

Linn County



# REPORTER

Happy Valentine's Day! Please send us your photos!

What's happening in Linn County, Oregon February 2024

## Ice, ice baby!

# Linn County rises to the challenge

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — Thousands of limbs and trees gave way to the extra weight of thick ice beginning Saturday, Jan. 13, leaving many homes and businesses in much of western Oregon without power, some as many as nine days.

Erik Anderson said from his perspective as Emergency Manager for the Health Department, communication among departments and other agencies was a key to making it through the ice storm in good shape.

Early in the storm watch, Linn County was notified that the Sweet Home Fire District's generator was not working, so a portable unit was loaned to them.

"What we found is that due to the extended amount of time some homes in east county were out of power, issues such as refilling portable oxygen tanks, or simply charging someone's hearing aids, were vital," Anderson said.

Anderson said he also delivered the county's trailer filled with blankets, cots and other items needed to create a shelter/warming center at the Sweet Home Community Center.

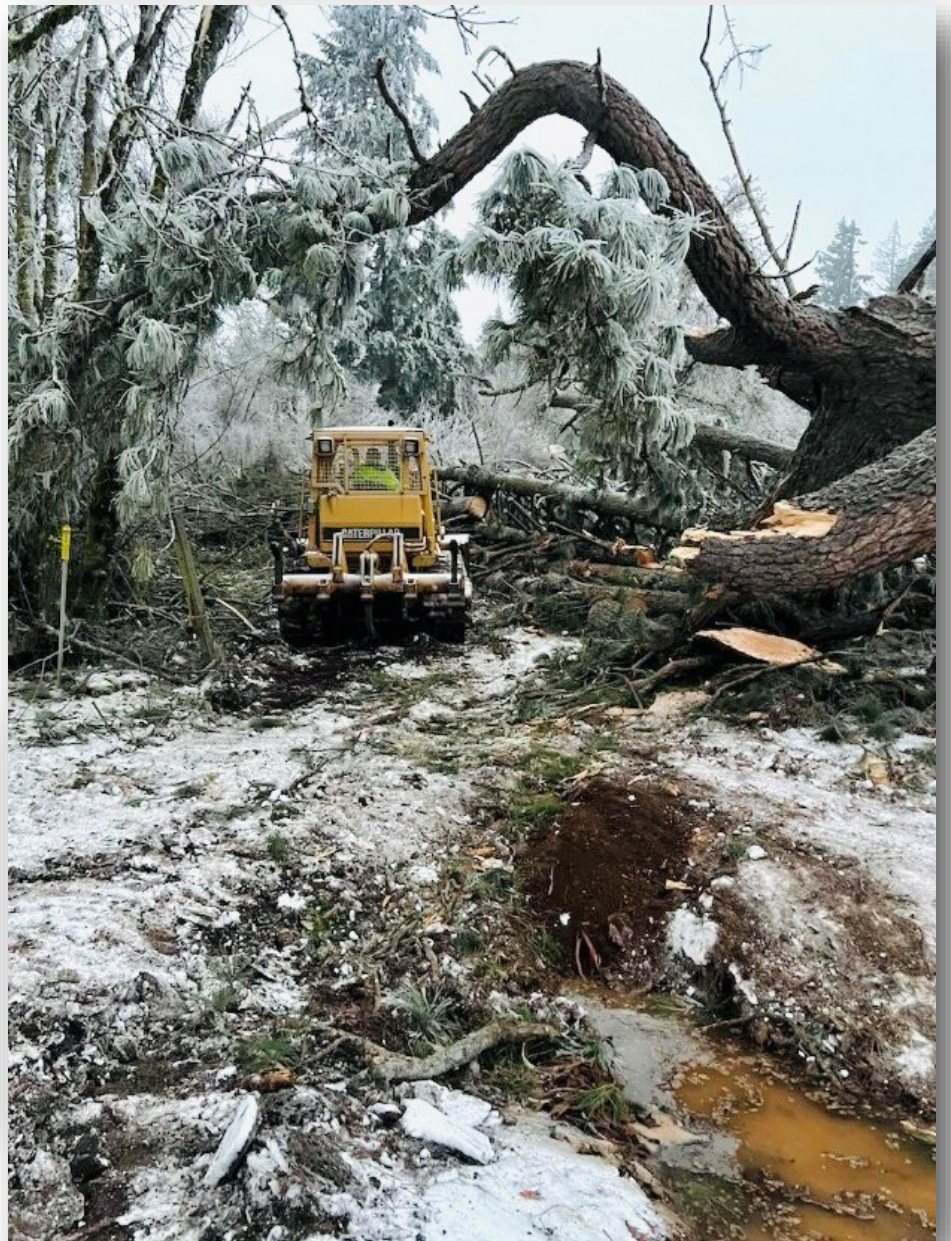
"I think the most important thing we want people to think about — especially people with medical conditions — is to have an escape route available, or to get to a safe place before the bad weather sets in," Anderson said.

Anderson said warming centers in Linn County communities were especially important for the homeless population. Anderson said key work areas will be to get more sheltering equipment trailers located throughout the county, get a backup generator system at the Sweet Home Community Center and develop oxygen refilling trailers spaced throughout the county.

ICE STORM ... See Pages 4-5



Above: Icicles hang onto the roof of a shop at Oak View Ranch near Crawfordsville. Right: Linn County Road Department employees use a D6 Cat to clear a residential driveway access on Brock Drive near Scio.



## New OSP trooper thankful for Linn County work experience

### Learned how to deal with the public

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

Damian Aranda, 23, always knew he wanted to help other people, starting as an altar server within the Catholic church.

Then, as he studied for the priesthood at Bishop White Seminary on the Gonzaga University campus in Spokane.

And even after discerning that priesthood was not in his future, Aranda believed he could accomplish his goal through a career in law enforcement.

Friday, January 26, Aranda graduated from the Basic Police Class at the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, a proud member of BP Class 432. It was a 16-week program, but as a Recruit OSP Trooper, Aranda had already completed a seven week, OSP pre-academy training program, and this week began another 2 1/2 week OSP program.

Aranda admits all of the training was difficult, especially the OSP pre-academy (much like a military boot camp) where recruits were pushed to their limits mentally and physically day and night.

Aranda says that working for one summer with Linn County Parks and for about six months with the Linn County Juvenile Department, prepared him for the challenges.

Aranda landed a job as a seasonal park ranger in 2022 after graduating from Gonzaga University with a degree in philosophy and criminal justice. He worked at several parks, but mostly at Sunnyside.

"It was a great job," Aranda said. "I mowed grass, cleaned restrooms, fueled boats and helped campers," Aranda said. "There were lots of nice people and from many different backgrounds, but I also

NEW TROOPER ... See Page 12



OSP Recruit Trooper Damian Aranda poses with Linn County Road Department retiree Allen Burger before graduation January 26 at the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training in Salem.



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](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us) or call 541-967-3825.

