National Girl Scouts Day 2023

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Spring gardening

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FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 2023

The Chief

$1.50

VOL. 131, NO. 44

Serving the Lower Columbia Region since 1891

$2.1M in illegally grown marijuana seized

Courtesy from the CCSO

The CCSO released this photo of one of the grow rooms found during the search operation.

Courtesy from the CCSO

A total of over $69,000 was confiscated during the enforcement operation.

JEREMY C. RUARK
Country Media, Inc.

Columbia County Sheriff's deputies have confiscated 6,611 marijuana plants and 133.5 pounds of processed marijuana with a street value of approximately $2,181,011, in the agency's latest enforcement.

Search and seizure

In a release, the CCSO said the operation was conducted on March 1, with deputies serving search warrants for illegal marijuana grows in Clatskanie, Deer Island and Scappoose.

During the service of these search warrants, CCSO deputies also recovered over $69,000 in cash.

Specific details about the addresses of the searches and of the suspects have yet to be released following the enforcement operation. Columbia County Sheriff Brian Pixley told The Chronicle that all suspects were referred to the Columbia County District Attorney's Office for charges.

Specific details were also not immediately available about what led to the search and seizure operations.

"These are the first of many search warrants that our Street Crimes team will serve over the next few years," Pixley said. "We appreciate the participation of our partner agencies, including the Scappoose Police Department, Yamhill County Sheriff's Office, the Oregon State Police, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation."

The Illegal Marijuana Market Grant, awarded to CCSO in 2022, funded this latest investigation.

Background

In July 2022, The Chief reported that the CCSO was seeking new manpower to establish an illegal marijuana enforcement team.

In that published story, Pixley told The Chief his agency was seeking three enforcement deputies and three corrections deputies.

"We recently received a $940,000 grant from the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) to put together an illegal marijuana enforcement team," Pixley said. "So, we are hiring to back fill spaces for this team and also for an open position."

Public safety concerns

Pixley said this specialized enforcement team has been needed for quite some time and the concern is twofold.

"The first is the human trafficking component," he said. "Often times these illegal grows are tied to organized crime from either a Mexican or Chinese cartel. As such, they often will use "indentured servants" to work these grows to pay off some form of debt owed to the cartel. In my opinion, this is the biggest reason

See MARIJUANA Page A4

Is Oregon's COVID pandemic over?

WILL LOHRE
Country Media, Inc.

Feb. 28, 2020, was the date of the first COVID diagnosis in Oregon.

Three years later, we are still navigating the waters of the pandemic, but the storm has calmed considerably. After three years of uncertainty, lockdowns, masks, and immunizations, a return to normalcy seems within grasp.

To find out the state of the pandemic and where we go from here, The Chronicle spoke with Kaiser Permanente Northwest Chief of Infectious Disease Dr. Katie Sharff.

"COVID is never really over. I mean, we're anticipating that this virus will be here, circulating for the next several years, decades; it just may not be at the forefront," Sharff said.

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"If you haven't been infected, you will probably get infected at some point, and if you've already been infected, there's a very high likelihood that in the future, you will get reinfected; that's just the nature of this virus. But the tools we have through vaccination and anti-virals do work," ~ Dr. Katie Sharff, Chief of Infectious Disease for Kaiser Permanente Northwest

Public health regulations rolling back

On Jan. 30, 2023, the Biden Administration announced its intent to end the national emergency and public health emergency declarations on May 11, 2023, related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This cessation of the state of emergency does not mean COVID will resolve itself completely, but it marks a new stage for dealing with the virus.

"I think the ending of the public health emergency is more a signal that we will start to treat COVID like a routine illness, such as Influenza or RSV," Sharff said. "I think that what will happen is that this pandemic will transition to what we call the 'endemic phase,' which means that the infection will impact a stable number of individuals but not be causing substantial illness across the globe all at the same time. It's going to be a respiratory virus that we manage along with all of the other respiratory viral infections that we're already currently managing."

Oregon is seeing policy changes that also reflect the decreasing threat of COVID. On Mar. 3, the Oregon Health Authority announced that it would rescind the mandate that requires workers in healthcare settings to wear masks. The requirement had been in place since August 2021. In some ways, Dr. Sharff feels that these official changes reflect the sentiments of the public.

"I think the U.S. population has kind of declared COVID over just by our own behavior. We're focusing our attention on other risks, other things, and accepting a certain level of disease and risk within the community," Sharff said. "So, I think the U.S. population has already moved on, and the end of the public health emergency is really just catching up with the current opinion of the U.S. population."

The current scope of COVID

Currently, the most common variant is the XBB1.5 Omicron variant. According to Sharff, the CDC is actually reporting that transmission numbers are up

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CONTACT THE CHIEF

Phone: 503-397-0116
Fax: 503-397-4093
chiefnews@countrymedia.net
1805 Columbia Blvd.,
St. Helens, OR 97051

0 33680 00001 5

Celebrating the Donavon Wooley Performing Arts Center

JEREMY C. RUARK
Country Media, Inc.

The community gathered Feb. 23 at Clatskanie Middle/High School to celebrate the opening of the schools renovated Donavon Wooley Performing Arts Center.

The center is named after former Clatskanie teacher Donavon Wooley.

"In the 70s when a new high school bond was proposed one of the selling points to the community was the auditorium, not only for use by the school, but by the community," Elsa Wooley, Donavon's wife said. "It has, through the years, been a place where community members could gather for important activities and events."

