



Native Encampment held at Sunnyside Park ... See P. 11

What's happening in Linn County, Oregon

August 2022

## Mad Platters café opens in courthouse

By Alex Paul  
Communications Officer

**A**LBANY — David Harms didn't set out to own restaurants. He's a land surveyor by training, just like his father. But the mid-valley native has found himself drawn to eateries for 30 years including his latest adventure — Mad Platters in the basement of the Linn County Courthouse. "I'm excited," Harms said. "I named it Mad Platters so we can do things a little differently. We want to offer new menu items regularly and we're not stuck with one style of food."

Mad Platters is open from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. It is open to courthouse staff and visitors as well as the general public. Enter the courthouse from the west door and take the stairs or elevator to the basement.

Harms' foray into the world of food actually started when he went to work as a valet at the CalNeva Casino in California.

The casino's restaurant was not doing well and that was reflected in the poor tips his valet staff was getting. Harms made comments about the restaurant to the casino's owner and the next thing he knew, he was put in charge of revamping the restaurant.

That was in the late-1990s and Harms has had restaurants in LaPine, the Oregon Coast and the mid-valley since, including Casetta di Pasta and Jo Jo Macs in downtown Albany.

"We want to create new things all of the time," Harms said. "The world is full of wonderful ingredients and we want to use them."

Harms said the name "Mad Platters" a play on the Mad Hatter of the Alice in Wonderland tale, allows him to be a bit "quirky, funny, to do some memorable things as well as use more vibrant colors like purple and yellow for décor."



It's a family affair at the Mad Platters café in the basement of the Linn County Courthouse. Left to right: Coral, Elson and David Harms. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Open only a few weeks, Harms said a variety of hamburgers appear popular as well as the meatloaf sandwich and Taco Tuesdays.

His son, Elson, 24, enjoys creating new sandwich offerings and they will soon be on the menu.

"It's a perfect fit for me," Harms said. "I feel like I could do this forever. I like to keep people happy. We can create anything you want."

Harms, 50, and his wife, Coral, live in Corvallis. In addition to Elson, they are parents to Brandon, 30, and Conner, 10.

"One of the nice things about being in the courthouse is that we see the same people every day and we get to know each other," Harms said. "It helps when regulars call ahead since we know they have one hour for lunch. I love the food industry, even

though the last couple years have been hard times in the restaurant business."

Mad Platters serves breakfast and lunch, dine in or take out.

Call 541-967-3877 to order.

A sampling of menu items includes a sausage breakfast sandwich, a meaty breakfast burrito, a garden salad, a Mexican Street corn salad and pesto chicken and Reuben paninis.



## Commissioners help celebrate new college

Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker, foreground, and Commissioner Roger Nyquist, far right, helped cut a ribbon to open the new Western University of Health Sciences college of physical therapy on July 8 in Lebanon. The college is located in the remodeled former Hometown Furniture building at 2665 South Santiam Highway. The program began accepting students last summer.

Photo courtesy Sarah Brown, Lebanon Local

# Harvest season; share the road

## Linn County Sheriff's Office

**H**arvest Season is here and we want to offer some farm equipment road safety tips. You are seeing a lot more farm equipment traffic on the road now through the end of September.

A few things to keep in mind to keep you and the farmers (and often young equipment drivers) safe:

- Farm equipment is becoming larger and larger each season. This means the equipment is likely to take up a greater portion of the road than you may have seen in years past.
- Most farm equipment is equipped with multiple lights on all sides and large triangle signs to help make them as visible as possible while on the roadway.
- When you approach farm equipment from the rear and the equipment is moving at a slow pace, people are going to want to pass. Always assume that the driver cannot see you. If you are going to pass, make sure you are in a designated passing area. Since the equipment can be very large, make sure you look further up the road than you normally would when passing a vehicle. Once



you have passed the farm equipment, make sure to give extra space before returning to your lane of traffic.

- When you approach farm equipment from the front, make sure you slow down. Check to see if other vehicles may be passing the farm equipment. As mentioned, the person passing the farm equipment may not see you coming, so it is very important to be extra vigilant. Continue past the farm equipment slowly and, once cleared, proceed as normal.

- We understand that it can be frustrating when you are slowed on the road by farm equipment. Keep in mind these farmers are doing their jobs like we all do each day. Farmers all over our county provide jobs, are working to support their families and are bringing food to all our tables! They make up a large part of our great county and we want to keep everyone safe! Take it slow this harvest season. Keeping these things in mind will help keep you and others safe on the road.

## Linn County Board of Commissioners

**Roger Nyquist**



**Sherrie Sprenger**



**Will Tucker**



**Call 541-967-3825**



*Eric Rice of Linn County Veterans Services assists one of 10 veterans*



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*who attended a Veterans Stand Down July 21 at the Corvallis Elks Lodge. Rice said most of the veterans were homeless or at risk of being homeless. He helped them obtain copies of their military records and referred them to other community resources that could help them with housing, education, employment and rehabilitation. Rice said he spoke with representatives from about 12 different community resources to help build a network to help mid-valley veterans.*

Do you have a story idea for the Linn County Reporter. Please contact editor Alex Paul at 5451-967-3825 or email [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us).

## Steve Wills Leads Planning & Building

By Alex Paul  
Communications Officer

**A**LBANY — Former Linn County Building Official Steve Wills has been promoted to director of the Planning & Building Department, County Administrator Darin Lane said this week.



**Steve Wills**

“We have observed Steve over the last year in the absence of a Planning & Building director,” Lane said. “We are impressed with his leadership abilities and his desire to see the department succeed.”

Wills, 53, brings more than a dozen years’ experience as a building inspector in both Deschutes and Linn counties — as well as several years as a private contractor — to his new role.

“I want people to come into the Planning & Building Department and feel welcome,” Wills said. “I also want them to get consistent answers from all of us. It’s important that staff have a sense of camaraderie.”

Wills is an Albany native and 1987 South Albany High graduate.

He worked at Oremet and then the Albany Trucking Division for Willamette Industries where he rose to the positions of chip truck dispatcher and maintenance and dispatch supervisor.

From 2002 until 2012 he worked as an independent contractor in Linn County.

In 2012, while living in LaPine, he earned his building inspection certification and spent five years as an inspector with Deschutes County.

“We wanted to be closer to family and moved back to Linn County in 2017 and I got a job with Linn County,” Wills said.

Wills said he has enjoyed his work because it offers a broad variety every day. A Linn County building inspector might inspect a pole barn, home remodel and subdivision all in the same day and all over the county.

Wills said the inspection team will do about 40 inspections per day.

There are four full-time and one part-time inspectors.

Rick Goff has taken over Wills’ former position as the county’s Building Official.

Wills and his wife, Heidi a Realtor, live in Millersburg, and have three grown children and eight grandchildren.

They enjoy boating, fishing, old cars and trucks and being with family as well as working around their home.

# Nearly 30,000 people attend Linn County Fair

By Alex Paul  
Communications Officer

**A**LBANY — Nearly 30,000 people attended last week’s Linn County Fair over its three-day run according to Linn County Fair & Expo Center Manager Randy Porter.

More than 13,709 people came to the fair on Saturday, enjoying mid-70-degree weather during the day.

They packed the house in reserved seating as well as general admission to watch popular country rock band Sawyer Brown on the Main Stage that evening. The award-winning group has traveled coast-to-coast for 38 years.