## Linn County Board of Commissioners



**Roger Nyquist**



**Sherrie Sprenger**



**Will Tucker**

The Board of Commissioners meet at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesdays and at the same time on Wednesday if needed.

You can listen to the meetings by calling 541-704-3003 PIN 8442.

**Call 541-967-3825**

# Linn County health program featured in Lund Report story

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — The Prevention Team of Linn County Alcohol and Drug received a major shout-out in a recent Lund Report story about what states are doing to address substance abuse prevention among young people.

According to its website, the Lund Report is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit, online news source that provides people of Oregon and southwest Washington “with high-quality journalism about health care that promotes awareness and understanding of pressing issues while holding government and industry accountable.”

Featured in the story published Jan. 16 was county Alcohol and Drug Prevention Specialist Shannon Snair, who was working with a Life Skills Training Class at Scio Middle School.

A statewide school survey showed:

- 60% of Oregon’s school districts don’t use prevention curricula or programs at any grade level that meet even the lowest bar for evidence, including Portland Public Schools, according to the nation’s top prevention and curricula clearinghouses.
- District responses showed 20% of districts rely on little more than a chapter in a health textbook to get the job of addiction prevention done.

## How Linn County brings an evidence-based program into classrooms

“Do you guys know what it means to be assertive?” Standing tall and dressed in black, Shannon Snair commanded attention in a classroom full of 11- and 12-year olds.

- Though prevention experts emphasize starting substance use prevention early, only 44 of the 119 districts surveyed use programming endorsed by an expert clearinghouse’s evidence review at the elementary school level.
- Only one of the responding districts offers an evidence-based program that involves parents — which experts call a powerful component of effective prevention.
- Oregon’s school districts receive little support and guidance from the state to select substance use prevention programs backed by evidence.
- Other states follow the science, helping schools adopt evidence-backed programs.

The article told about how Snair works with students, encouraging them to be assertive when telling adults about

their needs and why they need something. “It’s when you act in a really strong, confident way, letting people know what you need, and why you need something,” Snair is quoted as saying. “And I will tell you, being assertive is not always easy.” A survey associated with the story notes that LifeSkills can lead to reductions in the use of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis years later among students who’ve completed the program. Danette Killinger, who coordinates the program for the county, was also quoted as saying Linn County chose LifeSkills Training 25 years ago, because it was “the most studied program out there.” Sending health workers into classrooms to teach it saves money and ensures the curriculum is being taught as it was designed, she added.

To read the whole story, visit <https://www.thelundreport.org/content/most-oregon-kids-dont-get-science-backed-drug-prevention>.

## Commissioners seek BM 110 repeal

The Linn County Board of Commissioners recently sent the following letter to all Oregon legislators:

As the Legislature nears its February session, we strongly urge the repeal of Ballot Measure 110, which decriminalized the possession of hard drugs such as heroin and methamphetamines.

We believe Ballot Measure 110 is so flawed that it cannot merely be amended or patched. We ask this issue be placed before Oregon voters as soon as possible.

The new law has failed in many ways, not the least of which is that it takes away tools needed by law enforcement officers to get drug dealers off our streets.

Although passed by a 58 percent majority of Oregon voters in November 2020, Linn County residents voted almost exactly opposite — 53 percent voting no to 47 percent voting yes. Oregonians now realize they made a mistake approving Measure 110. A recent Emerson Poll indicates 64 percent of those responding favor rolling back or altering parts of the bill.

Our elected officials and employees are dealing with the negative effects of Measure 110 on a daily basis.

- The Sheriff’s Office is seeing increased homelessness and mental health issues. Sheriff Michelle Duncan said “there is a clear nexus between both of these and drug use, especially the types of drugs decriminalized by Measure 110.

Open air drug use is not illegal and that makes our parks and other public spaces uncomfortable at best for families and law-abiding citizens to use.”

- Lack of intervention prevents short jail sentences which provide addicted people with “forced moments of sobriety” when they can make life decisions without being under the influence of drugs.
- Juveniles are now obtaining hard drugs without the stigma previously associated with them and without the threat of major interactions with law enforcement penalties. Juveniles in the midst of addiction do not realize they have a problem.
- The juvenile brain is still developing and even though they believe nothing bad is going to happen to them, we all know it can and will.
- Juveniles are different than adults. We have all kinds of laws to protect them such as being required to attend school, not run away from home, be home after certain hours in the night etc. We must also protect them from hard drugs.
- Ballot Measure 110 now provides lesser consequences for possession of meth, heroin or cocaine than possession of alcohol or marijuana.
- The current law is allowing addiction to grow in youth and not be treated until they become adults where the vast majority of Ballot

Measure 110 money has been designated.

- There is little to no investment in the juvenile Substance Use Disorder service system again creating adult addicts.
- Addressing youth SUD services is imperative in prevention of the growing number of adults addicted to drugs and being dependent on state funded services.
- Although Ballot Measure 110 was billed as the “Drug Addiction and Recovery Act” it has, in fact, led to increased addiction and reduced recovery.
- Drug overdose deaths in Linn County are exponentially higher than they were prior to Ballot Measure 110. The amounts of drugs trafficked in and through Oregon have also grown exponentially.
- The number of Sexually Transmitted Infections appears to have risen in our county since the 2020 passage of BM 110. For the two years prior to the ballot measure’s passage, there were 33 recorded STIs related to drug use. Since 2020, there have been 64 STIs recorded.

In closing, we ask for your leadership in helping to reverse the trend increasing addiction problems and the astonishingly negative consequences that come with addiction by repealing Ballot Measure 110.

We thank you for your service and your consideration in this most important matter.

# County Health Department takes the 5210 Challenge

By Dani Crabtree  
For the Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — The Linn County Health Department is challenging county departments to eat healthier and move more for



Joleen Meza-Wynkoop

February's Heart Healthy Month with the 5210 Challenge. The challenge consists of eating FIVE or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily, reducing recreational screen time to TWO hours or less daily, increasing physical activity to ONE hour daily, and consuming ZERO sugar-sweetened beverages daily.

"We hope this activity will inspire many of us to keep on track not just during February but through the rest of the year," said Jolynn Meza Wynkoop.

Meza Wynkoop, a community health improvement program specialist at Samaritan Health Services, is leading the

challenge for partners across Linn, Benton and Lincoln counties.

While Samaritan and other partners have participated in the challenge for the last three years, this is the first year the Linn County Health Department has participated. SamFit staff have created 5210 exercise videos that are available on the 5210 webpage, and the Linn County Health Promotions team has created a calendar with healthy eating and exercise tips for the Leap Year event.

This year, Samaritan will also award prizes to two participants from each county: Benton, Lincoln and Linn. Those who participate in the challenge and log their activity for 10 days or more will be entered into a raffle drawing to win a prize.

"The prizes are awesome this year," Meza Wynkoop said. "I am so excited to give them out to some participants in all three counties."

Begin by registering online at [ccwn.org/5210-home](http://ccwn.org/5210-home). During the registration process, make sure to join the Linn County team. It's important to update your progress daily. Don't worry if you miss a day. You can always input the data later.

