



Here fishy, fishy ...

Juvenile Department students take on fish parenthood



By Alex Paul
Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — There's something fishy going on at the Linn Benton Juvenile Detention Center. And staff members are just fine with it. Young folks are learning about the "circle of life" of salmon and trout, working hand-in-hand with staff from the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife through its Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program. Students have tended to 250 Chinook salmon eggs since October and due to their diligence, they have lost only one egg. That's far better than the survival rate in the wild.

Staff member Idahna Freitag heads up the project and says the students are excited about watching the young fish develop. "We got 250 Chinook salmon eggs on Oct. 19," Freitag said. "We will get 150 rainbow trout eggs in January."

Freitag said the program began in 2011, working with staff from the Corvallis ODFW office.

"The students learn about responsibility, fish habitat and the circle of life of fish," Freitag said.

15-year-old Riley is exuberant talking about how students monitor the water temperature within the 50-gallon fish tank, plus check on the water's pH and nitrate levels. All of the factors play a role in the survival of the fish and how quickly they grow.

They also check for ammonia levels. "We check the water temperature daily," Riley said. "We dechlorinate tap water by letting it sit for a day or so. Adding water



Student Riley demonstrates how classmates monitor conditions within the 50-gallon fish tank at the Linn Benton Juvenile Detention Center. Their hard work resulted in the loss of just one egg out of 250 provided by the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife.

also lowers the pH level and can change the water temperature." Bryan says he enjoys watching vide-

os that describe the life cycle of fish and Hope says it is interesting to watch the eggs progress into smolt.

"They have the yolk sack attached for a while," she said.

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Ribbon cutting celebrates Intermodal Center opening

Cutting the celebratory ribbon at the new Mid-Willamette Valley Intermodal Center Dec. 15 were: ConGlobal CEO Brandt Ring, Gov. Kate Brown, Linn County Commissioners Roger Nyquist, State Transportation Commission Vice-chair Julie Brown, ODOT Director Kris Strickler and Union Pacific's Aaron Hunt. The \$35 million facility is open and ready for business. Story and more photos on Pages 9 and 10.

Photo by Alex Paul

Landmark legislator Liz VanLeeuwen dies at 97

December 7, 2022 |
Courtesy The New Era

Liz VanLeeuwen, a longtime mid-valley farmer who represented Sweet Home and Lebanon in the Oregon state Legislature from 1981 to 1999, died Nov. 27 on her farm on Irish Bend Loop, near Halsey.

She was 97.

"She was an amazing lady," recalled Coreen Melcher, who served as VanLeeuwen's legislative aide in the 1990s after the legislator called her up one day and asked Melcher to help her out.

Alex Paul, former publisher of The New Era, and his wife Debbie, knew VanLeeuwen well.

"She was a tireless worker for the people, for rural people, especially – for agriculture, timber," Alex Paul said.

He emphasized that she was first and foremost a farmer.

"She understood rural people, our needs and the challenges that the modern world keeps throwing at rural America. She understood it and she worked to protect the interests of those who want to live in the country."



Former State Rep. Liz VanLeeuwen works with FFA students during a soil judging contest sponsored by the Linn Soil and Water Conservation District. VanLeeuwen served as a director for decades.

Melcher described VanLeeuwen as high-energy, extremely organized and very responsive, a legislator who "answered every single constituent – write or call. Every single one."

"She taught me so much," she said of her boss, who formerly had been a teacher. "I had no idea how to even turn on a computer. She worked with me and taught me."

VanLeeuwen was born Nov. 5, 1925, in Lakeview, where she lived until attending Oregon State University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in homemaking education and a minor in English in 1947. Growing up, her father raised registered Ayrshire dairy breeding livestock until losing his Lake County farm and dairy cattle when banks went broke in the late 1920s.

She married George "Geo" VanLeeuwen on June 15, 1947. They became seed farmers. In addition to farming, she was a news reporter and journalist for the Brownsville Times from 1949 to 1970. She also taught at Monroe High School and hosted a weekly farm report radio program on KWIL in the 1970s.

She and George, who preceded her in death on Oct. 21, 2016, had four children: Charles, Mary, James and Tim.

VanLeeuwen's political involvement began well before her stint in the Legislature. She was a founding member of Oregon Women for Agriculture and a member of the Oregon Farm Bureau Women's Committee and Legislative Committee before being elected to the Oregon House of Representatives.

"She was active in farming before she ran for office," Paul said.

"She did it out of survival. People were trying to take away their land for the river. She knew what it was like to have city people trying to make rules that would really hamper or harm the family farm," he added, referencing state plans at the time to create a giant 510-mile park along both sides of the river from Portland to Eugene.

In 1999, VanLeeuwen was elected to the Linn County Soil and Water Conservation District board and held that position until her death.

Debbie Paul, now office administrator for the LCSWC, said VanLeeuwen was active to the end.

