



**Linn County to Gov. Kotek: fix Ballot Measure 110**

**E**ditor's Note: February 15, several mid-valley officials — including all three Linn County Commissioners — sent the following letter to Gov. Tina Kotek, asking the governor to amend Ballot Measure 110, which made possession of small amounts of Class 1 drugs a misdemeanor.

The Honorable Tina Kotek  
Governor of Oregon  
State Capitol  
900 Court Street  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Governor Kotek,

We write today asking you to act to amend Ballot Measure 110 by again making possession of Class 1 federal narcotics state crimes, including punitive sanctions for both adults and minor-age children.

Since passage of the measure in 2020 and implementation in 2021, communities in our county — and statewide — have seen increased drug use and overdoses, increased property crimes and families and children suffer.

Roger Nyquist, chair of the Linn County Board of Commissioners, believes the intent of Ballot Measure 110 is “not coming to fruition ... addiction is up and the number of people accessing treatment is down.”

The recent audit of the measure supports our belief that while Ballot Measure 110 was well intentioned, it is not living up to expectations and is, in fact, causing harm in our communities.

Our schools, law enforcement and Juvenile Department officials all agree that reclassifying possession of hard drugs as misdemeanors has lessened young people's understanding of the long-term consequences of illicit drug use.

Andy Gardner is superintendent of Greater Albany Public Schools, which serves more than 9,200 students.



*Drugs, cash and a pistol recently confiscated by the Linn County Sheriff's Office.*

He believes Ballot Measure 110 has “profoundly impacted how our kids view drugs”, adding “Oregon adults now have more access to controlled substances than ever before and now face fewer repercussions for possession or usage.” He is worried that the acceptance of drug use in Oregon will create addiction issues at young-

er ages and will “affect future generations of kids.”

“Ballot Measure 110 is a disaster,” Linn County District Attorney Doug Marteeny said, adding that advocates saw it as something that would increase treatment for addicts, but that is not the case.

Marteeny added, that since the passage of BM 110, overdose deaths are up, theft crimes are up, the number of addicted people living on the streets is up. All of this strains systems put in place to improve

**MEASURE 110 ... See Page 2**

**Stacey Whaley is new Parks Director**

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**S**PRINGFIELD — New Linn County Parks & Recreation Director Stacey Whaley and her predecessor Brian Carroll share a love of the outdoors dating back to family backpacking trips, his on the east coast and hers 3,000 miles away on the west coast.

Whaley, 47, was recently hired to succeed Carroll, who retired at the end of December after 25 years heading up Linn County Parks. “The selection committee unanimously supported Stacey’s application even though we had a number of great applicants including several internal candidates,” Linn County Administrative Officer Darrin Lane said. “Stacey brings



**PARKS DIRECTOR ...See P. 9**

*Happy  
St. Patrick's Day!  
We hope you find a  
pot o' gold at the end  
of your rainbow.*

**Gold at the Rainbow's End**  
Everyone wants to find  
The gold at the rainbow's end,  
But most of us have already found it.  
We have a lot of good friends,  
And a love that soars us into the heavens.  
That is what the pot of gold is all about.  
These are worth more than the gems  
That sparkle in your hand.  
They make your life sparkle  
With the happiness they bring to you.

— David Harris

Photo by Alex Paul



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Thanks for reading the Linn County Reporter. If you have a story idea, please contact editor Alex Paul, at [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us), or call 541-967-3825.

## Linn County Board of Commissioners

**Roger Nyquist**



**Sherrie Sprenger**



**Will Tucker**



**Call 541-967-3825**

## BALLOT MEASURE 110 LETTER: *From Page 1*

"We need to always remember that one function of law is to declare moral standards of the community. Law communicates the expectations we all have for one another," he said. "Checking out of reality by ingesting highly addictive and deadly substances is a poor life choice. Our laws should reflect that value. Our children learn much from the culture our laws create."

Linn County Sheriff Michelle Duncan spent several years working drug cases.

She said that often, it took an arrest and a court appearance for someone with a drug addiction to "hit rock bottom" and realize they needed help. Sheriff Duncan firmly believes possession of hard drugs should return to a major crime status. She said there needs to be consequences for bad actions.

"There is no stigma about drug use anymore," Sheriff Duncan said. "Kids think it's OK because there are no consequences."

Increased drug use is also having detrimental effects for the county's homeless population, Sheriff Duncan said. "Drugs cause mental health issues and people with mental health issues often self-medicate with illicit drugs, which makes their mental health issues worse," Sheriff Duncan notes.

Local shelters are seeing increased drug overdoses to the point the need for Narcan and training was a topic at a recent meeting of local groups interested in helping homeless people in Albany.

Torri Lynn, director of the Linn County Juvenile Department said that although Ballot Measure 110 is supposed to redirect funds to treatment programs, virtually no money was designated for juvenile programs. Lynn said that in 2021, Senate Bill 817, "eliminated all fines and fees for juveniles", affecting the Juvenile Department's ability to respond to any citations with anything other than providing a phone number to the hotline for a youth who is in possession of heroin, methamphetamines or cocaine.

The state audit showed statewide the cost of operating a telephone hotline for people cited with drug possession, cost \$7,000 per call. Of about 100 callers, only 28 actually asked for addiction recovery services assistance. The majority of assistance was sheltering and needle swaps.