Other headline shows were Sara Evans on Thursday and Five For Fighting on Friday.

Attendance on opening day Thursday was more than 8,000 and almost 7,700 on Friday.

Rodeo action and Mutton Bustin’ drew big crowds into the Calapooia Arena as well.

“It was fantastic,” Porter said. “We blew 2019 out of the water.”

The fair was cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2021 fair was up 70% as people were excited to get out and about once again.

“I was hesitant to compare this year’s fair to 2021 simply because it had been so wildly successful, but the truth is, this year’s fair held right up to it in many areas,” Porter said. “Our food numbers were up significantly. The carnival was down a little.”

Porter thanked fellow staff members Kris Barnes, Rachel Lytle, Joel Sannan, Rory Warren and Jordan Myers as well as many volunteers who made the fair happen.

Porter, who will retire at the end of the year, said this was the first time in his 24 years with the Fair & Expo Center that he sat down and enjoyed an entire musical concert — Sawyer Brown.

Fair Board President Kris Latimer thanked Porter and his staff and the many volunteers who did everything from put out traffic signs to haul guests to and from parking lots.

“Linn County turned out in such a big way,” Latimer said. “They really supported the fair vendors and of course, the Youth Livestock Auction was amazing. It looks like another record at nearly \$1.2 million.”

Latimer said temperatures in the 70s and 80s were welcomed.

Roger Nyquist, chairman of the Board of Commissioners, said he feels fortunate to live in a county where there is a “very strong sense of community that continues to celebrate and honor the role agriculture plays locally.”

COUNTY FAIR ... See P. 4



**Above:** Linn County Fair Board President Kris Latimer welcomes everyone to the Saturday edition of the fair and introduces her fellow Fair Board members: Damon Martin, Steve Mote, Ed Perlenfein, Kerry Johnson, Roger Nyquist, Dr. Michael Huber and staff members Randy Porter and Kris Barnes.



**Right:** The annual Linn County Youth Livestock Auction set another record at \$1.2 million for 4-H and FFA livestock projects.

**Below:** Photographer Mark Yen captured this photo during some wild rodeo action at the fair.





Lead singer Mark Miller and the country rock band Sawyer Brown performed to a packed house on Saturday night at the Linn County Fair.

# Having fun at the Linn County Fair!

## COUNTY FAIR ... *From P. 3*

“We would like to thank everyone who attended the fair, our staff and volunteers who made this happen,” Nyquist said.

In addition to Latimer and Nyquist, fair board members include Damon Martin, Ed Perlinfein, Steve Mote, Kerry Johnson and Dr. Mike Huber.

Although the tally isn’t complete it appears the annual Linn County Youth Livestock Auction had another record year. Add-on donations to projects were still being accepted on Monday.

The top 20 buyers were Advanced Mechanical, Relco Roof and Floor, George Van Dyke Trucking, RAM Trucking, Cascade Timber Consulting, Farmland Tractor, JZ Trucking LLC, Pratum Coop, Riverland Rentals, Nutrien Ag Solutions, Weyerhaeuser Santiam Lumber, Mid Valley Farms Inc., Pimm Farms, Elite Equipment Rental, Barenbrug USA, Coastal Farm, Cox Farm, Dr. Ben Braat, Radiator Supply House and Faithful Friends Animal Clinic.

You can see photos of the champion livestock winners at [www.lcyla.com/](http://www.lcyla.com/).



Former mid-valley resident Sara Evans opened the county fair Main Stage entertainment on Thursday evening and greeted several local residents backstage.



These folks make the fairs and other events happen year-round at the Fair & Expo Center. Left to right: Kris Barnes, Rachel Lytle and Manager Randy Porter, who will retire at the end of the year after 24 years.



Fair Board members Kris Latimer and Kerry Johnson pose before presenting outgoing fair manager Randy Porter with a Golden VIP Ticket prior to the start of the rodeo.

# Maintaining adequate jail beds is a balancing act

From Sheriff Michelle Duncan

It has been my commitment since taking over as Sheriff in January to fully open the Linn County Jail. With that said, these decisions have



Sheriff Duncan

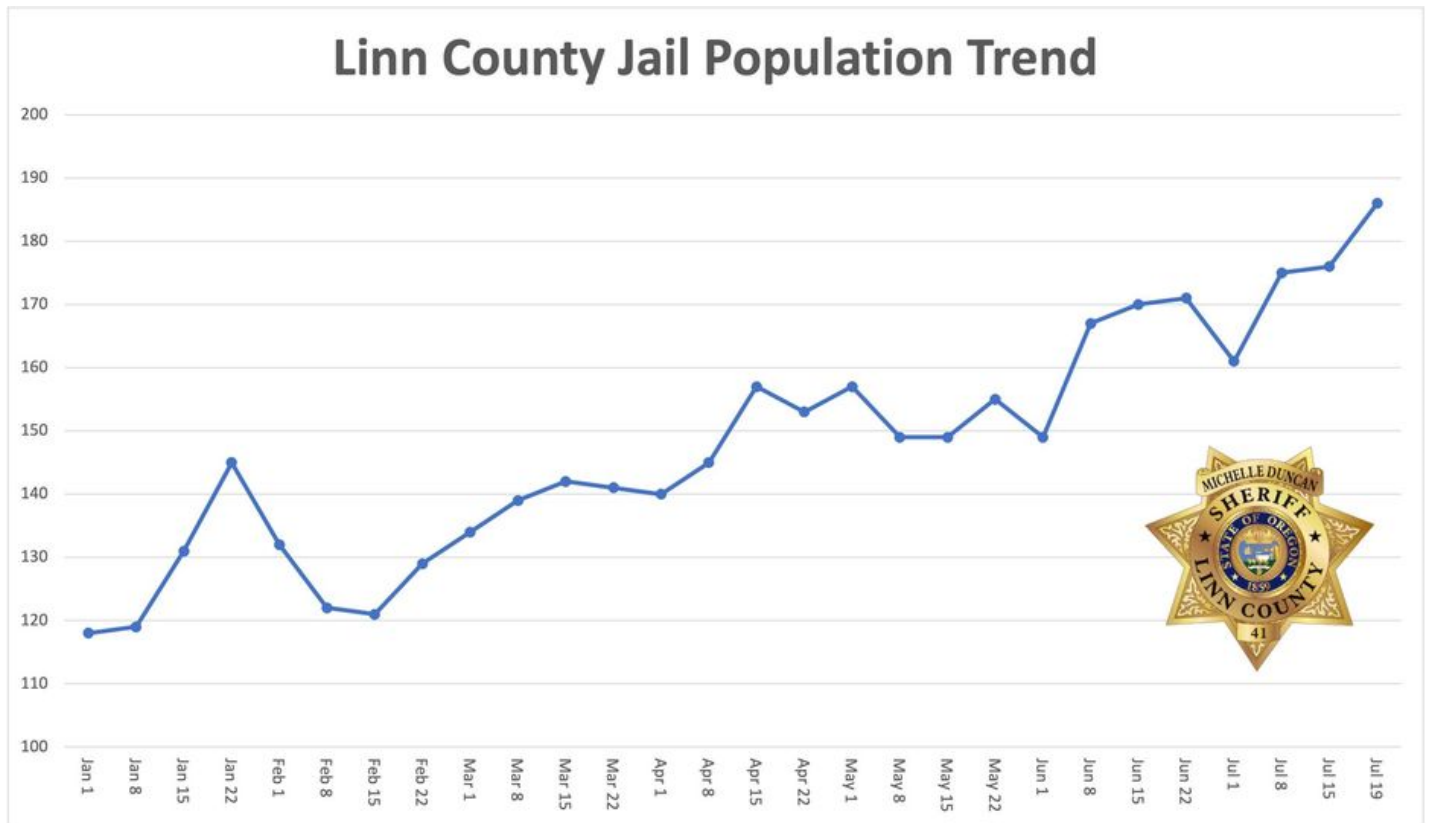
to be made thoughtfully, considering staff safety, taxpayer dollars and the overall health and safety of the adults housed in our facility. With