"She was very hard-working, very passionate about representing her constituency when she was in the legislature, as well as agriculture concerns while she was on the Soil and Water District board," she said. "She was never afraid to ask the hard questions, even if it made people uncomfortable. That's one of the things I always admired about her."

As she did with her constituents' communications, VanLeeuwen was thorough in reading the paperwork for board members, Paul said.

"She would read it and have little sticky notes to remind her to ask questions. She didn't let anything get by her, that's for sure."

In 2002 she ran for Oregon's 4th congressional district against Democratic incumbent Peter DeFazio, losing 64% to 34%.

As a legislator, she was "very, very smart – astute," Melcher said, remembering that when VanLeeuwen would get invitations to debate during campaigns "she could anticipate a set-up."

"She never put her campaign things out until right at the last. She said 'Nobody needs to see them until the end.'"

Van Leeuwen was always an incredibly productive "farm girl" at heart," Melcher said, recalling although the VanLeeuwens' home was set up around her legislative work, a lot of other things were happening.

"She didn't really have time for normal hobbies like quilting, though she would host events at her beautiful home.

"She had checklists every day. They'd have

little boxes and we'd initial it and put a little date in it.

"She never wasted taxpayer dollars. She'd get tons of mailings and if the paper had a blank side, we'd save it and cut it into squares and make notepads out of it.

"She and George – he called her 'Lizzy' – would be doing farm work on the side while she was working hard. This was in the 1990s. She was probably in her 60s, maybe even 70s. She was up before I got there and she always fixed me lunch. Before I went home at night she would go to the garden and pick green beans, corn, and she'd send me home with all of that. And even then she still wasn't done."

VanLeeuwen was a devoted advocate for agriculture and forestry interests – and "very devoted to youth," Melcher said.

She was instrumental in founding the local Court Appointed Special Advocates program – CASA, which serves abused and neglected children who are wards of the court in Linn County.

VanLeeuwen could hold her own with anyone, Melcher recalled.

"She was not intimidated by anybody."

She recalled attending an Oregon Department of Forestry meeting with VanLeeuwen, where the discussion centered on the marbled murrelet.

"I was jotting down little things, and I noticed that these were not facts – 'We assume they do this,' they were saying.

"Pretty soon Liz gets done. She said, 'I'm not interested in this. OK, Coreen, what do you have to say?'"

Melcher said she was caught totally off-guard, but managed to refer to her notes.

"I said, 'You know, I haven't heard one fact here today.'"

Alex Paul said VanLeeuwen and Democratic state Sen. Mae Yih formed a "tag team" for Mid-Valley interests, even though they were in opposing political parties.

"They were like 'Magic' Johnson and Larry Bird," he said. "They battled each other sometimes, but when it came down to nuts and bolts, for somebody in Sweet Home or Lebanon, they were tough to beat. I think that is an important point that most people did not realize.

"They were a dynamic duo. They were not young. They were seniors; they had wisdom."

Over the years VanLeeuwen served in a wide variety of organizations in addition to those mentioned: Linn County Commission on Children and Families, Gov. Robert Straub's Day Care Task Force, South Santiam Watershed Management Area Local Advisory Committee, Western States Legislative Forestry Task Force, Benton, Lane, Lincoln and Linn Regional Strategies Board, Pacific Northwest Economic Region Board, and numerous legislative committees.

Her other community involvement included American Agri-Women, Alliance For America, American Legion Auxiliary, AWANA, Linn Extension Association, 4-H clubs, Future Farmers of America, Peer Court, Chambers of Commerce, Farm Bureau, Citizens for a Drug Free Oregon, Grange, OSU's Jackman Foundation and Third Force for Forestry.

She was also a Sunday school and Bible school teacher.

"She was a kind Christian lady. She loved her family and she loved her state and her community," Melcher said.

Linn County Board of Commissioners

Roger Nyquist



Sherrie Sprenger



Will Tucker



Call 541-967-3825



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

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

Christmas tree elves to the rescue

On November 21, 2022, Linn County Deputies found the Grinch was hard at work in Linn County.

Dozens of Douglas Fir trees were illegally cut and left to waste in the Santiam State Forest outside of Mill City. A Mountain Patrol Deputy investigating the crimes located the Grinch with fine police work. Rest assured, the Grinch will get their day in court.

Luckily, our deputies had substantial holiday cheer and knew the opportunity couldn't be wasted! These trees were the perfect size to fill the living rooms of families in need. The following day deputies loaded up their four-wheel drive sleighs and recovered the Christmas trees



and delivered them for donation. The Linn County Sheriff's Office was able to salvage 63 trees suitable for spreading holiday cheer this season!

Thank you to Oregon Department of Forestry for donating the trees unlawfully cut from state lands. We would also like to thank the Santiam Service Integration team

Corps of Engineers seek comments about dam operations

PORTLAND — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Portland District has opened a public comment period on a draft 30-year plan for the operation and maintenance of our system of 13 dams and reservoirs across the Willamette River Basin.