"The recent Secretary of State's audit of BM 110 doesn't even mention juvenile services, probably because there was nearly nothing spent on juvenile services," Lynn notes. He also points out that sex trafficking of minors will likely increase, since drug use is a common element in that issue. "If no one is citing or getting arrested for possession, then it makes it nearly impossible for the Juvenile Department to assist in identifying youth who are being sexually trafficked," Lynn said.

Justin Thomas, director of Linn County's Alcohol & Drug Programs, said "The unfortunate downside of the measure is that more people may be using substances with the assumption that there are little to no consequences



since the legal ramifications have been drastically reduced.

"The practice of making substance use more socially acceptable is troubling to treatment providers because of the progressive nature of addiction that occurs when one uses substances consistently over time. In Linn County, we have not seen a decrease in the requests from people to access alcohol and drug treatment with the implementation of Measure 110."

Local businesses are seeing increased issues stemming from community drug use. Janet Steele, president of the Albany Chamber of Commerce, said that organization is "extremely concerned that the state has legalized the possession of small amounts of all drugs, including cocaine, LSD, meth and oxycodone."

Steele said mental health and homeless issues have reached the "crisis stage" in Oregon and the use of illicit drugs can be linked to those issues. "Like Albany residents, businesses are seeing the negative effects of Oregon's drug laws and face the day-to-day reality of people with addictions and homeless issues harming themselves, employees, customers and buildings," Steele said.

In a letter to the City Council, Albany Mayor Alex Johnson II said the community is doing what it can to combat drug and homeless issues, "However, the increases in vandalism, disruption of operations, assaults and littering are very evident around our city. These criminal acts put the citizens of Albany, as well as Albany businesses, at risk. They endanger staff and facilities, impact productivity and damage our abil-

ity to attract investment and create healthy economic growth. The current situation cannot be allowed to continue."

Our state is suffering from issues surrounding illicit drugs. The time to act is now. Proponents of Measure 110 want to wait a few years to see if it can work. With what we have seen in our communities in the last two years, we do not believe we have that luxury as a society.

At the rate of decline in services and increase in addiction, overdose and crime rates, we are heading to a point we cannot dig ourselves out of. We are asking you to protect future generations and rescind Ballot Measure 110 now.

Sincerely,

Albany Chamber of Commerce President Janet Steele

Albany Mayor Alex Johnson II

Greater Albany Public Schools Superintendent Andy Gardner

Linn County Commissioner Roger Nyquist

Linn County Commissioner Sherrie Sprenger

Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker

Linn County District Attorney Doug Marteeny

Linn County Sheriff Michelle Duncan

Linn County Juvenile Director Torri Lynn

Linn County Alcohol & Drug Director Justin Thomas

Sweet Home Mayor Susan Coleman



Linn County Emergency Services Coordinator Erik Anderson makes a point during a recent meeting of people interested in helping local homeless people.

# Groups coming together to help local homeless

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**A**LBANY — Homelessness is all around us in some fashion — shopping carts overflowing with junk abandoned in a parking lot. Small tents or tarps set up on a sidewalk or under a clump of trees near an apartment complex.

No one sees the effects of homelessness more than local emergency services providers and operators of Albany’s two largest homeless shelters.

Since December, representatives of key groups in both Linn and Benton counties have been meeting monthly to coordinate their efforts to provide shelter and medical care, explained Erik Anderson, Linn County Emergency Services coordinator.

The group was pulled together by Hillary Kosmicki of the Albany Fire Department.

“There has been a lack of coordination,” Anderson said. “We have so many agencies working with the shelters, but we’re

not all on the same page.”

Anderson said representatives at the meetings come from the Albany Fire Department, Linn County Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug and Emergency Services, Albany Helping Hands and Second Chance shelters, Community Services Consortium, Linn-Benton Housing Authority, COAT (Community Outreach Assistance Team), Corvallis Housing First and more.

**QUOTABLE**

*“There are many services, but there are the gaps. Identifying those gaps and then plugging them will be a key.”*

— Erik Anderson

Anderson said the meetings are more than just sharing thoughts, members are volunteering for “action items” and bring reports

back to the group.

“There are many services, but there are the gaps,” Anderson said. “Identifying those gaps and then plugging them will be a key.”

Anderson said another plus from meeting is that the players get to know each other and reduce hesitancy to call for

assistance.

“The goal is mitigating situations before they become major issues,” Anderson said.

Anderson said another goal to continuity of care for homeless people who visit health service providers and are then released.

“For example, if someone needs their bandages changed several times per day, how is someone living on the street going to be able to do that?” Anderson said. “With coordination, emergency service folks could do that for them. Assisting the homeless takes a lot of coordination. It isn’t easy, but we did it with COVID-19. We sent teams into the bushes to help.”

An example of a project the group is tackling is getting identification cards for homeless people so they can utilize Urgent Care services.

ID cards are not required at Emergency Rooms, but are required at Urgent Care locations.

“We really want to work closer with Samaritan Health and other providers,” Anderson said.

Anderson said that at times, emergency departments don’t contact mental

health crisis teams, that could assist them if a patient is having a mental health episode.

“In some cases, people will just walk out if they have a long wait to be seen,” Anderson said.

Drugs are a key factor in homelessness and local shelters often have to initiate Narcan — which can bring someone out of a drug overdose. But sometimes, the down side of administering Narcan is that the patient comes out of the overdose violently.

