

The New Era

SWEET HOME • LEBANON • AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

SERVING EAST LINN COUNTY SINCE 1929

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2026

VOL. 96, NO. 10 | \$2.00

Fire destroys house on Rowell Hill

An early morning fire destroyed a home on Rowell Hill Sunday, March 8, Sweet Home Fire and Ambulance District reported.

At 7:20 a.m. Sunday, Sweet Home firefighters were dispatched to the fire, at 27118 Rowell Hill Road, arriving to find it fully engulfed, SHFAD said in a statement.

The single occupant of the home, who escaped the fire, reported that it started when she struck a match to light her woodstove and the head of the matchstick broke off, falling onto her couch, SHFAD reported.

County records list the property owner as Marilee Williams.

The fire quickly spread throughout the double-wide manufactured home, and was reported to 911 by neighbors.

The SHFAD incident commander requested a second alarm upon leaving the station when a large header of smoke could be seen.

See Rowell Hill, Page 11



Fire rages in a manufactured home on Rowell Hill early Sunday morning as firefighters arrive to battle the flames, which destroyed the dwelling. — Photo by Scott Swanson

HOMETOWN
NEWSPAPER OF
DARRELL AND
CONNIE MAY

This Week's Top Stories



Eagles Score Trophy at State

East Linn Christian's boys ended their season with a sixth-place finish in the 2A state basketball championships.



Fun Forest Hike

Local forester recounts trip through Fun Forest with County Small Woodlands Association.

Page 20



Dale Hall, left, talks about Paul Aziz's contributions to the community that earned Aziz the Frankie Gray award during Lebanon Chamber of Commerce's Distinguished Service Awards Banquet Friday, March 6. — Photo by Scott Swanson

Steinhebel, Adamson top honorees at Lebanon DSA

By Sarah Brown
Of The New Era

Jason Adamson and Michelle Steinhebel were named Man and Woman of the Year at the Lebanon Chamber of Commerce's Distinguished Service Awards banquet on Friday, March 6.

Volunteer and dance coach Megan Lofton was named Junior First Citizen, while local volunteer Dale Hall was named Senior First Citizen.

Recipient of the Frankie

Gray "Answering the Call" award was Paul Aziz.

Chris Breshears, manager at Best Western Premier Boulder Falls Inn, was named Best Western Premier Business Leader of the Year. The Small Business of the Year was T-Mobile of Lebanon, and Knife River Training Center was named Large Business of the Year.

The Nonprofit of the Year was awarded to The River Center, which received a \$500 check from Columbia Bank.

The Lebanon Chamber of Commerce hosts the Distinguished Service Award banquet every year to recognize individuals and organizations that make Lebanon and the community a better place through their service, leadership and support.

In addition to awards presented by the chamber, other organizations took the opportunity to present their own recognitions. This year, Lebanon New Business Gen-

erations, Lebanon Rotary, Boys and Girls Club of the Greater Santiam, Lebanon Ambassadors, Lebanon Community School District, and a Lebanon resident presented awards.

The awards banquet, held at the Boulder Falls Event Center, provided a comfortably-formal backdrop topped with a sense of humor that the chamber's emcees usually bring. This year's emcee was

See DSA, Page 14



Obituaries

Virginia McFarlan

Aug. 27, 1930 - March 1, 2026

Virginia R. McFarlan, 95, a 69-year resident of Sweet Home, passed away peacefully on March 1, 2026, in Salem.

She was born Aug. 27, 1930, in Fargo, N.D., to Leone (Sands) and Tracy W. Johnson.

Her family moved to Corvallis in 1938. Virginia had warm memories of her childhood with her beloved sister, Barbara. She graduated from Oregon State University in 1952 with a degree in home economics.

In 1953 she married Earl McFarlan, then moved to Sweet Home where Earl practiced law. With the couple's two daughters, Candice and Alice, they enjoyed camping, boating, water skiing and snow skiing with family friends. She was very involved in Girl Scouts in the 1960s.

Virginia excelled as a

seamstress, sewing her own costumes for the "Chips and Splinters" shows in 1967-68. She planned many fashion shows in those years and was known for her creativity and decorating talent.

She was an adult educator, teaching classes for Linn-Benton Community College in microwave and gourmet cooking, and entertaining. Due to her community involvement, she was honored as "Woman of the Year" in 1967.

Virginia was a charter member of P.E.O. Chapter DD and played bridge with the "Thursday Bridge Girls" for 60 years. She also was an active member of St. Francis Episcopal Church. Faith, family and friends were very important to Virginia, and she loved organizing and planning celebrations.

In her later life, Virginia traveled throughout the U.S., often through the Elderhostel program. Highlights were studying Native American cultures in the Southwest and going to Churchill, Manitoba, Canada to see polar

bears.

She happily moved to a "cottage" at Wiley Creek Community in 2006 and later moved into assisted living there. In 2022 she moved to Memory Care at Boone Ridge Senior Living Community in Salem.

Virginia is survived by her daughters, Candice (Robert) Snyder of Sweet Home, and Alice (Mike) McKinney of Salem; grandchildren Nathan (Luisa) Snyder, Joseph (Kathryn) McKinney and Megan McKinney, all of Salem and Caitlyn Snyder of Portland; and three great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Earl McFarlan; infant daughter Mary Ann; and sister Barbara Blevens.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m., Friday, March 13, at Sweet Home Funeral Chapel.

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to the charity of your choice in her name. Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling the arrangements.



Alfred 'Glen' Sawyer

March 29, 1941 - March 1, 2026

You know, when you're about to throw away a fishing pole, tent, or cooler...stop. This is when Glen Sawyer stepped in. He had a purpose or repurpose for everything. He lived a long life and it was very fulfilling; no moment was un-spent trying to get the most out of everything in the best way possible.

Well, let's just talk about Glen (Alfred) Sawyer for a second....

Alfred "Glen" Sawyer, 84, of Sweet Home, passed away March 1, 2026.

He was born in Seagraves, Texas on March 29, 1941, to Ava (Davis) and Alfred Sawyer. His mother taught him early on to be reliable and trustworthy. He took those lessons to heart.

The family moved to Sweet Home in the early 1950s and he became an early entrepreneur, founding the seeds for newer grocery stores in the area.

Of course, he also enjoyed his years attending Sweet Home schools. He graduated in 1959 and with his love of cars carried on full speed. He also loved the majestic outdoors and all the foothills of the Cascades could offer him, exploring and remembering it all.

As a young man he made himself very valuable at Dean's Central Supermarket, where he made an indelible mark

as a dedicated and valued employee.

In 1962 he got drafted and served in the armed forces with the same dedication and conviction that he grew up with and returned home to manage "Central Super."

Upon returning from service, he met Marilyn Trigg in a happenstance - however, that resulted in 59 years of wedded communion together. A few years later he started his own grocery business (Speedee Mart and Glen's Market) with dedication, determination, and solidarity.

His love of family was only, if barely, rivaled by his love of the outdoors: trips throughout the Pacific Northwest to hunt, fish, and explore all the majestic land had to offer.

He was a loving father, spouse and good solid friend to all around him. He lived a very happy life with a surviving wife, Marilyn, two sons, Steen and Cameron (Sarah), and grandkids Cade, Huxley and Hensley.

Funeral services were held March 7 at Sweet Home Funeral Chapel, with military honors following at Gilliland Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to: Sweet Home Veterans of Foreign Wars, P.O. Box 295, Sweet Home, OR 97386, or to Samaritan Evergreen Hospice, 4600 Evergreen Place SE, Albany, OR 97322.

Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling the arrangements.



Thomas West

May 18, 1950 - Feb. 19, 2026

Thomas Lee West, 75, of Wellton, Ariz., passed away Feb. 19, 2026, after a long, but valiant, battle with cancer.

He is survived by his loving wife of 34 years, Joanne (Butler) West; and his children, Jenny (Marvin) Combs and Justin West, and step-daughters Jodi WIncheski, Krysti (Michael) Coursey, and Karli (Triny) Rivera.

Tom was born on May 18, 1950 to Wilson (Bill)

and Audrey (Mullin) West in Olympia, Wash. He had one sister, Sharon whom the family lost in 1977.

A funeral service will be held at the Baptist church in Wellton on March 12 at 1 p.m. There will be a celebration of life on July 25 at the Grange Hall in Triangle Lake at 11 a.m. A lunch will follow.

Tom was so proud to be the grandfather to 12 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. The kids and grandchildren have many fond memories of four-wheeling at the Oregon coast and riding in the deserts of Arizona.

Tom has had some form

of motorcycle since he was 6 years old. He had a love for anything with a motor.

Tom worked in the logging industry on the Oregon coast and in Sweet Home for all of his working career.

He will be remembered for his infectious humor; his willingness to always be available to help others and his humble generosity.

He loved to go to Algodones, Mexico, and made many special friends there. He made it a priority to learn to communicate with them.

Tom was a man with many abilities. He will be missed by all of us.



Thelma Anderson

June 9, 2025 - Sept. 4, 2025

Thelma Christine Anderson, 100, passed away peacefully on Sept. 4, 2025, in Loudon, Tenn.

Born June 9, 1925, in Brattleboro, Vt., Thelma was raised there before moving to Anaheim, Calif., in 1960.

Known affectionately as "Irish," she was cherished for her joyful spirit and always maintaining a positive outlook on life. Irish loved decorating cakes and sewing.

Irish demonstrated a friendly and diligent work ethic throughout her life. She worked in customer

service for the City of Anaheim from 1963 to 1982, earning numerous awards for her dedication.

She later relocated with her husband to Sweet Home, where they owned and operated the Sweet Home Laundromat. They also added an auto mechanic shop behind the laundromat.

For approximately 20 years, from 1977 until 1995, under the Andersons' ownership, the laundromat was a staple of the Sweet Home business district.

Later, Irish also worked in patient registration at Lebanon Hospital, before they returned to live in California in 1996.

Most recently, Irish moved to Loudon, Tenn., to be near her daughter

Kathleen Johnson and son-in-law Tom Johnson. There, she embraced life with enthusiasm - dancing on Friday nights, attending concerts, and joining her daughter's wine and game groups. She loved family time, travel, dance, and music.

The community in Tennessee warmly embraced her, providing a cherished new circle of friends, family, and fun.

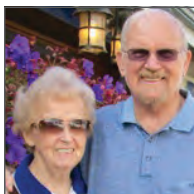
Twice widowed, Thelma's first husband, Robert W. Sumner, whom she was married to for 24 years, was a World War II veteran. Her late husband, Robert L. Anderson (born and raised in Sweet Home), also served in the military; they were married for 38 years.

Thelma supported the

Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Diabetes Association.

Thelma embraced life and had three children: Wesley Sumner, who died in 2022, and two surviving daughters, Kathleen Johnson and Christine Nolan; two stepsons, Robert Anderson Jr. and Kevin aka Guy Anderson; six grandchildren, Cherelle Champfleure, Shealin Johnson-Conway, Timothy Johnson, Tina McCosker, Teri Mille, and Trevor Sumner; and four great grandchildren.

Her legacy of love, positivity, and joy will be deeply missed by all who knew her. A celebration of life was held Nov. 15, 2025, at the church in Hinsdale, N.H., where her grandson is pastor.



Elizabeth Bayless

Oct. 14, 1961 - March 1, 2026

Elizabeth S. Bayless, 64, passed away March 1, 2026.

She was born Oct. 14, 1961, to Barbara (Binkley) and Robert Pullins Sr. in Concord, Calif.

Elizabeth was the kind of person who made people feel welcome the moment they met her. She touched the lives of many. She believed that family extended beyond blood, and anyone who spent time with her quickly felt like they belonged.

She loved all animals, especially giraffes, and enjoyed the simple joys of life - playing music, laughter



OBITUARIES

From page 2

filling the room, and spending time surrounded by family. Making sure the people she loved were cared for meant everything to her.

She is survived by her husband, Jason Bayless; sons Keith Alvarez, Kevin Vasquez, and Christopher Vasquez; daughters Allison Himebaugh and Alyssa Himebaugh; and her nine beloved grandchildren

To her husband Jason, Elizabeth was not only a wife but his best friend and the love of his life.

A celebration of life will be announced at a later date.

Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling the arrangements.

Death Notices

Sybl Lee Acree, 90, of Lebanon, died Feb. 17, 2026.

Huston-Jost Funeral

Home is handling the arrangements.

Bernie Bailey, 58, of Lebanon, died Feb. 28, 2026.

Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Michael Anthony Bly, 53, of Sweet Home, passed away March 3, 2026.

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

Patricia Ann Claussen, 89, of Lebanon, died Jan. 31, 2026.

Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Jason Michael Comer, 48, of Lebanon, died Feb. 24, 2026.

Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling arrangements.

Richard Otis Kirk, 73, of Sweet Home, passed away March 9, 2026.

Sweet Home Funeral

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

Anita Catherine Lewis, 87, of Sweet Home, passed away March 1, 2026.

Viewing will be at 10 a.m. Saturday, March 21, at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1155 22nd Ave., Sweet Home. Funeral will follow at 11 a.m. Private burial will be at Lewis Cemetery.

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

Nancy L. Mehr, 80, of Lebanon, died Feb. 18, 2026.

Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Danny K. Noble, 76, of Lebanon, died Feb. 16, 2026.

Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Dale Richard Parker, 76,

of Lebanon, died Feb. 21, 2026.

Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Calvin Edward Peterson, 34, of Albany, passed away March 2, 2026.

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

Eilene D. Ward, 91, of Lebanon, died Feb. 13, 2026.

Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Clyde Dwight Wilson, 89, of Lebanon, died Feb. 20, 2026.

Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Kurt Douglas Wisherd, 75, of Lebanon, died Jan. 24, 2026.

AAsum-Dufour Funeral Home - Albany is handling the arrangements.



TEMPERATURES

| DATE | HIGH | LOW | RAIN |
|------|------|-----|------|
| 3/3 | 60 | 42 | 0.00 |
| 3/4 | 51 | 44 | 0.08 |
| 3/5 | 51 | 40 | 0.34 |
| 3/6 | 55 | 41 | 0.01 |
| 3/7 | 69 | 41 | 0.00 |
| 3/8 | 44 | 40 | 0.00 |
| 3/9 | 44 | 37 | 0.00 |

RAIN IN INCHES

Year to date: 8.20
3/12/25: 9.50

FORECAST

| DATE | WEATHER | HIGH/LOW |
|------|---------|----------|
| 3/12 | Rain | 56/49 |
| 3/13 | Rain | 57/45 |
| 3/14 | Showers | 55/42 |
| 3/15 | Cloudy | 61/45 |
| 3/16 | Cloudy | 74/45 |
| 3/17 | Cloudy | 75/48 |
| 3/18 | Showers | 70/50 |

LAKE LEVELS

Foster 615.5
Green Peter 928.3

Public Safety

- Information herein is sourced from law enforcement and fire agencies. Details, which may not always be available in time for our weekly publication, are updated on our website as information becomes available. - Addresses noted generally denote the location of the incident or arrest, occasionally indicating the origin of the call. - 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. A Roman numeral indicates the degree of a charge: theft I (first-degree theft). - Following are abbreviations that may appear in our log reports:

- AMC (Albany Municipal Court)
- DU (Driving uninsured/without insurance)
- DUII (Driving while intoxicated)
- DWS (driving while suspended)
- FTA (failure to appear)
- FTC (failure to comply)
- FTOTCD (Failure to obey traffic control device)
- LCJ (Linn County Jail)
- LCSO (Linn County Sheriff's Office)
- LCCC (Linn County Circuit Court)
- LCJC (Linn County Justice Court)
- LMC (Lebanon Municipal Court)
- MIP (Minor in possession)
- PV (Probation Violation)
- SHMC (Sweet Home Municipal Court)
- SHPD (Sweet Home Police Department)
- SLCH (Samaritan Lebanon Community)

MARCH 8

LCSO/OSP LEBANON

- 10:13 a.m. - Darrell Hodson, 63, of Lebanon, cited for DWS, 400 block E. Grant.
- 2:52 p.m. - Gabriel Eckhold, 45, of Lebanon, arrested for

harassment, contempt of court, 41300 block Baptist Church. Report taken.
4:33 p.m. - Mason Reed, 24, of Albany, arrested for trespass II, disorderly conduct II, 36600 block Hwy. 34. Report taken.
10:57 p.m. - Nichole Clark-Romine, 39, of Lebanon, arrested for assault IV-domestic, reckless endangering, following report of disturbance in 31100 block S. 5th. Report taken.

LCSO/OSP SWEET HOME S. COUNTY

- 10:27 a.m. - Caller reported losing firearm in 25700 block Timber, Brownsville. Report taken.
- 1:26 p.m. - Timothy Roebuck, 43, of Sweet Home, cited for DWS, DU. Arrested for possession of meth, felon in possession of restricted weapon. 53rd/Wiley Creek. Report taken.