For more information, contact Meza Wynkoop at [jolynn@samhealth.org](mailto:jolynn@samhealth.org) or Health Promotions Supervisor Anita de Anda at [adeanda@co.linn.or.us](mailto:adeanda@co.linn.or.us).

## Tips for the Workplace

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**5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables**

Fruits and vegetables are important additions to a healthy lifestyle! They provide a lot of nutrients, water, fiber, and phytochemicals that keep your body healthy and help prevent cancer, heart disease, and other diseases. Plus, they're a tasty way to fill up without adding a lot of calories to your diet – so dig in!

- Try to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at each meal – if healthy options are not available in your workplace cafeteria or breakroom, get in the habit of packing a lunch!
- Join with co-workers to improve the food environment – start with creating or expanding an existing workplace wellness plan, acquiring a refrigerator and microwave for the break room to make it easier to bring in healthy lunches, and improving vending machine and cafeteria offerings.
- Look into hosting a farmers' market or community garden at your worksite or establishing a farm-to-work partnership.

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**2 or fewer hours of recreational screen time\***

\*review guidelines on parenting strategies to ensure quality screen time (AAP, 2015)

Recreational screen time is free time spent in front of screens – like televisions, video games, and the internet. It is possible to get enough physical activity and still engage in an unhealthy amount of screen time – so find other fun activities to do in your free time, and take regular breaks from sitting at your computer at work!

- Find like-minded co-workers and take a walk during your lunch break instead of surfing the web.
- Do you work at a desk? Consider sitting on a yoga ball instead of an office chair, do leg lifts under your desk as you type, and learn whether treadmill desks are feasible in your office.
- Take regular breaks to stretch and work your muscles.

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**1 or more hour of physical activity**

Moving your body is a great way to burn calories, improve your mood, boost your energy, prevent cancer and cardiovascular diseases, and help you sleep better at night – plus, it can be a lot of fun!

- Walk or bike to work.
- Consider scheduling walking meetings in place of seated meetings when there are a small number of attendees.
- Make stairwells more appealing – the addition of colorful paint, carpeting, music, and artwork can promote stair use.

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**0 sweetened beverages**

It is important to drink fluids to stay healthy, but sweetened beverages add extra sugar and calories to the diet. Watch out for drinks with the following ingredients: sugar, honey, sweetener, syrup (e.g., corn syrup, brown rice syrup), and/or ingredients ending in "ose" (e.g., glucose, dextrose).

- Make water the norm for quenching thirst – drink water when you are thirsty, and encourage others to do the same. Take steps to make free drinking water accessible at work if it isn't already!
- Nonfat and 1% milk and 100% vegetable juices contain beneficial nutrients and calories - they are like healthy foods that promote a nutritious diet; they are not beverages to drink when thirsty.
- Consider limiting your consumption of artificially sweetened beverages, like diet sodas.

## 5210 - Let's Go! February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>5 servings fruits and veggies per day</b> 	<b>2 hours or less of leisure screen time</b>	<b>1 hour or more of exercise</b>	<b>0 sugar-sweetened beverages</b>	1 Call a friend and join the 5210 Challenge. Visit the QR code below to register as part of the Linn Co. team.	2 Wear red for National Wear Red Day, part of Heart Healthy Month, and choose a red fruit/veggie to snack on!	3 Schedule your annual physical. Discuss your health goals with your doctor.
4 Make a heart-healthy snack. <a href="http://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating">www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating</a>	5 Squat it out. Do 1 minute of squats.	6 Use herbs for flavor instead of salt. 	7 Visit <a href="http://quitnow.net/Oregon">quitnow.net/Oregon</a> to take the first step to quitting smoking/vaping.	8 Get your blood pressure checked.	9 Make at least 15 minutes of your exercise a walk today..	10 Aim for 30 minutes of strength-building exercises.
11 Plan your menu for the week. Be sure to include 5 servings of fruits and veggies.	12 Practice deep breathing and/or meditation today to help reduce stress.	13 Add fruit or herbs to your water to spice it up.	14 Protect your sweetheart's heart: Plan a heart-healthy date.	15 Swap the sweets for a piece of fruit for dessert.	16 Practice mindful meditation for 10 minutes. 	17 Head to bed with enough time to get a full 7-8 hours of sleep.
18 Add a stretch break to your calendar to increase your flexibility. 	19 Eat vegetarian for a day.	20 Swap screen time for a board game or book.	21 Dance for 15 minutes to your favorite music.	22 Build a healthy trail mix: 1 cup unsalted nuts, 1 cup unsalted seeds, 1 cup dried fruit, 1 cup fun stuff (popcorn, cereal, chocolate). Combine and mix!	23 Walk and talk if you need to make a phone call. Heads up and be aware of your surroundings.	24 Stay hydrated. Try a new tea, coffee, sparkling water, coconut water without added sugar or low sodium broth.
25 Ask a family member or neighbor to join you for a walk.	26 Fill half of your lunch and dinner plates with vegetables.	27 Challenge yourself – How long can you hold a plank or how many push-ups can you do?	28 Pay it forward! Tell a friend about the 5210 Challenge.	29 Leap for joy. You completed the 5210 challenge. Bonus points: Practice 5210 all year around. 		

## Ice storm ... From P. 1

### Road Department

The Linn County Road Department began mobilizing for a storm response on Thursday, Jan. 11, according to Operations Manager Kevin Hamilton, that included establishing a plan and prepping equipment for what was expected to be a mixture of snow, sleet and ice.

Friday morning, some personnel came in to finish equipment prep, for example, a 10-yard truck had been left hooked to an equipment trailer for debris response with an excavator. On Friday, that truck was disconnected from the trailer, tires were chained up, a snow plow mounted and a sander installed.

In all, the county would spend \$20,000 to \$30,000 on sand.

On Saturday, as ice began to form, 38 staff members responded with equipment. They would eventually log 377 hours of overtime valued at \$62,000.

Hamilton said supervisors began inspecting roads and monitoring conditions between 3 a.m. and 5 a.m. Crew members came in between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m., varying by district according to conditions. Second shift came in between 9 a.m. and noon, varying by district. Crews worked until between 6 and 9 p.m.

Sleet accumulations and icy road surfaces present across the county. Light rains turned to freezing rain and/or sleet through the day. Crews applied sand while plowing sleet accumulations where applicable.

Work continued into Sunday, with sleet forming sheets of ice.

“The sleet from Saturday had frozen into a solid ice mass across the county. There were a lot of trees and debris down, particularly affecting the Holley-Crawfordsville area out of Sweet Home,” Hamilton said. “All districts ran sanders. Plows were mostly ineffective. Sweet Home District had a dedicated tree crew as well.”

On Monday, Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, 10 staff members and four district supervisors were working.

All roads had already been sanded. Supervisors and one or two crew members per district drove through all roads to monitor conditions and re-apply sand where needed. Everyone was home by noon.

