



DA Marteeny finds beauty of life in the written word

By Alex Paul
Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — When District Attorney Doug Marteeny was a boy, he much preferred being outside exploring nature than hunkering down somewhere in the house and reading a book.

But when he was about 21 years old, Marteeny asked his father Daniel — a special education teacher who loved reading classic books — to suggest a good book to read.

He did: *Plato's Apology* and the young Marteeny was hooked.

"My dad is always reading," Marteeny said. "He is the type of guy that if you ask him about a book, you will leave a half-hour later with an armload of them."

It is probably no surprise that an attorney is a proficient reader, but Marteeny says law school was filled with reading case laws and while interesting, the writing is far from the intricate and painting-like prose of classic literature.

Marteeny said that he likes to set a new challenge for himself every

year and in 2020, he challenged himself to read 20 books. He has since grown that list to about 25 per year.

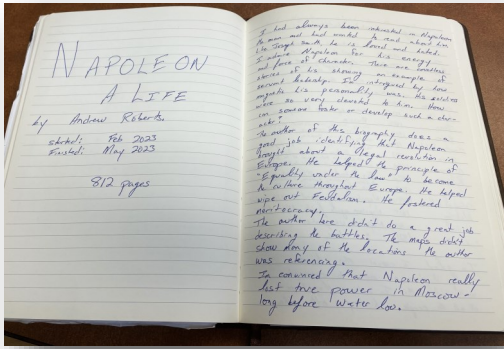
And, he has found himself reading books that really grab his attention two or three times.

"I have gained a love for literature because it causes me to ask the great questions of life," Marteeny said.

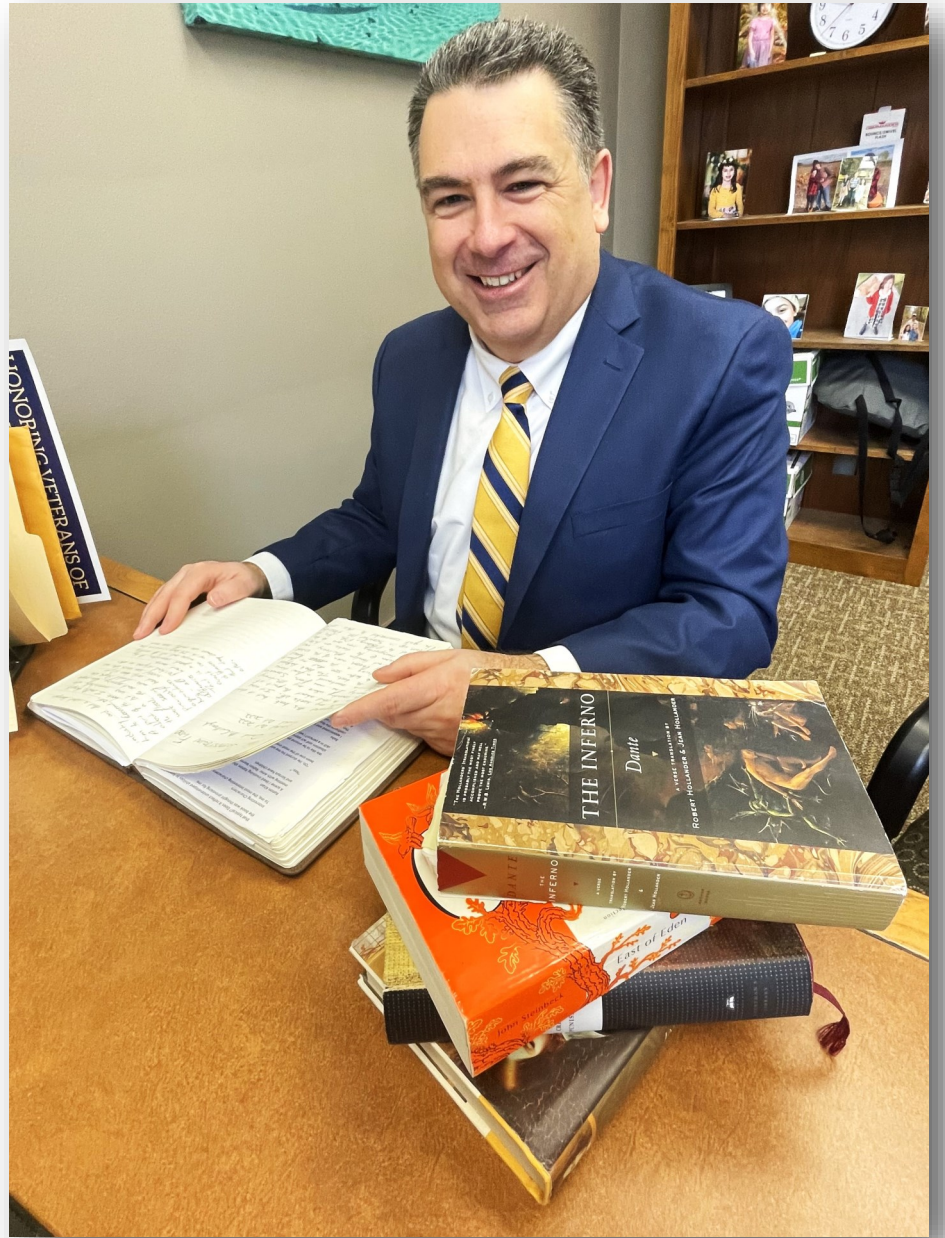
"Those profound, fundamental

questions about existence, relationships and meaning that most all humans ask at some point. Literature causes you to wrestle with the questions and with the potential answers to the great questions."

Marteeny enjoys sharing conversations about books he has read with others, a small "book club" of three to five people who discuss their readings by Zoom and more often by emailing each other.



Marteeny keeps track of his reading with notes in a journal.



Linn County District Attorney Doug Marteeny tries to read about two dozen books per year.

MARTEENY ... See P. 2

Linn County Parks to open new RV dump in SH

Scott Swanson
The New Era

SWEET HOME — A parade of Knife River dump trucks delivered loads of asphalt February 26 to pave the new recreational vehicle dump located on the north end of 24th Avenue.

Watching a paving machine lay down steaming strips of brand-new asphalt, was Tristan Davis, county Parks and Recreation Operations Supervisor, who has overseen the process of planning and building the four-lane public recreational vehicle wastewater disposal facility.

"I'm really excited about this facility," Davis said, adding that he's particularly happy that the dump will be accessible to the public. "This facility will be usable by anyone, so if you're on Hwy. 20 driving over the mountain, or you're coming home or wherever, you're welcome to pull in here. If you're on I-5 and you want to detour and go see a friend in Sweet Home and dump your RV, well, here you go."



RV dump ... See P. 16

This aerial view shows the new county RV dump site under construction on county property between the FAC homeless shelter and BiMart. Photo by Mack Knebel



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Marteeny's love of books ... *From Page 1*

Although he finds intriguing themes in all books, he was especially taken by the *Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoevsky.

"I was taken back by the breadth and depth of the book," Marteeny said. "It was inspiring to consider that a human brain was capable of producing such a magnificent work. One of the most moving scenes in all literature is found in that book. It is where a father, answering his little boy's inquiries, explains that there isn't justice in the world. The son and the father then both weep while the father holds his son and tries to comfort him."

Marteeny said he was pleasantly surprised by the book, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte.

"I put it in the top echelon of books that I have read," Marteeny said. "The philosophical ideas in the book are excellent. I would love to teach a class one day where all we did was spend an entire semester exploring the ideas of the book. I have read it three times. At the end of each chapter, I have written what I consider to be some of the "great questions" that are posed by Charlotte Bronte."

Marteeny says he enjoys the "book club" experience.

"We debate, disagree and tease each other about the books," Marteeny said. "I find this exercise to be very helpful to see a book with new eyes, from different perspectives."

In addition to reading, Marteeny has become a writer, keeping a journal.

"One of the legal assistants in our office who participated in the book club, bought me a journal and invited me to keep a book journal," Marteeny said. "This has further helped me to gather my thoughts about each book and better process the ideas each book presents."

Adding another layer of learning to his hobby, Marteeny said he tries to read one "holy book" of another faith each year.