Staff need training, participants at the February meeting agreed. And, some people don’t want to be saved. They become agitated because they were saved.

A participant reminded everyone that not all homelessness is tied to drugs and that everyone living on the streets is “somebody’s child, somebody’s sibling.”

Dave Taghon of Linn County Alcohol & Drug said the county is adding four staff members to expand its outreach program. A van was recently purchased to assist in that effort.

The coalition meets at 11 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at Albany Fire Station 11.



## Taking the plunge for Special Olympics

Linn County staffers — including those from the District Attorney’s Office and Sheriff’s Office — took part in the annual Polar Plunge to raise funds for the Special Olympics program on Saturday, Feb. 18. and raised more than \$1,300 for the cause.

Such a “cool” thing to do!



Here chick, chick chick ...

Young people at the Linn County Juvenile Detention Center partnered with Linn County 4-H to learn about incubating chicken eggs. **Above left:** Juvenile Detention religious service volunteer, Jen Berg (she purchased three chicks.

**Right:** C. Hiatt assisted instructor Idanha Freitag in leading groups on the eggs/chicken's progress. C. Hiatt monitored the incubator by checking the temperature and humidity, along with the proper rotation of the eggs. (The picture of the chick by the dish) C. Hiatt is showing the chick how to take its first drink of water before placing it in its heated tub.

Volunteers needed to support foster youth in Linn, Benton and Lincoln Counties

**A**LBANY — Greater Oregon Behavioral Health Inc. (GOBHI), an Oregon non-profit group, is looking for volunteers to be full-time and relief care foster homes.

All youth in foster care need a safe and loving home, but some youth need more because of past trauma and behavior patterns that don't fit within their current lives. They may need short-term support or the help of additional support not available in a traditional foster home.

That's where the GOBHI's Therapeutic Foster Care program comes in. This program offers therapeutic support for foster youth throughout Oregon using a trauma-informed approach grounded in Collaborative Problem Solving®. The aim is to guide each youth seamlessly back to their family of origin, traditional foster care, an adoptive resource, or transition into independent living with the resilience and personal growth necessary to become healthy adults.

GOBHI regularly faces placement challenges due to a lack of both full-time and relief care foster homes, especially for teens.

The need is high. In 2021, Child Welfare reported Benton County had 82 children in traditional foster care, Lin-



coln County served 150 kids, and Linn County supported 240 children.

Adam Rodakowski, Director of Foster Care at GOBHI, added, "The latest numbers from Child Welfare indicate that 16 youth from Benton, Lincoln, and Linn counties are currently in residential group or institutional care. Many are placed outside of their home community because there

aren't foster homes available. Our goal is to add at least 8 more homes to support bringing these kids back to their community."

Fostering is a demanding commitment, but the rewards of interrupting generational trauma and aiding children as they grow toward their best selves are

immeasurable. Because this kind of care is focused and goal oriented, the typical length of full-time GOBHI placements are typically six months to two years.

Part-time (or respite) foster care placements, which allow more flexibility than full-time care and is a vital resource for our other foster parents, typically last 2 to 14 days. GOBHI youth range from ages 4 to 17.

"The important thing is that kids can enter a home where they feel loved, respected, and free to be themselves," said Lanie Smith, a Regional Child Placement Coordinator with GOBHI. "Our foster families are part of the kiddo's therapeutic care team, so we do our best to give them the training and support they need to effectively coach a child through every challenge or struggle they face."

GOBHI supports their foster families on this journey, providing specialized training with individual, group, and online opportunities to prepare foster parents for what will be asked of them, including 24/7 on-call support, two paid days off per month for full-time homes, and other support.

Potential foster parents from all different backgrounds, walks of life, and areas of Oregon are encouraged to apply. Visit [gobhi.org/fc](http://gobhi.org/fc) or call 541-298-2101 to learn more.

# Brothers Collection a treat for a couple county “car guys”

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**S**ALEM — You don’t need to be a car lover to appreciate seeing a 56-year-old Ford Mustang with just 3.5 miles on its odometer.

Surely, it’s in a museum somewhere. Sort of.

It’s actually one of nearly 700 cars in a private collection in Salem called the Brothers Collection.

On Feb. 5, I got to visit this place I had heard of for years, with Linn County IT Director Steve Braaten, a fellow car guy. I had been invited by my friend Shawn Anderson and Steve was my “plus one.”

The Brothers Collection is not open to the public on a general basis. It’s a private collection valued at more than \$500 million.

It does open several times per year and proceeds go to various Salem-area charities.

Based in a 117,000-square-foot former computer chip manufacturing building in south Salem, the building is immaculate, as are the cars, which vary from sports cars such as Ferrari and Porsches to dozens and dozens of muscle cars including Shelby Mustangs, hemi-powered ‘Cudas, Challengers and Roadrunners.

It is rare to see mid-60s Shelby Mustangs anywhere, but there are seven in a row in this building. There are 18 AAR Cudas — the family wanted one of every color available in 1970. There are so many they are stacked three high on racks along one wall. There is a placard in front of each car that tells about its heritage, provenance as they say in the car collecting world.

“Seeing a collection at this scale so close to Linn County residents was impressive,” Braaten said. “I do hope all Linn County residents can view this collection at least once.”