On Tuesday, Jan. 16, 41 staff and eight supervisors were back to a regular schedule and 30 staff members remained on the roads after 5 p.m.

Staff continued with inspecting roads and re-sanding where necessary; clean-

ing debris and addressing hazard trees. Rain in the morning turned to freezing rains in the afternoon, and persisted through the night. Winds increased through the afternoon and evening, getting up to 25 mile-per-hour gusts. Crews added sand to provide traction as much as possible, emphasizing

collectors and primary routes, with service to rural-local roads as possible.

“By 7 p.m. we had sent all remaining staff off the roads due to the extreme hazards presented by falling trees and limbs. Staff working on downed trees had trees falling around them,” Hamilton said. “Line crews pulled

off as well, and emergency services like SHFD stopped responding to rural calls due to the hazards.

Cleanup continues in the Sweet Home/Crawfordsville areas.

Once the ice began to melt, flooding occurred in parts of the county, and the Road Department had to close several roads due to high water for a day or two.

GIS Director Steve Barnett created color-coded maps showing high-water areas and road closures.

### Linn County Parks

Parks Director Stacey Whaley said there was quite a bit of limb damage throughout the parks system, especially Lewis Creek Park on Foster Reservoir.

Several large trees fell at McKercher Park near Crawfordsville.

### Ambulance runs

The number of people who fell and either bruised their egos — and other body parts — or made trips to local emergency rooms is unknown, but the number of calls received by local ambulance and fire departments exploded.

The Lebanon Fire District responded to 96 calls from Jan. 13-16, 44 of them on Jan. 15 alone. The Sweet Home Fire District responded to 114 calls from 7 a.m. Saturday to 7 a.m. on Wednesday.

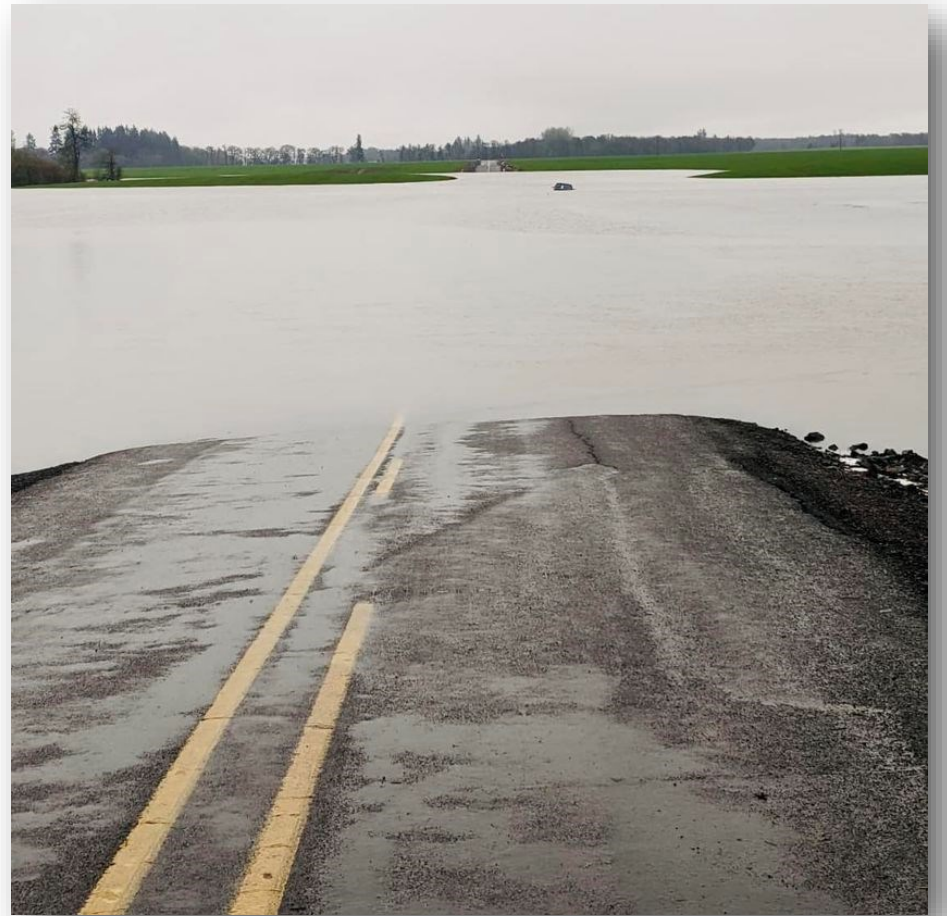
The Albany Fire Department saw a 100% increase in calls on one shift alone.

### Emergency Operations Center

Linn County Emergency Managers Ric Lentz established an Emergency Operations Center at



Sodaville area ice.



Above: Submerged vehicle on Abraham Drive near Peoria. Below: Clearing Brush Creek Road.



the Linn County Sheriff's Office.

He distributed daily reports, including information on shifting weather conditions.

### Linn County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Michelle Duncan posted these comments on social media:

I want to take the time to offer thanks to all those that endured and helped our community during the ice storm earlier this week.

First, I want to thank our staff here at the Sheriff's Office. They drove through the same conditions we were warning others not to. I am so proud of our staff and their dedication to serving our community. Not only did they simply show up to do their jobs, they did it in such a way that was well beyond what is expected of most law enforcement agencies. They

helped stranded motorists, checked on vulnerable populations, restocked wood and transported them to warming shelters or hotels. I am truly honored and proud to be working with such compassionate men and women.

I also want to thank the ODOT and the Linn County Road Department for clearing the roads, the power companies for restoring power, and the Fire/EMS personnel and hospitals for caring for people who fell or had other medical needs. Thank you to the neighbors who watched out for each other and others who worked in so many other ways to help. You all worked tirelessly to help our community and keep them safe.

Lastly, I would like to thank our community for their patience and prudent decisions in this weather, as it could have taxed our resources much more so if you weren't.

It is times like these that I am so thankful to be your sheriff.



Lewis Creek Park on Foster Reservoir had extensive tree and limb damage from the recent ice storm. Photos by Operations Supervisor Tristan Davis.

# ICE STORM ... From P. 4



A water pipe burst in the warm-up arena at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center dumping thousands of gallons of water and creating a sloppy mess. Fair & Expo Center and Road Department staff members are working on sopping it up.

Photos by Fair & Expo Director Kris Barnes.



Road Department clearing Crawfordsville Drive.

Photo by Sweet Home supervisor Jason Duncan.



Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker, right, grabbed a snow shovel and helped clean sidewalks at the Linn County Courthouse during the ice storm.

Photo by Planning & Building Director Steve Wills.

## Linn County provides portable generator for S.H. Fire District

SWEET HOME — With severe winter weather forecast for much of western Oregon, on January 8 the Sweet Home Fire District requested support from the Linn County Public Health Emergency Management office to provide temporary auxiliary power while repairs are taking place at Station 21 in Sweet Home for their standby generator.