the help of some amazing staff working in our jail, we have been increasing the number of people we are holding in our facility every month and are very close to our normal capacity. We will continue to move our jail population numbers towards normal capacity. Yesterday, we had 186 adults in custody and we are continuing to increase these numbers. Prior to COVID, in 2019, our average was 197, so we are very close.

For the last two years, COVID has limited our capacity in the jail because of Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) restrictions regarding social distancing, which for a time didn't allow for inmates to be housed two to a cell; and quarantining of those in custody who were newly coming into the jail, tested positive for COVID or were a close contact with someone who did. Even today, although greatly relaxed from previous restrictions, correctional facilities are one of the few places where there are still some restrictions and direction because of COVID. The jail's commitment was, and is, to do everything possible to safeguard the health of staff and the inmate population whom we are charged with their care. These restrictions must be followed to safeguard taxpayer dollars from potential lawsuits by those in custody who may contract COVID.

For the safety of those in our facility, including our staff, we still test everyone being lodged at the Linn County Jail. Those refusing testing (yes, they can do that) have a longer quarantine period than those complying with testing.

As the courts have been extremely slow on prosecutions for the last two years, we are housing some of these inmates much longer than normal, taking up some of our bed space. Currently, we have 16 people awaiting some kind of criminal homicide trial. Prior to COVID, we averaged 3-4 inmates on similar charges. These types of



criminals are very dangerous and often have specific restrictions placed on them because of the severity of their crime. Having four to five times the number we normally house limits our ability to take in those committing lesser crimes. This is also true for other serious offenses, such as serious assaults, robberies, sex offenses and others. The Linn County Jail currently houses some of the worst of the worst.

For example, if I have a block that has 20 beds when double-bunked (2 persons to a cell), and I have 8 high-risk offenders in that block that have to be single bunked (1 person to a cell), I have 12 beds that are left unused because by jail standards, I cannot place a lower risk inmate in the same block or cell with the high-risk, more dangerous, population.

Senate Bill 48 (SB48), which was passed earlier in the year and took effect July 1, has a direct influence on how much control we have on our population. Simply put, it mandates who we have to let out or keep with little regard to whether or not we have a bed for them. Once we have some time to truly evaluate the effects of SB48, I will reach out with a clearer perspective on jail operations under SB48 to keep our community informed.

I would like to thank our jail and medical staff who have worked tirelessly

over the last couple of years with constant rule changes (by OHA and CDC) to best manage our population. Although, our population was lower for a time our staff has had additional work of testing, managing COVID outbreaks, managing a more dangerous population, rearranging our housing many times to maximize our capacity, and all while feeling the scrutiny of what they were doing when the jail could not take in people off the street, the way they did prior to COVID. They have worked hard to get us back to normal and maximizing the space we have. They serve a vital role in public safety.

It is important to let those out there committing crimes know we have a jail bed for you. I am proud of the corrections staff's work on enabling us to do this (as much as the state law allows) to best protect our community. With their help, I am also looking to add double bunks to several more cells to increase as much as we can without compromising the safety of staff and inmates. The majority of our cells are already double bunks, but we will add where we can.

Linn County is a fantastic community and deserves to have criminals held accountable for their crimes. I am committed to this just as much as I was when I was a patrol deputy on the road making those arrests. I will look for every way possible to continue this mission at the Linn County Sheriff's Office.

## QUOTABLE

*The Linn County Jail has a maximum of 231 beds to house adults in custody, and I often get asked why we don't have 231 people in custody at all times. This number is a maximum which is nearly impossible to ever meet because of the required separation of populations.*

Sheriff Michelle Duncan

The Linn County Jail has a maximum of 231 beds to house adults in custody, and I often get asked why we don't have 231 people in custody at all times. This number is a maximum which is nearly impossible to ever meet because of the required separation of populations. Basically, we would have to have the perfect combination of inmate types to reach this capacity. We have several areas in the jail configured to house certain types of inmates. Most people realize males need to be separated from females. We have to separate high-risk offenders, who are a danger to others based on their behavior and/or charges, from the rest of the population. We cannot lodge these people in a cell with another inmate because they are also dangerous to each other. Separation based on gender and risk levels are just two examples of how we have always separated out the populations, affecting when and which bed space can be used.

## LCSO offers campsite safety tips

Camping season is in full swing and we once again wanted to remind everyone of some Campsite Theft Safety Tips. Follow these tips to help ensure you have the best camping trip possible.

- Lock your vehicle. When venturing off on an early morning hike, lock your personal belongings out of sight in your vehicle, or better yet, carry them with you. If you're tent camping, valuables can easily be stolen.
- Get an extra set of eyes. If you leave your campsite for a day trip, ask your neighbors to keep an eye on it for you.
- Lock items to a tree. If you have an expensive grill or bike, secure them with a cable locked around a nearby tree.
- Properly store your food. Thieves can also take the form of furry critters. Store your food in airtight containers. This not only keeps it fresh; it prevents animals from noticing its scent and raiding your campsite.
- Keep an eye on Mother Nature. Mother Nature can quickly whip up a summer storm. Make sure your belongings are properly secured. Store expensive items in your car or RV. Properly stake items to help keep them secure from strong winds.



**Summer time fun at Clear Lake**

*Dina Dysinger (payroll) and family spent some time at Clear Lake in July and enjoyed both the fishing and tasty snacks from the restaurant. **Above:** Annie Whitfield shows off a trout while Joe Gowdy keeps working at it. **Center:** Maysee Whitfield, 1 1/2, enjoying a treat. **Below:** Christian Whitfield shows a trout to his daughter, Vidi Whitfield, 2 1/2. Dina calls Clear Lake "a hidden treasure."*



**Chrissy Cliburn is new Linn County Developmental Disabilities director**

**By Alex Paul**  
*Communications Officer*

**A**LBANY — Chrissy Cliburn is the new director of the Linn County Public Health’s Development Disabilities Department, but she isn’t new to the department.

She has a head for figures and a heart for helping others, which she learned when working as financial support staff and services coordinator within the department from 2006 to 2012, when she accepted a similar position in Benton County.

Cliburn, 44, was born in Jackson, Mississippi, but moved with her family to Oregon when she was just one year old. She graduated from West Albany High School in 1995 and earned her degree in business administration with an emphasis in finance and a minor in economics from Oregon State in 2006.

“I really enjoy working with figures, but I also enjoy working with people, helping people,” Cliburn said.

She found during her original tenure with Linn County, that staff members would ask her financial questions relating to clients.

