented by

Sweet Home SHOCASE

An original stage production written and preformed by local talent. "The Innkeepers" has become a beloved Christmas tradition in our community. Come and celebrate the true Reason for the Season with people of all faiths!

Sweet Home High School Auditorium
1641 Long Street, Sweet Home

Saturday, December 20th
3:00 - 4:30 PM & 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Sunday, December 21st
3:00 - 4:30 PM & 7:00 - 8:30 PM

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Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

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4

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

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Kids, cops enjoy some Christmas shopping at BiMart



Wade Savolt and Oregon State Trooper Loren Linhart, above left, discuss Christmas gift options Saturday morning, Dec. 6, during the annual Shop With a Cop activity. The annual event pairs local law enforcement officers with children from the community whose families have faced particular adversity during the past year. Above right, Police Chief Jason Ogden, right, ponies up some gift cards to pay for purchases selected by Cheyenne Bain at BiMart as store Manager Seth Peterson. Children had \$100 to spend on themselves and their family members for Christmas. Law enforcement officers who participated included two Linn County Sheriff's deputies, two state troopers, four officers from Sweet Home Police Department and Sweet Home Community Services Officer Jennifer Gaspard, who is a retired sheriff's deputy. Approximately a dozen local community members, including Sportsman's Holiday Queen Natalie Conn, volunteered at the event. Funding is provided by donations from the community, the largest of which come from ATF Services' Thanksgiving breakfast, at which participants donate to the event as they arrive for food. Also, some proceeds will benefit the Sweet Home High School unified basketball team.

Photos by Scott Swanson



Auction participants browse the goods during the silent auction Saturday evening at the Boys & Girls Club.



Shari Melcher Smith hoists a cake donated as a fundraiser to the auction as Auctioneer Jeremy Powell chants for bids after dinner. Announcer Ivan Wolthuis, right, watches for bidder numbers.

Photos by Scott Swanson

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AUCTION
From page 1

Search and Brittani Albrecht. "The trees were amazing," Reynolds said. "They were beautiful and people were bidding this year. The vibe was good. I felt like people were having a good time."

The event included a silent auction with more than 100 items.

"I thought we had a good silent auction," Reynolds

said. "We had a nice variety of items and that helps satisfy all different kinds of bidders."

Dinner was provided by local caterer Angila Tack, along with wine from Moore Family Vineyards and Nessie Bar Co., operated by McKayla Whatley, "a Sweet Home girl," Reynolds noted.

Cakes for the VIP tables were provided by The Lovin' Oven of Stayton and others donated by Shari Peterson

and Molly Laycock were auctioned off.

Zech Brown won a "heads or tails" fundraiser, getting a cut of half the proceeds from the game that included several dozen people, all of whom paid \$10 to play.

Reynolds said that although there were still outstanding bills to pay, she guessed that the event made about \$50,000 in profit.

Board Member Greg Ego told the crowd that the en-

dowment was a little over \$3 million, interest from which funds scholarships.

The SHAF has awarded just under \$1 million in the 21 years that the auction as taken place prior to this year.

He said that SHAF plans to award \$120,000 in scholarships this year, a record amount.

To see photos of individual trees and the prices they sold for, find this story at sweet-homenews.com.

FOSTER LAKE RV RESORT

Foster Lake RV Resort is located in the foothills of the Cascade mountain range. We offer nightly, weekly & monthly RV reservations.