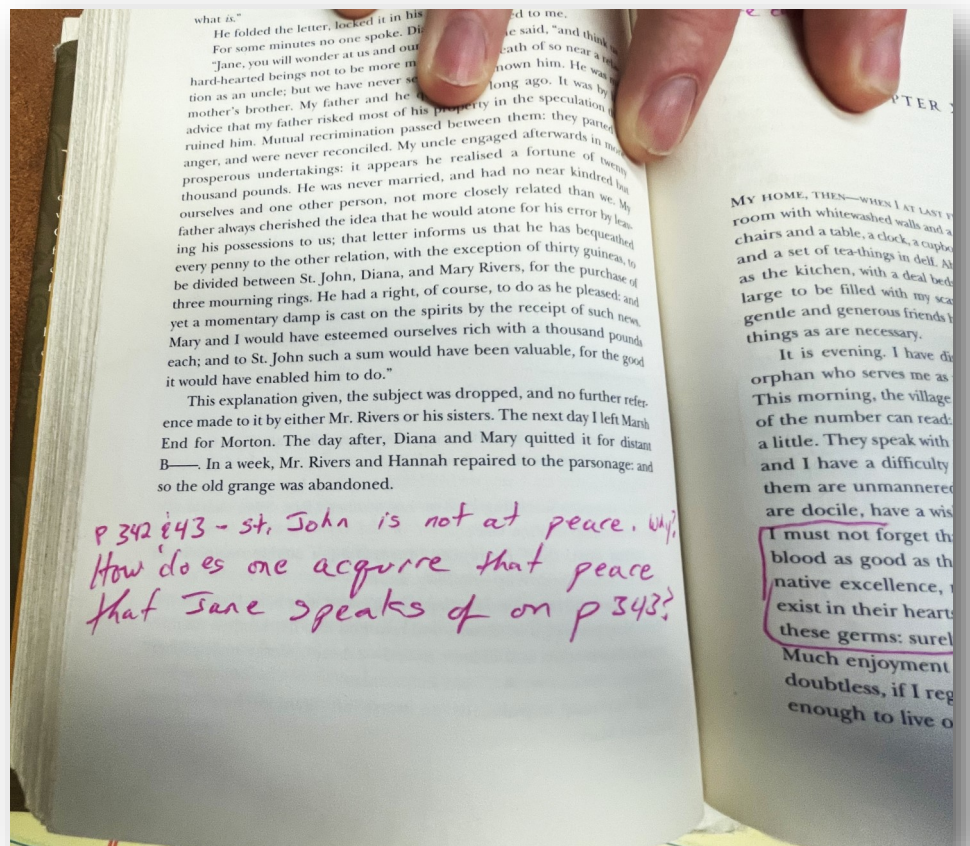
"There are many wonderful teachings to be found in the books and stories of others," Marteeny said. "I find the principles taught are largely similar. It is mainly what is emphasized that differs."

Although he enjoys a broad range of authors, he says Fyodor Dostoevsky and Charles Dickens are his favorite authors.

Marteeny said, "In the movie, "Shadowlands" C.S. Lewis is quot-



Above: Doug Marteeny reads from one of his favorite books. **Below:** He often makes notations as he reads.



His favorite books are ...

Doug Marteeny says that as the District Attorney, it is not surprising that he thinks about justice and the criminal justice system a lot.

He considers the following books his favorite on the topic:

- *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville
- *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky
- *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens
- *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens
- *East of Eden* by John Steinbeck
- *Agamemnon, The Libation Bears, The Emumenides* by Aeschylus
- *No Country for Old Men* by Cormack McCarthy

ed as saying something to the effect: "We read so that we know we are not alone."

To Marteeny that suggests reading is a bridge that connects individuals, across time and place.

"Some of the authors have wrestled with some of the same ideas that I think about and ponder," Marteeny said. "A great author can help many readers discover the universality of predicament and thought."

New River Bend yurt has outdoor kitchen, river view

By Alex Paul
Linn County Reporter

CASCADIA — A new yurt at River Bend Campground near Cascadia, has received accolades from not only visitors, but also Parks Director Stacey Whaley and Park Ranger Kade Pulliam.

The 20-footer was constructed late last summer and opened to the public in September.

It is the fourth yurt at River Bend and is being praised for its outstanding accessibility for all, including someone who may use a wheelchair, and for its outstanding view of the South Santiam River.

The 20-footer is single level, plus it features some very nice amenities such not one, but two fire pits — propane and wood — and an outdoor kitchenette.

“It is popular and people are just learning about it,” Pulliam said. “It is fully ADA accessible, plus it has a wrap-around deck and a propane-powered firepit on the back side. It features a kitchenette with lights and it is easily accessible from the parking lot.”

Pulliam said there is a bar top that seats three or four people and is wheelchair accessible.

“There are three new moveable benches and a wood-fired firepit as well,” Pulliam said.

And the cherry on top of the ice cream sundae is the beautiful view of the South Santiam River.

“It’s only about 35 yards from the

river,” Pulliam said. “We did some clearing and the view is amazing,” Pulliam said.

As with other Linn County Parks cabins and yurts, furniture was constructed by Brett Teztlaff, Daisy Brennemen and Amanda Shaw, Pulliam said.

“I love this yurt and especially the flooring,” Pulliam. “We went with a natural look. We installed tongue and groove planks, burnished them with fire and then covered it with a clear coating like what goes on gym floors. It is beautiful. We’re excited to see how it works out.”

Pulliam said that although pets are allowed in parks cabins (with a pet deposit) they are not allowed in yurts.

Whaley said the new unit is close to the cabin area.

Whaley said the new yurt is the 16th yurt installed by parks staff in recent years. Two more yurts were added at Clear Lake in 2024.

“People really like yurts because they feel like camping, but everything is all set up for them when they arrive,” Whaley said. “There are comfy beds and a kitchen. They are light and airy and have a vaulted ceiling feel to them.”

Whaley said the 20-foot yurt sleep up to five people and rents for \$125 per night, during the spring and summer months. It rents for \$100 per night from November through March.



Kade Pulliam



Clear-coated tongue and groove flooring is stunning.



What a view of the South Santiam River!



The new yurt at River Bend Campground features an outdoor kitchenette.



Two fire pits — one gas and one wood-burning — offer options.

Call the Linn County Board of Commissioners at 541-967-3825.

150 Ways to Show Kids You Care

Courtesy: Linn Together

Source: Search Institute



- Row of hearts
- Notice them.
- Smile a lot.
- Acknowledge them.
- Learn their names.
- Seek their opinions.
- Remember their birthdays.
- Ask them about themselves.
- Look in their eyes when you talk to them.
- Listen to them.
- Give them time to play.
- Read aloud together.
- Help them find humor in the situation.
- Be nice.
- Say yes a lot.
- Tell them their feelings are okay.
- Set boundaries that keep them safe.
- Be honest.
- Be yourself.
- Listen to their stories.
- Help them imagine their “future selves.”
- Put aside your worries and focus on them.
- Notice when they’re acting differently.
- Present options when they seek your counsel.
- Give them time to relax.
- Reward them for hard work.
- Be present when they’re afraid.
- Encourage discussions.
- Suggest better behaviors when they act out.
- Feed them when they’re hungry.
- Delight in their discoveries.
- Share their excitement.
- Notice their kindnesses to others.
- Follow them when they lead.
- Notice when they’re absent.
- Say hello.
- Plan surprises.
- Give them space when they need it.
- Contribute to their collections.
- Discuss their dreams and nightmares.
- Laugh at their jokes.
- Be relaxed.
- Acknowledge that some problems take a long time to solve.

- Answer their questions.
- Tell them how terrific they are.
- Create traditions and keep them.
- Learn what they have to teach.
- Use your ears more than your mouth.
- Make yourself available.
- Show up at their concerts, games, and events.
- Find a common interest.
- Row of hearts
- 51. Help them become problem solvers.
- Apologize when you’ve done something wrong.
- Listen to their favorite music with them.
- Keep the promises you make.
- Wave and smile when you part.
- Display their artwork and projects.
- Thank them.
- Point out what you like about them.
- Clip magazine pictures or articles that interest them.
- Give them lots of compliments.
- Catch them doing something right.
- Encourage win-win solution.
- Give them your undivided attention.
- Ask for their opinion.
- Have fun together.
- Be curious with them.
- Introduce them to others.
- Tell them how much you like being with them.
- Let them solve most of their own problems.
- Meet their friends.
- Meet their parents.
- Let them tell you how they feel.
- Let them tell you how they feel.
- Be excited when you see them.