SWEET HOME POLICE

- 8:14 a.m. - Tammy Reta arrested on AMC warrant for FTA in DWS case, McDonald's, 2000 block Main.
- 11:47 a.m. - Trevor Alden Groff, 52, arrested for criminal trespass II after caller reported him at FAC, in area of 24th/railroad tracks, from which he had previously been trespassed. Cited and released.
- 1:01 pm. - SHPD responded to report of male yelling at deputy in 3100 block Main. Police contacted male, who apologized, stating he was having hallucinations.
- 1:34 p.m. - Caller reported their packages had been delivered to the wrong address in 300 block Holley, and residents at that address were not returning them.

See Public Safety, Page 5

CORRECTIONS

Our report in the March 4 edition of a burglary that occurred on Feb. 26 in th 1800 block of 9th St., Lebanon, contained errors. Here's the correct information: According to LCSO, a shop on the property was broken into. The victim reported the following bicycles stolen: 1999 Schwinn, metallic blue, valued at \$5,000; 2018 Marin, bright purple, \$2,700; 2014 Trek, silver, \$1,700; 2012 Giant, black with blue accents, \$4,000; and a 1986 Yamaha, Big Wheel 80, white tank, brown seats. \$1,500.

Clarification: The new master of science in nursing program in Lebanon, announced by Western University of Health Sciences and reported in our March 4 edition, is a separate program from the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific-Northwest, which is the medical school housed in the campus across from Samaritan Lebanon Community Hospi-

tal. The new MSN-E program is being offered by WesternU Oregon, and will have its own curriculum and faculty, and is not part of the COMP-NW program. It will be based in Lebanon, though not necessarily at the campus across from SLCH. Although, colloquially, many local residents think of the entire Western program under the name COMP-NW, that is not correct and our story wasn't clear in distinguishing the different players.

Our report on the Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce's awards banquet should have identified the Organization of the Year as the Road Maggot Motorcycle Club (no "s" on Maggot).

A paragraph in the report on Sweet Home's boys wrestling team's state title, specifically talking about junior Jesse Landtroop's third straight individual championship, somehow got turned around in the



Chamber and city award winners honored at the Feb. 28 Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet include, from left, Owen, Josh, Luci, Allison and Patty Hankins of A&W; Cindi Robeck, Robert Snyder, Mike Hall, McKenzie Reynolds and Cindy Rice.

Note: The above photo was supposed to be included in our report of the Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet, but due to a layout mixup, did not get in.

editing process. Here is what it should have said:
"Jesse just dominates, he's one of the most dominant wrestlers in the state of Oregon, (Head Coach Steve) Thorpe stated after throwing Landtroop onto the mat for celebratory fun in front of the crowd of more than 1,000, which erupted in laughter after the fun surprise. "He studies, trains, and doesn't let the pressure get to him."

CROSSWORD KEY

Puzzle on page 15

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P | A | C | A | S | A | L | B | A | B | O | C | K | | |
| O | M | A | H | A | P | E | A | C | E | A | B | L | E | |
| M | I | S | A | P | P | R | E | H | E | N | S | I | O | N |
| P | A | H | E | O | S | T | E | S | T | I | | | | |
| | | P | A | N | H | A | M | E | | | | | | |
| | S | O | D | S | | S | T | A | T | E | S | | | |
| S | P | A | N | | P | I | E | S | | P | A | R | | |
| S | A | N | E | M | A | M | A | S | | D | E | C | O | |
| B | L | T | B | E | N | T | | A | E | O | N | | | |
| P | A | R | E | N | T | | S | A | N | S | | | | |
| | | O | S | H | A | P | A | C | | | | | | |
| B | I | O | T | A | | A | A | R | | S | P | T | | |
| C | O | N | F | I | D | E | N | T | I | A | L | I | T | I |
| I | N | T | E | R | E | S | T | S | | S | A | R | A | N |
| R | A | I | D | | N | E | E | | | P | O | S | S | E |

SUDOKU KEY

Puzzle on page 15

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

Opinion: Open letter to Gov. Tina Kotek from state's newspapers

We are asking Gov. Tina Kotek to veto House Bill 4177, an ill-advised measure approved by the Oregon Legislature that undermines Oregon's long-revered Public Meetings Law.

A work group that proposed HB 4177 excluded media organizations that had been deeply embedded in the creation of our Public Meetings Law in 1973 and in subsequent amendments.

Coming late to that table, representatives of the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association were shocked to find this warning from the Oregon Government Ethics Commission:

"This exception would allow governing body members to meet in private and/or communicate privately with each other, outside of any public meeting, in order to gather information.

"Much of the information gathering that normally occurs in public meetings (work sessions or executive sessions) could instead be done privately... with no meeting notice, no minutes or recordings, and no news media observers."

Here are additional notes of caution from OGEC, obtained through a public records request:

"It should be noted at the outset that whenever a quorum of a governing body gathers together, whether in public or private, that quorum has the power to exercise government authority and bind the government to any decision. Even if that decision occurs in private and in violation of the Public Meetings Law, the action

still binds the government."

"It (HB 4177) is effectively rewriting the Public Meetings Law in ways that create much more ambiguity and inhibit enforcement, and doing so in a short session without any public involvement."

HB 4177 contains significant legal and political complications, and there is no emergency needing immediate legislative action without adequate attention to those problems.

Some portray HB 4177 as a measure simply to clarify issues related to "serial communications," which are "daisy-chain" discussions among members of a governing body allowing deliberation without a meeting.

Instead, as testified by citizens, ONPA and OGEC, HB 4177 actually expands permissions for serial communications while allowing full-quorum gatherings of governing bodies with "no meeting notice, no minutes or recordings, and no news media observers."

And, of course, no citizen observers.

Enactment of HB 4177 would result in loss of government transparency, and new confusion for OGEC in its role of enforcing the Public Meetings Law.

Ironically, it required a public records request to uncover the depth of public harm that would be imposed by enactment of HB 4177. Oregon's two joined laws – Public Records and Public Meetings – provide the core rights of Oregon citizens to open government.

The Public Meetings Law in ORS 192.620 states state

policy unchanged since 1973: "The Oregon form of government requires an informed public aware of the deliberations and decisions of governing bodies and the information upon which such decisions were made. It is the intent of ORS 192.610 to 192.690 that decisions of governing bodies be arrived at openly."

HB 4177 is a violation of that 56-year-old open government policy.

We believe, in passing HB 4177 during a short session, that the Oregon Legislature did not have full access to legal analysis about its consequences. This is precisely the time particularly by a governor who has championed open government through decades of Oregon public service – for a balancing veto.

Gov. Kotek, we offer our full support on behalf of the Oregon public for your consideration of a veto on HB 4177.

The New Era

Albany Democrat-Herald
BakerCityHerald.com
Bandon Western World
Beaverton Valley Times
Tigard-Tualatin Times
Bend Bulletin
Bluemountaineagle.com
Burns Times-Herald
Canby Herald-Pioneer
Cannon Beach Gazette
Cascade Business News
Central Oregonian
(Prineville)
The Chronicle (Springfield)
Columbia Gorge News
Corvallis Gazette Times
Cottage Grove Sentinel
Curry Coastal Pilot
(Brookings)
The Daily Astorian
East Oregonian
Estacada News
Eugene Weekly

Forest Grove News-Times
Grants Pass Daily Courier
Herald and News
HermistonHerald.com
Hillsboro Tribune
The Gresham Outlook
LaGrandeObserver.com
Lake Oswego Review
Lakeview Examiner
Lincoln City Leader
The Madras Pioneer
McKenzieRiverReflections.com
The Newberg Graphic
The News-Register
(McMinnville)
The News-Review
(Roseburg)
North Coast Citizen
Oregon Newspaper
Publishers Association
The Oregonian
Polk Co. Itemizer Observer
(Dallas)
Redmond Spokesman

Rogue Valley Times
(Medford)
The Sandy Post
South County Spotlight
(Scappoose)
Seaside Signal
Siuslaw News (Florence)
Smoke Signals
Tillamook Headlight Herald
Wallowa.com
West Linn Tidings
Wilsonville Spokesman
Woodburn Independent
The World (Coos Bay)

Editor's note: Of 35 individuals who testified on this measure, only seven spoke in favor – one was neutral. Local Rep. Jami Cate was one of four House members who voted in opposition to this bill.

Fiddlers returning to Lebanon for 60th annual state contest

The Oregon Oldtime Fiddlers' Association will present the 60th annual Oregon State Open Fiddle Contest on Saturday, March 14, from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the Lebanon Mennonite Church, 2100 S 2nd St., Lebanon.

Contest Chair Cat McClintock said fiddle contests are a long-standing American tradition that bring together musicians of all ages to test their skills, trade tunes, and pass regional styles from one generation to the next – often on the same stage.

"This contest is where a lot of fiddlers first learn how to perform under pressure and mix with fiddlers from other generations and communities," she said. "You'll hear everything from brand-new players to seasoned champions – sometimes separated by only a few hours on the

schedule."

The Oregon State Open Fiddle Contest features divisions for all age groups, with rounds taking place throughout the day. Finals and the championship division begin at 7 p.m., followed by performances from the contest judges and the crowning of the state champion at 10 p.m.

In addition to the competition, the event includes a special on-stage performance jam from 6-7:00 p.m., open to anyone with an acoustic instrument who would like to join in.

Admission is by donation, and families are encouraged to attend for a full day of live music, camaraderie and traditional fiddling at its finest.

For more information, contact Cat McClintock at (970) 219-0256.

From our Files

March 15, 1951

Intention of residents of the 7th Avenue and A Lane area to have their streets paved moved another step as city councilors approved an engineer's report for the street improvement district. Cost per square yard for street improvement only was estimated at about \$2.25. Petitioners are seeking curbs, asphaltic concrete and sidewalks.

The railroad car shortage, blamed by some experts as the real cause for a drop in Douglas fir shipments this year, may be closer to relief. Shippers of lumber, plywood, seed, grain and other commodities in western Oregon banded together to form a Shippers Car Supply committee, which recommended a seven-point plan.

March 11, 1976

Green Thumb, a group of older residents involved in city maintenance, recently completed work for the new Sweet Home winterization project for eligible

low income homeowners. Work for 30 families included ceiling insulation, storm windows, weather stripping and other heat conservation repairs. For the city, Green Thumb does various beautification, cleaning and shrub work. They recently completed fences at Clover Park and the sewage disposal plant.

A fund drive started nine months ago for the Sweet Home Ambulance Service personnel drew a "phenomenal" response from the community. The original goal was to purchase two HEAR communication systems, but successful efforts will get them that and more. EMT Terry Brooks said they will probably have the most modern equipment in the valley, including Life-Paks, defibrillators, I.V. fluid sets and coronary medications.

March 14, 2001

Sweet Home is on the short list of being considered as the site for a new state police and fire training academy. Sweet Home

and Willamette Industries offered a 160 acre site off 18th and Tamarack, though the DPSST would prefer 165 acres with room to expand. The \$50 million facility would impact the city's economy.

With moisture readings nearly one-third behind average and the state's rainy season nearly over, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will discuss how to allocate precious water resources. Low water levels could have a significant impact on recreational usage. A recent visit to the Thistle Creek boat ramp – made for low water levels – revealed the ramp was several hundred yards out of the water.

The Kiwanis and Rotarians asked the school district for land in a renewed effort to build a skate park. With former Public Works Maintenance Supt. Dale Ivan's resignation, the driving force behind the effort left. Estimates for the park are up to \$250,000; so far \$50,000 has been raised.



EMT Terry Brooks said in 1951 that the community's support for the Sweet Home Ambulance Service fund drive has been "phenomenal," reaching beyond their goal and allowing them to buy more equipment.

Opinion: Proposed ban on killing animals will harm wildlife

By Jennifer Puccio

Every fall, families head into the woods and onto the water not just for sport, but for the harvest. Freezers fill with wild game and fish that often provide a household's entire year of healthy protein.

And the people doing the harvesting are changing. The most recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service survey reports that women make up 22 percent of hunters and 30 percent of anglers.

Behind the scenes, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) works to ensure the environment and food supply remain sustainable. They oversee 16 wildlife areas, run hatcheries, perform species surveys, set harvest quotas, and partner with landowners and other agencies. Together, these efforts support an outdoor economy that benefits the entire state, including rural communities like Sweet Home.

That system, however, would be brought to a halt by a proposed initiative petition called IP 28, People for the Elimination of Animal Cruelty (PEACE).

The proposal would ban hunting and fishing—sport

and commercial—and classify them as animal abuse, with no exemptions for tribes. It would outlaw standard agricultural practices in farming and ranching, including livestock slaughter, breeding, de-horning, and castration. Rodeos, traditional pest control, and animal research would also be banned.

A ban framed as “protecting animals” under the acronym PEACE may sound morally appealing. But it ignores how fish and wildlife are protected in our country. In practice, the proposal would harm animals and people and put the final nail in the coffin for a little-known statute called the Public Trust Doctrine.

Established by the Supreme Court in 1842, and reinforced in 1896 with a focus on wildlife, the doctrine holds that private interests do not own waterways and wildlife; they are held in trust by the government for present and future generations.

In Oregon and across the country, hunters and anglers are the primary funders of wildlife and wilderness management. According to the ODFW, about 40 percent of its budget comes from hunting

and fishing licenses and federal excise taxes on hunting and fishing and wildlife watching equipment purchases, collected under the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson Acts. In other words, people who enjoy Oregon's wild waters and forests help pay to maintain them.

Remove hunting and fishing from that system and the funding dries up.

Nature, as the old saying goes, abhors a vacuum. If wildlife management loses the resources that sustain it, something will replace it—and it begins with a “p,” but it isn't the public.

With weakened fish and wildlife management, populations quickly exceed the capacity of their habitat, leading to starvation once food is consumed to depletion. Diseases spread and habitats collapse more easily in these situations, harming far more animals than regulated harvest ever would.

Wildlife agencies also monitor diseases that move between wildlife and livestock, which affect private ranching. This includes diseases like Leptospirosis. Transmitted through water and soil, it can

move between wildlife, cattle, and dogs, and then to people.

Americans often speak proudly of rugged individualism in the outdoors. But the tradition behind hunting and fishing grew from ordinary citizens gaining the freedom to hunt. In Europe, hunting belonged to royalty and landowners. In the United States, wildlife was placed in public trust.

President Theodore Roosevelt helped cement that idea after spending three days in the Yosemite wilderness with naturalist John Muir in 1903. He went on to establish national parks, forests, and refuges across the country. The Roosevelt elk that roam our region still carry his name. Years later, even First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt took part in stocking trout in Yosemite waters.

Access runs deep. Half our nation, including Oregon, participates in a habitat and landowner access program, which uses grant-funded patrols to keep millions of private timberland acres open for public hunting. Linn County also ranks high in sales of over-the-counter hunting tags, which creates a

reliable stream of funding for wildlife management. That participation also reflects the quality of the region's outdoor resources: last month, Fishmasters ranked Green Peter among Oregon's top 30 fishing lakes.

If the supporters of this petition want peace for animals, there are constructive ways to pursue that. Work with state and local leaders to strengthen the wildlife funding acts mentioned earlier. Support Oregon's current wildlife crossing projects that restore migration routes and reduce vehicle collisions where highways cut through habitat. Or assist local shelters that provide low-cost spay and neuter and adoption of animals. These efforts reduce suffering for animals and people.

Native peoples practiced the tradition of caring for the land and its inhabitants long before us: its bounty survives and thrives not when people are banned from it, but when they take responsibility for its care and use.

Jennifer Puccio lives in Sweet Home and studies environmental science at Linn-Benton Community College.

PUBLIC SAFETY

From page 3

Officer responded. Report taken for theft II. Approximate value \$412, Items were eventually returned to owner, who declined to pursue charges.

2:58 p.m. - Davy Anthony Phillips, 53, arrested for criminal trespass II and for SHMC warrant in trespassing case, north end of 24th. Cited and released.

7:59 p.m. - Caller reported male inside vacant residence in 1800 block Tamarack, smashing things. Officer responded, male was evaluated by medics. Damage to residence not detected and property owner declined to pursue charges, so male was trespassed.

Lebanon Police
10:48 a.m. - Kelvin Edwin, 37, cited on AMC warrant for FTC - DWS.

1:33 p.m. - Benny E. Hardin, 54, cited for DWS, DU. Car impounded.

2:02 p.m. - Timothy Patrick Thurston, 81, cited on OSPB warrant for PV.

4:56 p.m. - Austin Brian Lee, 22, arrested on LCSA warrant for FTC - criminal mischief III.

7:58 p.m. - Stray dog attacked caller's dog, 700 block W Grant St. Owner bent down to get her dog and stray bit her face. Officer observed puncture and hanging skin on lip. Transported to hospital.

MARCH 7

LCSO/OSP LEBANON

11:20 a.m. - Jeffrey McCorkhil, 37, of Lebanon, cited for DWS, failure to install ignition interlock device, 3900 S. Main Rd.