Through a Federal disaster readiness grant, Linn County Public Health has a towable generator on standby that produces 25,000 watts of electricity. This diesel-powered generator is usually deployed to provide service when mobile clinics are set up, or when a power outage is taking place at a community shelter.

This generator can operate for more than three-days without refilling the fuel tank.

Sweet Home Fire District, led by Fire Chief Nick Tyler and more than four-dozen firefighters currently serves more than 19,000 people and conducted more than 3,300 calls for assistance during 2023 in the eastern area of Linn County.

This generator provided power for a two-way radio system, bay doors and lights at the station, telephones and pagers connecting all four of the stations and every first responder as well as the fuel pumps for the apparatus and ambulances.





# OSU Extension Service



OSU Extension prepares a Food Hero Soup recipe featuring the fresh farm products families received in their food boxes. Photo: Hope Stephens.



A display table showing off the abundance of storage crops families came to pick up - the meat was in the freezer! Photo: Diego Nieto.

## Linn County, OSU Extension bring local food to local families

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — Three \$5,000 microgrants provided by the Linn County Health Promotions Team are helping local groups enhance nutrition for families in the mid-valley.

The funds are being used to provide locally grown food to children/families from the local Farmers Market to the Old Mill Center for families and the OSU Extension Service, according to Diego Nieto of Linn County Public Health.

“The program not only benefits local families, but also helps put some money into the hands of local farmers,” Nieto said.

Nieto said one grant went to the Albany Farmers Market and the \$5,000 is used to provide children with fresh, locally grown food.



Local meat that was purchased for families and included with storage crops. Photo: Teagan Moran.

Children can pick out fruit and other produce from growers who bring their crops to the weekly Farmers Market.

The Old Mill Center provides food boxes to families in Corvallis, Albany and Lebanon.

OSU Extension Service is working with farmers in Linn, Polk, Marion and Benton counties and offering classes on how to make healthy, nutritious food.

Nieto said that instruction is not only family oriented but also aimed at restaurants, schools and health care organizations.

“Everyone wins,” Nieto said.

OSU Extension Small Farms Program and the Family Community Health team bought over 1,000 pounds of “storage crops” for 40 families, food that is easily stored over the winter months. The box items were purchased from farmers that serve Linn County, providing vitamin-rich food, Nieto said.

OSU Extension paired the pick-up of the boxes with recipe tasting and information on how to purchase the fresh food directly from the farmers. The small-scale farmers benefited from these unexpected purchases, preventing food waste and increasing their year’s sales.

Nieto said funding for the microgrants comes from the tobacco prevention program.

“We have budgeted \$50,000 over two years,” Nieto said.

Nieto said Linn County Health is also going to partner with the OSU Extension-Linn County office to provide cooking demonstrations.

Organizations that want to participate in this program must complete a mi-




Sample of the storage crops purchased for families including squash and sweet potatoes. Photo: Hope Stephens.

crogrant application and meet the following criteria:

- Purchase food from local growers and producers.
- Provide food to Linn County residents and other community members free as part of an educational and/or cultural event, or as an expansion of an existing service.
- Collaborate with the Healthy Communities Coordinator in a short evaluation of the microgrants and their efficacy.

## Coming soon !




## Military Veteran Farmer Winter Gathering

**Sunday, February 4th, 2024**  
**11am - 1pm**  
**Tangent, Oregon**

<https://beav.es/q2h>

*Join us for a chance to connect, share resources,  
and enjoy a potluck!*



Questions or accommodations contact:  
[crystal.kelso@oregonstate.edu](mailto:crystal.kelso@oregonstate.edu)



# Volunteers contribute 31,000 hours to Willamette National Forest

In 2023, more than 540 volunteers — who hail from several groups and organizations — partnered with the U.S. Forest Service to steward the Willamette National Forest. Collectively, volunteers logged more than 31,000 hours, valued at more than \$1 million.

Volunteer activities included planting trees, staffing fire lookouts, surveying for invasive weeds, maintaining trails for all types of users, engaging

the public as trailhead hosts, rehabbing historic buildings, doing wildlife surveys, and more. Thank you volunteers for your commitment to public lands!

This is just one example of all the great work completed in 2023. We look forward to completing more projects in 2024.

Photo Credit: Cascade Volunteers



Seated: Deputies Dillon Spangler and Martin Kaftanchikov. Row two: Deputies Derek Klein and Jacob Randall.

## LCSO deputies receive Award of Valor

Four Linn County Sheriff's Office deputies received the Award of Valor in December at the annual Oregon State Sheriff's Association (OSSA) awards banquet. The annual event that recognizes outstanding achievements made by Sheriff Offices around the state throughout the year.

We would like to recognize and thank Deputies Derek Klein, Jacob Randall, Marion Kaftanchikov and Dillon Spangler for their courage, dedication and professionalism shown during this event that took place.

The event was filled with amazing stories of great men and women going above and beyond to serve the people within their counties in Oregon.

Members from the Linn County Sheriff's Office were recognized with an Award for Valor for the bravery and heroism they showed in the Cascadia Officer-Involved Shooting last March.

A full recap of the event is available, courtesy of the OSSA at <https://oregonsheriffs.org/videos/2023-ossa-awards-ceremony/>.

Congratulations to all this year's award recipients. Thank you for all you do for your county, community and the citizens you serve.

Remember to send your Valentine's Day photos — home or office — to Alex Paul at [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us).



Sebastian Allison, a computer specialist with the Sweet Home School District, provided information about how to protect children from on-line predators at St. Helen Catholic Church in Sweet Home on Jan. 15. Allison provided an in-depth look at the many ways and programs predators use to lure children into providing too much information to strangers on-line.

## Protecting children from on-line predators ...

### Linn County Sheriff's Office

We know a lot of young ones out there received gifts for the holidays that allow them to access the internet. These include phones, tablets, computers, and other online capable devices. Knowing this, we wanted to share some online safety tips to help keep our children safe from potential dangers online.

### Kids:

- Don't give anyone your password, name, address, the name of your school, or any information about your family.
- Don't talk to strangers on the Internet, even if they seem to be in your age group. You don't have to respond to strangers that try to talk to you.
- Don't agree to meet anyone in person that you've met online.
- Don't post pictures of yourself without your parents' permission.
- Do not download or install anything on your computer without your parents' permission.
- If you are unsure if your parents would approve of something, ask. They only have your best interests at heart!

### Parents:

- Monitor your children's screen time. Have them leave it somewhere in plain sight when they go to bed, so you are aware of when they are using their phone.
  - Limit what apps you allow your child to use. Predators often use apps/games with chat features such as Snapchat, Instagram, Roblox, Fortnite, Yubo and Kik. They will often pose as another child to gain your child's trust, often leading to inappropriate requests.
  - Periodically check your child's phone to make sure there is nothing on there that concerns you. Make sure you know their passwords to apps.
  - Most phones, operating systems (ios/android), as well as cell phone providers, have tools that allow you to control what apps your child can access, amount of "screen time" they can have, times they can use their phone for online purposes and more.
- As always, communicate with each other about internet usage and any concerns. The ABC House, located in Albany, offers free Smart Cyber Choices training that will show adults how to empower children and teens to use technology safely and wisely. We encourage you to sign up for these trainings by visiting: <https://www.abchouse.org/training>. We hope this info will help keep your kids safe online!