Braaten added, “The Ford GT40 Prototype 1, Ferrari Enzo, and Ferrari F40 were my favorite cars in the collection. Seeing a single one displayed is rare, seeing them all together under one roof is a once-in-a-



*We’ve all seen 1967 Camaros, but likely not this one of a kind, prototype Cheetah Camaro. It was supposed to have been destroyed.*

lifetime experience.” It would be difficult to say which cars are the rarest. There is a 1971 Plymouth Cuda that sports two-tone paint, white roof, black body. It was one of only two produced. The ‘67 Mustang with just 3.5 miles is hot pink. For example:

- A 1970 Chevelle SS LS6 454 with 34.2 original miles.
- Four 1969 Pontiac Trans Am convertibles — out of eight produced.
- A 1966 Shelby Mustang GT350,

- one of four built that year.
- Forty Corvettes, including three from 1953, the model’s first year.
- A 1959 Ferrari 250 GT LWB California Spyder worth about \$8 million.

The collection is so impressive other car guys, such as Jay Leno use it as a marker when they are restoring cars in their collections.

And if you are ever lucky enough to get an invite to tour this collection and find yourself saying, “I’ve never

seen that car before.” You are likely correct. There are prototypes such as the 1967 Camaro Cherokee, that was supposed to have been destroyed, but wasn’t. There is even an immaculate Tucker, one of fewer than 50 built in the late 1940s by Preston Tucker.

To learn more about how to book a tour of this impressive collection, email: [in-fo@thebrotherscollection.com](mailto:info@thebrotherscollection.com).

The building is so large there are numerous benches for resting and volunteers provide bottled water to take along your journey into the automotive past.



*Clockwise from top: It is rare to see one 1966 Shelby Mustang GT 350, let alone seven of them in one place. Above right: you will never see one of these cars on the street, a 1970 Toyota 2000 GT. Right: 18 AAR Cudas. Left: one of only two two-tone 1971 hemi Cudas.*

# OSU Extension — Linn County



## Super Static Saturday was a success

35 young people participated in Super Static Saturday on Saturday, February 25. Activities were led by nine volunteers and small groups were led by five teen 4-H Ambassadors. Super Static Saturday introduced participants to six different “static” projects, including art, photography, knitting, crocheting, sewing, foods and geology.



**4-H Record Book Workshops**

**Introduction to 4-H Record Books:**  
Wednesday, March 1 from 5:30-7:00pm

**Advanced 4-H Record Books:**  
Thursday, March 2 from 5:30-7:00pm

**Introduction to 4-H Record Books**  
This record book workshop is for new 4-H members or for youth needing a refresher on how to complete a 4-H record book. Highly recommended for first year 4-H members.

**Advanced 4-H Record Books**  
This workshop will go over how to complete record books to be submitted for 4-H scholarships and state opportunities. Highly recommended for 10th-12th grade 4-H members.

We recommend parents/guardians of 4-H members attend the workshop with their youth participant. 4-H Volunteers and Club Leaders are also welcome.

 Register online:  
[beav.es/5bC](http://beav.es/5bC)

LINN COUNTY 4-H

**FOOD PREP**

WORKSHOP

**THURSDAY**  
MARCH 16  
5:30-7:00PM

REGISTER ONLINE:  
[beav.es/wBp](http://beav.es/wBp)

OPEN TO ALL  
LINN & BENTON 4-H  
MEMBERS





Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker talks about the long partnerships between Linn County and The Army Corps of Engineers. Most parks and other recreational amenities on Foster and Green Peter reservoirs east of Sweet Home are provided by Linn County Parks & Recreation.



Greg Taylor with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers addresses a group of people interested in Master Planning for Foster and Green Peter reservoirs Saturday morning in Sweet Home. Similar meetings were held earlier in the week at other Linn County locations.

## Linn County parks should be important in Foster, Green Peter master planning

By Alex Paul

Linn County Reporter

SWEET HOME — Linn County and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have had outstanding partnerships over several decades, Commissioner Will Tucker told several dozen participants at an information meeting about developing new Master Plans for Foster and Green Peter reservoirs Saturday, Feb. 25 at the Sweet Home Senior Center.

“We have tremendous partnerships,” Tucker said. “Now, we are facing Master Planning issues. We have many facilities on both reservoirs including campgrounds, boat ramps and even a marina.”

Corps of Engineers staff emphasized that a Master Plan differs from the environmental mandate from a federal court concerning fish passage and water flows. Master Plans are required every 20 to 30 years and focus on management and protections for recreation, interpretation, fish and wildlife, cultural resources, vegetation, water/wetlands and mineral resources.

Corps staffer Greg Taylor said it is about stewardship and balancing the many things people want from the two dams and reservoirs. The multi-year process is going on for all 13 Corps of Engineers

dams the valley.

The current Master Plans were approved in 1987.

A lot has changed over the past 36 years including changes in land use regulations, environmental conditions, regulations and how people recreate.

There have also been major changes in climate including summer droughts and snow and rain events. The risk of wildfires is much greater and cultural resource stewardship has gained in public importance.

Master Plans do not address water quality or supply, water level management, downstream flows, hydropower, navigation or flood risk management.

The Foster and Green Peter Master Plans will take about two years to complete, officials said. Dam removal is not on the table, Corps officials assured the group.

The Corps welcomes further public comments until March 24. Comment at <https://www.FGPL-MasterPlan.com>.