1:32 p.m. - Paul Herzberg, 38, of Sweet Home, arrested for DWS, outstanding warrant, 4th/Kay. Report taken.

5:28 p.m. - LCSO conducted investigation of littering incident

on private timber property, Middle Ridge/Sodaville Cutoff. Report taken.

6:58 p.m. - Caller reported neighbor had transported “truckloads of garbage” onto property in 3500 block Flannigan. Information forwarded to code enforcement.

LCSO/OSP SWEET HOME

S. COUNTY

12:12 p.m. - Manuel Santana, 33, of Lebanon, arrested on outstanding warrant, Courtney Creek/Timber, Brownsville. Report taken.

5:01 p.m. - Male took shower at River Bend Campground without paying for camp site. He was warned for theft of services. 45900 block Hwy. 20. Sweet Home Police

3:53 a.m. - Stacy Diane Stafford, 54, arrested on SHMC warrant for FTA in trespassing case after officer located her sleeping on sidewalk in 900 block Main. Cited and released, due to amount of property she had with her.

12:37 p.m. - Caller reported German shepherd had run past her house with male chasing it in area of Wiley Creek Park, and then, caller thought, it sounded like German shepherd had attacked another dog in the park. Officer responded, determined that smaller dogs had been attacked. Unable to locate German shepherd. Owner of smaller dogs planned to take them to vet. Caller then called back to report that male with German shepherd had just walked through area of 53rd/Poplar, and that dog was muzzled this time. Officer located owner, who was warned for dog at large.

4:20 p.m. - Scott Richard Fleury, 48, arrested on LCCC warrant for FTA, Ashbrook Park, 2800 block Juniper. Caller had reported

male yelling outside RV. Cited and released.

Lebanon Police
9:05 a.m. - Driver crashed into two parked cars, 100 block Jennings St. Driver said he was tired; no signs of impairment.
3:40 p.m. - Grandma reported juvenile grandson took \$40 from her purse.

MARCH 6

LCSO/OSP LEBANON

11:30 a.m. - Crash reported in 37300 block Middle Ridge. Single-vehicle. Juvenile operator, 16, cited for careless driving, DU and failure to maintain lane. Report taken.

12:43 p.m. - Kayla Rusk, 18, of Lebanon, cited for driving without privileges, failing to carry proof of insurance. 34400 block Bellinger Scale.

2:43 p.m. - Eric Harvey, 53, of Lebanon, arrested on outstanding LCSO warrant, APD warrant, Sodaville Waterloo/Townsend. Report taken.

9:58 p.m. - Caller reported lost elderly individual in their driveway, 37900 block Hullacre Lane. Caller was able to contact family of lost person, who was retrieved.

LCSO/OSP SWEET HOME

S. COUNTY

12:48 p.m. - Deputy contacted male in RV in area of Cascadia Dr./High Deck. He was advised to move along.

4:32 p.m. - Crash reported in 28100 block Brownsville Rd., Brownsville. Medics transported female to hospital with injuries reported to be non-life threatening. Further details unavailable at press time. Report taken.

4:43 p.m. - Joshua Leslie, 38, arrested on outstanding warrant, 27300 block Rowell Hill. Cited and released. Report taken.

See Public Safety, Page 9

Volleyball coach arrested

A Sweet Home woman has been charged with luring a minor after a parent discovered communications with their child.

On Oct. 31, 2025, the parent contacted Lebanon police after discovering inappropriate electronic communications between their child and the child's adult volunteer volleyball coach.

Investigators determined that Alyssa Joan Baker, 20, of Sweet Home, had sent explicit and inappropriate electronic messages to a minor.

Baker had volunteered as the minor's volleyball coach; however, the season had ended prior to the start of the investigation, and Lebanon Commu-

nity School District had terminated her volunteer status.

In February Baker was indicted by a grand jury on one count of luring a minor, alleging that she “unlawfully and knowingly furnished to a minor a narrative account of sexual conduct for the purpose of inducing the minor to engage in sexual conduct.”

She was taken into custody and lodged at the Linn County Jail. She posted 10% of a \$10,000 security.

The investigation remains ongoing. Anyone with additional information is encouraged to contact Officer Romeo Herrejon at (541) 258-4317 or Lt. Taylor Jackson at (541) 258-4357.

Cops: SpeeDee Mart incident not ‘robbery;’ likely a scam

A report that prompted social media speculation that SpeeDee Mart may have been robbed – or that its cash had been taken by police – over the weekend was false, Police Chief Jason Ogden said.

Social media posts reported that the store was unable to do cash transactions due to “the police taking all the money in the store,” at 1501 Main St., according to a police report. Facebook posts carried a variety of conjecture regarding the incident.

According to Ogden, police responded after the social media posts, and “officers determined that the claim was not accurate,” he said.

“The store had received a phone call from an individual falsely claiming to be law enforcement and attempting to convince an employee to turn over cash as part of a supposed counterfeit investigation,” Ogden said Monday. “The employee briefly removed money from the register after receiving those calls, but the funds were returned to the store and there was no involvement by the Sweet Home Police Department in taking any money.”

Ogden said the store owner had not filed a formal report as of The New Era's deadline on Monday, “but the incident appears consistent with a scam.”

UPCOMING CITY MEETINGS

These are regularly-scheduled meetings. Sometimes the dates or times are changed due to schedule conflicts among members, work session additions, holidays, etc. Last minute changes do occur at times. Please check the governing board's website for updated information and agendas.

Lebanon School Board: Thur., Mar. 12, 6 p.m., at Lebanon Library, 55 Academy St.

Lebanon Aquatic District: Mon., Mar. 16, 6 p.m., at Lebanon Pool, 1800 S 5th St.

Sweet Home Fire Board: Tues., Mar. 17, 6:30 p.m., at 1099 Long St.

Brownsville Fire Board: Tues., Mar. 17, 6:30 p.m., at 600 E Blakely.

Sweet Home Park & Tree Committee: Wed., Mar. 18, 8:30 a.m. at City Hall, 3225 Main St.

Lebanon Parks, Trees & Trails: Wed. Mar. 18, 2 p.m. at Lebanon Library, 55 Academy St.

Lebanon Planning Commission: Wed. Mar. 18, 6 p.m. at Lebanon Library, 55 Academy

Sweet Home Planning Commission: Thur., Mar. 19, 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, 3225 Main St.

Sodaville City Council: Thur., Mar. 19, 7 p.m. at City Hall, 30723 Sodaville Road.

Sweet Home City Council: Tues., Mar. 24, 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, 3225 Main St.

Brownsville City Council: Tues., Mar. 24, 7 p.m., at City Hall, 255 N Main St.

Sweet Home Planning Commission: Thur., April 2, 6:30 p.m., at City Hall, 3225 Main St.

Charter School Board: Mon., April 6, 6 p.m., at Sand Ridge Charter School, 100 Sand Ridge Ct., Lebanon.

Lebanon City Council: Wed., April 8, 6 p.m., at Lebanon Library, 55 Academy St.

Lebanon School Board: Thur., April 9, 6 p.m., at Lebanon Library, 55 Academy St.

Central Linn School Board:

Mon., April 13, 6 p.m., at Conference Room, 239 W 2nd St., Halsey.

Sweet Home School Board: Mon., April 13, 6:30 p.m., at 1920 Long St.

Lebanon Fire District: Tues., April 14, 5:30 p.m., at 1050 W Oak St.

Sweet Home City Council: Tues., April 14, 6:30 p.m., at City Hall, 3225 Main St.

Waterloo City Council: Tues., April 14, 7 p.m., at 31140 1st St.

Halsey City Council: Tues., April 14, 7 p.m., at City Hall, 100 Halsey St.

Sweet Home Park & Tree Committee: Wed., April 15, 8:30 a.m. at City Hall, 3225 Main St.

Lebanon Parks, Trees & Trails: Wed., April 15, 2 p.m. at Lebanon Library, 55 Academy St.

Lebanon Planning Commission: Wed., April 15, 6 p.m. at Lebanon Library, 55 Academy

Sweet Home Planning Commission: Thur., April 16, 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, 3225 Main St.

Sodaville City Council: Thur., April 16, 7 p.m. at City Hall, 30723 Sodaville Road.

Lebanon Aquatic District: Mon., April 20, 6 p.m., at Lebanon Pool, 1800 S 5th St.

Sweet Home Fire Board: Tue., April 21, 6:30 p.m., at 1099 Long St.

Brownsville Fire Board: Tue., April 21, 6:30 p.m., at 600 E Blakely.

Sweet Home City Council: Tue., April 28, 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, 3225 Main St.

Brownsville City Council: Tue., April 28, 7 p.m., at City Hall, 255 N Main St.

Republican candidate files to run for open local Senate District 6

Jack Tibbetts of Saginaw announced Tuesday, March 3, that he has filed for the Republican nomination for Senate District 6.

"I'm running for office as a husband, father, and proud Republican. As a small business owner in agriculture and raising my family here, I've become increasingly concerned about the direc-

tion Oregon is headed," said Tibbetts. "I'm ready to stand up to one-party control, defend the Second Amendment, oppose new taxes, and fight for the families of the Willamette Valley who want lower taxes, fewer regulations, and practical, commonsense leadership."

Tibbetts owns several Oregon-based natural re-

source-based businesses and lives in Saginaw, just north of Cottage Grove. State Senate District 6 covers eastern Lane and Linn Counties and a portion of Marion County. The primary election will take place May 19.

Learn more at www.tibbettsfororegon.com

Commissioners approve tax abatement for chemical company's local expansion

By Alex Paul
Linn County Communications

At their March 3 meeting, Linn County Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker approved an extended Enterprise Zone Tax Abatement Agreement for Valliscor LLC.

Linn County is a cosponsor of the Albany Enterprise Zone. The City of Albany had already approved the agreement, which will provide property tax incentives for the development of a chemical manufacturing plant by Valliscor LLC.

Valliscor, based in Corvallis, manufactures high-value compounds used in the pharmaceutical and semiconductor industries. According to the company's website, its chemicals are used in medications to treat asthma, COPD, breast cancer and other diseases. Other products are used to make logic and memory chips in the semiconductor field.

The company is expanding to include a 16,000-square-foot manufacturing facility on 12-acres on Ferry Street in Al-

bany.

Albany Economic Development Manager Sophie Adams told the commissioners the project will create 40 new jobs that pay at least 150% of the average wage in Linn County, with a long-range plan of 100 total jobs in the future. She said this is a \$25 million investment by Valliscor.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Approved contracts to provide 9-1-1 communications by the LCSO with the following: Albany Fire Department, Brownsville Rural Fire Protection District, Halsey-Shedd Rural Fire Protection District, Lebanon Fire District, Scio Rural Fire Protection District, Sweet Home Fire and Ambulance District and the Tangent Rural Fire Protection District.

- Approved a letter of support for the Sweet Home Water Treatment Plant generator project. The city is seeking federal funding to modify the water treatment plant due in part to turbidity issues caused by the drawdown of Green Peter

Reservoir. A generator would ensure water treatment processing could continue if storms knock out commercially-provided electricity.

- Approved the purchase of a tax-foreclosed property at 2948 44th Ave. SE, Albany by the former owner for \$35,432.52.


- Added Trail Bridge Campground on Highway 126 to the list of U.S. Forest Service campgrounds managed and maintained by the Linn County Parks & Recreation Department. The campground was closed for almost a decade due to infrastructure work in the area by the Eugene Watershed Enhancement Board. This brings the total number of Forest Service campgrounds managed by Linn County Parks & Recreation to 26.

- Approved a temporary employment agreement with LCSO Lieutenant Detective Randy Voight. He will retire from the Sheriff's Office on April 30 and the agreement will allow him to work back for one more year.

Church Directory

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

Highway 20
Church of Christ


 Pastor Machiel Greyling

Sunday, 10:30am & 6pm
Wednesday, 7 pm
Prayer & Bible Study

3025 Highway 20, Sweet home
541-367-6899 - highway20cc.org

Mt. Calvary
Missionary Baptist Church

Sunday Service 11am
Come join us!

 Bible Study
10 am Sundays.

1042 Pleasant Valley Rd.
541-818-0022

 **St. Helen**
Catholic Church
600 6th Ave, Sweet Home

www.sweethomecatholicchurch.com

Holy Mass
Sat. at 5:30 pm & Sun. at 9:00 am
Tues 5:30 pm & Wed-Fri 8:30 am

Confessions
Before Masses or 1st, 2nd & 3rd Sat.
4:00 - 5:00 pm

For Sacramental information call
541-367-2530
Father Scott Baier

 **Sweet Home**
United Methodist Church

Open Hearts,
Open Minds,
Open Doors

A Reconciling Congregation

11:00 am Worship
Free Meal - Tue, Wed & Fri - 5:00 pm

6th & Ironwood
541-367-3073

The
COMMUNITY CHAPEL



— at Ames Creek —
SUNDAYS at 10am
www.chapel.cc
42250 AMES CREEK RD
SWEET HOME OR

 **hope.church**
sweet home

GATHERING TIME
10:45 A.M.

890 Mountain View Rd.
541-967-HOPE (4673)
www.hope.church/sweethome

 **New Life / In Christ**
Fellowship
(formerly Sweet Home Mennonite)

1266 44th Ave. PO Box 515
541-367-2848 • shnlc.org

10:30 a.m. Worship Service
10:30 a.m. Children's Church

 **Sweet Home**
Evangelical Church

Join us Sunday 10:30 am

FOLLOW US AT:
FACEBOOK.COM/SWEETHOMECC
1347 Long Street • 541-367-4357

 **Elm Street Baptist Church**

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

1150 Elm St. Sweet Home
541-367-5883

Ex-foster child credits CASA volunteer at luncheon

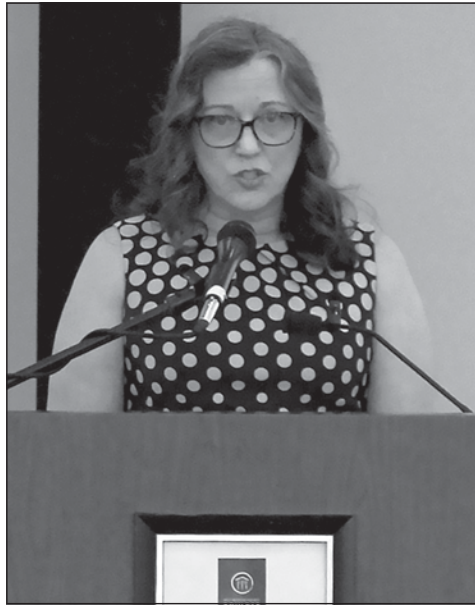
By Scott Swanson
Of The New Era

Amira Therese had already been in dozens of different placements as a foster child when she found herself, at age 15, in Henderson, Nev., in, she realized, a trafficking house.

Therese, now an author and activist based in Arizona, is also the host of the podcast "Interview with a Foster Kid," which exposes realities of the foster care system that "most people never see," according to the show's explainer. She was the keynote speaker at CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Linn County's annual luncheon Wednesday, March 4, at Boulder Falls Inn.

Therese, who participated remotely, told the story of how she had been moved nearly constantly through most of her childhood, and on this particular trip she was told by a new caseworker that she was going to be transported to her new "forever home."

She related how she started wondering what was going on when the caseworker told her they were taking a "road trip" and would be picking up "other girls," which turned out to be one other teen. Then



CASA Executive Director Shyla Malloy, left, introduces keynote speaker Amira Therese, right, who spoke to attendees at the CASA luncheon about her experiences with a CASA volunteer as a foster child. — Photos by Scott Swanson

they crossed the state line, from Arizona.

When they arrived, Therese said, they were told that they had two choices to make money.

"Now mind you, I'm thinking I'm going to my forever home," she said. "I'm ready to meet a new family and hope it works out."

Instead, she said, it was "chaotic and scary," with adults and "girls my age" cir-

culating through.

She and the other girl who had arrived with her, "Melissa," determined to get out.

"We had very little idea of the extent of what was going on," she said. "We were upset, just thinking they wanted us as child labor."

They made it back to Arizona after a "tumultuous" four-week journey, where she was told by her caseworker,

"who was not happy to see me," to "stop telling your lies."

Therese said she ended up in juvenile detention because, her caseworker told her, the story she was telling made her unplaceable.

She was there for two weeks when she heard a familiar voice. An "eccentric" woman wearing a leather coat "stormed" into the facility, and announced, "I'm taking her."

"She looked at me, and she said, 'I found you.' She always found me," Therese said of "Judy," the CASA volunteer who had been assigned to her when she was 11.

"This time I wasn't moved into a foster home and nobody was looking for me, but she found me," Therese said. "I felt so safe in that moment. I felt found."

She added that her CASA volunteer "wasn't extraordinary - she was ordinary."

"She had a family, she had another job, she had problems, she had a whole life outside of what she was doing within CASA, but she had a few extra hours a month, and believed that I mattered."