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Public Notices

TRUSTEE'S NOTICE OF SALE
The Trust Deed to be foreclosed pursuant to Oregon law is referred to as follows (the "Trust Deed"):
Grantors: Scott Heinz
Trustee: First American Title of Oregon
Beneficiary: Oregon Community Credit Union
Date: March 28, 2023
Recording Date: March 28, 2023
Recording Reference: 2023-03213 County of Recording: Linn County The Successor Trustee is Patrick L. Stevens and the mailing address of the Successor Trustee is: Patrick L. Stevens, Successor Trustee, Hutchinson Cox, PO Box 10886, Eugene, OR 97440.
The Trust Deed covers the following described real property in the County of Linn and State of Oregon, ("the Property"):
THE LAND REFERRED TO HEREIN BELOW IS SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF Linn, STATE OF OR, AND IS DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:
Beginning at a 1 inch rod, being the intersection of the North line of the Southwest quarter of the Northwest quarter of Section 1, Township 14 South, Range 1 West, of the Willamette Meridian, in Linn County, Oregon, and the Southeasterly right-of-way line of State Hwy. 228, said point being South 8921 'West 1304 feet from the Northeast corner of the Southwest quarter of the Northwest quarter of said Section 1; thence Southwesterly, along the Southeasterly right-of-way line of said State Hwy. 228, 100 feet to the Northwest corner of Parcel 1, PARTITION PLAT NO. 1995-90, Linn County, Oregon; thence North 89' 20'53 "East (North 89' 21 'East by prior record) 436 feet to a 5/8 inch rod; thence North 34'19'00 "East 107.37 feet (100 feet by prior record) to a 5/8 inch rod; being on the North line of the Southwest quarter of the Northwest quarter of said Section 1; thence South 89 20'20 "West (South 89' 21 'West by prior record) 449.88 feet to the Point of Beginning. Commonly known as: 40972 Highway 228, Sweet Home, OR 97386.
Both the beneficiary and the trustee have elected to sell the said real property to satisfy the obligations secured by said trust deed and a notice of default has been recorded pursuant to Oregon Revised Statutes 86.735(3); the default for which the foreclosure is made is grantor's failure to pay when due the following sums:
The monthly installment payments beginning December 25, 2024 and continuing through the installment due June 12, 2025; plus interest and late charges; real property taxes, plus interest and penalties; and other liens and penalties. Total default as of June 12, 2025 is \$2,763.34.
By reason of said default, the beneficiary has declared all sums owing on the obligation secured by the trust deed immediately due and payable, those sums being the following to wit: \$49,999.64 principal balance, plus unpaid interest through and including June 12, 2025 in the amount of \$3,235.85, together with the sum of \$131.59 which represents late charges, together with interest on the principal sum of \$49,999.64 with interest at the rate of 10.50% per annum from June 13, 2025 until paid, together with insurance paid by the Beneficiary on the property, late charges and penalties, trustee fees, attorney fees, foreclosure costs and any sums advanced by the Beneficiary

Public Notices

pursuant to the trust deed. The date, time and place of the sale is:
Date: Wednesday, February 18, 2026
Time: 11:00 o'clock a.m.
Place: Front Entrance, Linn County Courthouse, 300 SW 4th Ave., Albany, OR 97321
RIGHT TO CURE
The right exists under ORS 86.753 to have this foreclosure proceeding dismissed and the Trust Deed reinstated by doing all of the following at any time that is not later than five days before the date last set for the sale:
(1) Paying to the Beneficiary the entire amount then due (other than such portion as would not then be due, had no default occurred);
(2) Curing any other default complained of herein that is capable of being cured by tendering the performance required under the Trust Deed; and
(3) Paying all costs and expenses actually incurred in enforcing the Obligation and Trust Deed, together with Trustee's and attorney's fees not exceeding the amounts provided by ORS 86.753.
We are a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information we obtain will be used to collect the debt.
Cashier's checks for the foreclosure sale must be payable to Oregon Community Credit Union.
Dated: November 21, 2025
/s/ Patrick L. Stevens
Patrick L. Stevens, Successor Trustee
Hutchinson Cox
Attorneys at Law
PO Box 10886
Eugene, OR 97440
Phone: (541) 686-9160
Fax: (541) 343-8693
(12/3, 12/10, 12/17, 12/24)_____
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE STATE OF OREGON FOR THE COUNTY OF LINN Probate Department CASE NO. 25PB10487 NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS In the Matter of the ESTATE of RONALD MELVIN CHESTER POWELL, Deceased, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on December 3, 2025, Cheryl L. Powell was appointed and deemed qualified to act as the personal representative of the above estate. All persons having claims against the estate are hereby required to present these claims, with proper vouchers, within four months after the date of the first publication of this notice, as stated below to the personal representative's attorney, Susan Ezzy Jordan, Jordan & Williams, LLC., 180 West 6th Ave., Junction City, OR 97448 (541) 342-8110, or they may be barred. All persons whose rights may be affected by the proceeding in this estate may obtain additional information from the records of the attorney for the personal representative. DATED AND PUBLISHED: December 10, 2025 (12/10)_____