This plan — referred to as a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement — details seven potential courses of action including one most preferred by the Corps and essentially lays out a long-term path for achieving the congressionally authorized purposes of the Willamette Valley System (flood risk management, hydropower, irrigation supply, etc.) while improving conditions for endangered fish.

Public comments will be accepted through January 19, 2023.

The document will determine the Corps' course in managing the system for the next 30-plus years.

This 55-day comment period is essentially the opportunity members of the public have to share their input and be a part of the decision-making process that sets a path for the management of trillions of gallons of water.

The Corps of Engineers will host virtual and in-person public open house meetings on the draft EIS in the coming weeks.

- More information: <https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/Media/News-Releases/Article/3234764/corps-seeking-public-comment-on-proposed-30-year-plan-for-willamette-valley-sys/>

- For background on the draft EIS, to see a schedule of public meetings, and to view and download the draft EIS, visit the EIS webpage: <https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/Locations/Willamette-Valley/System-Evaluation->

Michelle King is new Detroit District Ranger

DETROIT — The Willamette National Forest welcomes Michelle King as the new Detroit District Ranger.

Michelle comes from the Deschutes National Forest in central Oregon where she served as the Deputy District Ranger on the Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District.

Michelle started her Forest Service career on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest as a student intern and has continued with the agency ever since.

She graduated with a degree in Forestry and a minor in Political Science from the University of Washington, focusing on public dimensions of natural resource management.

She has worked at several National Forests across Washington, Oregon, and Arizona specializing in

Environmental Planning, Public Engagement, Recreation, and Project Management.

Michelle recently completed a four-month assignment in the summer of 2022 as the Acting District Ranger for the Sweet Home Ranger District, becoming well acquainted with the Santiam River Zone and Willamette National Forest.

"I am honored and excited to serve as the next District Ranger on the Detroit Ranger District" King said. "I am eager to support the ongoing recovery and rebuilding efforts on the Ranger District and within the community."

In her free time, Michelle enjoys hiking, cross country skiing, mountain biking and any adventures that can include her two dogs.

"I am looking forward to settling down in western Oregon, allow-



Detroit District Ranger
Michelle King

ing me to live closer to my family and loved ones," Michelle said. "I am fortunate for the opportunity to work with the many communities, individuals, and stakeholder groups that are invested in the landscape. I cannot wait to join the outstanding team in Detroit."

Honored for helping spread the word about OSU Extension/4-H

By Michele Webster

OSU Extension-Linn County

CORVALLIS — Alex Paul won the OSU Extension Association Cooperator Award at our recent annual banquet.

We nominated Alex for his continued support of the OSU Extension Service and the programs we offer.

Alex is the Linn County communications officer and is responsible for the county's communication which includes their monthly e-news-the Linn County Reporter, website and social media. He promotes our programs and highlights one or more Extension Service program or event in each monthly e-news.

He can be found meeting and taking photos of our staff at the office, in the field, at gardens and at the Linn County Fair.

Alex goes above and beyond to educate the community about Extension. His work has been an instrumental "connector" of Extension to the county.



Alex Paul with his wife, Debbie, at the OSU Extension Service annual meeting at the CH2M Hill Alumni Center on the OSU campus.



Spreading holiday cheer

Students at the Linn Benton Juvenile Detention Center wanted to spread some holiday cheer and created colorful paintings that also lit up. One of the paintings was donated to the Linn County Board of Commissioners.



Mill Street clean up project was a success

LEBANON — Several Linn County departments and the Linn County Sheriff's Office worked cooperatively on December 7 to clean up a property on Mill Street in Lebanon that had become a health concern for surrounding neighbors, according to Code Enforcement Officer Carol Gordon.

Linn County has been working with residents of the property since 2019. The owners are dead and there was no probate, so ownership is in question.

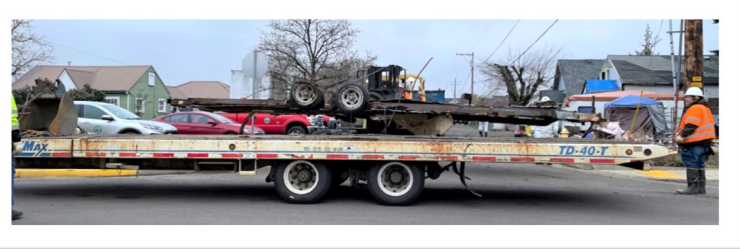
A house on the property experienced significant fire damage at one time and since then, RVs and tents have been placed on the property and a variety of individuals took up residence.

Unfortunately, huge piles of trash also accumulated on the property, creating a health hazard.

The Linn County Road Department, Planning & Building and the Health Department all worked together to bring in equipment and to fill six 40-yard refuse containers provided by Republic Services.

Gordon estimates the project cost at about \$15,000.

To further protect area residents, the county worked with a pest removal company to address rat



Top photos: Before and after photos of the clean up project. **Bottom photos:** A large RV is reduced to small pieces and put into a 40-yard refuse container. **Left:** the RV frame is loaded onto a trailer.