She said CASA needs three things from the public: volunteers who are willing to give 10 to 15 hours a month "and you don't need to be perfect; you just need to show up," funding; and "your voice."

"CASA needs your voice; tell people about this. Make CASA as well-known a cause as every other cause you care about."

Shyla Malloy, executive director of Linn County's CASA, noted to the crowd of well

over 150 attendees that Therese has been searching for "Judy," with whom she lost touch after exiting the foster care system.

"She does these keynote presentations and hopes that someday somebody will see her story and recognize that and that they will be reunited again," Malloy said. "So that just tells you how powerful that relationship is."

CASA volunteers, Crystal Tyndall, a local banker who sits on CASA's Board of Directors, told the luncheon crowd after Therese's presentation, are trained, court-appointed community members who advocate for abused and neglected children in the foster care system.

"We show up, we stay, we make sure a child is never invisible in a system that can feel overwhelming," Tyndall said.

CASA volunteers visit children monthly, gather information from teachers, doctors, and caregivers, and report to judges to ensure children's needs are met and they are safe.

Tyndall told the audience that they could help by volunteering themselves, or by donating to support the training.

"Somewhere in our community today, a child is wondering, 'Does anyone see me?'" Tyndall said. "Let's make sure the answer is 'yes.' Let's make sure they are found."

CASA of Linn County can be reached at (541) 926-2651 or at www.linncasa.org.

Local author shares journey of sasquatch 'awakening' in book

By Sarah Brown
Of The New Era

Author Michelle Heaton has been acquainted with sasquatch since she was a 5-year-old girl living in a rural farming community in Michigan, but she didn't realize at the time what she was seeing.

It was a recurring dream where the eyes of sleep saw what, at the time, Heaton believed to be a boogy man.

Now an adult living in Sweet Home, Heaton is ready to share how that dream led her through a journey to "change her understanding of reality" in her book, "The Dream Guardian: Sasquatch and the Path to Awakening."

She will be sharing her story at the Sweet Home Public Library on Saturday, March 14, at 1 p.m.

As Heaton grew up, she began to see the creature in her dream as sasquatch, leading her to research the mythical creature and, one day, actually see what she believes is evidence of his existence.

That first experience took place in 2024 on an out and back trail off Highway 20 when she saw the back of a creature that made her do a double take. Each time she looked back in his direction after a brief moment of not looking, he would be another 30 or so feet further away.

"(It) amazed me because



Michelle Heaton

there was, like, berry bushes and ferns and broken trees," she said. "It was like, no human could do that so quickly."

After that, Heaton said she "kind of got obsessed with it" and began going out looking for him. She has since started a Facebook group, Sweet Home, Oregon Sasquatch Research Group, and published her book, which can be found on Amazon.

"I see sasquatch as my dream guardian," she said about her book title. "He was my guardian. He was like my protector."

As Heaton had gotten older, the dream faded from her sleep, but a move to the Pacific Northwest in 2014 began to unpack some of the childhood memories.


She said her story shares "where the boundaries of reality blur and the heart begins to remember."



"I started having experiences and then I started to remember details and feelings about the dreams, and it all just kinda came together for me, it all made sense," she said.

Through her journey, from childhood to today, Heaton came to learn the boogy man in her dream is not a monster but, rather, a flesh and blood creature very much like humans, with feelings, families and territorial boundaries, "but there's more depth to them," she said.

Heaton's 97-page book shares how "she discovered a presence that awakened her soul and challenged her perceptions of what it means to be human."



Sweet Home
Pregnancy Care Center

Free parenting classes to help
with practical resources & information.

Open Mon. & Wed. 12-5pm

1344 Main St. • SHPregnancy.org • 541-367-2447

Honor Roll

SWEET HOME HIGH SCHOOL SEMESTER 1 HONOR ROLL 2025-2026

YEAR

Seniors: 4.0

Addyson E. Vannice, Alonna L. Baker, Trinity J. Victor, Lukiss P. Grover, Cannon L. Klumph, Andrew A. Tolman, Katriona M. Harris, Luke E. Rosa, Kylie M. Melkvik, Isabella G. Wagner, Levi S. Ensley, Natalie E. Conn, Dillan C. Davis, Quintell L. Hall, Loralai O. Mark, Ruby G. McKinnon, Anabelle G. Morris, Aubrey J. Newberry, Benjamin A. Perry, Delainie R. Pratt, Natalie M. Smith, Natalie K. Spencer, Trevvor L. Starkey.

Seniors: 3.5-3.99

Ava K. Nash, Bode T. Nichols, Levi C. Millsap, Aubri J. Parker, Krista F. Reed, Marley B. Rettmann, Selah L. Wright, Vincent Kennedy, Eleanor C. Larsen, McKenzie M. Miller, Hayden P. Smith, Ellie Chiffaffino, Gracie N. Rand, Trenton E. Templin, Riley J. Alexander.

Juniors: 4.0

Xander D. Blom, Ryker A. Burr, Olivia G. Saveskie, Miu A. Simmons, Victoria M. Victor, Ella S. Haggas, Austyn R. Hogan, Kaitlyn M. Kennedy, Mailey A. Brewer, Obadiah J. Christman, Trent G. Harvey, Raylynn D. Meyers, Landon R. Murry, Kyle D. Zajic, Aaliyah E. Brown, Khrystoffor B. Domingo, Aivaih R. Duran, Aria E. Gardner, Ryan James, Karissa M. Jewell, Mary J. Johnson, Bradyn J. McClure, Isaiah J. Scofield, Michelle Slayton, Cael G. Stevenson, Talitha E. Watkins.

Juniors: 3.5-3.99

Kellen B. Hartsook, Logan M. Anderson, Caden J. Foley, Nick C. Larson, Daniel N. McCubbins, Gavin D. Tyler, Noah J. Valdez, Emry R. Vannice, Hannah M. Sieminski, Khloe R. Wood, Amara S. Gonzales, Caiden D. Matthews, Haylee M. Fortune, Gage R. Pettner, Heaven L. Richardson, Louis A. Scott, Riley R. Vaughan.

Sophomores: 4.0

Tiffany Jane I. Abarcar, Samuel D. Barringer, Lynnikka A. Damag, Autumn J. Dieterich, Henry P. Gainer, Brandon W. Hernandez, Jesse R. Jernigan, Evan D. Knight, Damon M. Lawrence, Evan W. Malabago, Natasha D. Marin, Joshua D. Meglen, Sakura S. Miller, Ava E.

Padua, Hailee T. Ramsdell, Wesley G. Raynor, Emmalin J. Rosa, Taylee J. Rosa, Khloe R. Sautel, Russell L. Schroeder, Jake C. Smith, Kace E. Stevens, Mariah R. Stevens, Olivia I. Sullens, Mason N. Tyler, Jasper J. Victor, Dinah F. Watkins.

Sophomores: 3.5-3.99

Eli C. Adams, Tyler R. Bondesen, Hailey L. Borromeo, Yadira Casas, Sydney L. Dominy, Ziara R. Duncan, Dymin Flowers, Trinity K. Foley, Rebecca D. Hindman, Breanna N. Jamison, Arlin M. Lynn, Kaiuanu Ragudo, Bella M. Rico, Ameliah R. Spinney, Fiona C. Thompson, Madison R. Ciullo, Sage A. Burton, Taelyn L. Coleman, Grace L. Gardner, Shelby A. Henthorne, Blayne R. Schuster, Kaylee M. Silacci, Steven A. Singree, Kadence R. Thompson, Lyla J. Ventura, Chance K. Corey, Elijah J. Cruz, Ellie K. Dominy, Shyann J. Dunbar, Kianna Furst, Apollo P. Gazdag, Cedella Hiner, Hailey G. Smith, Velvet L. Smith, Jillian P. Stafford.

Freshmen: 4.0

Erin D. Aiello, Jaxson D. Burke, Zed N. Christman, Sadie A. Dalton, Allison L. Denuil, Maddy M. Greenwalt, Pyper M. Hall, Eveline M. Harris, Madison L. Jepps, Colten T. Lindsey, Austin K. Millard, Blake M. Murray, Hudson J. Ogden, Macen D. Rosa, Zoey M. Rust, Halen T. Salvador, Devon M. Sharp, Cody D. Sieminski, Jocelyn M. Simmons, Talon G. Temple, Shasta S. Tenbusch.

Freshmen: 3.5-3.99

Kali M. Vogel, Riley J. Cauldwell, Kaleb M. Fortune, Sydney T. Lamb, Nayeli H. Lund, Addison M. Lynn, Elijah E. Rodriguez, Christian J. Romero, Amaya M. Smith, Tayler Q. Sullivan, Savannah D. Thompson, Baylee D. Kimball, Laycee B. Carter, Ryder R. Cummings, Loki S. Davis, Gavin M. Duran, Elizabeth D. Hankins, Julia I. Landtroop, Alexis P. Lee, Ayden A. Marin, Kayla L. Matthews, Nevaeh A. Mize, Bristol L. Paul, Iris M. Pelcher, Landen M. Pruitt, Marcus T. Warthen, Silas J. Baker, Kerra A. Darcey, Caira N. Erspamer, Adam Hanson, Ava S. Murry, Kevin D. Ross, Lukas R. Shultz, Brodie S. Starha, Bentley Uhly, Braelyn Walker, Matthew B. Meglen, Marshall J. Van Dijk.

SWEET HOME JUNIOR HIGH SEMESTER 1 HONOR ROLL 2025-2026

Grade 7: 4.0

Emily M. Bagg, Hailey M. Baker, Sailor S. Burr, Hayden J. Delong, Lincoln J. Funk, Allison M. Hankins, Anneliese E. MacKenzie, Davynee D. McAfee, Ryder L. Parr, Brooklynn Payne, Jackson R. Sands, Cameron L. Smith, Sophia Sullens, Natalie J. Towery.

Grade 7: 3.8+

Lynfel Franzcysse A. Damag, Carter C. Duffitt, Eloise A. Fahy, Ryker S. Huenergardt, Hollie M. Jernigan, Oliver L. Lindsey, Brooke A. Parsons, Gage T. Sanders, Bianca F. White, Novaleigh G. Adams, Ginger R. Baldwin, Autumn R. Bryant, Kellen S. Landis, Daniel L. Porria, Teegan Ragudo, Toby L. Reed, Addison M. Wineteer, Madeline M. Aguilar-Mota, Andres L. Barocio, Natalie J. Cartwright, McKenna M. Coonc, Kylee M. Crawford, Alexia K. Hanson, Brayden M. Rowe, Preston L. Walls, Veneta U. Garcia, Brighton L. Landauer, Miles K. Lawrence, Isabella L. Martinez Abraham, Peighton P. Perkins, Tanner M. Tenbusch, Arybella Yoder, Maleika A. Barno, Charlie J. Radley, Karter J. Billington, Miguel A. Estrada, Addison B. Peterson, Colt W. Rider, Paydon R. Roberts, Serenity M. Vaughan.

Grade 8: 4.0

Brianna J. Allison, Sawyer G. Anderson, Ellie Banks, Brooklyn J. Bondesen, Addy R. Bonnevill, Noah R. Boyd, Leroy D. Dargis, Aldon J. Darrow, Emma M. Davis, Amber A. Dieterich, Brooke L. Doyle, Miles W. Gallegos, Payton A. Goodfriend, Elaina M. Hartness, Aubree R. Hegge, Maddie R. Hegge, Jaxon L. Huenergardt, Lauren N. Rice, Brooke D. Silacci, Tempest N. Tweed, Lael B. Watkins, Scott N. Westfall.

Grade 8: 3.8+

Logan V. Ayala, Cristiana R. Collman, Wiley L. Farris, Gabe C. Hayes, Noah D. Lynn, Sayuri H. Miller, Addysin Osinga, Ellie G. Rosa, Aidian M. Slimp, Xander G. Eddings, Natalie N. Godell, Farrah K. Gonzalez, Jodi T. Jorgensen, Lucy L. Juza, Abel J. Knight, Emily G. May, Natalie K. McCool, Saphyre D. Newell, Bryar D. Olsen, Quinn N. Padua, Renae E. Renek, Kayden M. Truschke, Kate P. Ydia, Lucille C. Corig, Anistyn R. Weikel, Cody A. Budd, Khloe A. Arce, Rileigh B. Chase, Skylar E. Hanson, Lincoln D. Towery, Byron K. White, Timber L. Jensen, Ty A. Jewell, Brody L. Menge, Luz M. Garcia, Sierra L. Jones, Colton J. McCubbins, Bryce A. Miner, Raylene L. Allison, Spencer D. Coonc, Ava A. Gaspard, Weston R. Hartness, Breyonna L. Payne, Ava R. Rivers.

LEBANON HIGH SCHOOL SEMESTER 1 HONOR ROLL 2025-2026

Seniors: 4.0

Blaine Baskett, Xavier Bledsoe, Boston Borgmann, Mady Bradshaw, David Brandt, Bodhi Brown, Collin Connaghan, Penny Cox, Emma Davis, Hailey Destowet, Emma Estes, Caspian Garvin, Jayden Hare, Trenton Hartman, Chase Herb, Wyatt Jenkins, Logan Large, Avery Lindsay, Aaliyah Marker, Isabella Milam, Alyx Mills, Peyton Mitchell, Dallen Myler, Owen Nelmark, Lawrence Parker, Addy Pickles, Carson Quigley, Ki Rash, Jazmine Robertson, Kael Robinson, Sebastian Sharp,

Eliana Smith, Jayden Stewart, Peyton Stewart, Weston Tenbusch, Tessa Thompson, Ruby Vandenbos, Payton Voight, Peyton Vorderstrasse, Julie Wadnizak, Alex Walnum, Helix Watkins, Cade Weber, Gwyn Wheeler, Anne Workman, Ellora Wright.

Seniors: 3.5-3.99

Greta Abbott, Wyatt Aldrich, Omar Amador-Lopez, Niko Autry, Kamber Barge, Dylan Bell-Love, Deegan Borruel, Will Brown, Tatum Cole, Aubree Collins, Kherington Cook, Aniston Cooperrider, Kaedence Cummings, Emily Curtis, Emily Davis, Felix Davis, Mayte Diaz-Sanchez, Daryna Dumanovska, Emily Duty, Troy Ebbs, Jaxon Fair, Emily Fernandes, Tenaya Garcia, Austin George, Yamileth Gonzalez Vazquez, Zech Halsey, Treigon Haselip, Brady Heimbuch, Alyssa Hogue, Avery Howell, Hunter Jacobsen, Rowan Jones, Tryston Majors, Gunner Miller, Gracie Moran, Hailey Myers, Chloe Norris, Jaden Offutt, Ryan Robinson, Micah Sanchez, Zachary Schlundt, Teddy Simmons, Kohlette Stevenson, Logan Taylor, Jess Veitenheimer, Mari Waite, Jalynn Wilson, Jasmine Wooden.

Juniors: 4.0

Avarie Anderson, Aimee Andrews, Izzy Argo, Sadie Cruz, Daniel Doerzapf, Macie Ellis, Chloe Francis, Scarlett French, Alison Frey, Kyla Hamner, Reagan Heim, Avery Medonich, Sierra Miller, Inez O'Driscoll, Daniela Ponce, Braden Pruet, Raymond Romero, Laylah Rosenthal, Diana Sanchez, Heather Savedra, Elliot Simmons, Joey Squires, Aubrey Steward, McKenna Villarreal, Sophia Vitali, Jack Whitacre.

Juniors: 3.5-3.99

Marcos Aguilar, Addison Baldwin, Molly Basting, Kaleb Bond, Kevin Camacho, Cruz Compean-Silva, Grady Cox, Tylie Dalebout, Grace Darling, Cadence Davis, Brayden Fountain, Sarah Froman, Riley Gay, Cole Gerig, Eva Graves, Jayden Gruseck, Jude Hanten, Kaidence Holcomb, Maddalinn Howard, Carmen Johnson, Anabelle Kisselburgh, Maliha Mowdy, Amy Nguyen, Taiya Privratsky, Aubree Rankin, Yago Ruano Perez, Blue Saavedra, Abbie Schafer, Heidi Schrader, Callie Steinhebel, Rainie Thayer, Tyson Trask, Mackayla Truett, Taelyn Whitney, Melanie Wilder, Gwen Zorko.

Sophomores: 4.0

Adylade Bennett, Raquel Biggs, Jane Brandt, Angelina Castillo, Tessa Caudle, Kinnley Clark, Brooklyn Davis, Treyton Enright, Sandy Franco, Teryn Gandy, Natalie Gerig, Elizabeth Goodwin, Hailey Gutierrez, Gavin Harris, Penelope Haselip, Hailey Hasenyager, Brooklynn Hensley, Cara Judy, Addison Keene, MacKenzie Lawrence, Kaleb May, Leeann Montano, Ayannah Noffsinger, Ivanna Ortiz, Valeria Ortiz, Laura Padilla, LaToya Pineda, Monica Ramirez, Emma Ross, Kylee Ryan, Zee-gan Sciscioli, Kendall Sowa, Lake Tucci, Finn Vandenbos, Alex Wright.