## Dr. Paula Crone named WesternU provost

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Dr. Paula Crone has worked in partnership with the Linn County Board of Commissioners, Samaritan Health Services and the City of Lebanon since the concept of developing the Western University of Health Science College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Northwest was first breached in 2013. Dr. Crone has been interim Provost of WesternU since April 2022 and in early February, she was officially named Provost of the university based in Pomona, California. For those of us not in the academic field, a provost is the chief academic officer of a university.

Courtesy WesternU

As a national leader in health science education, Paula M. Crone, DO has dedicated much of her career to the success of her students, faculty, and staff. Dr.

Crone's passion for her profession and the patients it serves firmly positioned her for success in her role as Provost for Western University of Health Sciences.

In addition, she serves as the Vice President for WesternU Oregon, providing executive leadership for the growth and expansion of Western University of Health Sciences' Oregon campus and colleges.

In her previous role as Dean for the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific (COMP) in Pomona and the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific-Northwest (COMP-Northwest) in Lebanon, her legacy as a dynamic and innovative dean of one of the largest medical schools in the nation garnered her executive positions on national platforms in medical and graduate education, healthcare policy, provider shortage strategy, mental health, and substance abuse.

As an alum of COMP herself, Dr. Crone has dedicated her career to the success of the university and its future healthcare professionals. Her leadership was integral to the founding of COMP-Northwest, serving as Founding Site Dean from its inception until 2013, when she was instated as Dean of COMP and COMP-Northwest and Vice President of the Oregon campus.

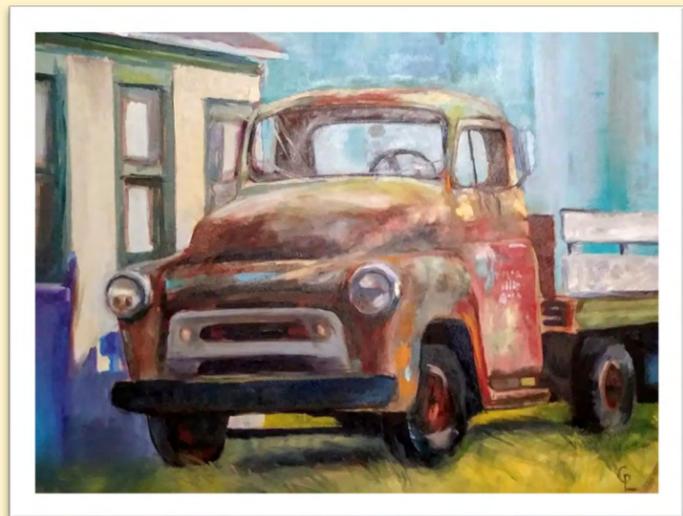
Dr. Crone was the program director for the Family Medicine residency at Eastmoreland Hospital in Portland and the founding DO of a multi-physician primary care clinic in Portland, Oregon prior to joining WesternU in full-time academic leadership.

Dr. Crone completed her residency in Family Medicine at Eastmoreland Hospital in Portland, Oregon.

She completed her bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Portland.



Dr. Paula Crone



Painting courtesy Gin Lammert Fine Art: <https://ginlammert.com/>

## Why no one steals a farm truck

Our “farm truck” is 30 years old and runs like a top.

We know several Linn County staff members can relate to this little ditty I found in an old Midwestern newspaper.

### Top 10 reasons farm trucks are never stolen

- 10: They have a range of about 20 miles before they overheat, break down or run out of gas.
9. Only the owner knows how to operate the door to get in or out.
8. It is difficult to drive fast with all the fencing tools, grease rags, ropes, chains, syringes, buckets, boots and loose papers in the cab.
7. It takes too long to start and the smoke coming up through the rusted-out floorboard clouds your vision.
6. The Border Collie on the toolbox looks mean.
5. They're too easy to spot. The description might go something like this: The driver's door is red, the passenger side door is green, the right front fender is yellow, etc.
4. The large round hay bale in the back makes it hard to see if you're being chased. You could use the mirrors if they weren't cracked and covered with duct tape.
3. Top speed is about 45 mph.
2. Who wants a truck that needs a year's worth of maintenance, u-joints, \$3,000 in body work, tail-lights and a windshield?
1. It is hard to commit a crime with everyone waving at you.

# Steer weigh-ins done for 2023 Linn County Fair

*49 4-H and FFA youth weigh 56 steers*



Jake Donner with Blaine Suing ear tagging



Morgan Lalonde



Blake Rose

Photos by  
Abby Johnson,  
Linn County 4-H



Grady Spencer with Blaine Suing ear tagging



Selah Wright holding the steer facing back, Autumn Suing measuring hip height.



Ground breakers were: Gunnar Gladics, principal architect from Rice Fergus Miller; Jordan Fell, Executive Vice President from Emerick Construction; Robert Duane Taylor Board, Lebanon Fire Board president; Dale White, board vice-president; Wyatt King, board secretary; Allen Forester, board member; Michael Schrader, board member; Fire Chief Joe Rodondi.

# Lebanon breaks ground for new fire hall

**L**EBANON — Linn County staff members who live in Lebanon will soon have a new fire hall — Central Station 31 — providing services from 1050 West Oak Street.

Ground was broken for the almost \$14 million project on Feb. 14. Fire officials have worked out of temporary facilities since October when the old fire station was razed.