Shipping Container



12' (H) x 40' (L) x 8' (W) Shipping container you move paid \$3,000 make offer 971-208-8775. If no answer leave message. (12/10)_____

Estate Sale

Estate Sale! Everything must go! December 12-13, 9 am - 3 pm. Total Household. Garage and yard equipment. Cash Only. 200 Market St. #258, Lebanon. (12/10)_____

Fall Cleanup

Fall Cleanup: Moss treatment, gutter cleaning, yard cleanups, trimming, pruning, blackberry removal. Jesse's Yards 503-871-7869 (10/23 - 2/9)_____

Black Lab Puppies

Black Lab pups for sale vaccinated and dewormed 503-747-9442 or 541-220-3623. (12/4,12/11)_____

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Archery Hut Sale

The Archery Hut Christmas Sale! Camo clothing, buy one get one of equal value or lesser value for free. Come in and check out our other items on sale! Open Wed, Thurs, Fri, 11 am - 5:30 pm and Sat 11am - 5pm. The Archery Hut 190 Crowfoot Rd., Lebanon 541-259-2697 (12/10-12/17)_____

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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.

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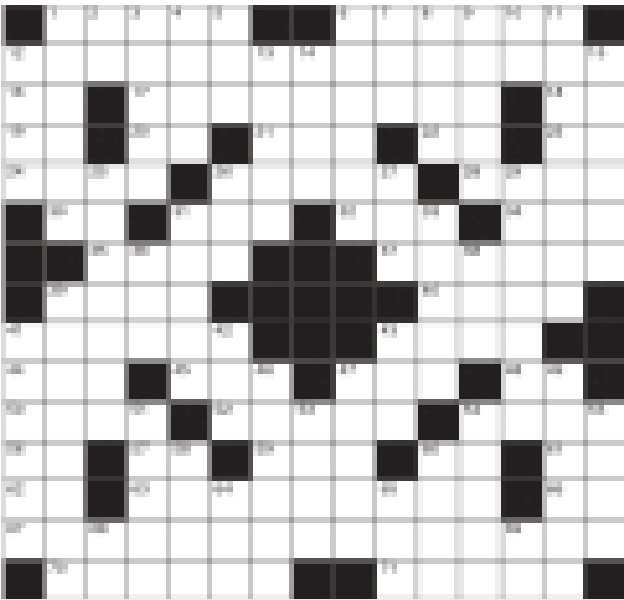
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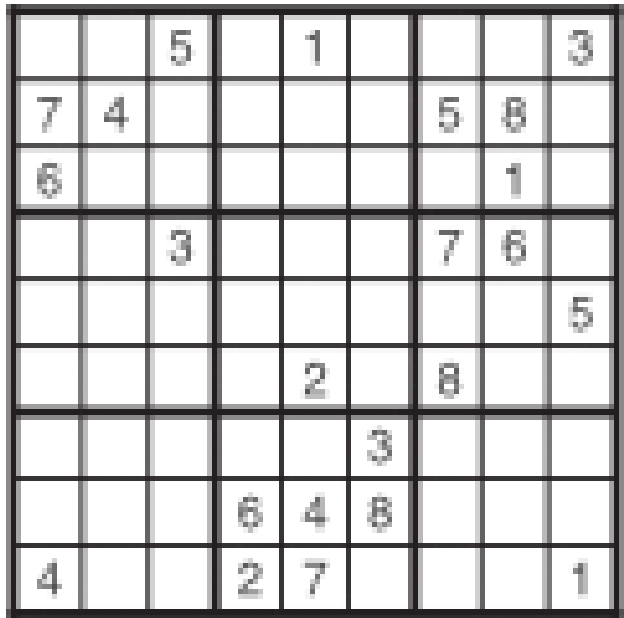
CLUES ACROSS