As the years went by both the sound and lighting systems deteriorated, according to Wooley.

"It was sad to have drama groups not heard and music groups not able to see their music," Wooley said. "The renovation of the Donavon Wooley PAC brings a new life to the space and honors the hard work and dedication of school performance groups and enables CAC to once again bring professional groups such as the Oregon Symphonic Band back to perform in Clatskanie."

Visitors are now greeted with a new sign and a Donor Wall as they enter the renovated center.

A donation drive for the Donor Wall was launched about five years ago and raised about $5,550. Additional funds were collected following the pandemic.

CMHS Teachers Tim Kamppi and Deney Flatz and students in the Career Technical Education (CTE) classes created the music notes with each donor's name for the Donor Wall. The new Donavon Wooley Performing Arts Center sign design was created by CMHS sophomore Hannah Isaacson, according to CMHS Band/Music/Fire Arts Teacher Jaime Erwin.

See CENTER Page A4

Courtesy from Laurey White

Donovon and Elsa Wooley at the unveiling of the Donovon Wooley Performing Arts Center at the Clatskanie Middle High School.

How to track your Oregon tax refund

The Oregon Department of Revenue is now issuing refunds due to taxpayers who have filed their 2022 tax returns.

Through March 3, the department had received and processed 681,099 returns and had issued 495,606 refunds.

The agency began processing returns January 23 in the order they were received. However, each year, the department waits until after February 15 to issue personal income tax refunds as part of its tax fraud prevention efforts. The delay allows for confirmation that the amounts claimed on tax returns match what employers report on Forms W-2 and 1099, according to a release from the Oregon Department of Revenue.

Taxpayers can check Where's My Refund on Revenue Online to see the status of their refund. To check the status of their refund, taxpayers will need their:

• Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)
• Filing status
• The exact refund amount shown on:

Line 46 of their Form OR-40, or Line 71 of their Form OR-40-N, or Line 70 of their Form OR-40-P

The Department of Revenue recommends that taxpayers wait one week after they have electronically filed their return to use the Where's My Refund tool.

Where's My Refund will tell taxpayers whether their refund has been issued electronically, a check has been mailed, their refund has been adjusted, there are questions about their return, or their return is being manually processed.

E-filing and requesting direct deposit is the fastest way for a taxpayer to get their refund. On average, taxpayers who e-file their returns and request their refund via direct deposit receive their refund 34 days sooner than taxpayers who mail their paper returns and request paper refund checks.

All Oregon resident taxpayers preparing their own returns in 2023 can file electronically at no cost using one of Oregon's free file options.

Taxpayers can check the status of their federal tax refunds on the IRS website.

Six common reasons refunds take longer and what to do about it

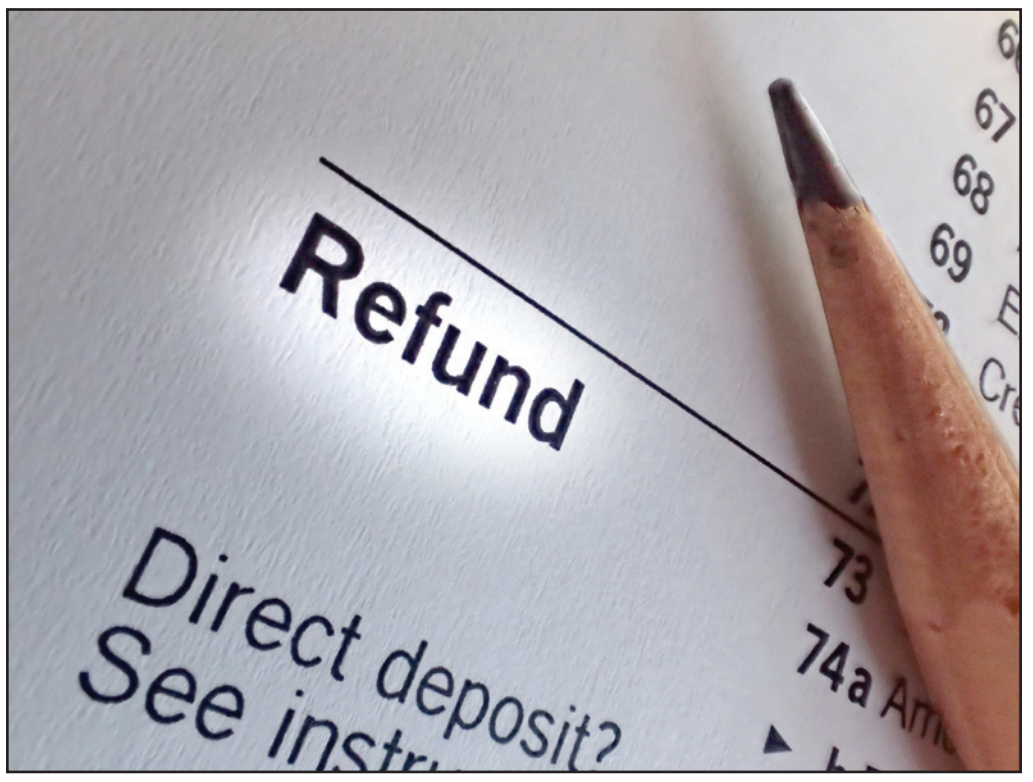
• Filing a paper return. Paper returns take longer to process and, as a result, it takes longer to issue related refunds. File electronically instead.

• Filing electronically and requesting to receive a refund via a check takes longer. Request direct deposit instead.