The Lebanon Fire District employs 40 full-time firefighters and has 60 volunteers. The new building will house administrative offices, eight private sleeping quarters plus a full kitchen, bathrooms and physical fitness area.

It will feature six pull-through equipment bays. In 2019, Lebanon area residents passed a \$16-million general obligation bond to fund construction. It will be repaid over 26 years.

EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE ELEVATIONS



RICEFERGUSMILLER ARCHITECTURE INTERIOR PLANNING VISUALIZATION MAIN STATION | LEBANON FIRE DISTRICT | JUNE 28, 2022

Photos and artwork courtesy of the Lebanon Fire District

## New Parks Director ... From Page 1

enthusiasm and a broad base of experience that will help move the Parks Department forward for many years to come.”

Although she has spent more than 20 years as a school teacher and administrator, Whaley has a degree in Parks & Recreation Management from the University of Utah, where she played volleyball.

“I can’t tell you how excited I am about this,” Whaley said. “It’s a phenomenal opportunity.”

### QUOTABLE

*“I can’t tell you how excited I am about this. It’s a phenomenal opportunity.”*

— Stacey Whaley

Whaley and her family live near Springfield and she is an administrator for the Marcola School District.

She has several friends who live in Linn County and one of them posted the parks job opening on their social media account.

“I grew up near Coburg and my parents were PE teachers,” Whaley said. “We did lots of outdoor activities. We hiked, camped, went whitewater rafting, kayaking, you name it.”

While at the University of Utah, Whaley worked several outdoor jobs including working with the college outdoor program, being a river guide and working hospitality at local hotels that catered to the ski crowd.

“I did a little bit of everything,” she said.

Now, her family focuses on water sports, camping, and four-wheeling.

But teaching has been Whaley’s focus for many years, mostly at Springfield High School with programs such as Special Education, Employment Literacy, and Remedial Reading.

She was the principal at Mohawk High School and most currently has been the Director of Student Services for the Marcola School District.

“I think many of the same skills I have learned and used here will transfer over into the parks job,” Whaley said. “I also write grants and am used to working with federal programs.”

The Whaley family already has a link to Linn County. Her husband, Garth, is a mechanic and works at Advanced Mechanical in Brownsville. Their daughter Brooke, 17, is a Junior at Mohawk High School and is a volunteer cadet at the Marcola Valley Fire District. She is planning a career in firefighting/paramedics.

Whaley said she can’t wait to get going, work with Carroll for a bit and meet the folks who make the parks system run.

“This is a tremendous opportunity,” Whaley said. “It’s my dream job.”

### Coming next month ....

What is LCSO Captain Jeff Schrader up to? We’ll tell you in next month’s Linn County Reporter.



# ENTEK: First to make electric vehicle battery parts in U.S.?

By Sarah Brown  
Lebanon Local

Electric vehicles are coming, and that's a promise ENTEK Chief Technology Officer Rick Pekala stands behind.

"You may not think electric vehicles are going to happen," he said. "They're going to happen. They're not going to happen as quickly as people think. There's going to be a large transition, but eventually it will get there."

But thanks to funding through President Joe Biden's recent Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), ENTEK is positioned to be one of the first U.S.-based manufacturers of battery parts for the expected rise in electric vehicle production. As the recipient of a \$200 million federal grant, the company will build a \$1.24 billion plant (likely outside of Oregon) to produce separators for electric vehicle batteries.

Pekala, who's been with ENTEK since 1999, spoke about the company's position in the electric vehicle market industry during a Jan. 27 lunch forum hosted by the Lebanon Chamber of Commerce.

"It's enormous, but in some ways a lot of things have really fallen in place for us," he said. "There is really no lithium-ion battery manufacturing technology in this country, and if China and the U.S. aren't going to be friends (as President Biden has indicated), then we'd better get our act together and be able to have some of this technology manufactured here in the United States."

The BIL is structured so that a certain percentage of battery components must be manufactured in the U.S. until, eventually, every part is manufactured in the country.

"We could be very busy for the next decade or two decades putting in a lot more separator plants," he said.

The funding will help support ENTEK's push to build a 1.4 million-square-foot plant on 200 acres that will require 130 megawatts of power to produce 1.4 billion square meters of separator sheets for the expected rise in electric-vehicle production. That's just a drop in the bucket for what's needed, as Pekala figured there would be a need for as much as 10 billion square meters of separator based on the number of companies planning to build U.S.-based battery production plants in the coming years.

"It's just mind-boggling, what we need to do this," Pekala said. "It's going to do five times what we do here in Lebanon."



Rick Pekala points to a rendition of ENTEK's future plant that will span 1.4 million square feet to produce battery parts for electric vehicles.

ENTEK's local plant is about 1.6 million square feet and produces 200 million square meters of lead acid separators and 100 million square meters of lithium-ion separators. Locally, it employs 21 people for the lithium department and already needs another 29 on the payroll to roll out production over the next two years. More than 600 people will be employed at the new plant, which is expected to begin production in 2025.