1. Put within
6. Lamented person
12. Resonance
16. Female title
17. Logical basis for a belief
18. 0-11
19. Indicates position
20. Article
21. Insignificant organizational member
22. ___ male
23. Expression of disappointment
24. Microelectromechanical system
26. Poems
28. Slightly
30. Bad
31. Spanish soldier "El ___"
32. French-like structure
34. Obscure unit of measurement
35. Unknown performer capital
37. Platform
39. Jazz singer (name)
40. Details
41. Holistic practitioners
43. Doveside-grown fruit
44. Needed to see
45. Political action committee
47. Fast place
48. Delicate dinner
50. Urgent request
52. Business press
54. Millennial
56. Atlanta rapper
57. Road delivery
59. Intimate service
60. The Watergate Scandal
61. Fire engine
62. For instance
63. Kitchens
66. Lincoln's state
67. Quiet
70. Misdirection
71. Multitasking movement

CLUES DOWN

1. The sock of the foot
2. Canadian province
3. Korean chapters
4. 1890s ___ Israeli politician
5. Navigator
6. Borneo
7. Conscience-Sustainer
8. Valley
9. Belongs to one god
10. Market
11. Street in salads
12. London
13. Passed through a sieve
14. Entryway
15. Support pillars
16. Aquatic mammal
18. ___ Fictional action
19. Unhappy
29. Noble molecules
34. Thrifty
33. French dynasty
36. Scottish poet
38. Irish militant organization
39. Borneo
41. Musical group of seven
42. Used to fix things
43. Carrot's companion
46. Rough stone landmarks
47. Fourth son of Jacob and Leah
49. Open again
51. Persian
53. Black white animal fat
54. Keyframe pages
55. Backless
58. Mountains and morning are two
60. Cellulose-based
64. Data movement
65. Retirement plan
69. Star Trek character: Lame
69. You and I

SUDOKU



Level: Intermediate

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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

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Sunday Services:
9:45 am Sunday School
11:00 am Worship
5:00 pm Prayer Meeting

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541-367-5883

Flood watch warning through Thursday

The National Weather Service has issued a flood watch for Linn County through Thursday night, Dec. 11.

According to the NWS, heavy rain that arrived Monday signalled the beginning of several days of heavy rainfall expected to impact northwestern Oregon and western Washington through late Thursday night.

The precipitation is the result of a "potent trans-Pacific jet stream" that will move sub-tropical moisture from the Pacific, resulting in heavy rainfall at times and warmer-than-normal temperatures.

Isolated to scattered in-

stances of flash flooding are possible near the coast and into the Cascades through midweek, where a slew of flood watches are in effect.

Residents are cautioned that river and urban flooding caused by excessive rainfall is possible. Landslides possible in areas of steep terrain, and debris flows possible over recently burned areas.

Excessive runoff may result in flooding of rivers, creeks, streams, and other low-lying and flood-prone locations. Landslides and debris flows are possible during this flood event. People, structures, and roads located below steep

slopes, in canyons, and near the mouths of canyons may be at serious risk from rapidly moving landslides.

If you live in an area prone to flooding, be prepared to act should flooding develop. For information on how to be prepared, visit <https://buff.ly/cjldn1c>.

If you are driving and see a flooded road ahead of you, turn around and don't drown. Water depth can be hard to gauge, and what looks shallow could in fact be much deeper and strand you and your vehicle, or even get swept away.

Sweet Home man dies in motorcycle crash in Lebanon

A Sweet Home motorcyclist died Nov. 29 in a crash on Bellinger Scale Road, Linn County Sheriff Michelle Duncan reported.

In a statement issued Dec. 1, Duncan said the Linn County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center received a 911 call at approximately 6:37 p.m. reporting a motorcycle crash in the area of the 32200 block of Bellinger Scale, just north of Mallard Creek Golf

Course.

The caller reported a motorcycle had crashed into their yard near their residence.

Deputies found that a 2007 Yamaha motorcycle, operated by Lani Lill, 53, of Sweet Home, had left the roadway while negotiating a corner and continued 190 feet into a ditch before hitting a small tree in the caller's yard. Lill had fallen off the motorcycle

during the crash and was found in the bushes, according to LCSO. Medics from the Lebanon Fire District arrived but Lill was pronounced dead at the scene.

Alcohol and speed appeared to be factors in the crash, LCSO determined.

The Linn County Sheriff's Office was assisted on scene by the Lebanon Fire District and the Linn County Medical Examiner's Office.

PUBLIC SAFETY

From page 3

ment was reached.

9:18 p.m. - Caller from A&W, 1010 Main St., reported male asking for free items, letting his dog run around, acting suspiciously. Officer responded, contacted male, who moved along.