- Tell them about yourself.
- Let them act their age.
- Praise more; criticize less.
- Be consistent.
- Admit when you make a mistake.
- Enjoy your time together.
- Give them a special nickname.
- Marvel at what they can do.
- Tell them how proud you are of them.
- Ask them about their “sparks” – those things that they love to do.
- Tell them about your sparks and how you pursue your interests.
- Be happy.
- Ask them to help you.
- Support them.
- Applaud their successes.
- Deal with problems and conflicts while they’re still small.
- Chaperone a dance or other activity.
- Help them to learn more about their heroes.
- Believe in them.
- Nurture them with good food, good words, and good fun.
- Be flexible.
- Delight in their uniqueness.
- Let them make mistakes.
- Notice when they grow or change.
- Acknowledge them when you see them in public.
- Give them immediate feedback.
- Row of hearts
- Include them in conversations.
- Respect them.
- Join in their adventures.
- Support their schools.
- Help them learn something new.
- Be understanding when they have a difficult day.

- Give them good choices.
- Respect the choices they make.
- Show your whimsical side.
- Recognize the transitions that the child is making.
- Make time to be with them.
- Inspire their creativity.
- Accept them as they are.
- Become their advocate.
- Appreciate their individuality.
- Talk openly with them.
- Tolerate their interruptions.
- Trust them.
- Respect their privacy.
- Surround them with positive messages.
- Create a safe, open environment.
- Be available.
- Cheer their accomplishments.
- Encourage them to help others.
- Tackle new tasks together.
- Believe what they say.
- Help them take a stand and stand with them.
- Daydream with them.
- Do what they like to do.
- Make decisions together.
- Magnify their magnificence.
- Build something together.
- Encourage them to think big.
- Celebrate their firsts and lasts, such as the first day of school.
- Encourage them to learn about new places and people.
- Welcome their suggestions.
- Show concern if they’ve been sick.
- Help them manage their time.
- Help them learn from mistakes.
- Be sincere.
- Introduce them to people of excellence.
- Tell them what you expect of them.
- Give their parents your contact information.
- Introduce them to new experiences.
- Encourage kids to support their peers’ sparks.
- Talk directly together.
- Be spontaneous.
- Expect their best; don’t expect perfection.
- Empower them to help and be themselves.
- Love them, no matter what.

TPEP program's goal is decreased tobacco use for all

By Dani Crabtree

TPEP Coordinator

ALBANY — The Linn County Tobacco Prevention and Education Program

(TPEP) coordinator works collaboratively with community members, partner organizations, and the Oregon Health Authority

to address the negative impacts of commercial tobacco and nicotine use in Linn County.



Dani Crabtree

The state grant-funded program allowed the TPEP program to ramp up outreach and project work to support community members across the valley.

Highlights of the 2024 tobacco education program include:

- The Lebanon Welcome Center, NAACP, Jackson Street Youth Services, and the Hispanic Advisory Committee are just a few of the organizations that offered tobacco and vape-free events across Linn County, in partnership with the TPEP program. These events raised awareness and normalized conversations regarding commercial tobacco products and their impact on the community, provided prevention education resources to attendees, and provided local cessation resources for those wanting to quit.
- The Linn County Health Education team and its community partners also offered tobacco education



Having fun and reaching out at the Lebanon Sources of Strength event.

and cessation materials at other community and back-to-school events across the county, including the Linn County Fair in July with Linn Together, the Central Linn School District registration day events in August, and the Greater Albany Public Schools (GAPS) FACT event in August.

- Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) and Maternal and Child Health programs started the process for licenses with Connect Oregon (UniteUs) to be able to refer clients to cessation services at the Samaritan Regional Education Hub, which manages the adult cessation classes in the region.

In the spring of 2024, GAPS launched the InDepth alternative-to-suspension education program at the four middle schools. The program, created by

the American Lung Association, is the next step in the alternative-to-suspension model adopted in 2021 by GAPS. Expanding InDepth to the Albany high schools is pending.

- The program partnered

with Linn County Alcohol and Drug and Central Linn Junior/Senior High School to expand the alternative-to-suspension substance intervention model. This work will continue in 2025.

- The Food for Health program launched in 2024 to offer 50 bi-weekly food boxes to Linn County families. The collaborative program with Maternal and Child Health and area farms was funded through community grants and the tobacco education program, as data shows that those facing food insecurity have high nicotine use rates. Health education materials, including tobacco prevention and cessation information, were included with the food boxes.

To partner with TPEP or to receive support on initiatives related to tobacco and nicotine dependence, please contact TPEP Coordinator Dani Crabtree at danicrabtree@linncountyhealth.org or phone: 541-243-3956.

2024 Linn County Tobacco Facts By the Numbers

Tobacco Retail Licenses (TRL): 117
 TRL within 1,000 feet of a school: 26
 Underage buy failure rate: 21% (25 retailers)
 Cigarette use (adults): 13,900
 Tobacco use 11th-graders: 13.1%
 Tobacco use 8th-graders: 6.9%

LCSO plans 2025 Search and Rescue Training Academy

ALBANY — The Linn County Sheriff's Office is recruiting young men and women, ages 14 to 18, to join the Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Team and participate in the summer training program.

This will be the 30th Search and Rescue Training Academy in Linn County and will be held June 20-30.

Those who are interested in becoming an integral part of the Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue mission should have an interest in community service and a desire to be part of a highly-trained and professional lifesaving organization. The life skills and mentorship by our staff have been invaluable ex-

periences for past SAR members. Many have gone on to become full-time employees!

The application process includes oral board interviews, a background check, and a physical aptitude test. Applicants must attend one recruit meeting at the Sheriff's Office on March 10, April 14 or May 5 at 7 p.m.

Additionally, recruits are required to complete an online First Aid and CPR training course provided by the Linn County Sheriff's Office by June 7 and attend an in-person CPR/First Aid skills class on Saturday, June 7.

On the same day, applicants will participate in a final review

and preparation for the academy and must bring all their academy equipment to the CPR/First Aid training for a final equipment check. The SAR academy will provide comprehensive training, including wilderness survival, shelter building, search tactics, first aid/CPR, map and compass navigation, rappelling, and many other essential skills

Recruit meetings (must attend one of the first three meetings): Monday, March 10 at 7 p.m.; Monday, April 14 at 7 p.m.; Monday, May 5 at 7 p.m.

Physical aptitude test (must attend at least one): Depart the Sheriff's Office promptly at 8 a.m. Return at approximately 12-noon.

Equipment: Recruits will need to wear clothes for the weather and comfortable boots (bring a water bottle). Lunch is provided. Saturday, May 10, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and Saturday, May 17, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Mandatory First Aid, blood-borne pathogen, final equipment test and BLS CPR course skills

day.

The online portion must be completed prior to the Skills Day. Skills Day — Saturday, June 7, 8 a.m.- 5 p.m. at the Linn County Sheriff's Office, Albany

After completing all required elements of the application process, recruits will be notified by one of the Search and Rescue Team Leaders if they have been selected to attend the SAR Training Academy. The dates of the Academy are not negotiable and attendance is required.

Equipment: See the available equipment list provided with the application, or request a list from a Team Leader at one of the recruit meetings.

Academy dates: June 20-30, 2025

If you have any questions, please visit <https://buff.ly/2MG1kKT> or contact Ric Lentz at rlentz@linnsheiff.org.



Commissioners respond to President's federal lands Executive Order

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — Reacting quickly to an Executive Order to investigate federal forest policies signed by President Donald Trump on Saturday, Linn County Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker approved a contract with a Washington, D.C. based lobbying firm to represent local interests on issues related to management of federal timber lands.

The commissioners discussed seeking a lobbying firm at their March 4 meeting and directed Administrative Officer Darrin Lane to research possible firms.

The commissioners agreed that President Trump's actions may lead to policies that help clear federal forest lands of wildfire materials and provide timber for local mills, creating jobs.

Board Chair Nyquist said the action is in keeping with the county's long-standing pro-timber and anti-wildfire position it has held for many years.