Sophomores: 3.5-3.99

Joshua Allydice, Ash Andersen, Joselena Arriaga, Anne Betterton, Laura Bigelow, Lynx Christiansen, Renea Christiansen, Ruby Coldiron, Dylan Cox, Lylah Cox, Sophie Culbertson, Kayla Daniels, Cash Davis, Zachary Dickerson, Brody Fitzgerald, Brooke Fountain, Hayden Jones, Reagan Jordan, Barrett Kleiven, John Kluttz, Ryker Lillis, Alexis Lindsay, Lucy

Links, Raiden McCollum, Nicholas McLoed, Abby Merrick, Kenley Mortensen, Addison Nichol, Maxwell Petermen, Bryce Peters, Dorothy Ross, Nicholas Ross, Brexton Sand, Kamryn Sargent, Zoey Savage, Erika Stephens, Jesse Taylor, Mia Turner, Isaac Vektor, Kadence Volkens, Alec Weber, Livian Wells, Cassidy Whelan, Emma Wright, Mallory Yankey.

Freshmen: 4.0

Ash Arnould, Lucas Barnes, Matthew Barnett, Larissa Bond, Gabby Breshears, Luke Briles, Cooper Burian, Hailey Cleveland, Amelia Collins, Kapri Collins, Aria Esparza, Daphne Graves, Kodi Hall, Trinity Howland, Lilly Hutsell, Carter Johnson, Kyle Johnson, Reese King, Xavier Macedo, Sofia Mason, Liam Maurer, Evelyn Meek, Ava Mills, Emerson Myers, Chase Nelson, Emily Nelson, Andrew Nguyen, Rylie Noonchester, Colton Parrish, Taelyn Poff, Samuel Ramsdell, Payten Rhiley, Robert Robertson Jr., Jackson Simmons, Charlotte Stevens, Isabella Studer, Jordan Tharp, Sophie Thayer, Tayzia Walker, Samantha Walsh, Chloee Walters, Noah Wiedeman, Enarra-Marie Wikner, James Wright.

Freshmen: 3.5-3.99

Rylan Albion, Tiara Allen, Anthony Anguiano, Nuala Attebery, August Barnes, Lucas Berge, Chloe Beyer, Louie Bishop, Alayna Bostian, Josephine Brady, Dahlia Brennen, Mason Byram, Kara Calubad, Avery Carver, Zoey Cude, Christian Curtis, Annabelle Fleming, Bella Foubert, Tanner Fountain, Isis Fritz, Saharra Garcia, Veda Gerig, Easton Graves, Leilahni Hall, James Hansen, Dylan Hayes-Kammer, Julia Hearn, Bristol Hockema, Giovanni Hodson, Carson Kolling, Katy Kolling, Jakin Lee, Brenda Magana, Miko Mattison, Carmen Mejia, Evan Milburn, Quinn Miles, Addyson Miller, Rilyn Nelson, Ava Newton-Cochran, Kasey Parker, Mia Pete, Libby Pointer, Zielynn Powell, Zoe Ruonavaara, Zane Schlundt, Meeya Settle, Keegan Silvers, Chessa Sloan, Eliana Smith, Kourtlyn Starr, Jillian Stuck, Miller Swanson, Ava Taylor, Danica Teague, Christopher Thomson, Rylie Trask, Qynn Whitney, Kayden Williams, Olivia Williamson, Isabela Wilson.

SAND RIDGE

CHARTER SCHOOL SEMESTER 1 HONOR ROLL 2025-2026

Grade 7: 4.0

Quinlan Adams, Zach Aguirre, Tristan Cutsforth, Everleigh Higholt, Kayleigh Medeiros, Averie Overton, Kamilah Rodriguez.

Grade 7: 3.5-3.99

Judah Davis, Samantha Fields, Jaykob Garg, Alexis Gutt, Khouri Hilchey, Wade Lawson, Andrew Moore, Brooklinn Pozder, Caiden Slupe, Marlaina Wagner.

Grade 8: 4.0

Lettie Bishop, Georgia Boriss, Alyssa Kinzer, Aubrey Oliver, Ella Robertson, Jocelyn Sundheim, CJ Valdenegro, Nehemiah Zderad.

Grade 8: 3.5-3.99

Ernie Burgos, Hadley Foss, Brandon Glaser, Weston Olson-Saunders, Ezrin Palmer, Brody Potter, Noah Turner, Rita Wahl, Alexis Womack.



SUNSHINE INDUSTRIES

OUR PROGRAM PROVIDES JOB TRAINING, JOB OPPORTUNITIES, AND COMMUNITY ACCESS TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.

WE OFFER GROUNDS KEEPING AND JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEEDS AS WELL AS FACILITY RENTALS.

1333 CLARK MILL RD. • 541-367-2765

PUBLIC SAFETY

From page 5

8:53 p.m. - Deputies conducted target patrols for MIP parties, other unlawful activity, in Timber Road/Courtney Creek/Shotgun Creek area, Brownsville. No activity noted.

SWEET HOME POLICE

12:02 a.m. - Marick Allen Tyree Best, 25, arrested by Salem police on SHMC warrant for FTC in harassment case. Cited to appear March 30.

1:57 a.m. - Ryan Matthew Rickman, 44, arrested for criminal trespass II after officer located multiple trespassers in 2200 block Main. Cited and released.

10:14 a.m. - Caller reported vehicle parked on street for "about a week" in 1800 block 18th. Officer responded, vehicle posted for removal.

12:56 p.m. - Caller reported buildings too close to fence, someone living in RV in 1000 block 43rd. Referred to code enforcement.

1:19 p.m. - RV parked in Steelhead Way posted for removal by code enforcement.

2:37 p.m. - Jordan Ray Knowles, 24, cited for DU, 4100 block Main.

5:02 p.m. - Caller reported neighbor burning garbage in 4200 block Main. Officer responded, located resident with small warming fire that was mostly wood and paper, with small pieces of trash. Resident warned.

5:08 p.m. - Caller from Safeway, 1540 Main, reported juveniles had just stolen beer and were heading westbound on Main. Officer responded, but was unable to locate youths.

9:25 p.m. - Denise Rochelle Burrow arrested on SHMC warrant for FTA in trespassing case after multiple callers reported someone knocking on doors and looking in windows in area of 28th/Fir. Cited and released.

9:49 p.m. - Bryanna Sue Harley, 34, arrested by Albany police on SHMC warrants for FTA in two theft cases. Cited to appear March 30.

See Public Safety, Page 15

FOOD & FUN
BITES AROUND THE BLOCK: DISCOVER LOCAL YUM!

FREE Medium Fries and Medium Soft Drink
with purchase of a premium sandwich valued at \$3 or more

Valid only at McDonald's in Sweet Home, Lebanon, Salem, Keizer, and Stayton locations. Prices may vary. Not Valid with any other offers, discounts or coupons. Cash value 1/20 or 1 cent. Limit one coupon per person per visit. Coupons may not be transferred, auctioned, sold, or duplicated in any way or transmitted via electronic media. Valid when products served. May not be valid for custom orders. Coupons must be presented at time of purchase. Void where prohibited.
© 2023 McDonald's

EXPIRES 12/31/2026

Taqueria Dos Arbolitos

LEBANON

50 W. Oak St., Lebanon
541-258-5798

A&W All American Food®

2 FOR \$8
MIX & MATCH

Crispy Alaska Cod Sandwich
Double Cheeseburger

REVV'D UP
ROOT BEER & CREAM FREEZE

NEW REVVD UP ROOT BEER \$3.99
NEW REVVD UP ROOT BEER CREAM FREEZE - \$5.49

A&W All American Food®

Prices and participation may vary. Limited time only. Tax extra. © 2017 A&W Restaurants, Inc.
1010 MAIN STREET, SWEET HOME • 541-367-4893

the POINT
RESTAURANT
EST. 1970

\$5 OFF
ANY PURCHASE OF \$30 OR MORE
NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFERS. MUST PRESENT COUPON. EXPIRES 4/01/26

OUTDOOR HEATED PATIO • OREGON LOTTERY
6305 US 20, FOSTER • (541) 367-1560

FOR RESERVATIONS AND TAKEOUT
POINTSWEETHOME.COM

OREGON'S
INDOOR HIGH CALIBER KITCHEN

FAMILY-OWNED - ON THE CORNER OF MAIN AND ASH IN LEBANON
NOW SERVING WINE, BEER, LIQUOR, AND COCKTAILS!

\$3 OFF
ANY LUNCH OR DINNER SPECIAL

WHEN YOU DINE AT HIGH CALIBER KITCHEN
SAVE YOUR RECEIPT
50% OFF
A SHOOTING LANE AT OREGON INDOOR SHOOTING NEXT DOOR.

EVERYTHING PREPARED FRESH WITH QUALITY INGREDIENTS
ASK ABOUT OUR NIGHTLY DINNER SPECIALS

590 S. MAIN STREET - LEBANON | 458-223-7288

Ixtapa Mexican Restaurant

Gift Certificates Available Now!
\$2 OFF ANY LUNCH OR DINNER
Not valid with any other offer.

25 N Santiam Hwy • (541) 451-3995
ixtapamexicanrestaurant.com

Mon. - Thurs. 11 A.M. - 9:30 P.M. | Fri. - Sat. 11 A.M. - 10:30 P.M. | Sunday 11 A.M. - 9 P.M.

Hawthorne kids run for fun



Hawthorne School in Sweet Home held a jogathon Wednesday, March 4, to raise money for new playground equipment. Top right, students in lower grades put in laps on the track, which were recorded by volunteers from the public and from Sweet Home Junior High. At right, Phoebe Frye gets her lap card punched by Natalie Godell of the Junior Leadership class. Above right, Colt Keeney runs with Selah Wright of the high school track team. Above left, school counselor Julie Harvey shows off tattoos, which students could purchase for \$1 and then choose which staff member had to wear it. As of the end of last week, approximately \$4,000 had been turned in by participants.

Photos by Scott Swanson

Sunshine Industries holds fundraiser dinner

Sunshine Industries held its annual fundraiser dinner Saturday, March 7, at the Sweet Home Boys & Girls Club. Trevor Tagle performed music and Casa de Reyes, far right, provided Mexican cuisine for the event, which attracted some 140 attendees, below right.. Organizer Tricia King, below left, said the final tally had not been determined early this week, but that Sunshine had finished in the black.



CCB# 208491



WALKER
HEATING & AC, INC.
Residential & Commercial

Improve the quality of your indoor air with duct cleaning

We service commercial & residential systems



Air ducts prior to cleaning Air ducts after cleaning

\$50 OFF
Duct Cleaning

Not to be combined with other offers. Some exclusions apply. Offer expires 5/1/2026

541-367-8706
2222 MAIN ST. SWEET HOME



Photos by Scott Swanson

Warriors' basketball seasons end against top state teams

By Mike Warner
For The New Era

Lebanon's boys and girls ended their 2025-26 basketball campaigns in the first round of the 5A Division state playoffs last weekend, the girls falling to No. 7 Wilsonville and the boys to No. 1-ranked Crook County.

Crook County 73, Lebanon 55

The Warriors, who ended their Mid-Willamette Conference season as the No. 5 team, faced the top-ranked Cowboys in Prineville, and found their hosts were as good as advertised.

Crook County came into the Friday, March 6, game with a 24-1 record and a roster that sports 6-10 Bryce Lowenbach and 6-9 Ryan Quinn, both senior forwards, complemented by the rest of their team who matched up pretty well with Lebanon, size-wise.

The Warriors battled as best they could, but the Cowboys were able to establish their control of the game early on and held an eight-point lead at the quarter. That lead expanded to 18 at the half. The second half was much the same, as the Cowboys cruised to the 73-55 final score.

The Warriors shot very well from the field at 47.5% (19-40) and from three 33.3% (8-24). Free throw shooting was



Peyton Vorderstrasse, right, fires a shot over an opponent earlier this season as Hazel Pepperling, left, watches the action.

- File photos

not as strong as it has been in the past at 56.5% (9-16). However, Lebanon did record 11 assists on nineteen baskets.

Four Warriors contributed, stats-wise, to the team effort. Gunner Miller scored 15 points and recorded two re-

bounds, two steals and three assists in his final game. Other seniors were Ryan Robinson, who scored 12 points, had four boards and three assists, and Logan Large, who scored 11 points finished with three rebounds, a steal and four assists. A bright spot for the future was sophomore Finn VandenBos, who scored 15 points and contributed three rebounds.

Lebanon finished 14-11 overall, 11-7 in the MWC.

Wilsonville 69, Lebanon 46

The Lebanon girls traveled north on Saturday, March 7, to meet the seventh-ranked Wildcats, who proved to be a quality foe.

Wilsonville took control of



Lebanon's Gunner Miller, left, angles for a shot in a game earlier this season. Miller led the Warriors in scoring against No. 1 Crook County.

the game from the start, pushing the pace and forcing 27 Lebanon turnovers.

The Wildcats defense also affected the Warriors' shooting. Lebanon was held to 29.0% (16-55) from the field, including only 12% (3-25) from the three. The Warriors shot 91.6% (11-12) from the free throw line but that wasn't enough.

Wilsonville progressively built its lead - 24-11 at the end of the first quarter, 43-22 at the half and 61-33 at the end of the third quarter.

Three Warriors scored in double figures, including se-

nior Peyton Vorderstrasse, who scored 15 points and collected 10 rebounds, two assists and three steals. Junior Piper Sewell scored 10 points and recorded three rebounds, while Hazel Pepperling, also a junior, recorded another double-double with 14 points, 10 rebounds and five steals. It was the final high school game for seniors Ruby VandenBos and Jayden Hare.

Lebanon finished the season with a 16-10 overall record, 10-6 and fourth in the MWC.



Firefighters spray water into the burning manufactured home as flames rage inside the structure Sunday morning.

- SHFAD Photo

ROWELL HILL

From page 1

The first fire unit arrived on scene at 7:26 a.m. and responders found half of the structure fully involved, with flames from every window and venting through the roof, while the other half of the structure was charged with black smoke.

Engine crews arrived and had water on the fire at 7:33 a.m. and the fire was knocked down at 7:45.

Water supply was provided by shuttling water tenders, utilizing tenders from Sweet Home, Lebanon and Brownsville. Crews remained on the scene, overhauling the structure for three more hours, as access was difficult

due to the heavy structural damage that made it unsafe for firefighters to enter all areas of the home.

The second alarm assignment resources included an engine, water tender and battalion chief from Lebanon Fire, and a water tender from Brownsville Fire.

In total, there were 12 units and 24 firefighters responded. No firefighters were injured; however, one person was transported to a local hospital by ambulance for evaluation.

The home and its contents are a complete loss, and a vehicle that was parked near the home sustained minor damage from radiant heat, SHFAD reported.

The *ICEBOX* Performer Of The Week



This week's ICEBOX performer of the week goes to Kyle, one of our skilled TIG welders.

Kyle puts in the effort every day, and it shows. With precision and efficiency, he consistently builds a high volume of units each week, delivering the kind of craftsmanship we rely on to serve our customers well.

What stands out just as much as his performance is his humility and willingness to help. Last week, Kyle stepped up to train our new hires and support fellow TIG welders, taking the time to share knowledge and strengthen the team.

Strong production. Strong leadership. The kind of mindset that keeps our standards high.

Thank you for your dedication, skill, and the positivity you bring to the shop every day. We appreciate you, Kyle.



Eagles end state basketball playoffs with a trophy

By Scott Swanson
Of The New Era

East Linn Christian's boys finished sixth in the 2A state championships last weekend in Pendleton, falling to eventual champion Trinity Lutheran 74-31 Thursday, March 5, then rebounding to beat Stanfield 65-56 on Friday before falling to Western Christian 62-54 Saturday morning.

"I'm very proud of these guys," Head Coach Jonathan Whitehead said upon returning from the tournament. "We got together and laid out most of our goals for the season and we hit most of them. We wanted to get to Pendleton, we wanted to play on Saturday and we wanted to win on Saturday. We came up a little short, but sixth place is awesome."

The top "four or five teams" in 2A this year are "very good," he added.

"To be able to get a trophy is awesome for these guys."

**Western Christian 62,
ELCA 54**

Neither team started fast, Whitehead said of the fourth-sixth-place game.

Although Western Christian led most of the game, it was back-and-forth in the first half against the Pioneers as East Linn trailed 14-10 at the first-quarter break, but took a 24-23 halftime lead.

"We had a really good second quarter, defensively," Whitehead said.

But that did not last, as Western Christian put together a series of back-breaking plays in which they Pioneers worked the shot clock down to the final seconds on successive possessions, then buried the ball - one for a three-pointer as time expired.