• Filing more than once. Sending a paper return through the mail after e-filing will a delay a refund. Taxpayers should file just once.

• Filing during peak filing periods. Refunds are also issued slower during peak filing periods, like the last few weeks before the April 18 deadline. Filing well ahead of the deadline will help taxpayers get their refunds sooner.

• Refunds can also be delayed when errors are identified on returns. Taxpayers who receive a letter requesting additional information are urged to respond promptly through Revenue Online to speed the processing of their return.



Metro Creative Connection

Taxpayers can check Where's My Refund on Revenue Online to see the status of their refund.

• Taxpayers who check Where's My Refund one week after they file and receive a message saying their return is being manually processed should watch their mailbox for correspondence from the department.

If it has been 12 weeks or more since they filed their return and they haven't received a letter from the department, taxpayers should call 503-378-4988 or 800-356-4222 to speak with a customer service representative.

Oregon's top 10 consumer complaints

Courtesy photo

Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum has released the Oregon Department of Justice's (DOJ) list of 2022's top ten consumer complaints.

For the third year in a row, auto sales and repairs, telecommunications and imposter scams took the top three spots.

2022 Top Ten Consumer Complaint List

• Auto Sales and Repairs (1,050 complaints)
• Telecommunications (778 complaints)
• Imposter Scams/Fraudulent Entity (697 complaints)
• Financial, Credit and Lending (554 complaints)
• Health and Medical (475 complaints)
• Travel Services and Products (191 complaints)
• Towing (190 complaints)
• Construction Contractors (187 complaints)
• Grocery, Food and Beverage (184 complaints)
• Real Estate (178 complaints)

This year includes — for the first time — a new category: Towing.

In 2017 the Oregon legislature passed towing reforms that prohibit towing vehicles from parking facilities, with limited exceptions like blocking an emergency vehicle, unless the towing company received signed authorization to tow the specific vehicle from the owner of the parking facility or the owner's agent.

Earlier this year, the DOJ Consumer Protection Section filed a lawsuit against one of the largest towing operators in Oregon, Retriever Towing. The lawsuit alleges the company illegally towed vehicles from parking facilities without signed authorization from the owner of the parking facility.

"We hope this lawsuit will send a message to all towing companies around the state that they'll be held accountable for violating the law," Rosenblum said. "Especially when it snows, — as it recently did — tow trucks are out in force due to the number of abandoned vehicles. If your car was towed during this time and you feel you were overcharged or otherwise unfairly treated, please call our consumer hotline at 1-877-877-9392 for help."

The Top 10 List issued was in association with National Consumer Protection Week March 5-11.

Rosenblum also issued the following highlights concerning the state's consumer protection work in 2022.

• $1.85 billion national settlement with one of the nation's largest student loan servicers, Navient. In Oregon, that means 5,488 federal loan borrowers received $1,462,937 in restitution and 864 borrowers received $22,454,017 in private loan debt cancellation.

• $701.5 million for Oregon to fund opioid abatement and recovery from eight settlements with opioid manufacturers, distributors, and pharmacies.

• $391.5 million national settlement – led in part by Oregon – with Google over its location tracking practices. The settlement is the largest attorney general-led consumer privacy settlement ever.

• $2.1 million from TurboTax (Intuit Inc.) to Oregon consumers who were deceived into paying for tax services that should have been free.

• $805,799.88 returned to Oregon consumers who filed complaints with the DOJ Consumer Protection Section.

• $309,234 in data breach settlements to Oregon with Avalon, Carnival Cruise, T-Mobile and Experian.

• 10,032 phone calls to the DOJ Consumer Protection Hotline.

• 7,791 written consumer complaints received.

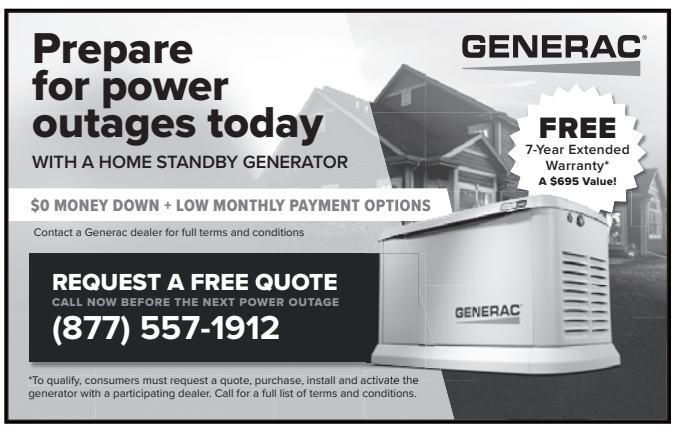
In addition, DOJ travels the state to teach Oregonians how to stay safe from fraud and scams. Visit our website for free resources online at: https://www.doj.state.or.us/consumer-protection/sales-scams-fraud/more-scams-fraud-resources/

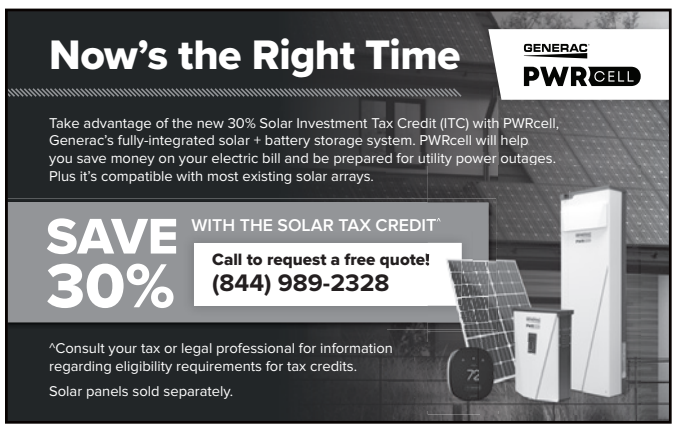
If you feel you may have fallen victim to a fraud or scam, contact the Oregon Department of Justice online at www.oregonconsumer.gov or call our Consumer Complaint Hotline at 1-877-877-9392.