The President's Executive Order:

- Calls for new or updated agency guidance to facilitate increased timber production, sound forest management, reduced delivery times and decrease timber supply uncertainty.
- Cuts red tape in order to streamline timber production and identifies measures to boost timber sales from public lands.
- Pushes for quicker approvals under the Endangered Species Act so that forestry projects are not delayed by slow reviews.
- Takes strong action to prevent and combat the spread of wildfires by focusing on strategies to reduce fire risks and improve forest conditions.
- Chairman Nyquist said the Federal Government — primarily U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management — owns 38% of all lands in Linn County.

- “Our citizens are under threat of wildfire damage every summer,” Nyquist said, adding that he vividly remembers the aftermath of the Labor Day weekend 2020 fires in the Santiam Canyon that claimed lives and caused massive destruction of homes, businesses and public and private timberlands. Rebuilding of homes and businesses in that area remains underway today.

The commissioners agreed that hiring a lobbying firm and acting quickly will provide the county with an opportunity to get local voices heard.

Funds will come from the county's

lease agreement with Aymium, a carbon production company on 33 acres owned by the county in Millersburg.

Taxpayers will not be asked for funding.

At the March 11 meeting, Lane reported that he had researched potential lobbying firms and recommended the firm of Michael Best Strategies, which has a reputation as a top-tier firm.

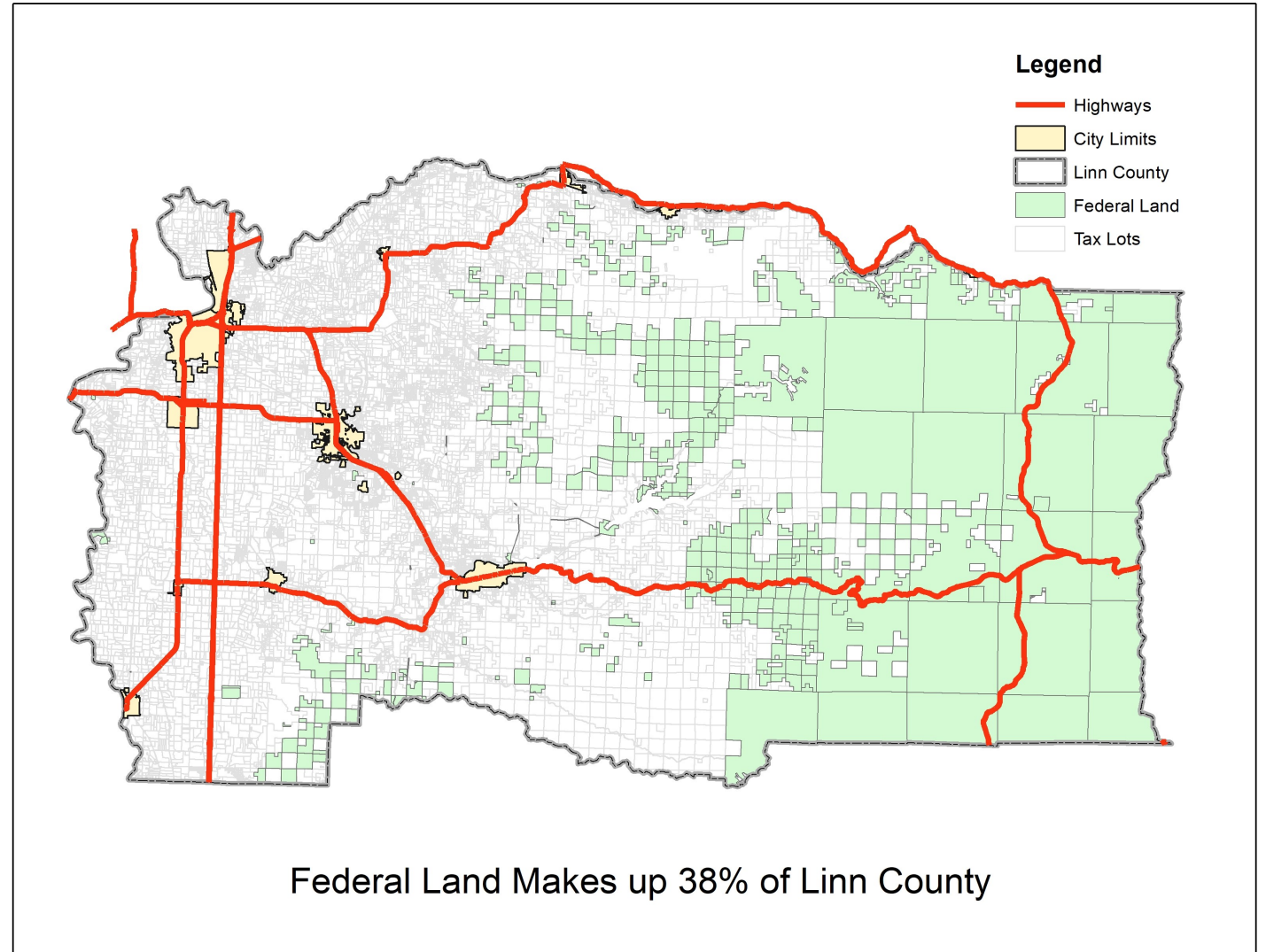
According to Lane's written report, “They routinely appear on Bloomberg Government's Top-Performing Lobbying Firms Report. Michael Best Strategies ranks in the top 68 of only 381 firms that make Bloomberg's list.”

Lane noted that Michael Best Strategies employs a “team of well-known figures who are highly experienced and

who have a proven track record of being able to make the contacts necessary to impact decision makers at the federal level.”

The commissioners approved a one-year contract at \$20,000 per month, plus expenses.

“While this is a significant investment, there is significant potential for a ten-fold return just in revenue to Linn County on an annual basis,” Lane noted. “The impact on our region's economy would be substantially greater if federal land managers are motivated to return to even a moderate level of economic activity seen in past years. When considered in the context of the president's executive order, this appears to be a unique opportunity.”



Telling folks about weeds

Did you know that Linn County has a Noxious Weed Control Commission? Members meet once a month. Why is what they do important? Think about all of the diverse crops grown in the mid-valley. Noxious weeds can ruin a field of crops in a short time. On Tuesday, some of the commission members answered questions at an information booth at the Lebanon Wilco's Reward Day event. Left to right: Lynden Brown, Nutrien Ag Solutions Agronomist Ryan Van Houten, Paul Brown, Tom Nichols and Roger Ruckert.

Second photo: Tom Nichols and Roger Ruckert.

Call the Linn County Board of Commissioners at 541-967-3825.



OSU Extension Service



Tuber quercicola (Photo credit: Heather Dawson)

The Wildlife Corner: Truffle-loving Rodents

Lorelle Sherman

OSU Extension

Oregon White Oak, Truffle-loving Rodents and a Golden Retriever

Have you ever looked at that big old oak tree in your yard or at your local park and thought, “I wonder how many truffles are under there?” No? I certainly hadn’t either until I met up with Heather Dawson and her truffle dog, Rye.

Heather is a PhD candidate at University of Oregon studying the diversity of Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*) associated truffles and the dietary preferences of truffles amongst our native small mammal community. I had always associated truffles with Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), but it turns out there’s more to the story.

Oregon white oak savanna and woodland were once widespread in the Willamette Valley but are now considered endangered habitats¹. The decline of both has been attributed to agricultural expansion, fire suppression, and invasive species.

The Oregon white oak is a biodiversity workhorse and has been providing habitat for hundreds of wildlife species for millennia². This species has spanned the test of time because of its drought tolerance and fire resiliency, but also because it can also handle seasons with high rainfall. However, even the persistent Oregon white oak needs a hand in long-term survival.

Oak trees, like many other trees in Linn County, depend on partnerships with mycorrhizal fungi for enhanced nutrient and water uptake. In this partnership, the fungi increase the uptake of water and nutrients by attaching to and extending the tree’s root system. Through photosynthesis, the tree supplies the fungi with carbohydrates. The Oregon white oak forms these partnerships with over 40 different species of fungi³, many of which are known as truffles!

Truffles are a type of mycorrhizal fungi that develop fully underground. While mycologists may disagree, these spherical fruiting bodies are not nearly as showy as the fungi that produce the colorful and often unusual above-ground fruiting bodies. What truffles lack in appearance, they make up for in smell. More on smell later...