“My focus began to shift toward the more social work side of the job,” Cliburn said. “It’s really rewarding.”

Cliburn said she was approached by friends who suggested she apply for the Linn County job.

She was cautious at first, but decided she wanted to help Linn County residents since she lives in Lebanon.

Cliburn said there are about 40 staff members in the Development Disabilities Department.

“My goal is to help create an inviting work environment where people can do their best work, which is to serve our communities and our clients,” she said.

Cliburn and her partner, Micah, live in Lebanon.



*Chrissy Cliburn*

She has two grown children, Bart and Sidney Hutchison and two grandchildren, Evelyn, 7, and Ellie, 15 months.

She enjoys reading, playing piano and being with family.

“I’m excited about the opportunity to grow our program and to serve our communities,” Cliburn said.

Public Health Director Todd Noble said he is “thrilled to welcome Chrissy back to Linn County in her new role as our Development Disabilities manager.”

Noble called Cliburn a “person of integrity, a natural problem solver and an advocate for some of the most vulnerable citizens in our community.”

“She leads by example and does not hesitate to roll up her sleeves and tackle any problem,” Noble said. “She has outstanding people skills and as a result I have full confidence in her abilities as a dedicated public servant to lead the DD program to its full potential and guarantee quality services to our Linn County community. I could not be happier to welcome her to this new role.”

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# S.H. City Council weighs options for 230-acre property's potential

**Editor's note:** Linn County gave 230 acres of the former Western States Land Reliance Trust property in Sweet Home several years ago. The county had acquired the property in 2010 in lieu of more than \$500,000 in back taxes. Here is what the city has been up to with it.

By Benny Westcott

The New Era

**S**WEET HOME — The Sweet Home City Council on June 28 discussed the future of the city-owned 230-acre Quarry Park property directly north of 24th Avenue and south of the Santiam River.

Councilors were shown a blueprint of potential plans, which included an event grounds for concerts and sports, trails, camping and parking spaces, a gazebo/arbor space, an outdoor school/wetland learning center (the property includes four ponds) and a Sweet Home Economic Development Group office.

Councilors Dave Trask, Susan Coleman, Dylan Richards and Diane Gerson were present for the full meeting. Angelita Sanchez left early.

"We don't want this to be a one-trick pony," Community and Economic Development Director Blair Larsen said. "We want it to have as many attractions on it as possible, both to weather downturns in the economy and provide the most appeal to the broadest segment of the population in the area."

The council directed city staff to create a request for proposal, or RFP, for private industry organizations that may be interested in developing the property.

"The purpose of an RFP like this would be to be completely transparent and up-front about what the development opportunities are, what the city is willing to do and to hear from private developers on whether they want to play ball with us," Larsen said.

The now-defunct Western States Land Reliance Trust acquired the property, formerly operated by Knife River, in the early 2000s for part of the failed Santiam River Club. Linn County assumed ownership of the land in December 2010 as a result of foreclosure on more than 400 acres against the firm for nonpayment of property taxes.

Then, in late 2017, county commissioners approved the transfer of the quarry to the city of Sweet Home. They'd initially intended to transfer it to the Sweet Home Economic Development Group (SHEDG) for use as the future home of the Oregon Jamboree. However, SHEDG declined after learning of the property taxes to be assessed.

"Given its history, it's been assumed from the very beginning that this would be the future home of the Jamboree," Larsen said.

The city now owns the land but is restricted to public use for a 20-year period that began in 2017. Therefore, the city cannot sell the property or lease it for any private use for the next 15 years, or it may revert back to the county.

"The county is the foreclosing entity and when they get property through foreclosure they are limited by state law on how they can dispose of that property," Larsen said. "They can give it to another government for public use, or they can auction it off to the highest bidder, or a couple



Proposed plans for Quarry Park, shown on this map, include ball fields, music event grounds, trails, and much more.

other options."

However, public use can include commercial operations such as recreational facilities and concert venues. The city may enter into management or development agreements for the property if the actual use fits the term's legal definition.

"This is something that we would want to be very, very careful with and make sure that whatever we do fits within that category," Larsen said. "Otherwise, we risk losing it."

He noted that some governments own golf courses run by private entities under contract.

"It's not unheard of to have a recreational facility that has an agreement to run it," he said. "Fairgrounds, conference venues and that kind of thing also fall under this category."

Access was one of the barriers for development, he said. A gravel road — Zelkova Street — runs into it on the east side, with some dirt and gravel roads also appearing on the property. According to Larsen, Zelkova is currently its only access.

"It's not suitable for permanent facilities," he said. "You can't have a whole bunch of people, especially not for the needs of the Jamboree, going into it."

The city has explored various access options. One would extend 24th Avenue north through the former Willamette Industries mill site, owned since February by Sweet Home Real Estate Restorations LLC. Larsen said a rail crossing was approved to allow that project to happen and Restorations owner Josh Victor was willing to work with the city.

"That's been a barrier up until now, but I think we now have a lot of reasons to be optimistic about additional access into that property," Larsen said. "It mainly hinges on money at this point."

Development ideas have been a topic of discussion for some time. Before its potential deal with the county fell through, SHEDG issued a 2016 document outlining a vision for the property that included campgrounds, ball fields, trails and music venues. City staff have also drafted various plans, but none have ever been officially

presented to or adopted by the city council.

Larsen said that the cost of developing the property to its fullest potential was unknown but would likely reach well into the tens of millions of dollars.

"At the same time, the full buildout of the property could be a bigger economic boost to the city than any other project," he noted.

He said city staff had spoken with local developers about partnering with a private entity, noting, "A project like this is exactly why public-private-partnerships [PPPs, or P3s] exist."

A P3 is an arrangement between two or more public and private organizations, typically involving private capital financing of government projects, followed by drawing revenue from users over the contract's course.

"Ultimately, what it comes down to is what a developer is willing to do and what they want for it, and what the city would have to give up and for how long," Larsen said, adding that such partnerships "can vary greatly, from the city getting a percentage of whatever the company makes, or the company taking on the financing and charging the city some sort of rent for the city to manage or utilize the facility."

"Whatever you could imagine and communicate on paper, you could put in place, if a private party is willing to do that," he said. But the city would have to ensure that the contract was "rock-solid."

"Take your time doing it because the consequences if you have any loopholes, could be quite severe to the city," he warned.

He additionally noted that a city-drafted RFP could include contact information for neighboring properties that, like Quarry Park, could be developed and encourage responders to make parallel proposals for adjacent land.

"Ideally, in this way, we would be able to promote development of multiple properties in the area," he said. "If the full vision of this happens the way we want, you would have complementary uses on neighboring properties. For example, we're not going to be able to get a hotel on the Quarry property. That wouldn't be a real possi-

bility when it comes to the restrictions we have on our land. However, a neighboring property would be ideal for a hotel that would serve patrons of the Quarry property.

"The great thing about such a process is that the council would be free to accept or reject proposals. If you see something you like, you can move forward with it. If none of the proposals make sense to you or seem to be a wise course of action for the city, you are free to reject all of them — no harm no foul."

Even if the RFP process didn't yield an actual contract, he said, the information alone would be helpful.

"You at least get the city's name out there and make it clear that the city has an opportunity with this property," he explained. "And you see who's really paying attention, who's willing to be a partner, and what it would cost. Maybe the cost is too high. We don't know. But you'd have the information and that would be valuable as the city seeks to move forward."