LCSO staff help 81 families

The Linn County Sheriff's Office held an internal silent auction to raise money to fulfill gift tags for the local Salvation Army.

Sgt. Dusty Frenzel led this effort and different teams and divisions throughout the office donated items and made themed baskets to be put up for bid. Auction baskets included themes like a Beavers Sports Package, Starbucks, S'more Kit, Survival Pack and many more.

Through the auction, Sheriff's Office employees raised over \$2,700.

Area businesses also donated services to be put up for bid in the auction.

We would like to thank Wreckamended Auto for donating \$450 in vehicle services, Urban Tint for donating a full ceramic window tint valued at \$500 and Prestige Detailing for do-

nating an entry-level automotive exterior detail and ceramic coating valued at \$500!

Additionally, we were able to add \$729.90 by returning the office soda cans.

Our grand total raised this year was \$3,442.90. This allowed us to fulfill 81 gift tags for the Salvation Army.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this such a huge success. We were happy to be part of such a wonderful thing for those most in need this Holiday Season. We hope to continue with the auction next year.





Thank you Christmas Angels!

Thanks to everyone who participated in the annual Salvation Army Christmas Angel gift program for kids. County employees provided many gifts for 30 children. Tags flew off the Christmas trees and bags of gifts came into the Board of Commissioners' office. In all, 300 families and 700 children benefitted from the Salvation Army program. Right: Courtney Leland and Marsha Meyer of the Commissioners Office load up the goodies on Dec. 16.




Linn County to install charging stations

Thanks to a \$53,000 grant from Pacific Power and the Oregon Clean Fuels Program, Linn County will install two electric vehicle charging stations.

Each unit will charge two vehicles at a time.

One unit will be for the general public and the other for the county's fleet system.

The units will be installed at the county parking lot next the Courthouse Annex.



Linn County Holiday Closures

Linn County offices/departments will be closed on Monday, January 2. Offices and departments will reopen at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 3. Linn County Circuit Court will also be closed on Monday, Jan. 2.

West Albany administrator earns statewide honors

ALBANY – In a surprise announcement in front of West Albany High School staff and administration last Wednesday, Jessica Smith, assistant principal, was named Oregon's 2023 Assistant Principal of the Year.

She is married to Linn County Undersheriff Micah Smith.

She will formally accept the award at a June 2023 conference of the Coalition of Oregon School Administrators.

Craig Hawkins, executive director of COSA, shocked Smith with the news at a staff meeting on Nov. 30. Hawkins explained that a good administrator listens to staff and students and builds genuine relationships with the school community.

"All of that and so much more perfectly describes your Assistant

Principal Jessica Smith," he said.

Smith has spent her entire education career at WAHS. She started teaching English and social studies at West in 2004. During her time in the classroom, she served on the school's Site Council, took on the role of AVID site coordinator, as well as social studies department chair. She also coached several sports.

Smith continued teaching in those subjects until 2016 when she became Dean of Students at West. A year later, she was hired as assistant principal. This is her sixth year as an assistant principal at the school.

"I was so honored to be nominated. I am still in shock I was chosen," Smith said. "I am surrounded by amazing people who give so much to the school and community. As an assistant principal

I strive to be the leader they deserve and this award is truly a reflection of my school community."

The relationships with her West Albany school community is who she credits as being the most rewarding part of her career.

"I wish everyone could spend a day in our building and see all the wonderful things happening," she said. "Our Bulldog family is so caring and supportive and I am beyond appreciative to be a member of something so meaningful."

WAHS Principal Susie Orsborn nominated Smith for the award. Orsborn pointed to Smith's commitment, heart, perseverance, high expectations, energy, and vision as factors leading to her leadership at West. "She is truly a gifted leader with endless energy that she devotes to students, staff, parents and the community."



Jessica Smith



Linn County welcomes veterans walking the Long Road for MIAs

LEBANON — Linn County welcomed three heroes with open arms Dec. 9 and 10, as they made their way from Boston Harbor to Newport — walking more than 3,365 miles to raise money and awareness about soldiers, sailors and marines missing in action.

More than 81,000 since WWII.

Making the trek on what they called “The Long Road” were Coleman “Rocky” Kinzer, Justin “JD” LeHew and Ray Shinohara, who teamed up with them in Elgin, Illinois during the summer.

Their efforts raised more than \$175,000 and raised awareness through news stories and social media.

The men all served together in the Marine Corps 3rd Regiment in Hawaii. Among them, they have 67 years of combined service.

Their daily goal was to walk about 20 miles.

Along the way they were greeted by regular folks, plus first responders including law enforcement officers and firefighters. Communities welcomed them as did local veterans groups from coast to coast.

They hiked through triple-digit Midwestern heat, blowing snow and of course, rain in Oregon.

They slept outdoors at first and then picked up an old RV along the way.

They also dodged speeding vehicles on stretches of highway that doesn’t have much shoulder room.