··Crossword Solutions··

Solution for the March 3, 2023 crossword puzzle

A	B	E	L			S	E	C				A	R	M
L	O	T	I		A	C	A	I		O	F	F	E	R
T	O	U	T		P	A	R	T		N	A	R	E	S
	M	I	C	H	E	L	L	E		T	R	O	D	
			H	U	M	P	Y		T	A	R			
E	N	S	I	L	E			C	O	P	E	P	O	D
L	O	P		A	N	A	L	O	G		L	A	S	E
V	O	I	D	S		B	A	D		A	L	G	A	L
I	S	L	E		B	E	W	A	I	L		A	G	A
S	E	L	L	O	U	T			D	I	S	N	E	Y
			T	A	B		M	A	Y	B	E			
	B	R	O	S		W	I	L	L	I	A	M	S	
K	A	U	R	I		H	A	I	L		B	A	I	L
A	D	I	O	S		E	O	N	S		E	D	G	E
Y	E	N				E	W	E			D	E	N	T





Rainier Junior Senior High School Honor Roll

Rainier Junior Senior High School has announced the schools honor roll and honorable mention roll for the first semester of the 2022-23 school year.

Those students named to honor roll had a grade point average of 3.5 to 4.00. Those students named to the honorable mention roll had a grade point average of 3.0 to 3.49.

4.00 Grade Point Average

NCA: Hallman, Raven; May, Sam.

12th Grade: Lever, Manon; Jimenez, Naira.

11th Grade: Biddix,Colby; Crawford,Garrett; Elwood, Jasmin; Fortelney, Delaney; Gutenberger, Hunter; Heath, Ava; Katon, Derek; Keplinger, Bergen; Lever, Clint; Makinson, Lacey; Ornelas,Sophia; Poorman, Samuel; Rankin, Kamille; Shulda, Karaka; Ylen, Brenna.

10th Grade: Cook, Miley; Cox,Shelby; Hird, David; Tygret,Carmalene.

9th Grade: Abel,Teela; Geringer, Alison; Hudson, Nicole; Jackson,Quentin; Johns, Taylor; Pruyne, Heather; Wallace, Caden.

8th Grade: Chambers, Adria; Komm, Orion; McGuire, Breahna.

7th Grade: Anderson, Trinity; McCann,Katelynn; Schopf, Ian; Thomas, Adelyn.

3.50-3.99 Grade Point Average

NCA: Loosli, Cachet; Mueller, Faith; Scoggins, Shane.

12th Grade: Becerril, Julia; Bell, Elijah; Bristol, Archer; Crape, Kendall; Erickson,Jaymin; Lindahl, Stella; Schimmel, Paige; Tygret, Samuel.

11th Grade: Parra, David; Sarr, Sarah; Schaffner,Hailie; White, Ivy; Wood,Brielle.

10th Grade: Anderson, Madalyn; Dobbels, Madisyn; Fox, Austin; Heil, Lillyan; Lever, Ina; Neal, Kasey; Paulus, Ashley; Turner, Tatum.

9th Grade: Dean, Lilli; Langley, Merritt; Makinson, Walker; Pattison, Emry; Pina, Trayten; Scott, Presely; Ward, Henry; Ward, Skyler; Watkins, James; Zasta, Zeda.

Courtesy photo

8th Grade: Chambers,Matthew; Gutenberger, Payton; Hird,Julia; Tygret,Teancum; Zimmer, Josie.

7th Grade: Devereaux, Jociyah; Hoeschen,Ava; Martinez, Gabriel; Schell, Ella Mae; Sullivan, Emily.

3.0—3.49 Grade Point Average

NCA: Campbell, Trent; Cornelius, Elektra; Loosli,Addyson; Martini, Owen; Pellham, Sheauna; Peterson, Caleb; Pfuhl, Logan; Schaffner, Maggie

12th Grade: Ellis, Joshua; Hendricks, Hunter; Mohammad, Adrian; Peters, Leucan; Placido, Kathryn; Resler, Wade; Richards, Alina; Smith, Donovan; Wood, Christopher.

11th Grade: Barnes,Julia; Dobbels, Aidia; Fair, Gabriel; Fortner, Kurston; Larkins, Mischa; Parsons, Tyler; Stout, Kadence; Torres, Cristofer; Widme,Wade; Wilson, Jacethen; Yeramian, Patience.

10th Grade: Cadwell, Alana; Coberle, Deric; Cole, Breanna; Heath, Shylee; Lovell, Zoey; Mattinen, Keaton; McLane, Velocity; Nguyen, Andrew; Sanchez-Hernandez, Abigail.

9th Grade: Altenhein, Kylie; Coberly, Carsen; Cox, Ethan; Crocker, Cayla; Elliot-Bach, Joseph; Fair, Kateara-Lynn; Garrett, Abby; Hill, Rylee; McCann, Makayla; Mohammad, Gage; Sanchez-Menjivar, Yandel.