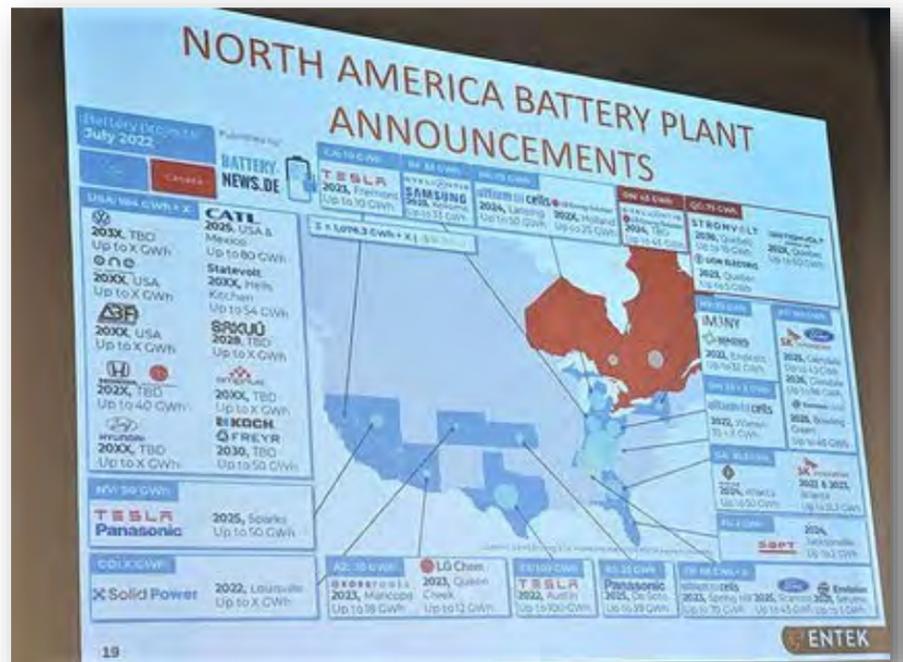
Pekala said the new plant will likely be located somewhere east of Mississippi as it competes with other companies scrambling for the acreage, power and workforce to support the expected demand for electric car batteries.

ENTEK was established in 1984, developing lead acid battery separators, which could be described in layman's terms as a technologically advanced plastic sheet separating negative from positive plates in a car battery. In the late 1990s, the company engineered its own extruder, a machine used to make the sheets, and opened a division to sell the extruders to other companies. In 2001, it began producing separators

### QUOTABLE

*"We could be very busy for the next decade or two decades putting in a lot more separator plants ..."*

— Rick Pekala



for lithium batteries and has since acquired plants in Europe and Japan.

"The future is really about lithium," Pekala said.

It should be noted that while electric vehicles use lithium batteries, they also employ lead acid batteries for lights, windshield wipers, ignition and

other uses. That means separators for lead acid batteries will continue to be in demand.

"Going to electric vehicles means there's a lot more separator that ENTEK has to manufacture to support the market," Pekala said. "We are in this energy-storage market and it's not going away. Renewal is not going away."



### Riding in the BearCat!

The Albany Christian School recently held a fundraising auction and the Linn County Sheriff's Office donated a ride to or from school in the SWAT BearCat as one of the items up for bid.

We had a blast taking second-grader Grayson home from school. It was a very exciting moment for Grayson and we had a great time showing many of his fellow classmates the vehicle as well.

We cherish these opportunities to interact with the great people of our county.





## Dodgeball for a good cause



Local law enforcement teams, including the Linn County Sheriff's Office, took part in a dodgeball competition Feb. 28 at the Mid-Willamette Valley YMCA to raise money for Furniture Share. The Albany Police Department folks took home the trophy, but everyone had a good time — although they may have been a bit sore come shift time.



## Linn County Parks & Recreation has gazebos, shelters for events

**P**lan your graduation parties and family gatherings, while shelters are still available for reservations. John Neal Memorial Park, River Bend County Park, Roaring River County Park, Sunnyside County Park and Waterloo County Park all have day use shelters.

You can reserve a shelter by calling the Linn County Parks Office at 541-967-3917.



## Watch out for counterfeit money

Albany Police Department

**S**ince counterfeit bills are on the rise, don't get fooled by fake moolah. Forged Franklins. Copycat C-notes.

There are many ways to spot fraudulent bills and avoid unnecessary losses.

Most counterfeit money feels different than real money. Real money is printed on paper that is made from linen and cotton, is thicker, more durable, and does not fade or lose clarity. Take time counting large stacks of bills feeling and examining each bill, and always larger denominations.

Hold the bill up to a good light source to see the water mark and security strip. Use a counterfeit pen to test the paper. Feel the raised printing (ridges) with a fingernail. There are occasions when an older bill made in the 1950's through 1970's may not have all the newest security features, however the paper is still the same and there are still raised ridges on the bill, which cannot be duplicated.

You can always use the internet to freshen up your knowledge on how to spot counterfeit money both new and old. Remember, you are receiving money in exchange for a product, take your time when dealing with money, it will pay off in the end.