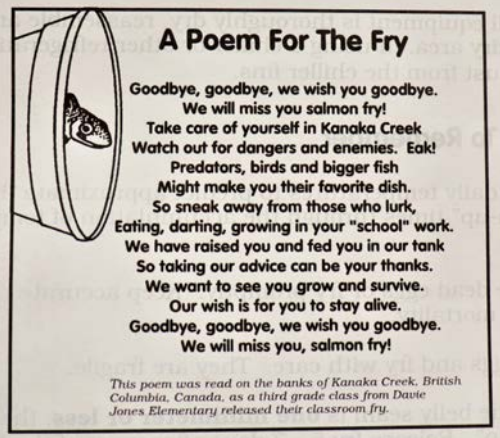
“It was an honor to be able to meet them and being able to escort them into Lebanon, along with the Lebanon Police and fire department was great,” said Dee Baley-Hyder, director of Linn County Veterans Services.



FISH PROJECT

From Page 1

That life cycle includes: eggs; alevin (feeds off yolk-sac for several weeks); fry (5 to 10 weeks and swimming) parr (several months old develop “finger” markings; smolt (1-3 years, will group up and head out to sea; Adult (spends 1-8 years at sea) spawning adult (spawn and will die within two weeks.)



How amazing is it that the students lost only one egg?

In the wild, there may be 4,000 eggs, of which 800 make it to the fry stage, 200 to the smolt stage, 10 adults and two spawning adults.

“There’s a 2-3% success rate in the wild,” Riley noted. “Things like pollution and water temperatures affect them.”

Freitag released the fry into the Santiam River on Dec. 13.

“We are so grateful to partner with

the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife,” Freitag said. “This is an opportunity for our students to learn hands-on. Without partners, we couldn’t have projects like this. We are very thankful.”

The Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program is a way volunteers can help the ODFW improve fish habitat and restore native stocks of salmon and trout.

STEP’s goals are:

- Rehabilitate and improve natural habitat and native fish stocks.
- Insure that harvest does not exceed fish population’s reproductive capability.
- Provide for citizen volunteer participation in achieving the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife’s fish management objectives.
- Support public education programs.

The Salmon and Trout Advisory Committee is composed of 13 Oregon residents appointed by the governor to provide recommendations concerning the program’s implementation.



Idahna Freitag releases 249 fry that have been nurtured by students at the Linn Benton Juvenile Detention Center for two months. The students lost only one of 250 eggs provided by the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife.



Stages of a fish from egg to fry.



A student demonstrates how the water is tested regularly for pH, nitrates and ammonia as well as temperature.

Casting into their futures

In addition to taking care of baby fish, Juvenile Department students also learn how to tie fishing jigs, which they get to keep and sell through the “Outkast Project.”

Idahna Freitag said students learn how to tie a jig — a weighted hook — and get to keep it. Then, they tie another one and it is used as inventory to be sold online at <https://new-beginnings-garden.myshopify.com/collections/hand-made-products> and at the Albany Farmers Market.

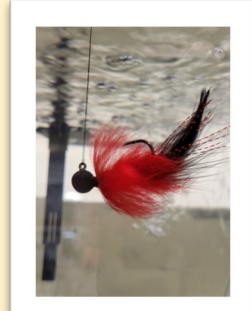
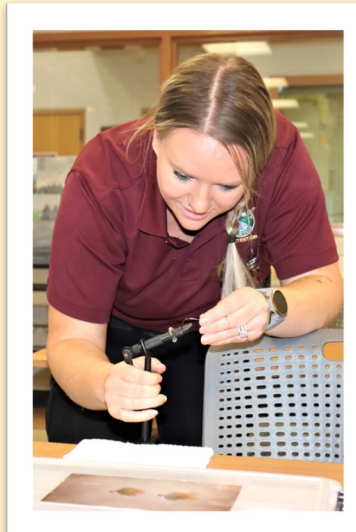
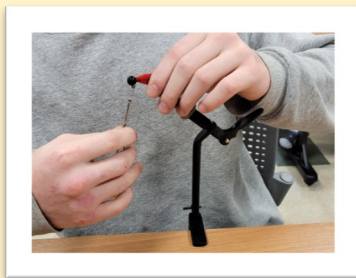
Proceeds fund the ongoing program.

Bender Mechanical provided funds to purchase materials and Sportsman’s Warehouse has made numerous donations, Freitag said.

“People have been wonderful, so generous,” Freitag said.

Students work on the project regularly and Freitag said she enjoys watching their progress, from floundering to wind thread onto the hook to completing the colorful jigs.

They get a lot of satisfaction seeing their completed jigs, she added



OSU Extension — Linn County



Above left: Katie with Lacombe Livestock.

Top right: Chloe with Reining Riders helping Carlie with Lacombe Livestock.



4-H Craft Day was big success

Middle left: Hayden with JR Farms.

Middle right: Caden with Shamrock Shenanigans with cloverbud members from Raindrops and Clever Clovers.