8th Grade: Blaylock, Chandler; Cassel, Oliver; Cook, Roman; Dart, Jennifer; Forbis-Bugg, Kayleilah; Fraley, Aya; Handley, Hudson; Langhorne, Faith; Mattinen, Braxton; Mooty, Quinn; Orman, Clayton; Owen, Nevaeh; Sylvester, Carter; Turner, Colton; Underwood, Riley.

7th Grade: Barnes, Wyatt; Burney, Joseph; Elwood, Chloe; Fogle, Emma-May; Harding, Logan; Jacob, Kalynn; Manzella, Emerald; Pattison, Walker; Thomas, Jocelyn; Whalen, Abbagail; Willis, Henry.

"Rainier is so proud of the work our students have been doing this year," a Rainier Junior Senior High School statement reads. "Keep up the great work! It's a great day to be a Columbian!"

New council to address Oregon's housing needs

STAFF REPORT
Country Media, Inc.

As Oregon take steps to meet the challenge of homelessness, a new leadership council is in place and is scheduled to conduct its first meeting March 10.

The Council is scheduled to provide a recommended framework for their action plan by April 1. Former Lincoln City Mayor and now State Senator Dick Anderson is one of the council members.

Background

On her first full day in office, Gov. Tina Kotek signed an executive order that set an ambitious housing production goal of 36,000 homes per year and established a council of leaders charged with developing an action plan to meet the new construction targets.

Kotek announced her appointments to the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC) March 6.

"I know too many Oregonians are struggling to find stable housing or on the verge of losing it," Kotek said. "Employers, particularly in rural and suburban areas, are struggling to hire and keep staff because there is nowhere for them to live or they are commuting from hours away. This is not sustainable. We must build more housing."

The HPAC will bring robust experience in a broad set of disciplines and represent Oregon's diverse demographics and geography, according to Kotek.

"We had an incredible list of qualified Oregonians interested in serving on the Council, which reflects not only a shared concern about our housing crisis, but more importantly, the dedication to solve it," Kotek said. "I am grateful for their willingness to serve and look forward to their recommendations."

The order established an annual housing production goal of 36,000 additional housing units at all levels of affordability across the state to address Oregon's current housing shortage and keep pace with projected population growth.

That's an ambitious target, according to Kotek – about an 80 percent increase over current construction trends – and would set Oregon on a path to build 360,000 additional homes over the next decade. This goal was accompanied by the establishment of the HPAC to help get the job done.

The members include a range of housing leaders, local government representatives, bipartisan legislators, a Tribal member, and relevant state agency directors:

Gubernatorial Appointments:

• Co-chair J.D. Tovey - rural Oregon and an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation - land use, building codes and housing development

• Co-chair Damien Hall - Metro- land use, and affordable and market housing development

• Daniel Bunn - Southern Oregon - land use and financing market housing

• Thomas Cody - Metro area - affordable and market housing development

• Deborah Flagan - Central Oregon - market housing development and construction

• Ernesto Fonseca - Metro area - affordable and market housing development and financing affordable housing

• Elissa Gertler - Oregon Coast - land use and financing affordable housing

• Riley Hill - rural Oregon - land use and market housing development

• Natalie Janney - Willamette Valley area - land use, market housing development

• Robert Justus - Metro area - affordable and market housing development

• Joel Madsen - Columbia Gorge - affordable housing development and financing

• Ivory Mathews - Metro area - affordable housing development and financing

• Erica Mills - Southern Oregon - financing affordable and market housing

• Eric Olsen - Willamette Valley area - construction, market housing development

• Gauri Rajbaidya - Metro area - affordable and market housing development

• Karen Rockwell - Oregon Coast - affordable and market housing development

• Margaret Van Vliet - Metro area - financing market and affordable housing, and affordable housing development

• Justin Wood - Metro - construction and market housing development

Legislative appointments and agency members:

• Senator Dick Anderson (R - Lincoln City)

• Senator Kayse Jama (D - Portland)

• Representative Jeff Helfrich (R - Hood River)

• Representative Maxine Dexter (D - Portland)

• Andrea Bell, Oregon Housing and Community Services Director

• Brenda Bateman, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development Director

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The governor's order established an annual housing production goal of 36,000 additional housing units at all levels of affordability across the state to address Oregon's current housing shortage and keep pace with projected population growth.

Looking for your new career?

JOIN US FOR THE

Columbia County Career Fair

HOSTED BY

PCC OMIC Training Center and Northwest Regional Educational Service District

Meet with local employers, drop off your resume, and learn about careers in advanced manufacturing, health care, apprenticeship training, criminal justice, and more.

Thursday, April 27
High School Students: 9 am – 2 pm
General Public: 2 – 5 pm

PCC OMIC Training Center
34001 NE Wagner Ct
Scappoose, OR 97056

FREE TRANSPORTATION

The Columbia County (CC) Rider will be providing free transportation from the St. Helens and Scappoose libraries and the St. Helens Employment Department.

FOR MORE INFO, VISIT:
pcc.edu/omic

Portland Community College | OMIC Training Center

Portland Community College is an Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity Institution.

··Obituaries··

Douglas Glenn McKay

March 17, 1957 ~ Feb. 6, 2023

Douglas McKay was born on March 17, 1957 to Robert McKay and Glenna Haynes in St. Helens, Oregon.