## LCSO annual awards presented at dessert

- Linn County Sheriff's Office Award recipients are:
- CERT Volunteer: Norman Simms
  - Top Shooter: Detective Matt Wilcox
  - Search and Rescue: Micah Schneider
  - Medical Search and Rescue: Nicole Kinkade
  - Posse Volunteer: Larry Chafin
  - Reserves: Reserve Sergeant Matt Bostrom
  - Life Saving Award: Deputy Jenna Sukle and Deputy Marion Kaftanchicov
  - Distinguished Service Award: Sergeant Dustin Frenzel and Deputy Chris Fairchild
  - Civil Division: Civil Clerk Kelsey Mor-

- rison
- Support Services: Records Clerk Tabitha Voisine
- Dispatch: Communications Supervisor Heather Means
- Corrections Division: Deputy Amber Erickson-Lovik
- Criminal Division: Deputy Barrett Dowding
- Detectives Division: Detective Greg Billington
- Supervisor of the Year: Lieutenant John Lovik II
- Employee of the Year: Deputy Brent Hauke

# LCSO is searching for Search & Rescue applicants

**A**LBANY — Mark your calendars, Linn County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue meetings and academy dates are around the corner. The Linn County Sheriff's Office is recruiting young men and women — ages 14 to 18 — to join the Linn County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Team and participate in a 10-day summer training program. This will be the 29th Search and Rescue Training Academy in Linn County and will be held June 23 through July 2. 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 a part of a highly trained and professional life saving organization. There is an application process that includes oral interviews, a background check and physical aptitude test. Ap-

plicants must attend one recruit meeting at the sheriff's office at 7 p.m. on March 13, April 10, or May 8 at 7 to participate. Applicants will also need to pass the physical aptitude test on either May 13 or May 20. Accepted applicants will be required to attend the pre-academy meeting on June 12. At that time, applicants will be eligible to attend the 10-day Linn County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Training Academy in June. The training will include classes in wilderness survival, shelter building, search tactics, first aid/CPR, map and compass reading, rappelling, and many more topics. For more information about the program contact Emergency Management/SAR Coordinator Ric Lentz at 541-967-3950 or visit the Linn County Sheriff's Office website at [www.linnsheriff.org](http://www.linnsheriff.org). Online applications are available on the website and at the Sheriff's Office in Albany.



# COVID-19 federal declaration to end May 11 — then what?

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**A**LBANY — If anything has been constant over the last three years of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been change. And no one knows that better than Linn County Public Health Director Todd Noble, so he's taking the May 11 deadline to lift the pandemic disaster declaration in stride. Noble said he has not received information from the Oregon Health Authority, but knows federal funding will end in May. That means four staff members hired as part of the contact tracing team will be laid off. They came on board in the spring of 2020. Other counties have already eliminated their contact tracing efforts, but Linn County will continue through the summer months. Anticipated changes due to the federal actions will mean:

- Vaccines will be available, but not everyone will have the same access to free testing and vaccines.
- Medicaid users will have access to free vaccines treatments and tests.
- Medicare users will have access to free vaccines but may have co-pays for antiviral treatments.
- Private insurance users may not have access to free testing and free vaccines. There



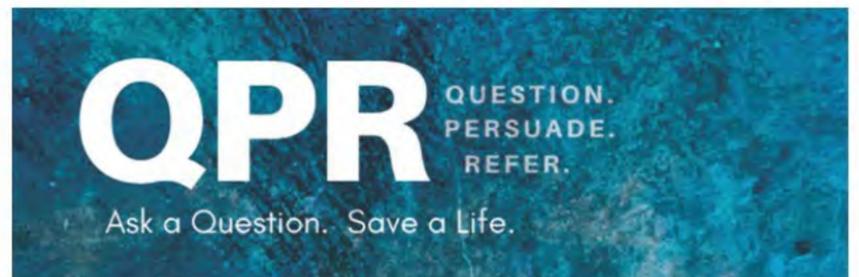
Todd Noble

may be copays for antivirals.

Linn County stocked up on Personal Protective Equipment — which was hard to come by at the start of the pandemic — and has thousands of testing kits, which are free to the public, Noble said. Linn County residents can pick up the tests at the Courthouse Annex north of the Main Courthouse building. Noble said that thanks to Linn County's staff and 800 volunteers from the Medical Reserve Corps, more than 100,000 people were vaccinated at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center and with mobile clinics.

"I think we were the best in the state. Very smooth," Noble said. "It averaged six minutes from sign-in to getting vaccinated." Noble said staff learned valuable lessons and are prepared for the next emergency. "In an emergency, everything is local," Noble said. About 87% of Oregon's adults 18 and older have received at least one vaccination and 78% have received a complete series. About 25% have received a booster shot.

There are about 9,148 Linn County adults who did not get vaccinated compared to 16,289 in Douglas County and 14,676 in Jackson County.



## Suicide Prevention Training for Adults

Question. Persuade. Refer. are three steps anyone can learn to help prevent suicide. Make a positive difference in the life of someone you know.

### You will learn:

- Myths and facts about suicide
- Suicide clues and warning signs
- How to ask someone if they are thinking about suicide
- How to persuade someone to stay alive
- How to refer someone for additional support

MARCH 14, 2023 | 6:00 - 7:30 P.M.  
ARMORY BUILDING | 104 SW 4TH AVE, ALBANY, OR

### Who should attend:

Community members • Employers • Parents • Educators  
Professional caregivers • Coaches • Faith leaders

Sponsored by Linn County Health Services

Registration is required.  
For more information or to register, email  
[prevention@co.linn.or.us](mailto:prevention@co.linn.or.us)



## Happy birthday, Steve!

54 isn't old if you're a tree. Planning & Building Department Director Steve Wills got a big surprise when he opened his office door Feb. 15. Suzanne Hunt had put together a giant arch of balloons to help liven up the day.