"They hit really good



Brison Edwards goes airborne to the basket during an earlier game this season. Edwards led Eagles in their bid for a fourth-place trophy Saturday. They wound up sixth

shots," Whitehead said. "You play defense good for 33 seconds, then they score like that."

Western outscored the eighth-seeded Eagles 20-11 in the third quarter, and East Linn couldn't close the gap in a 19-19 final period. East Linn finished sixth.

"We scored enough points to get back into the game, but it wasn't enough," Whitehead said. "I was really proud of the boys. Playing a third game in three days is always tough, and they got a trophy out of it."

Senior Brison Edwards was the only Eagle in double figures in the game, but he came through big, hitting 11 of 15 shots, including one of two three-pointers, to lead the team with 23 points - nearly half their to-

tal.

ELCA 65, Stanfield 56

The Eagles roared back after a crushing loss the day before to Trinity Lutheran, roaring out to an 17-8 lead over Stanfield, which had beaten them 72-52 in early January.

Not this time. East Linn's Grady Knurowski seemingly couldn't miss, pacing the team as they built an 18-8 lead in the first quarter, then held that for a 30-19 advantage at the half.

"He got off to a really hot start," Whitehead said of the sophomore. "That ended up being the difference in the game. If we didn't show up, that would have been the game."

The Eagles kept the pressure on in the third, building their advantage to 50-43



Grady Knurowski fires a shot from beyond the arc in a recent game. He was five of six from three-point land in the Eagles' win over Stanfield.

- File photos

at the third-quarter buzzer.

But then Stanfield, which, Whitehead noted, is known for making runs, pulled off its most productive scoring streak in the final period, closing the gap to "five or six" before East Linn finished things off for the win, helped by "some pretty awesome rebounding down the stretch," the coach said.

It was a rough game, as both Edwards and Gavin Christenson were whistled for technicals, and the Eagles finished with 22 fouls, though nobody fouled out.

"Poor Demetrius (Wilke) was on the floor for only a few seconds and they were whistling him," Whitehead said, adding that the Eagles were playing aggressively and when Stanfield couldn't hit outside shots, the Tigers started taking it inside, drawing fouls as East Linn tried to defend the basket.

"The refs were calling it tight and that didn't favor us on defense," he said.

Knurowski finished with a team-high 23 points, hitting eight of 12 shots from the field, including five of six trey attempts, and adding seven rebounds. Wilke and Gavin Wilson, who also scored 13 points, also grabbed seven boards each.

Edwards added 15 points and sophomore post Ryder Howard finished with four blocks and nine rebounds.

The Eagles, for whom, the coach said, free-throw shooting has been an "achilles heel," finished the game 13 for 18 at the stripe.

**Trinity Lutheran 74,
ELCA 31**

The Saints came into Thursday's game with one loss on the season, that one early in December to Westside Christian, which came into the 3A playoffs as the No. 1 seed (before being upset by Banks), and Trinity delivered as predicted.

East Linn trailed 24-9 after the first period and things didn't get better after that, as Trinity had a 43-19 lead at the half and was on top 65-22 at the third-quarter buzzer. Both teams scored nine points in the final period.

"That one was brutal," Whitehead said. "We turned the ball over way too much in the first quarter. We were taking difficult shots, trying to get it back, instead of grinding it out."

Four Saints finished in double figures, including 18 from junior guard Chimi Gilbert, 16 from fellow back-court junior Romney Quentin and 13 from senior guard Chace Nichols.

Austin Imhoff, Trinity's 6-7 forward - whose grandfather Darrall Imhoff was an Olympic gold medalist and NBA All-Star who spent 12 years in the pros - added 14.

Its points spread wasn't just due to the Saints' team quality, Whitehead said.

"Well over half their points were off our mistakes or us not getting back," he said. "Their whole lineup is pretty solid - Chimi, Austin and Chase. They did really well at

See Eagles, Page 13



Etc Thrift Shop

Bargains That Benefit All

We Accept Donations

Earth Day Upcycling Contest

Get Creative + Give New Life to a Thrift/Recycled item for a chance to win \$50 Gift Cards from ETC Thrift Shop + Camelia's Candles

Join ETC. Thrift Shop + Camelia's Candles
at the Thrift Shop on the dates below!

April 8-15 - Submit Items: Drop off at ETC. Thrift Shop

April 17-25 - Items on Display: Public in-store Voting

April 29 - Winners Announced: Please check FB for more information

836 South Main, Lebanon • 541-258-5614



New officer seeks to approach job with approachability, proactively

By Satina Tolman
For The New Era

The Sweet Home Police Department has welcomed a new face to its patrol ranks, and Officer Tyler Mendenhall says his goal is simple: serve the community with approachability and a proactive mindset.

Mendenhall, who grew up in the Philomath and Tangent area, joined the department after deciding he wanted a more people-centered career path.

"I started out in more of a corporate world and felt like I wanted to get away from that and help people more," he said. Before entering law enforcement, Mendenhall worked as a millwright.

Though policing had long been on his mind, he formally pursued the career just this past year. He attended the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, where he graduated in September 2025.

Mendenhall has been working with the Sweet Home Police Department since April 2025 and said one of the biggest adjustments has been understanding the day-to-day realities of the job.

"The different types of calls we get and the different experiences we actually have versus what I thought it would be like before I was in law enforcement," he said, discussing those realities.

He noted that the reality of policing, particularly in a small agency, differs from common expectations. Which has been the biggest adjustment for Mendenhall. Before, he said, he expected the department operations to be a lot more tech-savvy and have a lot more capabilities

than they actually have.

The academy provided a strong foundation, he said, but some lessons can come only through field experience. For example, "difficult people, they attempted to show that in the academy, but until you actually experience it, it's not very well understood."

Since arriving in Sweet Home, Mendenhall said he has been struck by the community atmosphere and level of support for local officers.

"I feel like Sweet Home is a welcoming community to law enforcement, and even the people I fairly regularly deal with are pretty supportive of law enforcement," he said.

Mendenhall said he aims to be a "proactive" officer and emphasizes treating people with respect during every interaction.

"I try to approach the public by seeing everyone as a person first and not judging anybody until I actually figure out what's going on," he said.

Working in a small town requires versatility, he added, citing as examples: "Being approachable, learning how to get by with less because we don't have as many resources to help us with certain calls, and we definitely take a lot of calls that bigger agencies would not take, such as a dog running down the street, for example."

Although still early in his career, Mendenhall said he has already had opportunities to respond to stressful situations and feels prepared to act when needed.

"I feel I am able to jump into action pretty quickly to help mitigate whatever is causing the stressor or try



Tyler Mendenhall says he's learned a lot since joining Sweet Home's Police Department as one of its newest officers. - Satina Tolman photo

to de-escalate the person or situation."

Like many small-town officers, Mendenhall's role extends beyond emergency response. Officers frequently serve as mediators, code enforcers and social service liaisons, while focusing on crime prevention through patrol, traffic enforcement, welfare checks, community outreach and assistance with animal-related calls.

In his first year, Mendenhall said his primary goal is straightforward: to get as many calls correct as he can.

Looking ahead, he has not yet chosen a specialty

within law enforcement.

"I am still open to that because I haven't seen all the opportunities that are out there yet. I am just trying my best to be a good patrol officer at this point," he said.

What excites him most about the profession is the unpredictability and the opportunity to solve problems in real time.

"There are multiple times a day I will go to calls I have never been to, and just trying to sort through everything and problem solve and figure it out and get to the best solution for all the parties involved," he said.

When he has free time, which he admits is rare

right now, Mendenhall enjoys spending time outdoors hunting, fishing, and watching his children play sports. He said being a husband and father remains his highest priority.

The most helpful advice Mendenhall says he has received is simple: "You're not going to solve the world's problems."

Still, he sees the badge as more than a career change; it's an opportunity to serve neighbors face to face. In a town like Sweet Home, he said, that work begins each shift the same way: ready for whatever call comes next.

EAGLES

From page 12

speeding us up."

The Eagles finished 21-9 overall, 10-0 in the Valley Coast Conference.

Bend based Trinity Lutheran will have a more local presence next year as it moves into the 3A Mountain Valley Conference next fall, along with Sweet Home, which is moving down from 4A, to join Sisters, La Pine, Creswell, Pleasant Hill and Harrisburg.

Whitehead said he was proud of how his seniors were unselfish in leading the Eagles.

"Each senior played specific roles for the team. They put aside the individual stuff for the team. Our sophomore and juniors did a really good job, setting themselves up for success next year if they keep working during the off-season."



LINN SHUTTLE

MON-FRI 6 AM - 10 PM - 10 ROUTES PER DAY
SAT 7 AM - 7:30 PM - 6 ROUTES PER DAY
CALL FOR APPROVED FLAG STOPS



Starting March 9th, 2026 there will be a route change. Currently on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the Sweet Home In-Town Transit (formerly the Shopper) makes 3 trips up to Cascadia. That route will be replaced by our Dial-A-Bus service. Starting March 9th, our riders needing to get to and from this community can call us 541-367-4775 and schedule a ride. Rides cost \$1 each way. Rides must be scheduled 48-72 hours in advance. Eligible pick-up times are available between the hours of 10am-3pm. Outside those times will be on a case-by-case basis.

DIAL-A-BUS

CURB TO CURB IN SWEET HOME
MON-FRI 7 AM - 4 PM
CALL TO SCHEDULE
OFFICE HOURS 8-4

**SWEET HOME
IN TOWN TRANSIT**

MON-SAT 9 AM - 4 PM
SHOP LOCAL- 4 TRIPS A DAY
THROUGH TOWN

541-367-4775 | LINNSHUTTLE.COM | FIND US ON FACEBOOK

DSA

From page 1

Scott Ingalls.

The Strawberry Court was present, as well as state Rep. Jami Cate, City Manager Ron Whitlatch, Mayor Ken Jackola, city councilors David McClain and Michelle Steinhebel, and several others representing WesternU and other leading businesses in town.

Distinguished Service Awards

**Man of the Year
Jason Adamson**

Adamson, deputy fire marshal at Lebanon Fire District and owner of Santiam CPR, was nominated for his "unwavering commitment" to serve the community, according to one who nominated him.

He started as a volunteer firefighter more than 20 years ago and worked his way up to his current position, proving himself to be a "consistent presence and leader, ensuring the safety and preparedness of our community."

During his career in fire service, Adamson became co-owner of Santiam CPR, through which he trains people how to perform life-saving skills in an effort to expand the public's knowledge in emergency preparedness.

Also, in his current role as the district's union vice president, Adamson is behind an effort to get the union more involved in the community.

Adamson's "passion for both community engagement and fire service history" is also seen in his efforts to help return Lebanon's 1936 Seagrave fire engine to LFD, said Steven Hodges, who presented the award.

He was described as a dedicated person who exemplifies leadership through resilience, integrity and a forward-looking spirit, with a commitment to public education and community safety.



At right, Megan Lofton walks to the front of the room to accept her award as Junior First Citizen - Photo by Scott Swanson

Woman of the Year Michelle Steinhebel

Steinhebel, city councilor for Lebanon and director of communications for the Lebanon Community School District, is said by her nominator to be one who "approaches every challenge with integrity and a genuine desire to make Lebanon a better place for all its residents."

Jenny Sheldon, last year's winner, noted that after graduating high school, Steinhebel chose to build her life here and invest her time and leadership back into "the community that helped shape her."

Through her career, Steinhebel has "used her voice and her skills to inform, connect and support the communities she serves," and for more than a decade she's been active in organizations that strengthen the community.

Some of her involvements outside of work include the Lebanon Oregon Legacy Club (formerly Optimists), Lebanon Schools Foundation,

Pioneer Elementary PTA, Lebanon Strawberrians and strategic taskforce for the Lebanon 2040 Vision.

"What stands out most

about her, I believe, is not just the number of roles she had, but the heart behind them," Sheldon said. "She shows up, she volunteers, she collabo-

**Junior First Citizen
Megan Lofton**

Lofton, a nurse, volunteer and Lebanon Explosion dance coach, was nominated for her role helping lead the dance team to several state wins, her mentorship to young women and her community volunteerism.

Last year's winner, Steve Patterson, said Lofton has been mentoring Lebanon's youth for almost two decades and "beyond that, she's quietly stepped up and infused creativity into our local and

See DSA, Page 18

Loggers, students compete at OLC



- SHHS photo



- Oregon Logging Conference photo

At left, Justin Jackola, right, of Rice Logging in Sweet Home, was the third-place winner in the Oregon Logging Conference's Log Loader Competition, held during the annual conference Feb. 19-21 in Eugene. Jackola's time of 3:33.76 was only 11 seconds short of the winner, Jeremy Staats (3:22.72), with Zane Bryant finishing second (3:26.28). Both work for Bryant Logging of Beavercreek. With Jackola in this photo is Rick Kriege of Kriege Logging in Prineville. Above, Sweet Home High School forestry students attend the Future Forestry Workers Career Day on Feb. 20, in which they learning about logging, forestry, reforestation, sawmills, wildland firefighting, diesel mechanics, and operating heavy equipment and competed against nine other high schools in forestry skills.

East Linn
ROOFING
541-367-2293
CCB# 110950

WE SUPPORT THE NEW ERA!

**Electrical
Systems
Services**
Dan and
Cindy Rice

Circuit Court

Jaiden Dutch Basham, 23, charged March 3 with two counts of fleeing or attempting to elude, reckless driving, recklessly endangering another person, driving while suspended and speeding more than 100 mph. He posted 10% of a \$25,000 bail.

Kristina Larizza Boswell, 40, charged with supplying contraband. Bail: \$10,000.

Johnny Ray Bishop, 54, charged Feb. 24 with DUII (liquor), reckless driving and criminal driving while suspended or revoked.

Connor Churchill, 20, charged March 9 with DUII (liquor), assault IV and operating a vehicle without driving privileges

or in violation of license restrictions.

Joshua James Harden, 46, charged March 6 with criminal mischief I.

Douglas Ryan Kempton, 34, sentenced March 6 to a \$440 fine after pleading no contest to failure to report as a sex offender.

Chloe Estelle Linares, 25, charged March 4 with two counts of fleeing or attempting to elude, two counts of escape III, two counts of resisting arrest, reckless driving, recklessly endangering another person, five counts of criminal mischief I, and failure to perform duties of driver - property damage. Bail: \$20,000.

Autumn Brook Pearson, 32, charged March 5 with unlawful possession of fentanyl and unlawful possession of meth. Bail: \$5,000.

Justin Michael Sears, 21, charged March 9 with sexual abuse I and contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Jacob David Siefarth, 30, sentenced March 6 to one year suspension of a drivers license, 120 hours jail, 24 mos. bench probation, restitution and a \$1,500 fine after pleading no contest to DUII (liquor) with a .12% BAC and criminal mischief II. Dismissed: refusal to take a test for intoxicants.

PUBLIC SAFETY

From page 9

LEBANON POLICE

2:13 a.m. - Caller reported subject outside firing a gun, 100 block S 5th St. Richard Guy Tegen, 36, found walking in roadway, drinking alcohol. When placed in handcuffs, he headbutted patrol car and dented it. Also damaged door and partition inside vehicle by kicking. Cited on LMC warrant for FTA, and Klamath County Circuit Court warrant for FTAS - assault IV, disorderly conduct II.

8:49 a.m. - Subject with hatchet trying to cut plastic wires near phone pole, 400 block N Santiam Hwy.

10:42 a.m. - Aiden Dean Winningham, 20, cited for DU.

11:36 a.m. - Kaseem Dee Dodson, 31, cited for DWS, DU, and LMC warrant for FTA.

3:20 p.m. - Osvaldo E. Duenas-Mestas, 23, cited for speeding

40/20 school zone, 500 block Cascade Dr.

3:32 p.m. - Cheyenne M. Schatz, 30, cited for speeding 37/20 school zone, 500 block Cascade Dr.

4:11 p.m. - Evyn N. Akin, 19, cited for speeding 41/20 school zone, 500 block Cascade Dr.

5:04 p.m. - Caller reported new CV axles from last year were swapped with used ones, unknown when or where.

5:32 p.m. - Henry Drew Tucker, 40, cited on LMC warrant for contempt of court and PV.

MARCH 5

LCSO/OSP LEBANON

2:16 p.m. - Deputy took report on litter dump in front of timber gate, 31000 block Sodaville. Report taken.

4:39 p.m. - Jack Counts, 36, of Lebanon, arrested, lodged in LCJ for warrant, 2600 block Porter. Report taken.

10:49 p.m. - Crash reported in 34800 block Webber. Joshua

James Cartwright, of Lebanon, cited for careless driving. Report taken.

LCSO/OSP SWEET HOME S. COUNTY

10:10 a.m. - Whitney Spent, 36, of Sweet Home, arrested on warrant, 40900 block Hwy. 228. Report taken.

10:13 a.m. - Scott Heinz, 38, of Sweet Home, arrested on three unspecified LCCC warrants, 40900 block Hwy. 228. Report taken.