"I would recommend that this not be a quick process," he continued. "This is something that we would very much want to take our time doing and be very thorough in the RFP to make sure that we're not hurting ourselves or committing ourselves to anything that we're not willing to do. We don't want any accusations of unfair dealing or anything like that."

He suggested that the city needed help from private industry.

"The chances of us being able to afford it ourselves and to find enough grant funding to develop this property ourselves are pretty slim," he said. "This is something we could certainly develop over time if we chose to do it ourselves and depending on how well the Jamboree does, there'd be some amount of cooperation from them, I'm sure. But when it comes to getting the property developed sooner rather than later this would probably be the best course of action to take."

"I'm for this," Councilor Trask said. "We need to get going. But it's going to take a long time."

"I think that one of the things that must be considered is the safety of having paths around water," Gerson said.

"Certainly, safety would be a concern as you're developing," Larsen replied. "There are many parks that are able to have ADA-compliant paths that are around bodies of water and they're able to make it work quite well. I'm sure that we can follow best practices when it comes to park development and make sure that they're done in a safe manner."

"Hopefully fishing would be involved, and maybe a play structure for children," Coleman suggested. Larsen stressed taking advantage of the property's ponds.

"If any proposal from the private industry suggests having some sort of boat or kayak rental that's right there for people to use on the ponds, that's certainly a good recreational use that could fit in well there," he said.

Trask expressed a desire for development to begin sooner rather than later.

"I would really like to maybe get a start with what we can afford, if we can get to that point," he said. "It would be nice if we could get something going in the near future, maybe not in my time on council, but as soon as we could and figure out how we can get that done."

## Just “kidding” around!



Linn County Commissioner Sherrie Sprenger hosts a monthly lunch session for county employees called “Cookies and Conversation.” County staff bring a lunch, enjoy sweet treats and are free to ask any and all questions about county issues. July 5, Commissioner Sprenger took the program outdoors and brought along her two Nigerian Dwarf goats, Donkey and Shadow. County staff, such as Captain Jeff Schrader of the Linn County Sheriff’s Office and his daughter, Brooke, 17, didn’t hesitate to help bottle feed Donkey and Greg Hart of General Services got in some snuggle time with Shadow. Instead of cookies, there was plenty of cold watermelon that was enjoyed by both staff members and goats.

## Learn about Oregon’s Defensible Space Code at Aug. 31 public forum

**A**LBANY — Mid-valley residents who live in wildland-urban interface areas and want to learn more about Oregon’s new Defensible Space Code are invited to participate in a public forum at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 31, at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Road.

The Oregon State Fire Marshal’s Office and partner agencies have developed a new Wildfire Risk Map. Oregonians whose properties are within the wildland-urban interface and at high or extreme risk based on the wildfire risk map, may be subject to the Oregon Defensible Space Code.

That means, they may have to prepare their property to reduce the spread of wildfire.

Defensible space is a buffer area between a home or business and grass, trees, shrubs and any wildland area that surrounds it.

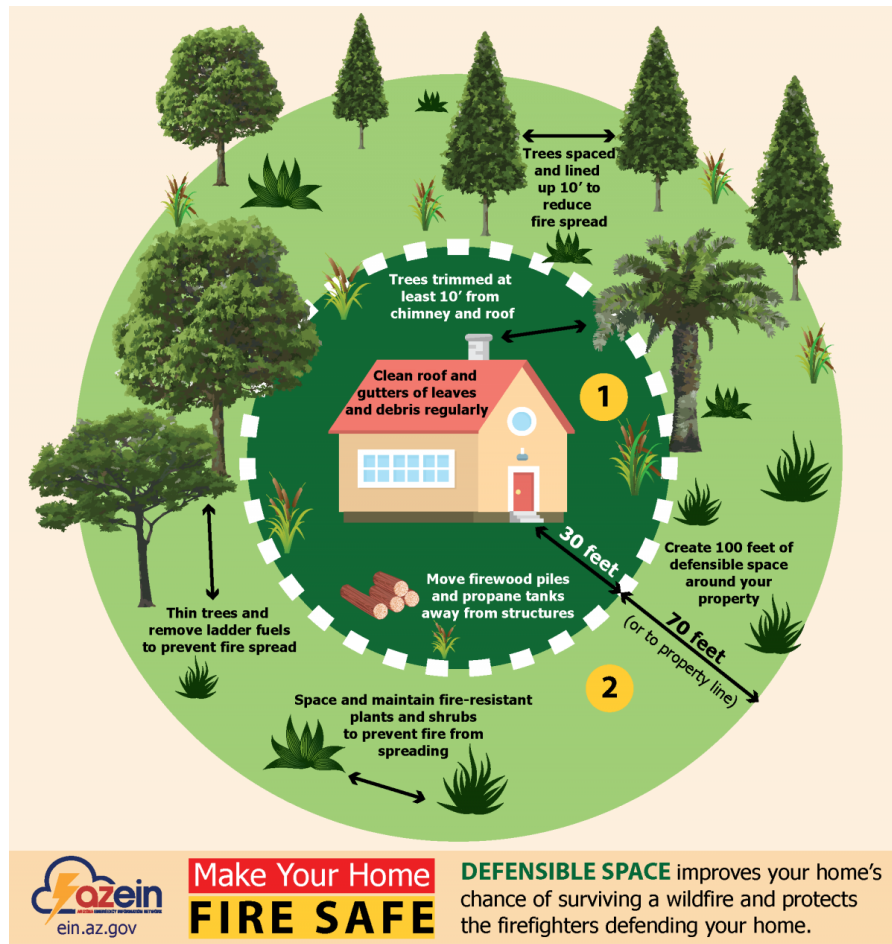
The State Fire Marshal says a “proper defensible space can slow or stop the spread of wildfire and help protect your home or business.”

The State Fire Marshal’s Office website offers numerous resources to help homeowners prepare defensible space around their property.

The updated wildland-urban interface and wildfire risk map assigns every Oregon tax lot a wildfire risk classification of no risk, low risk, moderate risk, high risk, or extreme risk.

You can find the wildfire risk map at [https://tools.oregonexplorer.info/OE\\_HtmlViewer/index.html?viewer=wildfire](https://tools.oregonexplorer.info/OE_HtmlViewer/index.html?viewer=wildfire).

When the map is issued and whenever the



Graphic courtesy of the City of Veneta

map is updated in the future, property owners or local governments may appeal their property’s risk classification within 60 days of being notified of a property’s risk classification. The appeal may request a higher or lower risk classification. Properties that are in the high or extreme risk classifications, inside the boundary of the wildland-urban interface and have a dwelling, may be sub-

ject to future requirements to protect against the risk of wildfire through defensible space or home hardening building codes. Currently, there are no requirements or identified impacts to risk classifications of no risk, low risk, moderate risk, or high or extreme risk that are not inside the boundary of the wildland-urban interface. Here are some tips on preparing your

property’s defensible space:

- Remove dead and combustible vegetation, mulch, and other materials, especially within the first several feet from the home. Replace with decorative rock or gravel.
- Remove leaves, pine needles, and other debris from the roof, gutters, and on and under the deck to help prevent embers from igniting the home. Enclose eaves to help prevent ember entry.
- Remove any vegetation growing directly under your eaves. Inspect the roof and replace missing shingles or tiles, make sure the valleys are in good repair.
- Keep lawns mowed and all plants watered. Keep it “Lean and Green”.
- Move construction material, trash, and woodpiles at least 30 feet away from the home and other outbuildings.
- Trim trees and remove or trim brush/bushes and ground cover plants under trees or next to structures or decks. Cover exterior attic vents, soffit vents, and areas below decks and patios with 1/8" metal wire mesh to help prevent sparks from entering the home.
- Chip, compost, or haul yard debris to a recycling center.
- Follow local fire regulations if burning yard debris.
- Replace combustible plants, furniture, and cushions on decks with non-combustible types. For questions or more information about defensible space, contact the State Fire Marshal’s Office at 503-934-8204.