Truffles uniquely rely on animals for spore dispersal. This can happen in two different ways: 1) they are kicked to the surface by an elk or deer passing by, 2) they are consumed

by a rodent, bear, or whatever else fancies a fungal treat. In addition to occupying an important partnership with oak trees, truffles also serve as a major food source for wildlife.

Rodents: the unwitting truffle farmers

Rodents, such as mice and voles, consume large amounts of truffles and pass the spores through their systems unscathed. These animals are highly attuned to the scent of truffles, digging them up and consuming them as a food source.

In the messy process of eating, they spread fungal spores across the forest floor. More remarkably, the spores of truffles are still viable after passing through the rodent digestive system.

Rodents love eating and defecating truffles so much, they may actually aid in the habitat expansion and seeding survival of Oregon white oak in our savannas and woodlands! Oak acorns are often carried away from the parent tree by birds or squirrels and often land outside the parent tree root zone, meaning no access to mycorrhizal fungi.

One hypothesis for oak seedling survival in these cases is that rodents are dispersing incredible amounts of truffle spores through defecation while running from tree to tree.

Enter Rye, the Golden Retriever

There are hundreds of native truffle species in Oregon, but only a handful are of culinary value (*Tuber oregonense*, *T. gibbosum*, *Leucangium carthusianum*, *Kalapuya brunnea*).

While we know a bit about these culinary species from only very recent, they are not the species found in Oregon white oak fungal partnerships. There’s an entire new world of truffle species that associate with oak trees and we have barely scratched the surface. In fact, we’ve barely scratched the surface on fungi in general.

Meet Rye the golden retriever. When Rye is happily wagging his bushy tail, he smells something interesting under the soil’s surface. Rye is Heather Dawson’s truffle biodiversity dog, which means he surveys all species of truffles instead of being limited to the few species of culinary and economic value.

While he’s been trained with culinary truffles, he continues to expand his smell library and frequently calls attention to new smells. Heather hypothesized that when Rye gets bored of the common truffle species at a



Genea sp (Photo credit: Heather Dawson)



Rye the golden retriever hunting for truffles (Photo credit: Heather Dawson)

site, he starts keying into new smells, which range from “canned corn and tomato paste” to “burning brakes” to “sunscreen”.

Some of the samples Rye has collected will likely turn out to be undescribed species and will help to unravel the story of truffles in the Willamette Valley.

The Bigger Picture

The rodents undoubtedly recognize the array of oak associated truffle smells we are only beginning to learn about, but Rye and Heather are doing the work to catch up.

Heather plans to collect small mammal fecal material by setting up live traps and humanely capturing and releasing them,

noting their species. Fungal spores in the fecal material will be DNA sequenced along with Rye’s truffle treasures. Heather also plans to collect and DNA sequence mycorrhizal fungi from soil cores and root samples from her Oregon white oak savanna and woodland sites. They plan to visit a few Linn County sites this spring.

In order to protect Oregon’s endangered oak savannas and woodlands, we must understand all parts of the ecosystem. Heather and Rye’s work will catalog truffles that support a biodiverse landscape, home to hundreds of birds, insects, amphibians, and reptiles.

Bird flu markers in wastewater may come from wild birds

By Steve Lundeberg

OSU News Service

CORVALLIS, Ore. – New research shows that wild birds can account for much of the avian influenza virus evidence found in wastewater in Oregon, suggesting wastewater detections of the virus do not automatically signal human, poultry or dairy cattle cases of bird flu.

The study looked at the new clade of avian influenza virus that first appeared in the United States in January 2022 and by the end of 2024 had infected poultry and cattle throughout the country.

“The virus has been detected in wastewater sporadically throughout the U.S. and the results of this research may provide some additional context as to what the origin of those detections may be,” said Tyler Radniecki (Link is external), a professor in Oregon State University’s College of Engineering who studies microorganisms in wastewater.

Radniecki and collaborators at OSU, the Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Department of Agriculture analyzed nearly three years of wastewater surveillance across 20 communities in the state. Detections of the avian influenza H5N1 H5 subtype were most frequently found in or near communities with important wild bird habitats, the authors note. There was no association between H5 subtype detections in wastewater and outbreaks of infected poultry, or the location of dairy farms or dairy processors.

“One assumption is that wastewater H5 detections indicate human or dairy cattle cases of bird flu,” Radniecki said. “However, our work detected H5 in wastewater two years prior to the spillover of bird flu into dairy cattle, in a state that has not had any cattle outbreaks and only one human case. This work demonstrates that wild birds are also important contributors to the wastewater H5 signal.”

The new clade of avian influenza virus – clade refers to a group of organisms that include a single common ancestor and all of its descendants – traveled efficiently via migratory wild birds across the United States, and by December 2024 more than 112 million poultry in 49 states were affected.

In March 2024, there was a multistate outbreak among dairy cattle. Nine months later, more than 700 herds in 15 states had been affected.

Throughout the outbreaks, wastewater surveillance has been used by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state and local health departments as a monitoring tool, the researchers say. However, they add, interpretation of H5 in wastewater is complex because current testing practices do not distinguish between animal and human sources.

Radniecki and collaborators, including OSU colleagues Rebecca Falender, Christine Kelly and David Mickle, analyzed more than 500 wastewater samples that had earlier tested positive for the influenza A virus to see which ones contained the H5 subtype of the virus.

“This is the most comprehensive sample of retrospective avian influenza A H5 subtype testing in wastewater in the United States to date,” Radniecki said.



Dabbling ducks swimming in a clarifier at the wastewater treatment plant in Eugene, Oregon. Photo by Melanie Ryan, laboratory and field monitoring supervisor, city of Eugene.

“Wastewater surveillance picked up on avian influenza’s emergence in Oregon birds six weeks before other surveillance systems did, and the study offers important perspectives as to what the results mean.”

The samples had been collected from 20 wastewater plants in Oregon between September 2021 and July 2024. The analysis led to 21 H5 detections from wastewater treatment plants in 12 cities, with no association between the detections and poultry outbreaks in the surrounding county or grade A dairy processing facilities or dairy farms in the area.

“Instead, we found that the communities with the most detections contain important habitats for migratory wild birds such as seasonal wetlands and estuaries of major rivers,” said Falender, a wastewater epidemiologist in the OSU College of Engineering and the paper’s lead author. “Wastewater surveillance for avian influenza provides additional data that strengthens ongoing bird flu surveillance efforts, but nuance matters in interpreting the results.”

That means paradigms used with other types of wastewater surveillance data, like the novel coronavirus, may not work as well for zoonotic diseases such as avian influenza, Falender said. Laboratories, public health officials and state departments of agriculture need to work together when interpreting the results of surveillance for avian influenza, she said, adding that’s how results are interpreted in Oregon.

“For example, we know how many

poultry outbreaks, dairy farms and dairy processors are within Oregon’s sewershed boundaries because of our close collaboration with the state Department of Agriculture,” Falender said. “They have been monitoring and testing wild birds and agricultural animals in Oregon for years now.”

Melissa Sutton and Paul Cieslak of Oregon Health Authority and Ryan Scholz and Harrison Hall of the Oregon Department of Agriculture participated in the research, which was published today in *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, a journal of the CDC.



16TH ANNUAL

Celebrate Hope

FUNDRAISING & AWARENESS DINNER

APRIL 3, 2025

Join us in raising a paddle to support the increasing number of children impacted by child abuse and neglect.



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Real Estate Group

TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW



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You can always count on Linn County Treasurer Michelle Hawkins decorating her office for any holiday. She went all-out on Saint Patrick's Day.

St. Patty's Day fun!



Michelle Shannon of the Alcohol & Drug Department was definitely in the holiday spirit.



Steve Pederson of the Health IT office went all out this year.



Resource Fair planning committee, left to right: Blake Wetzel, Chrissy, Charity Boyer, Josh Barbour, Mary Johnson. Back Row: Aurelia Guerrero, LC DD eligibility specialist.



Brian Sacre with Access Technologies, which provides assistive devices and resources.

Celebrating Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Developmental Disability Resource Fair

ALBANY — Linn County celebrated Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month with a Resource Fair held March 19 at the Fair & Expo Center.