## ... and protecting your personal data as well

### Linn County Sheriff's Office

Data Privacy is always something we need to keep in mind. Technology is becoming more entwined into most of our daily lives. With this in mind, we wanted to take a moment and share some data privacy advice to help keep you and your information safe.

- Never use unsecured Wi-Fi – especially for banking, shopping or other uses where sensitive private information is required.
- Check your bank and credit card transactions regularly online as well as your monthly statement. If you spot anything questionable, contact your financial institution or credit card vendor right away to stop payment on the purchase and cancel your card. It is also a good idea to check your credit report at least annually to look for any discrepancies.
- Never give personal information over the phone, email, or text.
- Stop taking online quizzes or replying to similar social media post questions that ask random things about your childhood, children, tattoos, marriages, pets, favorite food etc.. Each time you take one of these, people trying to access your data gather a little bit more information

about you that may allow them to steal your data or identity. Many challenge questions used to help you sign into your accounts ask for similar information.

- Use strong password phrases. The longer the password, the harder it is to break. Using symbols (!@#\$%^&\*) in addition to letters and numbers is a great idea.

- Change passwords when your accounts may have been compromised and do not use the same password for all your log-ins. Once someone realizes your password they will try to access your other accounts if they can using that password.

These are just a few of the things you can do to help keep your personal information safe online. We recommend you take a look at the things you are currently doing and take these extra steps to help keep your information safe!

January 21-27 is National Data Privacy Week. For more information on this event, and how to keep your information safe, visit <https://staysafeonline.org/programs/data-privacy-week/>.



Do you have a story idea for the Linn County Reporter? Contact editor Alex Paul at 541-967-3825 or email [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us).

Thank you!



# New online guides will aid in identification of native bees

**C**ORVALLIS, Ore. – Pollinator enthusiasts and scientists have new online tools to identify native bees in the Pacific Northwest.

The publicly available “keys” resemble the field guides familiar to fans of fauna and flora but contain the extraordinary detail needed to identify bees, which are much harder to tell apart than plants, birds, mammals and reptiles, according to Jim Rivers of the Oregon State University College of Forestry.

“With birds for example, one characteristic can tell you whether it’s a California scrub-jay or a Steller’s jay,” said Rivers, who helped develop the keys. “Bees are not that way. Many species appear identical at first but are in fact distinguished by very small, nuanced differences.”

Oregon alone is home to more than 600 species of native bees. Bees and other animal pollinators enhance the reproduction of nearly 90% of the Earth’s flowering plants, including many food crops, and are an essential component of insect and plant biodiversity.

Bees are the standard bearer among pollinators because they’re usually present in the greatest numbers and because they’re the only pollinator group



Female *Perdita lateral*. Photo by Josh Dunlap, Oregon Department of Agriculture.

that feeds exclusively on nectar and pollen their entire life.

Rivers, Lincoln Best of the OSU College of Agricultural Sciences and the OSU Extension Service, Josh Dunlap of the Oregon Department of Agriculture, August Jackson of Mount Pisgah Arboretum in Eugene and Paul Williams of the Natural History Museum in London put together three separate ID keys: bee genera of the Pacific Northwest, and male and female species keys for the region’s bumblebees.

The keys, which took the collaborators about three years to assemble in a project funded by the College of Forestry’s Fish and Wildlife Habitat in Managed Forests program, are aimed at two primary target audiences: Scientists and land managers whose work in-

volves bees, and bee enthusiasts among the general public.

“The small number of people who are really good at identifying bees don’t use keys – they just know the species inside and out because they spend so much time working with bee specimens,” Rivers said. “We’ve made our keys easy enough that the amateur can use them, and our expectation is that the keys will benefit all kinds of research projects in this part of the world.” Rivers explained that in the Pacific Northwest, there are perhaps a half-dozen professional bee identification experts whose work is critical for moving forward any research project that depends on knowing for sure which bees are in a particular study area.

“And they’re all backlogged for

months,” Rivers said. “It’s a big bottleneck in bee research when you have thousands of specimens you’re trying to ID and you have to wait for months before you can get the identification data you need to complete a project. With the keys, we can at least get one step closer to having the identifications we need in a timely manner.”

The keys are downloadable and printable but most easily used online, he said. The design uses hyperlinks to navigate users through a decision tree that walks them through what to look for in various parts of the bee anatomy in high-resolution detail.

“You work through a series of dichotomous questions until you can say yes, what I am looking at in my specimen matches what I see on the key,” Rivers said. “We got the best high-resolution images we could get for the different diagnostic characters so that the images match what you see in a specimen. That’s a big improvement over the idealized hand drawings that most traditional keys have, which can be challenging to use when trying to ID a real-world specimen.”

Community scientists, including Oregon Bee School participants and OSU Extension Master Melittologists, helped review and test the keys.

## ‘23 a busy year for LCSO

As we say goodbye 2023, and hello to 2024, your Linn County Sheriff’s Office wanted to offer a recap of some of our crime stats for the year. As always, it was a very busy year for our office.

Our deputies responded to 35,872 calls for service. Of these calls, 5,564 resulted in reports being taken. Deputies also made over 3,946 arrests. We have some highs and some lows with our crime trends throughout the county.

All crime stats listed are for areas serviced by the Linn County Sheriff’s Office and do not include Albany Police Department, Lebanon Police Department, Sweet Home Police Department or the Oregon State Police.

We had an overall decrease in Property Crimes (22%) including residential burglaries (-2.8%) and vehicle break-ins (-40.2%). However, we unfortunately saw big increases in Arson (85.7%), Bicycle Thefts (333%) and Identity Theft (50%). There was a significant increase in littering investigations, up 181% from 2022. There was a 40% increase in Traffic Crimes such as suspended driving (at a misdemeanor or

felony level) and DUII’s. These driving crimes are typically detected during proactive traffic enforcement by our deputies, so they are clearly out there doing a great job

keeping our roadways safe! Person Crimes (ie. Assault, Sex Crimes, etc.) remained nearly unchanged from 2022 and we are happy to report there were zero homicides in the

county in 2023!

For your traffic related stats, we responded to 460 injury crashes and 509 non-injury crashes throughout the county. Deputies issued 2,559 citations and 3,757 warnings to drivers throughout Linn County.

Our dispatch center kept busy all year with a total of 62,654 calls from 911. On top of that, we also took in 92,200 calls from our non-emergency line! Our dispatch center is at times staffed with only 2-4 dispatchers, and we cannot express enough how hard these dispatchers work to help keep our county safe. Our jail stayed busy as well, booking 3,771 arrestees!



## ADULT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Mental Health First Aid is an entry-level training that teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adults.