10:37 a.m. - Joshua Harden, 46, of Brownsville, arrested for criminal mischief I, disorderly conduct II and reckless endangering, 25500 block Gap, Brownsville. Lodged at LCJ. Report taken.

6:34 p.m. - Dog bite reported in 27900 block Pine View, Brownsville. Report taken.

SWEET HOME POLICE

9:05 a.m. - Caller reported water

See Public Safety, Page 16

Analyst predicts local fuel prices likely to continue rise this week

Average gasoline prices in Oregon have risen 25.5 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$4.11 per gallon on Monday, March 9, according to GasBuddy, a technology company and mobile app that reports fuel prices in real time.

According to GasBuddy's weekly survey of 1,307 stations in Oregon, prices in Oregon are 61.4 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 43.1 cents per gallon higher than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has increased 85.9 cents compared to a week ago and stands at \$4.599 per gallon.

The company delivers station-level field pricing on its fuel savings app.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Oregon was priced at \$3.19/g yesterday while the most expensive was \$5.69/g, a difference of \$2.50/g.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 51.1 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.45/g today. The national average

is up 54.1 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 41.6 cents per gallon higher than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Historical gasoline prices in Oregon and the national average going back five years:

March 9, 2025: \$3.68/g (U.S. Average: \$3.03/g)

March 9, 2024: \$3.89/g (U.S. Average: \$3.40/g)

March 9, 2023: \$3.86/g (U.S. Average: \$3.45/g)

March 9, 2022: \$4.71/g (U.S. Average: \$4.32/g)

March 9, 2021: \$2.99/g (U.S. Average: \$2.81/g)

These are prices reported Monday in the region:

Eugene- \$4.05/g, up 21.1 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.84/g.

Salem- \$3.97/g, up 21.8 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.75/g.

Portland- \$4.17/g, up 21.2 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.96/g.

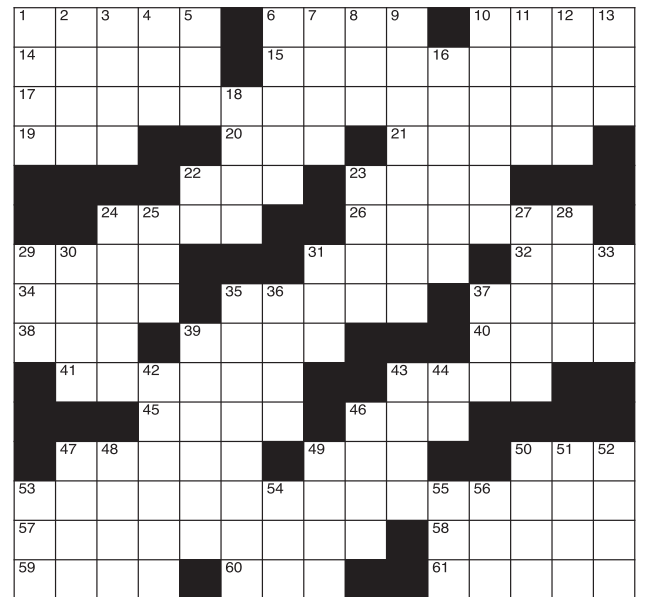
"In just a week, con-

sumers have seen gasoline prices surge at one of the fastest rates in years after oil prices spiked following U.S. strikes on Iran and the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"With additional attacks across the Middle East over the weekend pushing oil above \$100 per barrel for the first time in years, fuel markets are now rapidly recalibrating to the risk of prolonged disruption to global supply flows.

"As a result, gasoline prices in many states could climb another 20 to 50 cents per gallon this week, with price-cycling markets potentially seeing increases as early as (Monday). Diesel may rise even more sharply, with increases of 35 to 75 cents per gallon possible as global distillate markets react. While the situation remains highly fluid, consumers are already beginning to feel the impact as energy markets adjust to this sudden escalation."

CROSSWORD



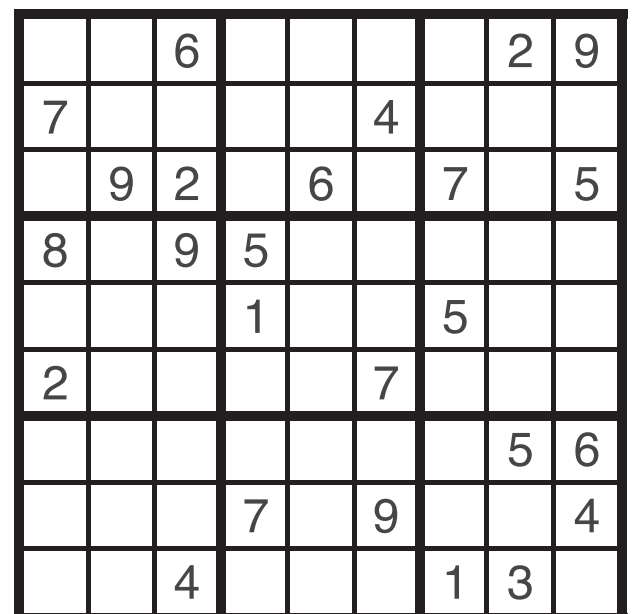
CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Nocturnal rodents
- 6. "Sin City" actress Jessica
- 10. Strong dark beer
- 14. Nebraska city
- 15. Inclined to avoid conflict
- 17. Mistaken belief
- 19. Expresses disgust
- 20. Greek goddess of the dawn
- 21. Cranky
- 22. Boy who wouldn't grow up
- 23. Scots for "home"
- 24. Turfs
- 26. Countries
- 29. The duration of something
- 31. Pastries
- 32. Golf score
- 34. Reasonable
- 35. Female parents
- 37. Art __, around 1920
- 38. Beloved sandwich
- 39. Damaged
- 40. Long time
- 41. One who rears
- 43. Without
- 45. Occupational safety and health act
- 46. Political action committee
- 47. Geological period
- 49. Swiss river
- 50. Type of mathematical graph
- 53. Doctors are sworn to it
- 57. One's concerns
- 58. Type of wrap
- 59. Foray
- 60. Born of
- 61. A temporary police force

CLUES DOWN

- 1. __ and circumstance
- 2. Bowfin fish
- 3. Ready money
- 4. Expression of satisfaction
- 5. A person who lacks good judgment
- 6. Cooks where one
- 7. Majors and Oswald
- 8. __ humbug
- 9. Salts
- 10. Type of hound
- 11. A notice of someone's death
- 12. Disgust with sweetness
- 13. Barbie's friend
- 16. Rectal procedures
- 18. Partner to carrots
- 22. Group of cops (abbr.)
- 23. First Chinese dynasty
- 24. A favorite of children
- 25. Being a single unit or thing
- 27. Fencing swords
- 28. New England river
- 29. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
- 30. Insect feeler
- 31. Payment (abbr.)
- 33. Director Howard
- 35. Large deep-bodied fish
- 36. Architectural term describing pillars
- 37. Chargers legend Fouts
- 39. Awaken
- 42. Covered
- 43. Frock
- 44. Cools a home
- 46. Congratulatory gestures
- 47. __ fide
- 48. Ancient Incan sun god
- 49. Card players' move: __ up
- 50. Gentlemen
- 51. Educational organizations
- 52. Actress Daly
- 53. Southern sky constellation (abbr.)
- 54. Midway between east and southeast
- 55. Small European viper
- 56. Language close to Thai.

SUDOKU



Level: Advanced

Public Notices

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND REQUEST FOR COMMENT. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Sweet Home Planning Commission will hold a public hearing(s) to consider the following request(s).

REQUEST: The applicant is requesting a conditional use permit to construct an approximately 200 square foot residential accessory structure on the subject property located at 2309 Harding Street. 2309 Harding Street is a vacant lot and based on SHMC Chapter 17.10.040(l) a conditional use is required for a secondary use of a lot without primary use. Tax lot 3500 contains approximately 22,780 square feet and is in the Residential Low-Density (R1) Zone.

APPLICANT AND PROPERTY OWNER: Gail Heine.

FILE NUMBER: CU26-01.

PROPERTY LOCATION: 2309 Harding Street, Sweet Home, Oregon 97386; Identified on the Linn County Assessor's Map as 32CA, Tax Lot 3500. REVIEW AND DECISION CRITERIA: 2309 Harding Street, Sweet Home, Oregon 97386; Identified on the Linn County Assessor's Map as 32CA, Tax Lot 3500.

HEARING DATE & TIME: April 16, 2026, at 6:30 PM. HEARING LOCATION: City Hall, Council Chambers at 3225 Main Street, Sweet Home, Oregon 97386. STAFF CONTACT: Angela Clegg, Planning & Building Manager Phone: (541) 818-8029; Email: aclegg@sweethomeor.gov.

You may submit comments or recommendations prior to, or at the public hearing. Written comments submitted by 5:00 PM April 6, 2026, will be included in the staff report that is provided to the Planning Commission. Written comments that are submitted after that time, but prior to the hearing, will be presented to the Planning Commission at their public hearing. Comments may be emailed to aclegg@sweethomeor.gov or mailed or submitted to the Community and Economic Development Department office at City Hall, 3225 Main Street, Sweet Home, Oregon 97386. Please include the file number(s) in the subject line of your comment. The failure of an issue to be raised in a hearing, in person or by letter, or failure to provide sufficient specificity to afford the decision maker an opportunity to respond to the issue precludes appeal to the Land Use Board of Appeals based on that issue. A copy of the application, all documents and evidence relied upon by the applicant and applicable criteria are available for inspection at no cost and a copy will be provided at reasonable cost. A copy of the staff report will be available for inspection at no cost at least seven days prior to the hearing and a copy will be provided at reasonable cost. Please contact the Community and Economic Development Department at 3225 Main Street, Sweet Home, Oregon 97386; Phone: (541) 818-8029. Persons interested in commenting on this application should submit testimony in writing to the Community and Economic Development Department Office located in City Hall prior to the hearing or attend the meeting and give testimony verbally.

Public Notices

Persons who wish to testify will be given the opportunity to do so by the Chair of the Commission at the Planning Commission meeting. Such testimony should address the criteria in the Sweet Home Municipal Code which are applicable to the request. Notice of the decision on this application will be mailed to the applicant, property owner, those who provided written comments on the proposal, and those who requested a copy of the decision. The location of the meeting is accessible to persons with disabilities. If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please notify the Community and Economic Development Department Office in advance of the meeting by calling (541) 818-8029. (3/11)

NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE STATE OF OREGON FOR LINN COUNTY - PROBATE DEPARTMENT

CASE NO. 26PB01659

In the matter of the Estate of Judith Lee Lane, Decedent, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that James Cameron has been appointed personal representative. All persons having claims against the estate are required to present them, with vouchers attached, to the aforementioned personal representative c/o Northwest Legal, Attn: Jinoo Hwang, 975 Oak Street, Suite 700, Eugene, OR 97401, 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 attorney for the personal representative, Northwest Legal, Attn: Jinoo Hwang, 975 Oak Street, Suite 700, Eugene, OR 97401. (3/11)

DISTRICT COURT EUREKA COUNTY, NEVADA

KATIE LYNN VAN ATTA Plaintiff, VS. TONY JAMES VAN ATTA Defendant. CASE NO.: CV2602-280 DEPT.: 2

SUMMONS

NOTICE! YOU HAVE BEEN SUED. THE COURT MAY DECIDE AGAINST YOU WITHOUT YOUR BEING HEARD UNLESS YOU RESPOND IN WRITING WITHIN 21 DAYS. READ THE INFORMATION BELOW VERY CAREFULLY.

To the Defendant named above: A civil complaint or petition has been filed by the Plaintiff against you for the relief as set forth in that document (see the complaint or petition). The object of this action is: Divorce.

If you intend to defend this lawsuit, within 21 days after this summons is served on you (not counting the day of service), you must:

1. File with the Clerk of Court a formal written answer to the complaint or petition.
2. Pay the required filing fee to the court, or file an Application to Proceed In Forma Pauperis and request a waiver of the filing fee.
3. Serve a copy of your answer upon the Plaintiff whose name and address is shown below.

Public Notices

If you fail to respond, the Plaintiff can request your default. The court can then enter a judgment against you for the relief demanded in the complaint or petition.

Issued on Behalf of Plaintiff: Plaintiff's Name: KATIE LYNN VAN ATTA

Address: 3013 Crescent Ave City, State, Zip: Crescent Valley, NV, 89821 (2/25 - 3/18)

Sweet Home Police Department 1950 Main St., Sweet Home, OR 97386 (541) 367-5181

Notice of intent to dispose of property under ORS 98.245

The Sweet Home Police Department has in its physical possession the unclaimed personal property described below. If you have any ownership interest in any of the unclaimed property, you must file a claim with the Sweet Home Police Department within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice or you will lose interest in that property. You may file a claim that presents proof satisfactory that you are the lawful owner or security interest holder of the property. The unclaimed property may be donated to a non-profit organization or another government agency; retained for use by the City of Sweet Home; destroyed; or sold at public auction through govdeals.com, ebay.com or Facebook at any time after the 30-day period expires, March 11-April 10, 2026 (PP 25-12):

Cell phones, wallets, cash, wrench, wire cutters, ax, cigarettes, lighter, medication for Eric Shipp, keys with fob, battery, screwdriver, wallet for Gavin Duran, bicycles, lighters, debit card for Kelly Orban, nails, drill bits, knives, ratchet strap, Suburu key, purse, change. (3/11)

NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS

On February 27, 2026, the Linn County Circuit Court of Oregon appointed Heidi K. Anderson as the Personal Representative (PR) in the Estate of Donna D. Shupp Case #26PB00973. Claims against the estate must be presented to the PR, with proper vouchers, within 4 months from the 1st publication date or they may be barred. All persons whose rights may be affected by this proceeding may get additional info from the court, the PR or the Attorney for the PR.

PR and Attorney for PR: Heidi K. Anderson c/o Dean Gibbons Law, 205 SE Spokane St. Ste 300, Portland, OR 97202 First published: March 11, 2026. /s/ Dean J. Gibbons Dean J. Gibbons OSB# 912835 Attorney for Personal Representative (3/11)

DO YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN SWEET HOME HISTORY?

We're looking for volunteers to help scan back issues of The New Era newspaper.

This is an interesting local history project that will preserve decades of community news and provide online reading for future generations.

• Flexible scheduling — we'll work around your availability

Public Notices

- Volunteer as little as 1 hour or several hours a week
- Training provided — no experience needed
- Multiple volunteers needed--any age can help!

If you enjoy local history and want to help preserve it, we'd love to have you join us! Give us a call at 541-367-2135. or reach out by email: office@sweethomenews.com (TFN)

PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 87

Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 3/17/2026.

The sale will be held at 10:00am by MCCLINTON AUTO COLLISION 3960 E COMMERCIAL WAY SE ALBANY, OR 2017 CHEV TAHOE SUV VIN = 1GNSKBKC3HR157753 Amount due on lien \$7405.75 Reputed owner(s) ANDERSON, AMANDA MARIE (3/4 - 3/11)

NOTICE OF SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY. UNDER LANDLORD'S POSSESSORY LIEN.

Personal property left in the following units have been seized for non-payment of rent and will be sold at **The Storage Depot- 36666, Hwy 34, Lebanon, OR 97355** on March 27, 2026 at 10am: Austin, Leslie CC40; Gilmore, Justin DR47; Johnson, Stevie DC40; Koenig, Joshua DC72; Libra, Brandi ER4; Mather, Yasmin FC22; Medlin, Ann CL22; O'Malley, Colin CC73; Walker, Kristina DC9; Corson, Maria DR10. (3/11-3/18)

PURSUANT TO ORS CHAPTER 87

Notice is hereby given that the following vehicle will be sold, for cash to the highest bidder, on 3/19/2026.

The sale will be held at 10:00am by M & N AUTO LLC 39821 HIH-BEE RD NE ALBANY, OR 2013 RAM 3500 VIN = 3C63R3KL7DG616329 Amount due on lien \$16216.00 Reputed owner(s) BISHOP SANITATION EDGAR HOLBROOK (3/4 - 3/11)

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

In the Matter of the Estate of: Randy K. Bilek, Deceased. Case No. 26PB01028

Notice to Interested Persons NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned has been appointed personal representative. All persons having claims against the estate are required to present them, with vouchers attached, to the undersigned personal representative at the Law offices of Melinda M. Brown, 725 Ellsworth Street SW, Albany, OR 97321, 541-967-7776, within four months after the date of the 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, Darryl D. Hensley, or the attorney for the personal representative, Melinda M. Brown. Personal Representative Darryl D. Hensley 30180 449th Ave. Volin, SD 57075 (3/11)

Firewood For Sale

Seasoned Firewood Fir & Pine mixed. U-haul \$200 a cord. We haul \$220 a cord 541-231-2251, 541-981-4177 (2/4 - 3/25)

Seasoned firewood Fir \$220 a cord, maple \$275 a cord, Mix \$250 a cord. 541-990-7730. (3/4 -3/25)

Wanted Motorhome

Wanted Motorhome, Travel Trailer or 5th Wheel 2005-2022. If it needs work or doesn't run that's okay. Willing to buy as is. Have cash and willing to pay fair price. I am a private party. 503-269-2947 (3/04- 5/27)

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: Audien Hearing. The world's first hearing aid with touchscreen controls. No tiny buttons, apps or prescriptions. 45-day risk free trial. Free shipping. Lifetime support. More than 1.5 million happy customers. Call Audien 1-844-387-1163.