County Developmental Disabilities Director Chrissy Cliburn said she was “Really pleased to see the community come out and grateful to our all of community partners and provider agencies.”

Event partners included Linn County Developmental Disabilities, Josh Barbour with Linn-Benton-Lincoln ESD; parent Charity Boyer; Mary Johnson, Linn County’s transitions team supervisor; and Blake Wetzel, services coordinator.

Cliburn said this was the first Resource Fair in recent years and about 100 members of the community attended the free event.

There were about 35 vendors divided into four key areas: education, employment, independent living and community resources.



Kate Skinner and Kym Hunt Community Transition Program teachers for Greater Albany Public Schools.



Dani Crabtree, smoking cessation specialist, Miley Torres, 11, and her mother, Rebecca Torres, access to care coordinator.



Melissa Pelcher and Laurie Krull with Sunshine Industries in Sweet Home.



Seated: Nikki Rutland (Office Manager and Carrie Howell (Executive Director) from Chamberlin House.

Photos courtesy Chrissy Cliburn

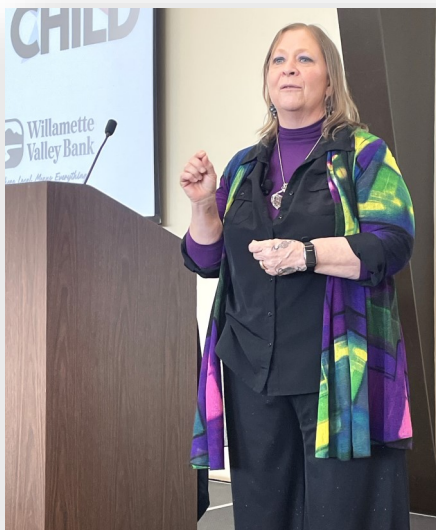


The annual Stand Up for a Child CASA fundraising luncheon always attracts a full house of supporters.

Former foster child is CASA lunch keynote speaker

By Alex Paul
Linn County Reporter

LEBANON — There was no Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program when Debbi Barreras was a



Debbi Barreras

foster child in the 1960s and 70s.

But she wishes there had been.

Barreras was the keynote speaker at the annual Stand Up for a Child CASA fundraising luncheon held March 5 at Boulder Falls Inn in Lebanon.

For Barreras, the memories of insecurity, of moving to and from foster homes are vivid.

“I am grateful for CASA,” Barreras told the packed audience. “I was one of those children CASA would have served.”

Barreras said she was fortunate that her foster parents, Arnie and Donna Brubaker, who attended the luncheon, “saved her” and acted as her advocate, which is what CASA volunteers do today.

Barreras said it is traumatic when a child is taken away from their home and the familiarity of things around them.

She said when foster care staff mem-

bers remove a child from their home, “it is a horrific thing. It changes everything about you. They leave you in a new house and tell you this is going to be your home, but none of it is your home.”

Barreras said she first learned about CASA as a college student, when she was introduced to former State Rep. Liz VanLeeuwen and Ajax Moody, local CASA founders.

As an adult, Barreras has been a foster parent and had to learn the difference between being a foster parent and a CASA volunteer. Each has their own role in assisting the child.

She read a poem about what life as a foster child is like. “These are not my people, not my room,” she said.

She called CASA a “lifeline” for many children.

Barreras spent 25 years with Linn County Mental Health and provided 10 years of therapeutic foster care. She is currently the founder and director of One2Another, which provides parenting classes and support to families in Linn and Benton counties.

Shyla Malloy, CASA executive director, welcome guests and said that 64 CASA advocates assisted 163 kids in 2023. There are 114 young people on a waiting list. CASAs are all volunteers, who must complete training and commit to two years service.

In Oregon, the number of young people in foster care has decreased from 7,908 in 2018 to 4,597 in 2023.

Closing speaker was Linn County District Attorney Doug Marteeny, who talked about seeing the importance of CASA volunteers first-hand in courtroom situations.

To learn more about CASA of Linn County, visit <https://www.linncasa.org/>.



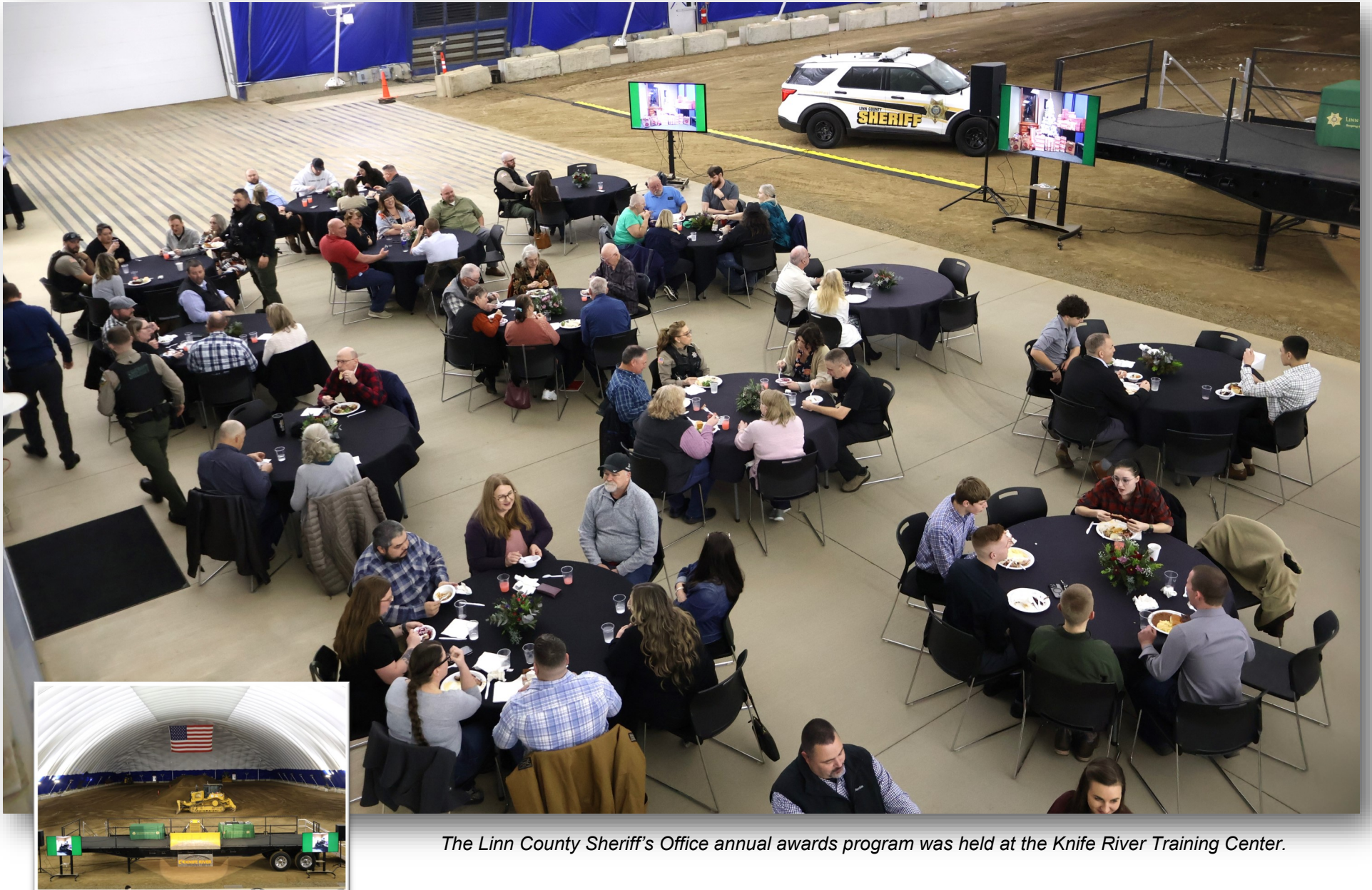
District Attorney Doug Marteeny



CASA Executive Director Shyla Malloy



Linn County Commissioner Sherrie Sprenger, far right.



The Linn County Sheriff's Office annual awards program was held at the Knife River Training Center.