Bottom left: Kaden with Lacombe Livestock helping Jase and Ada members of Raindrops and JR Farms.

Bottom right: Callie with Lacombe Livestock and Amity with Lucky Livestock.



Gov. Kate Brown, left, and Linn County Commissioner Roger Nyquist get a laugh from comments made by Oregon Transportation Commission Vice-chair Julie Brown during ribbon cutting for the new Mid-Willamette Valley Intermodal Center in Millersburg on Dec. 15.



ConGlobal CEO Brandt Ring.

Celebrating the intermodal partnership

By Alex Paul
Linn County Reporter

MILLERSBURG – Welcoming a crowd of nearly 200 people Dec. 15 at the new Mid-Willamette Valley Intermodal Center, Gov. Kate Brown said the project was among four in HB 2017 chosen to receive Connect Oregon funding.

“I’m proud to say we made a great choice — the right choice,” Brown said prior to a ribbon cutting ceremony. “Working together, we have created a success we can all be proud of.”

Brown said the \$35 million project — for which the state contributed about \$25 million — means trucks will bring in cargo and it will be loaded onto rail cars, providing a more “efficient, environmentally friendly way to move volumes of freight.” She added the 64-acre facility will take trucks off of highways in some of the most congested areas – Portland, Tacoma and Seattle – helping to reduce bottlenecks and greenhouse gas emissions in the Pacific Northwest” and “it will help our farmers by reducing shipping costs while getting their products to international markets by rail.”

Several other guest speakers also shared their congratulations with attendees, including Roger Nyquist, Linn County Commissioner and Board Vice Chair for the Linn County Economic Development Group, which led the way in getting support for the project.

“Our region has a long history of producing products that are beneficial to people around the world — from two-by-fours to the food people put on their dinner plates,” Commissioner Nyquist said. “This intermodal facility ensures the products will have ample transportation access to those markets long into the future.”

Nyquist added, “We are grateful to all involved who have helped make this happen. I want to thank Governor Brown and former State Rep. Andy Olson for their leadership in making this project a reality.”

Nyquist thanked numerous people who supported the project and stuck with it during the long process to see it to fruition, including his fellow commissioners, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker and posthumously John Lindsey; members of the Oregon Transportation Commission, the City of Millersburg, Benton County Board of Commissioners, John Pascone and the Albany-Millersburg Economic Development

Corp., the Linn Economic Development Group — James Ramseyer, Floyd Collins, Rick Kenyon, Darrin Lane, Kevin Kreitman and Andy Olson; Eric Hvag and Cece Gilbert with the Oregon Department of Transportation, Leah Horner with the Governor’s Office, ODOT Director Kris Strickler, Karla Chambers of Stahlbush Island Farms, Union Pacific Railroad partners especially Cindy Roberts, ConGlobal, Senator Lee Beyer and the community, which “is all in, 100 percent.” ODOT Director Kris Strickler said, “This is a first-of-its-kind project for us at ODOT and for the legislatively directed Connect Oregon program. We have never developed a major freight intermodal transfer hub. Connect Oregon has never taken a site used for something else and turned it into a non-highway funded transportation facility.”

Oregon Transportation Commission Vice-chairman Julie Brown called the project, “a smart way to use public funds.”

Karla Chambers, co-owner of Stahlbush Island Farms noted how important the intermodal center will be for ag and timber producers for decades to come. “Stahlbush Island Farms, Inc., along

with our other farmers and processors are excited about this new Mid-Willamette Valley Intermodal Center,” Chambers said. “The vision for this project was to make exporters and importers more cost and equipment efficient; to get trucks and freight out of Portland traffic; and be more competitive moving freight to the Midwest and East Coast US buyers. This rail facility will also help us

we experience high diesel costs and truck driver and labor shortages.” Chambers added, “Oregon has many distribution centers South of Portland and these importers will equally ben-

efit as they move goods into these West Coast ports, onto rail and into this new facility. This is an excellent example of Government and the private sector working together, and we thank Governor Kate Brown and Commissioner Roger Nyquist for their leadership.”

Other special guests/speakers were ConGlobal CEO Brandt Ring, Aaron Hunt, Senior Director of Public Affairs for Union Pacific Railroad and Grant Cyrus, Senior Distribution Director, Target.

Among other benefits, the \$35.5 million, 64-acre Mid-Willamette Valley Intermodal Center should reduce costs for farmers, shippers and others using the facility, while also reducing the number of trucks on Oregon highways. The state’s Connect Oregon program funds non-highway, multimodal projects that support the economy and provide options for transportation. The goal is to ensure Oregon’s transportation system is strong, diverse and efficient.



ODOT Director Kris Strickler.