9:36 p.m. - Male, 17, arrested at SHPD, 1950 Main St., on six counts of sexual assault, four counts of sexual penetration, two counts of rape, one count of sodomy I and one count of display child-sexual conduct. According to SHPD, the male allegedly had been involved in "reported incidents involving a younger family member. The investigation is ongoing, and all appropriate child protection procedures and partner-agency protocols were followed." Lodged at Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility.

11:34 p.m. - Anson Philip Grazer, 49, Arrested on LMC warrant for probation violation in resisting arrest case. Heather Mae Kelly, 46, arrested on LMC warrant for FTA in theft case, AMC warrant for FTA in trespass case, and SHMC warrants for FTA in six theft cases, two trespassing cases and one warrant in harassment case. 1800 block Main St. Both cited and released.

Dec. 5

12:23 a.m. - Caller reported vehicle blocking car charging station in 1200 block 10th Ave. for eight hours. Officer responded, determined vehicle was unoccupied and was unable to locate owner. Will attempt to contact owner.

1:07 a.m. - Caller reported

people in house and on property in 1100 block 55th Ave. that don't belong there. Officer contacted caller, who was advised on options.

5:07 a.m. - Caller reported suspicions about male who had large package with shipping label strapped to his bike in area of Long St./10th Ave. Officer was unable to locate.

11:09 a.m. - Caller reported package stolen from front porch in 2200 block Long St. Package contained barbecue valued at \$150. Video evidence provided.

11:15 a.m. - Rhonda Rae Sparks, 40, cited on LMC warrant for FTA in two criminal citation cases. 3100 block Main St.

12:56 p.m. - Caller reported his EBT used at Midway Grocery, 3239 Main St., after his wallet was stolen in Lebanon, which he had reported to Lebanon police. Report taken for fraudulent use of credit card.

1:23 p.m. - Caller reported fraudulent use of credit card at Speedy Mart, 1501 Main St. Report taken.

1:37 p.m. - Deputy contacted hunter walking down road in 45000 block Quartzville Rd. Hunter's vehicle had been locked in on MS300 and 400 lines. Deputy helped him get his vehicle out and escorted him off property, with trespass warning.

4:38 p.m. - Thomas Joseph Lee Burke, 46, arrested by Cottage Grove police on SHMC warrant for FTA in telephonic harassment case. Cited to appear Jan. 14.

7:11 p.m. - Caller reported fireworks in area of Dew/Liberty roads. Deputy sat in area

but was unable to locate fire-works activity.

Dec. 4

2:37 a.m. - Micah Lee Stewart, 25, arrested for possession of controlled substance - meth, 5300 block Main St. Also cited for failure to signal 100 feet before turn. Cited and released.

2:52 a.m. - Steven Anthony Young, 31, arrested by Albany police on SHMC warrant for FTA in disorderly conduct case. Cited to appear Jan. 14.

8:00 a.m. - Caller reported concerns about trucks violating "No Thru Truck" signs in area of Falk Rd./Seefeld Dr.

10:04 a.m. - Caller reported fraud, 25200 block Rice Rd. Female victim lost approximately \$50,000 to scammers. Investigation ongoing. Report taken.

11:10 a.m. - Richard Leland Jr., 58, of Sweet Home, arrested on felony warrant, 39600 block Hwy. 228. Report taken.

11:43 a.m. - Alicia Nicole Shaddon, 27, arrested by LCSO on SHMC warrants in criminal driving, criminal mischief cases. Cited to appear Jan. 28.

12:36 p.m. - Caller reported criminal mischief involving cut livestock fences in 29900 block Manning Rd., Brownsville. Report taken.

12:51 p.m. - Caller reported male approached him an hour earlier at Thriftway, 621 Main St., and told caller he was from Dubai and needed to sell some jewelry to help him get home to Los Angeles. Caller gave male \$200 for jewelry, which turned out to be fake. Officer responded, information noted.

2:37 p.m. - Caller reported neighbors have multiple dogs in 1000 block 13th Ave. and "they scream and cry" all day

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PUBLIC SAFETY

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and owners just scream at them to stop. Ongoing issue. Code enforcement advised.