Linn County Sheriff's Office annual awards

TOP SHOOTER : Aaron Sutherland

SAR TECH OF THE YEAR: Kayla Stokes

SAR CADRE OF THE YEAR: Drew Funk

POSSE OF THE YEAR: George Degner

JOINT SERVICE COMMENDATION AWARD: Deputy Andrew Spencer, SAR Tech Jennifer Snippen, SAR Cadre members: Ben Birkett, Cole Abbott, Drew Funk, Exavier Stratman, Jeremiah Kennedy, and Luke Kennedy

JOINT SERVICE COMMENDATION AWARD: Sergeant Josh Rue, Captain Andy Franklin, Undersheriff Micah Smith, Computer Resource Manager Joshua Perkins

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD: Dan Graybill

DIVISION EMPLOYEE AWARDS:

- **SUPPORT SERVICES:** Ric Lentz
- **DISPATCH:** Adelaine Carter

- **CIVIL:** Ginette Gill

- **CORRECTIONS:** Chuck Kachel

- **CORRECTIONS PROGRAMS:** Del Gerig

- **CRIMINAL:** Andrew Peterson

- **DETECTIVES:** Matt Wilcox

MEDAL OF VALOR: Lt Ryan Keys; Deputy Jackson Soto, (Deputy Preston Mayer)

MEDAL OF VALOR: Deputy Andrew Peterson

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE: Sgt Jordan Kirksey, Deputy Mykal Dekanu

SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR: Lt John Lovik II

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR: Deputy Ian Averett

Oregon taking part in America semiquincentennial 250 program

The America 250 Oregon Commission was created through Senate Bill 1531, which was signed into law by Governor Tina Kotek on March 27, 2024.

Chaired by the Oregon Historical Society's executive director, Kerry Tymchuk, the commission will organize Oregon's official observance of the United States Semiquincentennial.

The mission of the America 250 Oregon Commission is to coordinate, provide guidance, and ensure that Oregon's official observance of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States is inclusive and shares the histories of Oregon's diverse



populations, including the histories of the Indigenous peoples who have resided here since time immemorial.

What is the America 250 Oregon Commission?

Every state and territory has

responded to the request from the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission to designate an entity that would provide guidance for that state or territory's commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

SB 1531, which was adopted by the 82nd Oregon Legislative Assembly in March 2024 and signed into law by Gov. Tina Kotek, created the America 250 Oregon Commission. SB 1531 assigned the following responsibilities to the Commission:

- Coordinate and provide guidance for Oregon's official observance of the 250th anniversary

of the establishment of the United States as marked by the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

- Consult with the nine federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon when planning and developing activities throughout the state to meaningfully include Oregon's tribal history.
- Seek to ensure an official observance that is inclusive and shares the histories of Oregon's diverse populations.

Learn more at: <https://www.oregon250.org/>



Property auction

There was a full house of potential bidders when Linn County auctioned four foreclosed properties at the Commissioners Board Room on Wednesday, March 19. Auctioneer was Captain Bruce Davis of the Linn County Sheriff's Office. The properties were in Lebanon, Lyons and Sweet Home. Minimum bids ranged from \$5,575 to \$212,245.



Learning about county fair dollars and cents

Linn County Treasurer and Budget Officer Michelle Hawkins provided members of the Linn County Fair Board and Fair & Expo Center staff with budgeting tips and protocols March 10. Planning is well underway for the annual July event.

FOUR RIVERS 4-H CAMP

CAMPER REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

Join us for an out-of-this-world experience of self discovery at the beautiful Oregon Outdoor Education Center in the foothills of West Salem, Oregon with rustic and comfortable cabins. Participate in activities such as swimming, archery, adventure swing, canoeing, crafts, skits, theme based activities and more!

- Cost: \$595 (assistance available; contact your local extension office)
- Open to all 4th-8th graders.

CAMP DATES: JUNE 18-22, 2025

OREGON OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER

REGISTER AT: <https://beav.es/Gzh>

QUESTIONS? CONTACT ANDREA LEAO
ANDREA.LEAO@OREGONSTATE.EDU

Registration closes June 4, 2025.

Oregon State University

OSU Extension Service prohibits discrimination in all its programs, services, activities and materials. Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made by May 1, to Andrea.Leao@oregonstate.edu

4-H

DISH & FAIRY GARDEN

Workshop

April 12, 10am -2pm
Linn Co. Extension Office

The Lebanon Garden Club will be holding a workshop for 4-H members that wish to learn how to make a container garden.

For More Information & Registration go to:
<https://beav.es/NZP>

Commissioners support wildfire prevention project

ALBANY — March 11, Linn County Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker approved sending a letter of support to U.S. Forest Service officials for the Linn Wildlife Mitigation Group, a coalition of organizations whose goal is to take proactive measures to reduce wildfires.

The Linn Wildfire Mitigation Group is facing the possibility of losing federal funding.

Partner members include the Linn County Juvenile Department, Sweet Home Fire District, Lebanon Fire District, South Santiam Watershed Council, Calapooia Watershed Council and Oregon Department of Forestry South Cascade District.

The commissioners' letter notes:

- When we adopted the Linn County Community Wildfire Protection Plan update in 2024, we intended to highlight the need for effective, proactive wildfire prevention measures. The LWMG's project would serve as a critical tool in fulfilling that need and ensuring that residents in east Linn County are, not only more prepared, but also better equipped with the resources they need to make their homes and communities safe.
- We strongly believe that funding this grant would be a wise and effective investment in the safety, economy and future of Linn



Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker met Wednesday morning, March 12, with Sweet Home Fire Chief Nick Tyler, background left, Wildland Division Fire Chief Christian Whitfield and Patrick Shannon of the National Forest Foundation. The topic was supporting of grant funds for the Linn Wildfire Mitigation Group.

- County.”
- We strongly believe that funding this grant would be a wise and effective investment in the safety, economy and future of Linn County.
- The commissioners support the work of the Linn Wildfire Mitigation Group's goals:
- Developing a project pipeline

that will sustain and centralize a fuels reduction project database and property assessment system across jurisdictions and land ownerships.

- Greatly accelerate the pace of fuels reduction project work by funding professional fuels crews to complete treatments based on

assessments in the project database, provide frequent chipper days at no cost to residents, and reduce financial barriers to completing defensible space work in and around at-risk communities.

- Directly engage with community members to educate and empower them with knowledge and resources about wildfire prevention and preparedness through community events, K-12 programs in school, vocational training to Linn County youth, and professional support for developing new Firewise USA communities in Linn County.


Other Linn County agencies, including the Sheriff's Office and the Planning & Building Department also provide support for the Linn Wildfire Mitigation Group's efforts.



Students learn about Linn County government

Linn County Commissioner Sherrie Sprenger told about two dozen mid-valley high school students how county government functions Tuesday, March 11, in Courtroom 4 at the Courthouse. The students are members of the Albany Chamber of Commerce Youth Leadership program. Also participating were the Honorable Circuit Court Judge Keith Stein and Hollie Boggess, Deputy District Attorney with the Linn County District Attorney's Office.





Do you have a story idea for the Linn County Reporter?

Give Editor Alex Paul a call at 541-967-3825 or email apaul@co.linn.or.us.



Move-in day at 7th St. Medical Building

Monday, March 17 was more than just St. Patrick's Day.

It was also move-in day for the Linn County Public Health WIC program at the newly renovated 7th Street Medical Building.

Cardboard kept the new carpet and flooring tidy as box after box was brought in.

County staff will now turn their attention to renovating the other half of the building into a crisis stabilization center.



Don't Let Fraud Catch You
Stay vigilant against deceptive schemes!
#dignityhonestycompassion

So far this year, Linn County residents have paid out more than \$500,000 to fraudsters!

We get it, they call, they sound like they might be legitimate, but they're NOT!

The Linn County Sheriff's Office has taken numerous reports of people falling for scam calls, texts and emails. Unfortunately, these victims are out money because of it.

We can take reports, but suspects in these cases are difficult to find as they are often from outside this state or country.

- Please stop paying these people!
- A legitimate business or law enforcement agency is not going to call you demanding payment in gift cards.
- No member of a police agency is going to call you demanding

a payment of any kind.

- Do not respond to a text, call, or email from these people, and don't call back the number back provided on a voicemail they left.
- Do not talk with these people or offer any information about you or your accounts to them.

If you are in doubt about the call you get, look up a legitimate number independently and call that company or agency. Ask if there are any issues with your account, are the cops actually looking for you, or whatever other problem is being claimed.