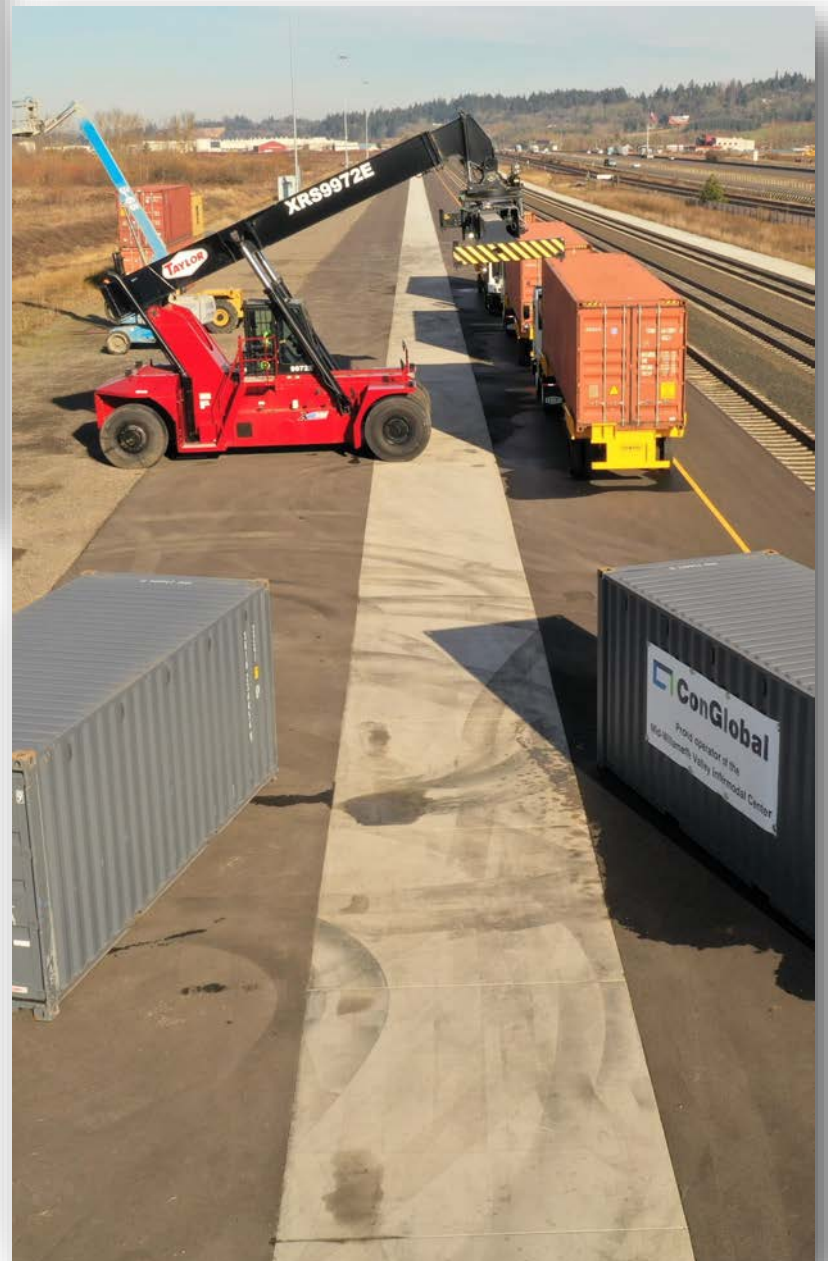


Karla Chambers, co-owner of Stahlbush Island Farms, Senator Lee Beyer and Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker.



Nearly 200 people attended a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Mid-Willamette Valley Intermodal Center in Millersburg on Dec. 15. The \$35 million facility sits on 64 acres of the former International Paper plant.

Photos by ODOT and Alex Paul



Stahlbush Island Farms co-owner Karla Chambers, Commissioner Roger Nyquist and John Pascone of the Albany-Millersburg Economic Development Corporation.



Santa's helpers were busy

Above: Linn County Dietitian Serena Stearns-Garland and WIC Supervisor Leah Brunson are pictured with diaper donations that will help nine local families with 500 diapers. The diapers were delivered last week to the local Salvation Army. **Left:** Lily Richardson, right, was the lucky winner of the third annual quilt raffle sponsored by the Linn County Juvenile Department. The large quilt was crafted by Rhonda Nicolas of Finally Together Quilt Shop. Proceeds, \$535, was used to fill Christmas food baskets with goodies.



Thank you, dispatchers

Most of western Oregon was hammered with a major ice storm on Friday, Dec. 23. Roadways became skating rinks and hundreds of vehicles — from cars to semi-trucks — became sleds that ended up in ditches or jackknifed on roads. The Linn County Road Department staff was all-hands-on-deck working on the slick roads. The Linn County Sheriff's Office dispatchers got a real workout handling hundreds of extra calls for service. The Albany Fire Department posted the message above as a thank you to the hard-working dispatchers. Fortunately, there were no deaths associated with the many mishaps and warm weather cleared the ice away by late in the day.