4:13 p.m. - Caller reported male neighbor threatened caller's 14-year-old daughter with Taser, stated that he would start tasing her every day that caller's dog is not muzzled, 1200 block 23rd Ave. Officer responded, determined that actions were not criminal but will contact neighbor and counsel him for his actions.

8:09 p.m. - Young driver counseled on speeding through neighborhood, 400 block Kay Ave., Brownsville.

11:09 p.m. - Kaitlin Chandra Lagene Lay, 29, arrested on SHMC warrant for FTA in endangering welfare of minor case, LMC warrant for FTA in criminal citation and LCSO warrant for FTC in theft case, 1500 block Main St. Lodged at Linn County Jail.

11:28 p.m. - Dallas Andrew Samson, 43, arrested for theft II after caller reported that son's stolen Airpods were ping-ing in area. 1600 block Long St. Cited and released.

Dec. 3

12:24 a.m. - Shallen Renae Sandoval, 27, arrested on LMC warrant for probation violation in DUII case. Lloyd David Leininger, 32, cited for no valid operator's license, failure to register vehicle, 1300 block Main St. Both cited and re-leased.

7:24 a.m. - Theft reported on

CTC property in 46400 block Quartzville Rd. According to LCSO, this was a theft from an active logging site. A pad-lock was cut to steal a Stihl chainsaw and Stihl cutoff saw. Damage and loss esti-mated at \$2,993.99.

9:29 a.m. - Illegal camping reported in 40300 block Hwy. 228. Tent on private prop-erty.

10:59 a.m. - Caller reported two abandoned vehicles in area of 46th Ave./Airport Lane. Code enforcement ad-vised.

11:44 a.m. - Juvenile ar-ested for unlawful use of weapon, menacing and ha-rassment in 28700 block Lib-erty Rd. According to LCSO, a physical altercation occurred between the juvenile and a parent; during the alterca-tion the juvenile pulled out a knife, which was taken away without any injuries. The ju-venile was taken to juvenile detention. Report taken.

12:23 p.m. - Caller reported individuals living in multiple different sheds and outbuild-ings in 4200 block Main St. Officer responded, observed conditions reported by caller. Multiple violations to be handled separately.

2:34 p.m. - Matthew Charles Jennings arrested for driving while suspended, af-ter allegedly failing to stop for school bus, 4100 block Main St.

See more and updated Public Safety Reports at sweethomenews.com

Redistricting Final Recommendation

Sweet Home's team sports took a step forward toward competing in the Oregon School Activities Association 3A division starting next fall, based on the final recom-mendation issued by the OSAA's Classification and Districting Committee on Dec. 1.

The committee's final rec-ommendation still must be acted on by the OSAA Execu-tive Board, which will meet Dec. 15. The board will re-ceive public testimony in writing or in person prior to making a final determination on the recommendation.

The redistricting plan will be in effect for 2026-30, al-though schools can petition to move up or down, based on their needs.

According to OSAA, the re-districting committee has re-ceived more than 210 pieces of correspondence since the process began in August.

Here are the committee's recommendations:

Number of Classifications: The committee is recom-mending a six-classification model.

Petitions to Play Down: The committee approved a recommendation for Sweet Home to move from 4A to 3A, for Rogue River to move from 3A to 2A, for Chemawa to move from 2A to 1A and for Aloha to move from 6A to 5A.

Petitions to Play Up: The committee has approved a recommendation for the fol-lowing schools to play up (stay up): Beaverton, Benson, Central Catholic, Clackamas, Jefferson (Portland), Jesuit, Lake Oswego, Lakeridge, McDaniel, Newberg, Roosevelt and St. Mary's Academy (Portland) all want to con-tinue to compete at the 6A level.

La Salle Prep and Parkrose have requested to continue to compete at the 5A level.

Cascade Christian (Med-ford) has requested to move up from 3A to compete at the 4A level.

Trinity Lutheran (Bend) has requested to move up from 2A to compete at the 3A level.

In the 4A division, the committee changed the maximum student body number cutoff from 580 to 560 to better address the ra-tio of largest to smallest schools in the classification.