SERVICES: YMT Vacations. Over 50 guided tours available. Affordable, social and stress-free travel designed for mature travelers. Our tours include accommodations, transportation, baggage handling, sightseeing, entrance fees, a professional Tour Director and select meals. For a limited time SAVE \$250 on all tours. Call YMT today. 1-866-335-3689.

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 12/27/26.) Call 1-855-341-5268.

Country artist Frankie Ballard to headline this year's Fair lineup

Frankie Ballard will open this year's Linn County Fair with headline entertainment on Thursday, July 16, Fair officials announced last week.

Friday night's entertainment will be announced soon, they said. Two of three Main Stage acts for the 2026 Linn County Fair have been announced by the Linn County Fair Board.

Concerts are free with paid admission, although reserved seats are available at: <https://www.linncountyfair.com/concerts>.

Frankie Ballard is a Battle Creek, Mich. native whose 2010 debut sparked three consecutive Billboard No. 1 country singles – the Gold-certified "Helluva Life," Platinum-certified "Sunshine & Whiskey" and "Young & Crazy."

His music has garnered over 1 billion global streams, with tours alongside Bob Seger, Taylor Swift and Keith Urban.

After spending more than 200 days a year on the road through 2020, Ballard stepped back to reset. Returning with "Money Runs Out" and the upcoming single "Homebody," he emerges renewed – a husband, father, and integrity-driven artist blending country, classic rock, and gospel with a deeper



Country artist Frankie Ballard will open this year's Linn County Fair.

sense of purpose.

The Band Perry, the Grammy and ACM Award-winning country music duo, will be the Saturday night headline act.

The Band Perry, featuring Kimberly Perry and her husband Johnny Costello, has sold 2.5 million albums, 12 million singles and racked up more than 1 billion streams.

Known for their string of crossover hits like "If I Die Young," "Better Dig Two," "All Your Life," and "You Lie," Their concert will cap off fair week, which will include three full days of family-friendly fun, livestock events, carnival rides, competitions and more at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Road East, Albany.

DSA

From page 14

cherished traditions."

Lofton participates in key events in the community, such as the Strawberry Festival parade and downtown events through the Lebanon Downtown Association. She also volunteers with an elementary school multiple times a week, all while working full time and raising her two young children.

"This individual's passion in everything that they do inspires local youth to be more involved and expect more from themselves," Patterson said. "This person has given so much back to their community and is very deserving of this award."

Senior First Citizen Dale Hall

Hall was nominated for his active volunteerism through a variety of organizations in the community, and his willingness to serve where needed.

He supports Dala's Blue Angels with their Walk A Mile for A Child, sets up Christmas decorations for Holidays in the Park, and assists with National Night Out.

Hall also supports the library through volunteering for Friends of the Lebanon Public Library, and was "instrumental" in rebuilding the Optimist Club into the Lebanon Oregon Legacy Club.

Presenter Heather McDaniel said he's "the person that volunteers the most."

Frankie Gray "Answering the Call" - Paul Aziz

Presenter Dale Hall said this year's recipient of the Frankie Gray award, former mayor Paul Aziz, made a decision long ago that Lebanon deserved something special at Christmas.

"Some people decorate for Christmas, and then there are people who rewire the grid," he said.

For 15 years, Aziz has been spending "thousands of hours" year after year planning and programming a Christmas production for the community that not only lights up the neighborhood, but also "lights up the community."

His Cascade Christmas Lights show draws families to his home every year where children can be seen dancing in the driveway while an animated light display illuminates the yard. The show has raised more than \$16,000, 3,476 pounds of food, and warm clothing for the Lebanon Soup Kitchen and other nonprofits.

After Aziz served as mayor for 10 years, his service to the community didn't stop.

He helped form the Lebanon Museum Foundation and, more recently, Aziz did not hesitate to say 'yes' when an opportunity arose to program the new lighted "mega tree" for Holidays in the Park.



Strawberrians escort the 2026 Strawberry Princess Court into the DSA awards banquet as the event begins.

– Photo by Sarah Brown

The light shows are consistent, generous and joyful, "built on an incredible amount of behind-the-scenes work that most people never see."

Business Awards

Business Leader of the Year Chris Breshears

Breshears was named Business Leader of the Year not only for the numerous leadership roles he serves to support Lebanon, but also for his ability to serve them well, Grizzle said.

She noted that leadership is not about power or titles, or about seeking recognition, and that's just a few reasons why Breshears was selected as business leader.

He serves as vice president of the Lebanon Downtown Association, vice president of the Legacy Club, board member for the 4th of July Celebration, committee member for the hospital foundation's garden and president of the chamber board.

It's the latter position that seemed to irk Grizzle the most, in a not-so-serious way (as the two share a special bantering relationship).

"While he does enjoy reminding me that he is, in fact, 'the boss of me,' what he really does is lead with steadiness and intention," she said.

Grizzle described her boss as a reliable leader who asks good questions, pushes for clarity, cares deeply about governance, shows up prepared, and supports the chamber, the downtown, youth programs and nonprofits.

Breshears was also described as a coach, volunteer and "professional meeting-attender," and if there's a board in Lebanon, "he's either on it or considering it."

Everything he does, Grizzle

said, he does "because he believes in his community," and "Lebanon is stronger because of his willingness to step up again and again."

Small Business of the Year T-Mobile

T-Mobile was honored as Small Business of the Year for helping "power" last year's push in a national contest that ultimately landed Lebanon High School as runner-up.

Competing against 2,100 schools, the local T-Mobile team led the charge bringing the Lebanon community together in a way that earned its school nearly 1.5 million votes and a \$100,000 check to go toward Heath Stadium upgrades.

Small businesses such as T-Mobile are honored for being the "heartbeat of our communities," showing up loud, proud and in magenta, Grizzle said. In this case, they rallied an entire community for a "huge win."

"They showed every one of us what it looks like when a business believes in its community so much it helps shine on a national stage," she said.

Large Business of the Year Knife River Training Center

Knife River, with its state-of-the-art training center, was honored for "shaping the future workforce" in the region, Grizzle said.

The skilled trades training center provides opportunities for the area's men and women to find success in family-wage careers, jobs that "keep our communities running." But that's not the only reason they were awarded this year.

It's the things Knife River does beyond that – opening doors to nonprofits, hosting community events, partner-

See DSA, Page 19

LOCAL SERVICE - POWERFUL EQUIPMENT

CASCADE
OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT



541-451-5213 • 1215 WAIRWAY RD-LEBANON
WWW.CASCADEPOWERLEBANON.COM

DSA

From page 18

ing with schools, supporting CASA, collaborating with workforce groups - that earned them the spotlight.

"They invest in Lebanon," Grizzle said. "Leadership like that doesn't happen by accident. It takes intentional culture. It takes vision."

Kris Latimer, director at Knife River, "understands that business success and community success are not separate things - they rise together," Grizzle said. "This organization models what corporate citizenship should look like."

**Columbia Bank
Nonprofit of the Year
The River Center**

The River Center was awarded with a \$500 check from Columbia Bank for the "quiet work" they do every week to help someone in need.

The River Center offers breakfast and a variety of resources to help people move forward when they need it most, including mental health or recovery programs, emergency assistance and dental help.

Grizzle described the organization as a place that offers practical help, guidance, hope

and a welcoming smile.

"Communities are measured by how they take care of people when life gets difficult," Grizzle said. "What makes this work so meaningful is the way it's done: with dignity, with compassion and with a deep belief that every person deserves support and a path forward."

Community Awards

Lebanon New Business Generations presented its Business of the Year award to Gateway Imprints.

Lebanon Ambassadors named Adrienne Irwin its Ambassador of the Year award.

Lebanon Rotary Club presented its Member of the Year award to Brandy O'Bannon.

Boys Club and Girls Club named Tanea Straub as Volunteer of the Year, John Segar as Volunteer Coach of the Year, and Drew Briese as Supporter of the Year.

Lebanon Community School District announced recent Apple Award recipients, who were Mike Wilson, Kim Mynar, Laurie Regalado, Bart Baldwin, Mindy Hoeckle and Erin Forrest.

And local resident Mary Thorp honored Robert "Smitty" Smith with a Servant's Heart Award.



At left, Michelle Steinhebel receives the Woman of the Year award from Jenny Sheldon and, at right, Jason Adamson receives Man of the Year from Steve Hodges. - Photos by Sarah Brown

BUSINESS DIRECTORY LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE, SHOP WHERE YOU LIVE.

AUTO REPAIR

SHAWN ANDERSON, OWNER
LOCATED IN SWEET HOME
541-367-2992

EQUIPMENT

CASCADE
OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT
"Powerful Equipment, Local Service"
HOURS: M-F 8AM-5PM
SAT 8AM-NOON
**1215 W AIRWAY ROAD
LEBANON OR 97355**
CASCADEPOWERLEBANON.COM
541-451-5213

FURNITURE

2550 S. SANTIAM HWY
f @ G
(541) 259-3646

HOME & GARDEN

SUMMIT
HOME & GARDEN
541-258-7107
www.summitacehg.com
ASK ABOUT FREE DELIVERY
FINANCING OPTIONS AVAILABLE
MON- FRI 7:30AM-6PM
SATURDAY 8AM-5PM
1055 TANGENT ST. LEBANON

INSURANCE

Irwin Agency
Enriching The Lives In The Communities We Serve

COUNTRY
FINANCIAL
Auto • Home • Life
Business • Retirement
(541) 223-0404

INSURANCE

FARMERS
INSURANCE
Aaron Hegge, AGENT
3037 Main St., Sweet Home
Ahegge@farmersagent.com
AUTO • HOME • LIFE • COMMERCIAL
(541) 367-5121

INSURANCE

KEESECKER
INSURANCE
Joel Keesecker
1195 MAIN STREET
541-367-2141

JEWELRY

Custom Design
Diamond Specialist
722 S. Main Street
tremisjewelry.com
(541) 258-2888

LOANS

loanDepot
JOLENE MULLENIX
Loan Consultant
NMLS#853502
(541) 570-2322
www.loanDepot.com/jmullenix
Equal Housing Opportunity | 56 E. Airport Rd.,
Lebanon, OR 97355. loanDepot.com, LLCNMLSID
174457. Licensed by the OR Division of Finance and
Corporate Securities, Mortgage Lending ML-4972.
(091923 120284-1723)

PLUMBING

CCB #238181
New Flo
PLUMBING
INC.
OWNER - MITCH CARTER
Office Hrs: Mon-Thu 8am - 4pm
New Construction • Remodels
Repairs • Service • Water Heaters
(541) 367-5655

REAL ESTATE

OREGON
Real Estate
PROFESSIONALS
LLC
2345 S. Santiam Hwy., Lebanon
oregonrealestateprofessionals.com
(541) 258-6100

REAL ESTATE

Tamara Shinko
Licensed Broker
503-951-7658
TAMARASHINKO@KW.COM
KW MID-WILLAMETTE
KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY
MLS
2125 SW PACIFIC BLVD, ALBANY

RV SALES & SUPPLIES

SWEET HOME
RV CENTER LLC
RV Sales, Service, Repair, Parts,
Appliances, Awnings, Propane, Solar and Batteries!
RV Waste Dump Open 24/7 Stop in Today!
MOBILE RV REPAIR SVC
AVAILABLE NOW
Established in 1974
Open 7 days a week
4691 HWY 20
sweethomervcenter.com
(541) 367-4293

THRIFT STORE

Sugar City
CLEANERS
NEW & USED MERCHANDISE
3031 SOUTH MAIN
OPEN: TUES. - SAT 10AM - 4PM
SUGARCITYCLEANERS@GMAIL.COM
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
541-367-3190

TIRE / AUTO REPAIR

point S
TIRE & AUTO SERVICE
4420 Hwy 20
Family Owned
541-367-4579 (Alignment)
pointstire.com/sweethome
TIRES - WHEELS - SUSPENSION
ALIGNMENT - BRAKES - OIL CHANGE
(541) 367-2462

Foresters host pulp processing activity at Fun Forest

By Jim Merzenich
LCSWA president

We arrived at 12:15 p.m. Feb. 24 and the hosts invited us to their warming fire. Hot coffee, water, soda, and snacks were provided.

On the two days preceding the tour we had 3 inches of rain and local streams were at flood stage. This did not deter people from attending and enjoying the Linn County Small Woodlands Association event. We expected nine attendees and 17 showed up.

The 22-year-old stand that was being thinned is adjacent to the Fun Forest barn. This stand was planted at about an 8-foot spacing and contained more than 600 trees

per acre.

While standing alongside the road, we watched Chris Melcher run the cut-to-length harvester, which cut each tree and then laid it horizontal to de-limb it. The machine was calibrated to separate the larger diameter "chip and saw" logs from the smaller pulpwood logs. The entire process takes about 30 seconds per tree.

The cut limbs are left on the ground and used as a cushion for the processor.

Melcher is a practicing forester and graduate of Oregon State University. After the demonstration, Melcher described the machine calibration and the reasoning for thinning the stand. He also

described how trees self-prune dead branches over a short period of years.

After this demonstration host Jim Cota led a road tour where we viewed stands ranging from 20 to 80 years of age that had been managed and thinned over time. Hearing the life history of each stand, we learned that Fun Forest current owners are efficiently managing their land and stands for the generations to come.

The Linn County Chapter's summer picnic will be held at the Fun Forest Barn on Saturday, July 18. Additional tours of the tree farm are planned for that event.



Rain gear was in order Feb. 24 as tour attendees witness thinning of a 22-year-old stand north of Berlin Road. Chris Melcher, center, explains the process. – Jim Merzenich photo

Third chapter in author fair reveals some new authors

By Sarah Brown
Of The New Era

Friends of the Lebanon Public Library held its third annual author fair, featuring 44 authors from Lebanon and throughout Oregon on Saturday, Feb. 28.

This year's event included featured speakers and a scavenger hunt for a chance to win a book by one of the authors.

This was author Emerson Reign's first time showing her series of "Season Sisters" books at the fair.

Reign, a contemporary dark romance writer, moved to Lebanon from Las Vegas with her husband in 2018.

Noting she was going through a dark period in her life and wanting to "pivot," she decided to start writing a book and the story "just came to her" in 2022.

"It just evolved and the

characters took on their own life," she said.

Her saga follows the story of four girls who were kidnapped at a young age and then later separated from each other after they were rescued.

"The overall story is them finding love, finding healing from their past and then eventually finding each other again," Reign said.

At the fair, Reign sold her trilogy series that included two companion books following one of the female main characters. She is currently completing her duet on the second female character, with plans for duets on the final two girls. Reign also has spin-off ideas she could work on once the girls' stories are complete.

Her books can be found on Amazon.



Readers visit with local authors during the Author Fair hosted by the Friends of the Lebanon Public Library. – Photo by Sarah Brown

Hamilton encourages kids to 'Read Mo' Books'

By Sarah Brown
Of The New Era

A flurry of excitement permeated Hamilton Creek Elementary in Lebanon as the regular cycle of a school day was replaced by activities designed to encourage a love of reading.

It was Friday, March 6, and students at Hamilton Creek were celebrating Read Across America week with activities centered around books by author Mo Willems, who created the "Elephant and Piggie," "Knuffle Bunny" and other well-known series.

As such, Hamilton's theme this year for Read Across America was "Read Mo' Books."

Throughout the week, kids read Willems books, "building up" to the big event on Friday when they participated in a variety of activities related to the stories they read, said Reading Teacher Mandy Seibert.

The activities, shared throughout the gym, library and classrooms, touched on some sort of topic related to Willems books.

In the gym, students were found

making paper bird nests, origami book corner covers, stuffies and other arts. Some were noisier in their activity as they shook plastic baggies to make homemade ice cream.

Games and drawing activities were performed in classrooms, and the library gave students the opportunity to read and to create their own little story book.

Media Assistant Liz Bitterman said Willems books are "extremely popular," so much so that she had to start keeping the library's collection in a back room to make sure they had enough for everyone to borrow.

According to Bitterman, the former media assistant always went all-out for Read Across America week and, following COVID, Seibert has been trying to build it back up to what it used to be.

"She's been really instrumental in bringing that vision back," Bitterman said of Seibert.

The purpose of Read Across America, Seibert said, is to encourage a love of reading, "to celebrate reading and all the things reading can do for you."



Hamilton Creek students enjoy time together while creating their own mini story books as part of the Read Across America program. – Photo by Sarah Brown