Douglas enjoyed singing and playing guitar, meeting and spending a few minutes talking to people. He enjoyed nature and loved exploring new places, always feeling at home whether in a forest, on a beach or high on a mountain.

Doug was preceded in death by his parents, Robert and Glenna; brother Dean; and sisters, Joyce McKay and Karen Beckstead.

He is survived by his children, Trudy McKay of Rainier Oregon and Tyven McKay of Eugene, Oregon; sisters, Annie Frizielle and Cindy McKay of Portland, Oregon, Sarah Robinson of St Helens, and Jeri McGee of Cheyenne, Wyoming; brothers, Jim McKay of St. Helens, Rod McKay of Scappoose, Oregon and Ray McKay of Charleston, Oregon; as well as longtime partner DeeAnn Fancher of Rainier, Oregon.

There will be a celebration of life will be held at 2 p.m. on Fri., March 17, 2023 at Groulx Family Mortuary, 25381 Wonderly Road, Rainier, OR 97048.

Jerald Edward Davis

Nov. 17, 1941 ~ March 1, 2023

Jerald Edward Davis was born on Nov. 17, 1941 in Montpelier, Idaho to Carl and Ada (McGlone) Davis. He was a loving brother to siblings, Linda, Martha and Marilee.

Jerald was raised and graduated from Rainier Union High School class of 1961 and worked in the timber industry. He was never married but he was surrounded by many nieces and nephews and oodles of cousins. Jerald attended The Alston Corner Assembly of God Church in Alston Corner as well as some in Portland, Oregon. Jerry was a devout Christian who was known to wear Bibles out from reading them so often.

Jerry is survived by his sisters, Martha (Robert) VanNatta of Rainier, Oregon and Marilee (John) Hayden of Anchor Point, Alaska.

He was preceded in death by parents, Carl and Ada, as well as older sister Linda Larson in June of 2022.

There is a graveside service at 1 p.m. on March 10, 2023 at Green Mountain Cemetery in Rainier, Oregon. In Lieu of flowers the family asks for donations to be made in his name to HOPE of Rainier or Rainier Oregon Historical Museum.

Irene Gibson

Jan. 16, 1933 ~ Feb. 24, 2023

Irene Gibson, 90, of Rainier, Oregon, passed away Feb. 24, 2023 in Longview, Washington.

··Clatskanie Grows··

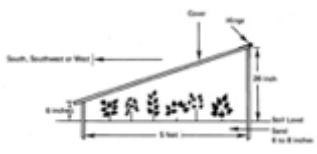
Where and when to plant vegetables

CHIP BUBL
Clatskanie Grows
Chief Guest Column

First, what is the right place for vegetables?

The more sun you have, the better. We ask these plants to grow quickly and give us lots to eat and preserve. The more sun vegetables have, the better. Lettuce and a few other greens can stand a little shade, but no vegetables do well in deep shade.

Time to plant some vegetables is dependent on last frost date (about April 20 in St. Helens and perhaps a few days earlier in Clatskanie). But timing for all vegetables is dependent on how wet and cold the soil is.



If you have raised beds, your soils will warm faster and are easier to prepare for planting. Working wet soil can create an ugly, cloddy mess. We used to get a week of nice weather in February but not this year! And March isn't starting out too nice either. But here we go:

Early spring plantings are asparagus, lettuce transplants, onions from sets or transplants started from seed, radishes, peas, and spinach if soil temperatures are at least 40 degrees, and rhubarb. Some farmers and savvy gardeners cover the soil with clear plastic to warm and dry out the soil earlier. Then they plant. Row covers on a "hoop" framework can help all the outside planted vegetable (seed or transplanted) get a better start. Cold frames (see picture) can be used to grow good transplants.

Mid-spring plantings include lots of crops, early April in St. Helens and a bit earlier in Clatskanie, all the cabbage family including broccoli, cabbage, kohlrabi, cauliflower, turnips, kale, and arugula; carrots; parsnips (be patient with parsnips, they can take almost 30 days to emerge after planting); chard; and early potatoes.

Be ready to protect from a "killing" frost (28 degrees) if needed. Most of these can be planted again for extended harvest. Warming the soil and/or using transplants that are acclimated to being outside before transplanting.

Late spring, the heat loving crops are planted: green beans, corn, cucumbers, summer and winter squash, and tomatoes. Peppers do best if it is warmer so hold off transplanting until mid-May or later depending on how what kind of weather we are getting. Last year, it was cold all the way to early June (I have described it as three straight months of March) but once it warmed, it stayed warm well into October, so

Metro Creative Connection

most gardens fared quite well. And gardeners have learned that green beans can be successfully transplanted. They can be started when the soils/weather is a bit cool in containers either in a cold frame, greenhouse, or sunny window in your house.

Early summer plantings can include replanting of some of the cabbage family, later potatoes, and later plantings of green beans.

Mid-summer plantings are for crops that will be eaten in the fall and can stand a frost. These include beets, carrots, radishes (plant often if you like them), rutabagas, turnips, chard, lettuce, and spinach.

It is important to note that the actual weather leading up to a planting cycle and what is projected for the following several weeks afterward is important.

Warm soils are good. Get a soil thermometer and test the top two inches of your soil. Blistering heat is not (except for peppers, many squash, and sweet potatoes). Transplanting in the evening seems to work better than transplanting in the morning. Attention to watering the new transplant or seed beds is needed.