# WIC program has positive effect on local businesses

By Alex Paul  
Communications Officer

ALBANY — WIC families spent more than \$1.6 million with 15 local stores in 2020, according to the new information released by the Oregon Health Department.

Linn County Environmental Health Director Shane Sanderson said there were five independent stores, one local or regional chain store, seven national chain stores and two pharmacies that participated. To participate, each store must carry at least eight kinds of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grain products, low fat milk, low fat yogurt and canned or dried beans.

“This illustrates the value of keeping WIC accessible in Linn County,” Sanderson said.

WIC stands for Women, Infants and Children and provides support for women who are pregnant, postpartum or breastfeeding, as well as children under 5 years of age.

“Participants must have an income less than 185% of the federal poverty limit and have a nutritional need or risk,” Sanderson said.

In addition to stores, 44 local farmers provided nutritious food items valued at \$31,320.

In Linn County, there were 4,328 participants, of which 36% per pregnant women and 2,352 families.

Three out of four participants are under the age of five and 91% of WIC moms start off breastfeeding their babies.

“In May, we served 564 women and 531 infants,” Sanderson said. “We helped 1,768 children and 15 women under the age of 18.”

Sanderson said the county’s registered dietitian had 92 high-risk interventions to assist babies who were having difficulty thriving.

“During the pandemic, we met people where they were,” Sanderson said. “We went into their communities. We want people to know we are here if they need us. I think if the pandemic taught us anything it is that you can have a job one day and be out of work the next.”



**Shane Sanderson**  
Environmental Health Manager

Sanderson said eight people work in the county’s WIC program.

To learn more about Linn County’s WIC program, call 541-967-3888.

### What is WIC?

WIC is a public health nutrition program designed to improve health outcomes and influence lifetime nutrition and health behaviors in a targeted, at-risk population by providing: nutrition education, breastfeeding support and services, supplemental nutritious foods, referral to community programs.

The WIC supplemental foods offered each month are not intended to meet all the nutritional needs for a balanced diet, but to help enhance the specific nutrients that are important during pregnancy/lactation in women, and rapid growth periods in infancy and young children.



## Congratulations to our SAR graduates

**C**ongratulations to our newest LCSO Search and Rescue (SAR) members who recently graduated from the SAR Academy! The recruits worked through some of the biggest physical and emotional challenges of their lives.

The following topics are just a glimpse into the training the recruits go through: team building exercises, searching techniques, search patterns, tracking, evidence searches, and first aid.

SAR recruits took to the trails for a multi-day field training exercise where they put extraction skills to the test for an injured horseback rider. Upon their return from field training, recruits are put to the ultimate test on the confidence course. This is a grueling test of endurance, teamwork and a whole lot of belief in self and trust in others.

The LCSO demands the most of our recruits during the academy and at the conclusion of the long 10 days, recruits graduate and are reunited with family. They are now a part of the best SAR team in the state.

Congratulations to the graduates of our 28th SAR Academy: Grant Basting, Benjamin Birkett, Gavin Cole, Jessica Corliss, Emmaline Durrett, Madeleine Goins, Isaiah Lafond, John Lute, Gabriel Nowak, Nate Paz, Maci Pearson, Hector Plata, Peyton Richardson, Alexander Royall, Jack Simmons, Samuel Strawn and Daniel Stucker.



## National Night Out is Back!

**O**n Tuesday, August 2, the Linn County Sheriff’s Office will join other agencies across the nation in celebrating National Night Out!

National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community under positive circumstances.

If you are planning an event this year and would like to have a representative there from the Linn County Sheriff’s Office, please contact Community Services Coordinator Michael Mattingly at [mmattingly@linnsheeriff.org](mailto:mmattingly@linnsheeriff.org).

We look forward to seeing everyone out for a great night of celebrating our neighbors.



# Commissioners oppose proposed Douglas Fir National Monument

**A**LBANY — Linn County Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker unanimously agreed Tuesday morning to send a letter to the mid-valley’s Congressional delegation opposing the proposed Douglas Fir National Monument.

The proposed monument could be created by President Joe Biden through the 1906 Antiquities Act and would include more than 530,000 acres of both public and private forest lands in Linn and Marion counties.

Last October President Biden approved monument status for the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments in Utah and Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Monuments in New England.

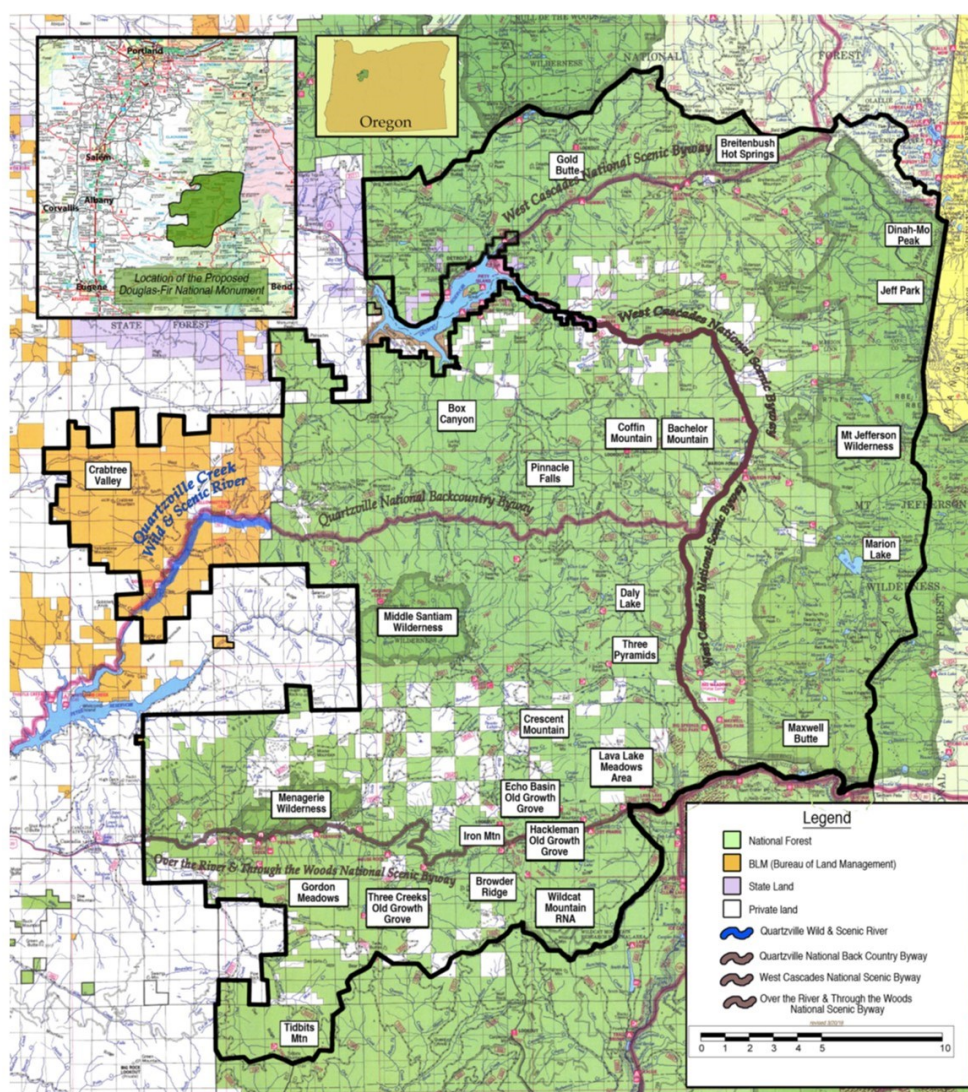
The Douglas Fir National Monument would add another layer of management regulation on U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Linn County Parks, established roads and highways and to a degree, privately owned forest lands in the geographic mix.