Learning how government works

Members of Leadership Albany, sponsored by the Albany Chamber of Commerce, recently stopped by the Linn County Courthouse and Sheriff's Office to learn about how local government works. Above: District Attorney Doug Marteeny shares information about how his office works and below, Commissioner Roger Nyquist talks about how the Board of Commissioners deal with issues in a county with 130,000 residents.



LCSO Search and Rescue trains for winter rescues

In early December, the Linn County Search and Rescue (SAR) joined the Mt. Jefferson Snowmobile Club for an annual snow rescue training.

The training took place at the Ray Benson Sno Park in the National Willamette Forest.

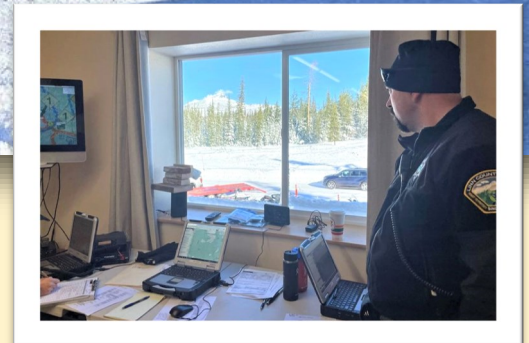
For the training, rescue dummies are placed in various spots along the Snow Mobile trails and the SAR team is given a location of last seen. With that information they work with the Snowmobile Club to search, find the dummies and then extract them from the area.

The SAR cadre hiked in and out of the area wearing snow shoes and covered around five miles during the training. Vital training like this helps the SAR team be one of the best in the state. The all-day event gets them real hands on experience of what it is/will be like when it comes to doing operations in the snow.

We would like to thank the US Forest Service and the Mt. Jefferson Snowmobile Club for joining us, providing equipment, and for lunch too.



Members of the Linn County Search and Rescue team recently trained with the Mt. Jefferson Snowmobile Club. They "rescued" several dummies hidden in the Willamette National Forest.



Safety tips for winter weather

Winter is here.

AAA recommends the following tips while driving in snowy and icy conditions:

Cold Weather Driving Tips

- Keep a bundle of cold-weather gear in your car, such as extra food and water, warm clothing, a flashlight, a glass scraper, blankets, medications, and more.
- Make certain your tires are properly inflated and have plenty of tread.
- Keep at least half a tank of fuel in your vehicle at all times.
- Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area, such as a garage.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface, such as on ice and snow.

Tips for Driving in the Snow

- **Stay home.** Only go out if necessary. Even if you can drive well in bad weather, it's better to avoid taking unnecessary risks by venturing out.
- **Drive slowly.** Always adjust your speed down to account for lower traction when driving on snow or ice.
- **Accelerate and decelerate slowly.** Apply the gas slowly to regain traction and avoid skids. Don't try to get moving in a hurry and take time to slow down for a stoplight. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- **Increase your following distance to five to six seconds.** This increased margin of safety will provide the longer distance needed if you have to stop.
- **Know your brakes.** Whether you have antilock brakes or not, keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to apply firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal.
- **Don't stop if you can avoid it.** There's a big difference in the amount of inertia it takes to start moving from a full stop versus how much it takes to get moving while still rolling. If you can slow down enough to keep rolling until a traffic light changes, do it.
- **Don't power up hills.** Applying extra gas on snow-covered roads will just make your wheels spin. Try to get a little inertia going before you reach the hill and let that inertia carry you to the top. As you reach the crest of the hill, reduce your speed and proceed downhill slowly.
- **Don't stop going up a hill.** There's nothing worse than trying to get moving up a hill on an icy road. Get some inertia going on a flat roadway before you take on the hill.

Tips for Long-Distance Winter Trips

- **Be Prepared:** Have your vehicle checked by a AAA Approved Auto Repair facility before hitting the road.

- **Check the Weather:** Check the weather along your route and when possible, delay your trip if bad weather is expected.
- **Stay Connected:** Before hitting the road, notify others and let them know your route, destination and estimated time of arrival.
- If you get stuck in the snow:
- **Stay with your vehicle:** Your vehicle provides temporary shelter and makes it easier for rescuers to locate you. Do not try to walk in a severe storm. It is easy to lose sight of your vehicle in blowing snow and become lost.
- **Don't over exert yourself:** When digging out your vehicle, listen to your body and stop if you become tired.
- **Be Visible:** Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna of your vehicle or place a cloth at the top of a rolled up window to signal distress. At night, keep the dome light on if possible. It only uses a small amount of electricity and will make it easier for rescuers to find you.
- **Clear the Exhaust Pipe:** Make sure the exhaust pipe is not clogged with snow, ice or mud. A blocked exhaust pipe can cause deadly carbon monoxide gas to leak into the passenger compartment of the vehicle while the engine is running.
- **Stay Warm:** Use whatever is available to insulate your body from the cold. This could include floor mats, newspapers or paper maps. Pre-pack blankets and heavy clothing to use in case of an emergency.
- **Conserve Fuel:** If possible, only run the engine and heater long enough to remove the chill. This will help to conserve fuel.