Gardening-related events March and April

March 11
Columbia County Small Woodlands Tree Sale

The Columbia County Small Woodlands Association has an annual tree sale in St. Helens. You can purchase a variety of trees in very small quantities. Forest tree seedlings, native shrubs, and ornamental tree seedlings will be for sale. The sale this year will be at the Lawrence Oil parking lot, 845 N. Columbia River Highway, in St. Helens from 8:30 a.m.to 1:30 p.m. Get there early for the best selection. It is very well attended.

March 23
What Gardeners Need to Know About the Emerald Ash Borer

Scheduled speaker is OSU Extension Forester Alex Gorman. Columbia County Master Gardener Chapter meeting. The program, which is first, is open to the public at the OSU Extension office at 6:30 p.m.

April 6
Columbia County Beekeepers Monthly meeting

7 p.m. Topic: Swarming and Catching Swarms. The group will meet in person at the Columbia County Extension Office in St. Helens and by Zoom. Contact columbiacountyoregonbeekeepers@gmail.com for Zoom info.

April 8
Scappoose Bay Watershed Council's Native Plant Sale

Join the Watershed Council for its Spring Native Plant Sale from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the SBWC nursery, located at Scappoose High School. Look for signs – go east on SE High School Way and turn into the parking lot between the high school and the school ball field areas. This is their semi-annual event to get you ready for spring and summer planting. They have lots of new plants at great prices – all native to our area. Staff and volunteers are available to help chose plants suggest gardening ideas and provide information on establishing and maintaining native vegetation. For more information see https://www.scappoosebay-wc.org/native-plant-nursery.

Important notes

• You can get up-to-date and accurate answers to your food preservation questions by calling our office at 503-397-3462 and ask to speak to Jenny Rudolph.

• The OSU Extension Office is fully open from 8 a.m to 5 p.m.

• Donate extra garden produce and/or money to the food bank, senior centers, or community meals programs. It always is greatly appreciated.

• The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.

• Free newsletter: The Oregon State University Extension office in Columbia County publishes a monthly newsletter on gardening and farming topics (called County Living) written/edited by yours truly. All you need to do is ask for it and it will be mailed or emailed to you. Call 503-397-3462 to be put on the list. Alternatively, you can find it on the web at http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/ and click on newsletters.

Have questions?

If you have questions on any of these topics or other home garden and/or farm questions, please contact Chip Bubl, Oregon State University Extension office in St. Helens at 503-397-3462 or at chip.bubl@oregonstate.edu. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Contact resource

Oregon State University Extension Service – Columbia County
505 N. Columbia River Highway, St. Helens OR 97051
503-397-3462.

Courtesy photo from the CCSO

This tray of processed marijuana was also seized in the searches.

MARIJUANA

From **Page A1**

for our team."

Pixley said the location of the illegal marijuana grows is his second concern.

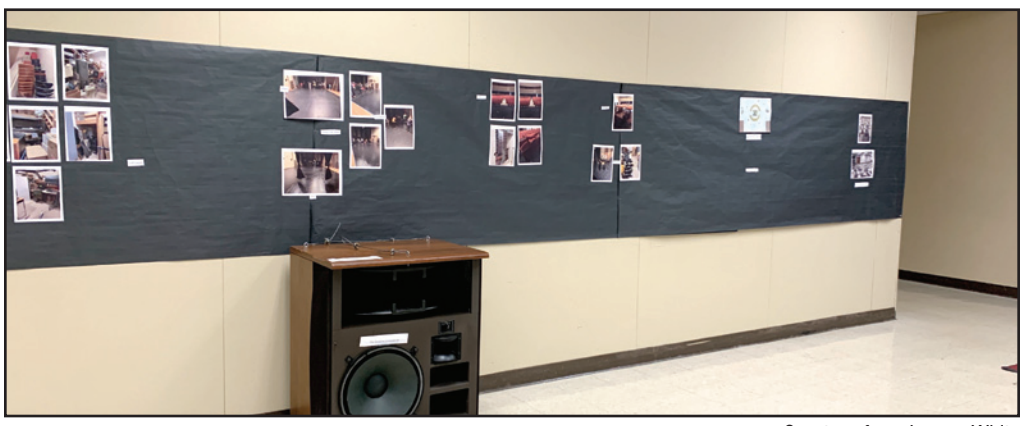
"The fact they grow in rural areas across Oregon, then ship the marijuana to the East Coast where they can sell the marijuana on the streets," he said.

In 2021, the CCSO worked with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Oregon State Police (OSP) wrapping up a year-long investigation culminated in 26 search warrants served across the state of Oregon and one in Texas over a two-day period.

As a result of the search warrants, Pixley said the following was recovered statewide:

• 32,999 total marijuana plants
• 1504 lbs. of bulk marijuana
• 23 firearms
• $353,000 in cash

Follow this developing story at thechiefnews.com and in the Friday print editions of The Chief.



Courtesy from Laurey White

The Donor Wall at the front of the Donavon Wooley Performing Arts Center inside Clatskanie Middle/High School.

CENTER

From **Page A1**

The Clatskanie School District was successful in gaining voter approval of a bond measure for district building improvements, which Erwin said helped with the Performing Arts Center's renovation costs.

History

Donavon, or "Dee," as he is called, came to teach in Clatskanie in 1968. When he first started teaching in this area, he taught classes at Quincy Grade School, Westport Grade School, Clatskanie Grade School, and Clatskanie High School.

Dee taught beginning band, band and choir and traveled among the schools each day. As the music program grew, other teachers were hired to cover the grade and middle school. Dee then taught band and choir in the high school along with Stage Band (Jazz Band) at 7 a.m. each morning.