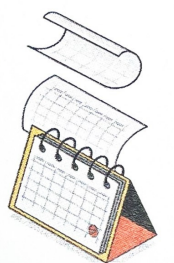
Even if you are the person who knows not to fall for these, please check with your family members and make sure they are aware. We really don't mind the work, but we are tired of seeing our citizens lose significant amounts of money to these criminals.

NO-COST WELL WATER TESTING

For Nitrate, Arsenic, and Coliform Bacteria

Testing includes an OSU intern coming out to your home to gather the sample, as well as participation in an educational seminar!

Fill out this interest form and we will reach out: <https://beav.es/GZh>



Why Test?

It is important to test your water regularly, since these contaminants have the potential to cause short- and long-term health issues. Testing is the only way to know if these contaminants are present.

Questions? Contact Chrissy Lucas at chrissy.lucas@oregonstate.edu or (541) 713-5009



Disclaimer: Priority testing will be given to high risk locations, and need based.

Linn County Parks RV dump ... From Page 1

The facility is on 4.62 acres owned by Linn County, which was carved off the former Willamette Industries (Weyerhaeuser) mill site before the remaining portion was sold three years ago to local businessman Josh Victor.

The site, just east of Bi-Mart, will be accessed by a two-lane driveway from 24th Avenue, which was part of the paving project last week and will also serve the homeless shelter.

Linn County park dump sites for use by campsite users are currently located at Riverbend County Park (\$15 dump fee) and Waterloo County Park (\$15 dump fee). Other nearby dump sites can be found at Sweet Home RV Center, 4691 Hwy. 20, and Gill's Landing RV Park, 1400 Grant St. East, Lebanon.

Davis said the Riverbend and Waterloo dumps are restricted to campers staying at those sites due to EPA requirements. The Sunnyside facility will eventually be decommissioned because it cannot meet required EPA standards, he said.

Plus, during busy seasons, there's often a long wait for RVs to access the facilities, he said.

"We have RV dumps at numerous county parks that we're struggling with, trying to keep up with the high use on those, keeping them within standards."

Former Linn County Parks Director Brian Carroll, now retired, proposed the idea of the larger public dump, Davis said, working with the Oregon State Parks Department to procure \$355,000 in grant funds that covered part of the cost of the \$900,000 project. Additional funding came from the Transient Lodging Tax and RV license fees. The project has taken 3½ years to complete, with the official opening anticipated by early May.

"We got the idea of constructing a multi-lane RV dump facility for people, that's kind of like a one-stop shop," Davis said. "There'll be potable water here, a garbage facility and black tanks. We just worked through a design phase to put it in here."

The new facility will also deposit directly into the city's main sewer trunk line, he said. That is expected to alleviate a problem that Linn County has been coming up against with its park septic systems.

Linn County Parks Director Stacey Whaley told The New Era that toilets in households use a lot of water to flush the effluent away, thus diluting the contents, but toilets in RVs use very little water in the process. As such, the county park septic systems are becoming increasingly more difficult to meet DEQ standards.

Davis said there were some construction challenges along the way, "as is typical with large projects," including the discovery of methane gas produced by wood chips from past mill operations.

"This is the old log pond," he said, gesturing toward the area where each of the four lanes passes by its own water tower.

The methane problem was solved by installing two diffusers, which dissipate

any gas collected by an underground system, he said.

The Sweet Home City Council in 2023 agreed to prohibit parking on 24th Avenue north of Main Street, in part to improve access for large vehicles trying to access the dump facility.

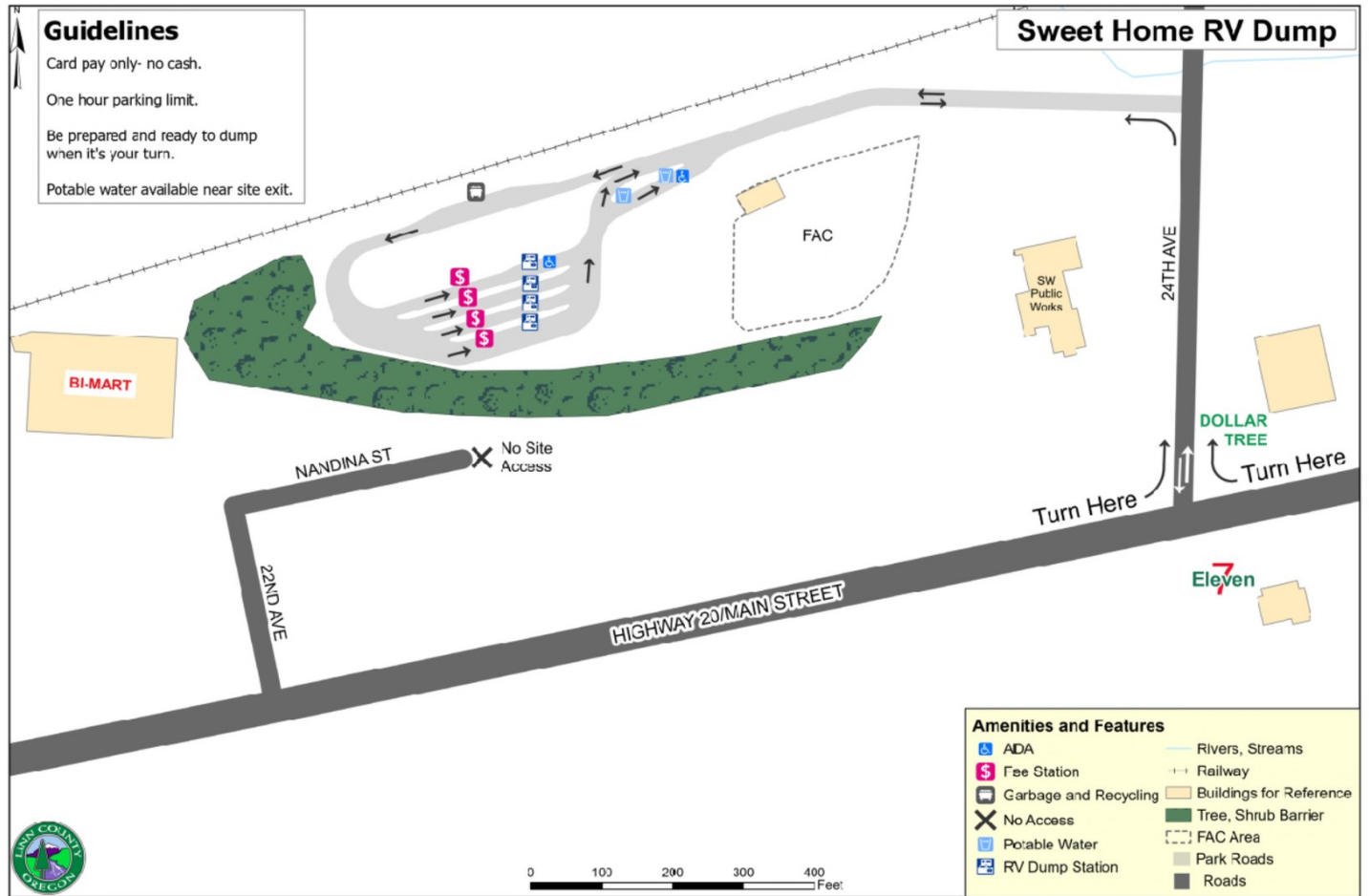
Whaley said users will access the

dump services at a kiosk that will accept credit cards. Cost will be \$10 per vehicle. Davis said the county has contracted for that with a Sisters-based firm, SaniStar, which already has a pay station at River Bend Campground.

"You just tap your credit card, it unlocks it and you can dump," he said.

The new facility will be particularly useful in the summer, he said.

"Even during the Jamboree when there's hundreds of RVs around town, this will be great for them," he said. "You pull in, there's four lanes, there shouldn't be a 45-minute wait like we see at River Bend sometimes."



The new Linn County Parks RV dump in Sweet Home is easily accessed on 24th Avenue off Highway 20.



The RV dump uses a tap and pay credit card payment system.



There is ample room for all sizes of RVs, including four dump lanes and a pass through lane.



Knife River employees pour asphalt in February at the new Linn County Parks RV dump.