It would run from Opal Creek in Marion County south to Tidbits Mountain in southern Linn County. It would extend from the Quartzville Creek area east of Sweet Home to the eastern border of the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness Area.

The commissioners said they believe adding the monument status would further reduce timber harvests, lead to the abandonment of roads and increase the possibility of greater wildfire danger, ultimately leading to heightened public safety issues.

Chairman Nyquist said he opposes the possible designation because it would restrict any future firefighting efforts on those lands.

Nyquist and Sprenger asked Tucker to include in the letter information about the Santiam Canyon fires of Labor Day 2020 that caused billions of dollars damage and loss of life.



# Road Department gears up for chip sealing projects

**T**he Linn County Road Department’s annual road chip sealing program will be in full swing in August. Here are maps of the planning projects.

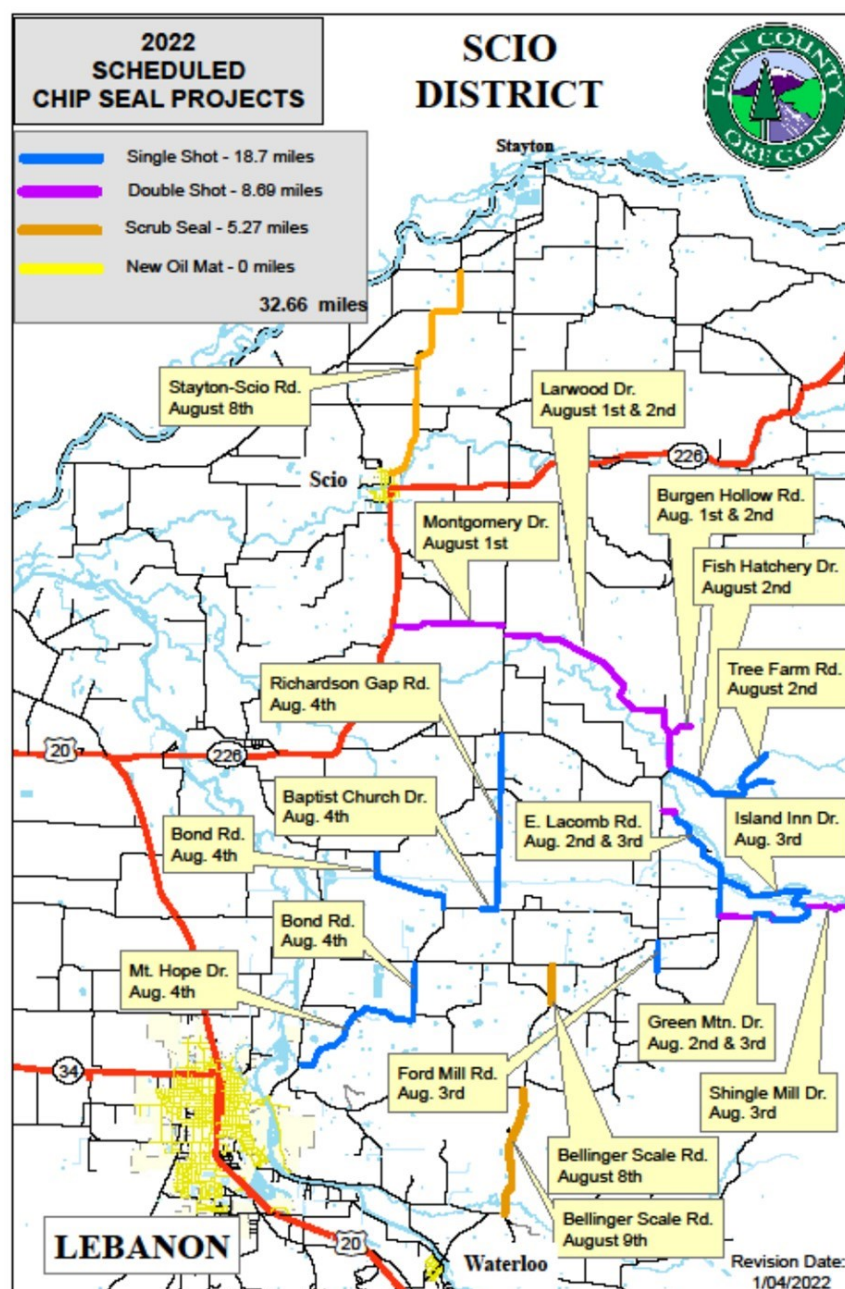
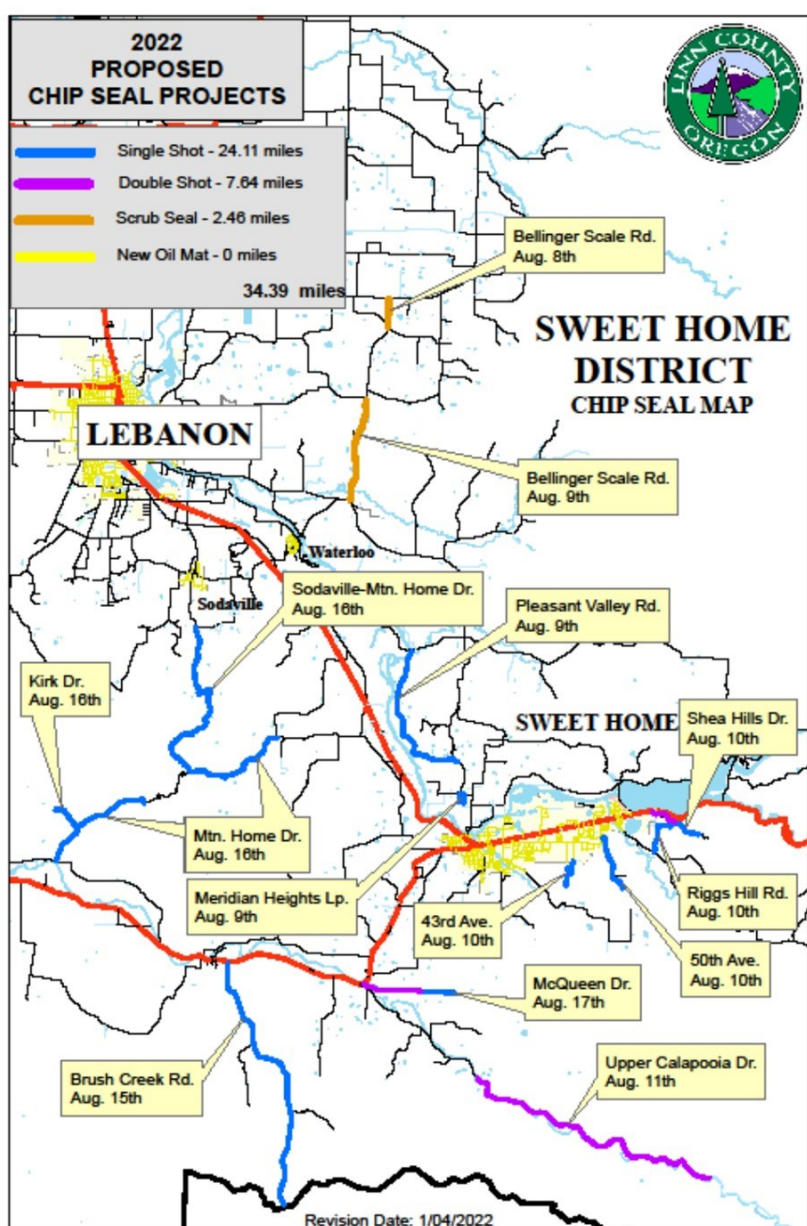
Here are some tips on how the public can help:

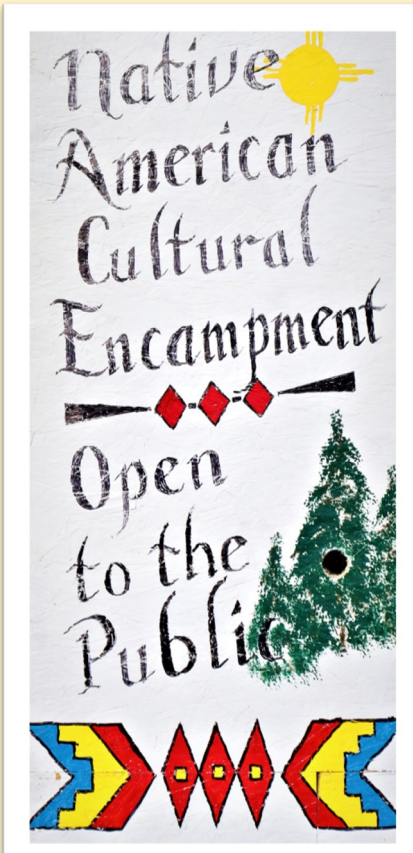
- Park vehicles well away from the edge of the road to avoid getting asphalt splashed or sprayed on them.
- Drive slowly on the fresh chip seal / loose rock. The speed limit will be reduced to

35 mph until the stripes have been restored. Be careful of speeders, as they throw rock off their tires which can chip windshields.

- Keep water off the road when

we’re applying the chip seal and the fog seal. Ensure sprinklers do not get the road wet. Just like you wouldn’t want to paint a wet surface, the new asphalt does not stick well to a wet pavement.





# Native Encampment



The fourth annual Native Encampment was held July 29-31 at the Sunnyside County Park Campground on Foster Reservoir. Native Americans from several tribes and communities gathered and shared music, dancing, crafts, storytelling and food. A second encampment will be held August 26-28 at Cascadia State Park. The public is invited and the event is free.



John "Two Eagles" Laverty, left of Dallas, Oregon, and Deitz Peters of Lebanon, perform traditional flute music.

Teepee poles form an interesting pattern.

# Linn County to Step Up for Breastfeeding August 6

**A**LBANY — Celebrate World Breastfeeding Week in Linn County from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Aug. 6, at the Linn County Courthouse Annex parking lot, 315 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave., Albany.

Organizations that support families from pregnancy through early childhood will be on site providing information about the value of breastfeeding at Step Up for Breastfeeding.

“This is the second annual event after last year’s great success,” said Megan Dunn, Linn County Public Health lactation consultant. “Our event is unique in Oregon in that it brings together many community partners who all work together to support young families and health infant nutrition.”

This year, attendees can look forward to community health and nutrition resources, free raffle prizes, a goody bag for every family, educational opportunities, community support and family fun, Dunn said.

“This event brings together so many of the Linn County organizations that support families from pregnancy through early childhood,” Dunn said. “It shows the effect that breastfeeding



Linn County staff members at last year’s event, with brochures and cookbooks featuring nutritional foods and breastfeeding information. From left to right: Serena Stearns-Garland, Brenda Zambrano, Leah Brunson, Brandy Tarr, Juana Lopez-Gonzales and Megan Dunn.

has on our community and celebrates that special bond.”

Participating organizations: Oregon State University Extension Service, Kidco Head Start, Linn County Public Health, WIC Breastfeeding Support, Samaritan Health Services, Linn County WIC, Linn County Dietitian Services, Community Doula Program, Pollywog, Family Connects, Linn-Benton-Lincoln Breastfeeding Coalition, Capitol Dental and Hope for Mothers.

For more information contact Megan Dunn, Linn County Public Health lactation consultant, at 541

-967-3888 ext. 2319 or email: [mdunn@co.linn.or.us](mailto:mdunn@co.linn.or.us).

Please send us your summer vacation/fun photos. Send to Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, 541-967-3825 or email [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us).



**Are you a military veteran living in Benton, Lincoln or Linn County or surrounding areas?** ArtsCare invites you to participate in an upcoming photography technique workshop, led by a professional photographer. Workshop participants will have the opportunity to learn how to use digital cameras or expand their existing skills. Interested participants will also have the opportunity to show their work at the Through a Veteran’s Lens photography exhibit at The Arts Center in Corvallis this fall.

### Workshop dates

Saturday, Aug. 6, 10 a.m. to noon  
Don & Ann Davis Park and Ocean Shore State Recreation Area, 840 W Olive St., Newport  
The group will meet near the park gazebo, then explore the views and the beach with cameras.  
Photographer: Karl Maasdam

Saturday, Aug. 27, 6 to 8 a.m.  
Northwest Art & Air Festival, Timber-Linn Memorial Park, 900 Price Road SE, Albany  
Parking permits will be provided for participants. Meetup location information coming soon. Participants will explore the event with cameras to capture images of the hot air balloons taking off.  
Photographer: Mark Ylen

**Registration information**  
Workshops are limited to 12 participants. Registration is required.  
To register, email [ArtsCare@samhealth.org](mailto:ArtsCare@samhealth.org) or call 541-768-7138.

**Art exhibit information**  
Sept. 29 through Nov. 12 at The Arts Center, 700 SW Madison Ave., Corvallis  
Reception: Oct. 20, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.



Samaritan Veterans Outreach and Samaritan ArtsCare:  
Fostering healing through the arts



## Stand By Me Day in Brownsville



The annual Stand By Me Day celebration was held on July 23 in Brownsville. The community was a key centerpiece in the 1980s film of the same name, directed by Rob Reiner. Numerous pieces of memorabilia from the event — including an original script — are on display at the Linn County Historical Museum in Brownsville, which is part of the Linn County Parks & Recreation Department.