In the 5A division, it ad-justed the low-end cutoff to 561 for the same reason. It also added Cascade to the Mid-Willamette Conference due to that cutoff number and added Henley to the Southern Cascade Confer-ence with Ashland, Crater and Eagle Point, dissolving the proposed Southwest Hy-brid, which would have put Crater, Eagle Point, Grants

Pass, North Medford, Rose-burg and South Medford to-gether, while putting Ash-land in the 4A Skyline Conference.

Both Cascade (577 stu-dents) and Henley (564) have been dominant in 4A compe-tition in nearly every sport,

If the Executive Board ap-proves the committee rec-ommendation after hearing final public testimony on the issue, Sweet Home, which is listed by the OSAA as having 401 students, would be moved to the Mountain Val-ley Conference, which in-cludes Creswell (243), La Pine (245), Pleasant Hill (216), Sis-ters (280) and Trinity Lutheran (104).

The final recommendation moves Central, with 550 stu-dents, and Taft, with 291, into the Oregon West Con-ference along with Newport (420), Philomath (363), and Stayton (488) as Sweet Home (401) and Cascade exit.

Trinity Lutheran finished third in the 2A volleyball state playoffs, lost to East Linn Christian in the conso-lation semifinals of last year's boys basketball state play-offs, lost in the first round of last year's girls playoffs, and qualified its boys and girls golf teams for the small-schools state tournaments.

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Swimmers launch season with wins
Grayson Savri, left, and Emma Whitton, above, help the Husky boys and girls toward wins in their season-opening meet Friday, Dec. 5. See much more about the Sweet Home swim teams and their outlook for the season in the Sports Preview in this issue. See more photos from the meet at sweethomenews.com.

Photos by Satina Tolman

East Linn
ROOFING

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Warning: Plan ahead for holiday cheer

December is Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month and the Linn County Sheriff's Office is warning residents to be cautious.

With the holidays come family gatherings, office parties, meeting up with old friends in town, and other events that may lead to a little... over-consumption.

It's a topic the department preaches all year long, "because of how easy it is to not drink and drive (or drive high)."

The best way to ensure you and those around you have a

safe night, is to plan before you go out. Plan to call an Uber or taxi when the night wraps up. Plan to have a designated driver to take you home. Plan to crash at your friend's house. It's a much better alternative than crashing into something (or someone) while driving under the influence (drunk or drugged).

Notice someone trying to take off and you know they have had too much to drink or are in some capacity, under the influence of drugs? Intervene, get their keys away if necessary, and find them a

safe way to get home. They might not like it in the moment, but you could be saving a life and once sobered up, they will appreciate it.

In Oregon, as is true throughout the country, holidays and weekends are when most drunk driving crashes occur, often late at night.

Law enforcement around the country (and Linn County) are on the lookout for impaired driving. If you do decide to drive drunk or drugged, law enforcement officers may be the ones driving you at the end of the night.

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CRASH
From page 1

crash, the Multi-Agency Investigation Team was called to assist with the investigation, the Sheriff said.

Mack Knebel, a staff member at The New Era, was one of the first to arrive at the scene.

"I heard the crash," said Knebel, who lives in the area. "I got in the car and drove to the intersection. It was a mess. Walking up to the accident, I almost tripped over a car battery."

He and another neighbor saw that the red Mazda was on top of the Dodge.

"He hit the dually hard enough to push it at least 30 feet," Knebel said. "Jeff was traveling in the right lane on McDowell. It hit him hard."

Knebel said a spatula from Gainer's truck was found in a neighbor's yard.

Gainer's wife, Dr. Tessa Reff, who practices in Sweet Home, arrived and assisted as emergency responders worked to free the girl, who was trapped in the pickup.

Reff said that her daughter underwent emergency



Photo by Mack Knebel

A Mazda pickup rests on top of an overturned Dodge Ram 1-ton pickup near the intersection of McCowell Creek Drive and Berlin Road.

surgery in Corvallis for a brain injury, then was transported to Randall's Children's Hospital in Portland. On Monday she was alert and was able to have her breathing tube removed, Reff said.

"She has movement in her extremities, and is alert and talking, knows where she goes to school, knows her dog's name," she said.

"We're very relieved. She still has a long way to go before she comes home."

Deputies were assisted at the scene by emergency responders from the Sweet Home Fire and the Lebanon Fire District.

Anyone with information about the crash is asked to contact the Linn County Sheriff's Office at (541) 967-3950.