### YOU WILL LEARN:

- Common signs and symptoms of mental health challenges.
- 5-Step action plan to help a person in crisis and non-crisis situations.
- How to connect a person to appropriate services and supports.

**FEBRUARY 22, 2024**  
8:00 AM- 5:00 PM  
ARMORY BUILDING  
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ALBANY, OR

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

Community members • Employers Educators • Hospital staff • First responders • Faith leaders • Support services professionals • Individuals interested in supporting others

Sponsored by Linn County Health Services

Registration is required. Certification will be provided.  
For more information or to register, email  
prevention@co.linn.or.us

Thanks for reading the Linn County Reporter.

# Fishing for answers, anglers question effects of drawdown

Kristy Tallman

The New Era

**S**WEET HOME — Springtime may seem a lifetime away here in January, however to those who fish it's just a minute away. The fishermen in and around Sweet Home have their curiosity up as was evident this week on Facebook.

It started with a post inquiring as to if there had been a mass die-off at the South Santiam Fish Hatchery which fortunately was just a rumor gone wrong. To date there has not been any die-off since the Kokanee die-off that occurred during the drawdown back in October 2023 according to Nick Gilbo, Fish & Wildlife Technician at the hatchery.

Gilbo has worked at the South Santiam Fish Hatchery for nearly 24 years so we were fortunate to get his input and experience to help us with some of these questions anglers are having. His work around the hatchery consists of raising spring Chinook, summer steelhead and rainbow trout. They also work spring Chinook, summer steelhead and winter steelhead at the traps.

A rumor came up regarding a parasite issue on the summer steelhead juveniles due to the mud and silt. According to Gilbo, "On the summer steelhead juveniles, we did have a severely increased load of parasites. Due to that mud and silt," he added.

"All that water being flushed out to a level that's never been seen before and you're stirring things up in the water column and you're shoving more bugs, more mud, more stuff down and it's never been seen before. Well it didn't hurt the Chinook, at all, as we can see, but it did really load the steelhead up full of parasites."

Gilbo said the parasitic problem wouldn't be an issue for those fishing for the steelhead as the parasites have been taken care of.

"We took care of the parasites on them. The pathologist was just here yesterday. She said they are back to normal load." Problem resolved.

Many folks have been wondering if the winter Chinook returned in plenty this year or if their populations had been affected by the drawdown. Gilbo stated this year and last they had above average returns on the Chinook.

They should know as they have to truck these fish up the mountain. "We collect them at the trap, we count them, we sex them, put equal number of males and females, tag them with numbers, take some genetic samples and then we truck them up to either Quartzville or the Middle Fork," Gilbo explained.

Down at the hatchery other folks were concerned about the silt running through the tanks and filtration systems. Gilbo conceded things were pretty bad previously but the water has been improving. "The silt," he says, "doesn't bother the fish or the filtration system.

"The silt is really light and fine, it just flows in and flows out no problem." He stated further the fish would be minimally impacted by the silt due to these same reasons. "It's not good on their gills necessarily but it's really light and fluffy so it doesn't, so far as we know, it doesn't have a negative impact on the fish that we've seen."

He did state that the fish do have trouble



**Above:** South Santiam Fish Hatchery below Foster Dam and below, murky water in Green Peter Reservoir in December.



finding their food due to the silt which would cause them not to eat, however they have since adjusted their feeding habits to accommodate for the disruption. Instead of feeding them once, they now feed them several times lightly so it's easier for the fish to find their food.

Bass and sunfish seemed to be of great curiosity for anglers wondering how the drawdown may have affected other species of fish not so often talked about since they are not native to Oregon. According to Gilbo, regardless of species folks are inquiring about, there will be no answers until the seasons begin and the fishing begins.

"They're going to have to find out," he said, "you're going to have to wait for Green Peter to fill back up, and then clear up so people can go fishing and they're going to be the ones that find out in a hurry."

"If they want to go back to their favorite spots, yeah, they're the ones who's going to find out and let the rest of us know."

Gilbo explained he wished he had more answers to some of the questions presented. "This is new to us, new to Oregon," he said "It's never been done before so everything is a wait and see."

He believes the silt will settle in time for summer recreation and says the process has made quite a bit of pro-

gress. "It's already cleaned up considerably from what it was here, I think it should be fine. It's made quite a bit of progress."

Currently this is an expected three year study, however due to current

litigation in progress it's uncertain whether the schedule will be adhered to or if it will occur at all.

When asked further about the native cutthroat trout, bass in the lower river and chub populations, he says of them too he doesn't know. "Nobody knows," he says, "this is new to everyone. It's going to take the researchers to bring us that information."

Due to the current state of the water and the continued uncertainty folks have regarding the drawdown, many wondered would the salmon and juvenile steelhead continue to be released by the hatchery. According to Gilbo, since the water started being raised they have let 300k salmon and steelhead go in November, 300k will be released in February and another 468k go in March. "We have to wait for them to get to size before they can be let go."

The population of fish in general, according to Gilbo, is a rollercoaster by nature. "Each year is a gamble, just like fishing. Sometimes you get a good catch while others you catch nothing. In a controlled environment things are predictable but out in the wild nature decides more often than not, it's a true rollercoaster."

Many questions presented to Gilbo were deferred to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) or the Army Corp of Engineers for further comment. When asked if there was a vote today to do this drawdown again would they vote yea or nay. We were told, firstly, it's a question for the higher ups, but secondly, due to this never being attempted before, there's no way for many folks' questions to have instant answers.

At time of press, The New Era had spoken with ODFW but were asked to submit our questions in writing. Stay tuned, there's definitely more answers to come. Gilbo invites any and all who would like to come down to the hatchery to do so. Self-guided tours are available from 7:30 a.m. to dusk and guided tours for groups from 7:30 a.m. to 4:20 p.m. Monday through Sunday.



## Linn County 4-H members attend leadership event at Eagle Crest

Linn County 4-H had a great group of young people at High Desert Leadership Retreat at Eagle Crest Resort in Central Oregon the weekend of Jan. 14.

We are so lucky to have such fantastic young people in Linn County!

High Desert Leadership Retreat is open to all 4-H members in the 7th-12th grades, and happens annually over MLK weekend at Eagle Crest Resort in Redmond.

*Students, tribal members and others visit the study site.*

## Western Cascades landscapes historically burned more often than thought

**C**ORVALLIS, Ore. – Forests on the west slope of Oregon's Cascade Range experienced fire much more often between 1500 and 1895 than had been previously thought, according to new research by scientists at Oregon State University.

The findings provide important insight, the authors say, into how landscapes might adapt to climate change and future fire regimes.

James Johnston of the OSU College of Forestry led the study, which was published in *Ecosphere*.

"Wildland fire is a fundamental forest ecosystem process," he said. "With temperatures rising and more and more area burning, we need to know as much as we can about the long-term variability in fire."

Johnston and collaborators at Oregon State, the University of Oregon and the U.S. Forest Service gathered tree ring data at 16 sites in the southern part of the Willamette National Forest, in the general vicinity of Oakridge.

Trees form scars after cambial cells are killed by wildfire heat, he said. These scars are partially or completely covered by new tissue as a tree grows, and tree rings tell the story of when the fire exposure oc-



curred.

Using chain saws, the scientists collected samples from 311 dead trees – logs, short snags and stumps. Seventy-three percent of the samples were coastal Douglas-fir, and 13% were ponderosa pine. The remainder were sugar pine, noble fir, red fir, incense cedar, western red cedar, mountain hemlock and western hemlock.

"We cross-dated a total of 147,588 tree rings and identified 672 cambial injuries, 479 of which were fire scars," Johnston said. "The scars allowed us to reconstruct 130 different fire years that occurred at one or more of the 16 sites before a federal policy of fire suppression went into effect early in the 20th century."

The main takeaways:

Fire was historically far more frequent in western Oregon Cascades landscapes than previously believed. Indigenous peoples likely used fire to manage large areas for resources and probably altered landscapes and fire regimes in significant ways.

There are important present-day restoration opportunities for fire-adapted systems in western Oregon.

"Also, our study produced little evidence of the kind of large, wind-



driven fires that have burned 50,000 to 75,000 hectares in the watershed immediately to the south and south of our study area," Johnston said. "Only 39% of fire

*Photos by Sarah Altemus Pope of the Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative.*

years were recorded at more than one site, only 11% were recorded at more than two sites, and only 3% at more than three sites – in a study area of 37,000 acres, that strongly suggests that most historical fires were relatively small."

Across all 16 sites, the average fire return interval – the length of time between fires – was as short as six years and as long as 165. In general, the differences in those averages were strongly associated with vapor pressure deficit or VPD, basically the drying power of the atmosphere. The higher the VPD, the shorter the time between fires.

However, historical fire in stands seral to Douglas-fir – stands that, if left alone, would end up with Douglas-fir as the dominant tree species – was much less strongly linked with dry air.

"We interpret the extraordinary tempo of fire in those stands, and the climate pattern associated with fire there, to indicate Indigenous fire stewardship," Johnston said.

"We saw some of the most frequent fire return intervals ever documented in the Pacific Northwest, but the enormous volume of biomass that these moist forests accumulate over time is often partly attributed to long intervals between wildfire."

The authors note that humans have

occupied the southern part of what is now the Willamette National Forest for at least 10,000 years. A variety of Indigenous cultures, including the Molalla, Kalapuya, Tenino, Wasco, Klamath, Northern Paiute and Cayuse, probably used the area for trading, hunting and the collection of plants.

"Removals happened very quickly, with most Native people taken

to the Grand Ronde, Warm Springs and Klamath reservations," said co-author David Lewis, a member of the Grand Ronde Tribe and an assistant professor of anthropology and Indigenous studies in OSU's College of Liberal Arts. "Removal of the tribes took their cultural stewardship practices, their use of annual cultural fires, from the land, radically altering how the forests were managed."

By 1856, most remaining members of Willamette Valley and western Oregon Cascades tribes had been forcibly removed to reservations. Extensive clearcut logging on the Willamette National Forest started in the late 1940s and continued for four decades.

"Now, Forest Service managers want fine-grained information about forest vegetation and historical disturbance dynamics to manage lands in ways that promote resilience to climate change," Johnston said.

He added that the Forest Service is working closely with the Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative, a group based in Oakridge, to plan a variety of restoration treatments.

Joining Johnston and Lewis on the paper were the College of Forestry's Micah Schmidt, now working with the Umatilla Tribe in northeastern Oregon, and Andrew Merschel. Co-authors also included William Downing of the U.S. Forest Service and the University of Oregon's Michael Coughlan.

The Oregon Department of Forestry funded the study.

**S.T.A.N.D. Beanies**



**Linn County  
S.T.A.N.D. Youth Council**

*Linn County STAND students designed STAND beanies for the 23-24 school year. STAND is a group of high school students from throughout Linn County working to enhance positive school climate through media campaigns and activities that address underage drinking, tobacco use and mental wellness.*

## OSP Trooper Aranda ... From P. 1

people and from many different backgrounds, but I also learned how to deal with people when they are angry and upset. Sometimes, they aren't going to be satisfied no matter what you tell them. It toughened me up and really helped me learn about serving the public."

Aranda said he was also proud that the county trusted him to pick up money from the camping fee collection boxes.

"It made me feel good knowing they trusted me," he said.

It was during that time that Aranda began doing "ride-alongs" with area law enforcement agencies. He liked all of them, but soon realized the Oregon State Police was his calling.

After the summer job closed, Aranda took a part-time job with the Juvenile Department and says he learned a great deal there as well.

"I enjoyed working with the kids and I hope made a positive impact on them," Aranda said. "I never felt unsafe, but you are always aware that even though they are 12 to 17 years old, some have done some pretty bad things. I was an adult figure and I hope also a mentor. I could listen

to them."

Aranda said he will bring the same philosophy of "showing kindness, compassion and planting a seed of change" into his OSP career.

Aranda said the most difficult parts of his law enforcement training were "a lack of sleep" and instructors picking apart every single thing any of the recruits did, looking for their weak spots and building upon them.

Recruits can be disciplined for having a ballpoint pen clicked in the wrong position, or for having hanging threads showing on their uniform. They marched in unison everywhere they went.

Aranda said training is intense, from firearms to answering mock calls or traffic crashes.

Recruits lived on campus at pre-academy (he often slept in a sleeping bag so he would not wrinkle his bed sheets) and would iron the bed sheets and pillow cases at 5 a.m. so drill instructors would not find something to discipline him over.

Friday, the class Training Coordinator Rick Igou, said that about half of the 38 graduates have college degrees and half have served in the military. Graduates will serve with OSP, city police departments and sheriff's offices from Portland to Medford and from Brookings to Pendleton. In all, they represented 18 law enforcement agencies.

Igou said this was an exceptional group, dedicated to succeeding and motivated to learn.

"They were serious when needed and humorous when appropriate," Igou said.

Guest speaker Washington County Sheriff Caprice Massey said their badges



*New OSP Recruit Trooper Damian Aranda with his family.*



*Posing with guest speaker Washington County Sheriff Caprice Massey and Training Coordinator Rick Igou.*



*OSP Recruit Trooper Damian Aranda, left, stands at attention during graduation ceremony on Friday in Salem.*

are a "symbol of hope and justice for your communities."

She admonished the graduates their chosen professions are "not easy jobs".

"You need to take care of yourself, physically, mentally and emotionally," she said. "We are a family bonded by a common purpose to help each other."

Aranda is the son of Rene Aranda of Lebanon and Carrie Aranda of rural Lebanon. He has 11 brothers and sisters and was homeschool.

He will work out of the Salem OSP office, serving Marion, Polk and a part of Linn County. He will work on probation for another year.

"I'm very excited. This is something I have waited for a long time," Aranda said. "I feel very blessed. It has been a lot of hard work."