He also had a pep band at all the games and a marching band in the local parades.

The bands won several awards during his years of teaching and his stage band competed at festivals in Oregon, in Vancouver, British Columbia and at the World's Fair in Spokane, Washington. He retired in 1994.

The last concert before his retirement was a surprise as the music students met with the school board and requested the auditorium be renamed in his honor. It became the Donavon Wooley Performing Arts Center.

During the concert the various hair and clothing styles of Dee were lovingly revisited. Students talked about the impact he had on their lives and their love of music. The choir and the band ended the concert with a joint musical piece and the announcement of the renaming of the auditorium. This event was held in May 1994.

The Donavon Wooley Performing Arts Center is located inside Clatskanie Middle/High School at 471 SW Bel Air Drive. For more information, call CMHS at 503-728-2146. Chief Guest Writer Laurey White contributed to this article.

Weekly Online Poll

What is your favorite type of movie?

- ☐ Comedy
- ☐ Action
- ☐ Drama
- ☐ Romance
- ☐ Horror

Last Week's Results

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

30.8% Frequent walks
15.4% Fishing
38.5% Camping
3.8% Golf
11.5% Other sports

Vote online at thechiefnews.com

The Chief

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Website: www.thechiefnews.com **Editorial:** chiefnews@countrymedia.net
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Letters policy
This newspaper's letters to the editor are limited to a maximum of 250 words and will be edited for grammar, spelling and blatant inaccuracies. Unsubstantiated or irresponsible allegations, or personal attacks on any individual, will not be published. Letters containing details presented as facts rather than opinions must include their sources. Writers are limited to one published letter per month. All submissions must include the author's full name, local street address and telephone number (only the name and city of residence will be published). By submitting a letter, writers also grant permission for them to be posted online. Opinions expressed on this page are the writer's alone and do not represent the opinion of the newspaper or its parent company, Country Media, Inc.

Marketplace

It's easy to place a classified ad in The Chief Just call 503-397-0116

Listings are updated daily at www.thechiefnews.com

312 Events

ANNUAL ASTORIA AUTOMOTIVE SWAP MEET

Vendors Wanted!

Clatsop Fairgrounds
Saturday, March 11th
8 A.M. - 2 P.M.

Call Charlie
(503) 325-3508
or Dorothy
(503) 468-0006

H21498

502 Help Wanted

Engineering Technician I
Columbia County, OR. EOE. Deadline: 3/29/2023. Apply at ColumbiaCountyOR.gov.

Pool Manager
Clatskanie Park & Recreation District is now accepting applications and resumes for a Pool Manager. Responsibilities: Train, manage and evaluate approximately 20 lifeguards; beginning in February and continuing into September. Plan, organize and schedule programs offered at our seasonal outdoor pool. Be responsible for scheduling adequate staff for the safety, supervision, cleanliness, water chemistry and mechanical operation of the pool for youth and families in our District. Maintain pool and employee records. Perform such other duties as assigned by the District Manager and/or Board of Directors from time to time. Knowledge and Skills: Strong administrative skills, recreational aquatic programming skills, leadership and managerial skills, pool maintenance and water chemistry skills and good public relation skills are a must. Thorough knowledge of policies, procedures and equipment used in daily outdoor pool operations helpful. Work with pool related chemicals and be familiar with State and Federal regulations regarding outdoor pool operations. Experience and Training: Experience preferred. Or the willingness to work within an agreed upon time frame between applicant and Board of Directors to obtain the required and suggested certifications for the position; First-Aid, CPR, AED certifications, Lifeguard Instructor and Training, Water Safety Instructor and CPO (Certified Pool Operator) certifications. You can request an application by phone at 503-728-2757, by email at csp@cni.net or on our website www.clatskanieparksandrecreation.com. Applications and resumes can be returned by mail to: Clatskanie Park & Recreation District, PO Box 737, Clatskanie OR 97016 or by email to csp@cni.net. If you have any questions, please leave message at 503-728-2757. Applications with resumes will be accepted until the position has been filled.

PORT OF COLUMBIA COUNTY
The Port is hiring the following positions: Finance Manager. Facilities Maintenance full-time. Scappoose Bay Marina summer parttime staff. To learn more and apply, please visit our website www.portofcolumbiacounty.org/jobs. EOE.

Road Maintenance Worker I
(Vernonia & Rainier). Columbia County, OR. EOE. Open until filled. Apply at ColumbiaCountyOR.gov.

Transit Driver
PT, Temp, On-Call. Columbia County, OR. EOE. Open until filled. Apply at ColumbiaCountyOR.gov.

860 Storage

CLATSKANIE Mini Storage

Hoarder's Paradise! 20 sizes, Inexpensive RV Storage, Carports, Hand trucks, Locks, Fully-lined, Insulated, Condensation free, all units lit. On-site Manager

503 728-2051
503 369-6503
Visa/MC/Amex

CLATSKANIE PUD
Owned by the People We Serve

Clatskanie People's Utility District is seeking a Controller/Finance Manager

Position depends on experience. This position will be responsible for providing leadership for general accounting, budget, and auditing functions, as well as, payroll and accounts payable processes. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to influence the strategic direction and fiscal performance of our hydro-powered, locally-owned electric utility and will be given the chance to develop professionally. The District is seeking someone detail oriented, professional, collaborative, and has an analytical disposition; experience in the electric utility industry is desired, but not required.

We're looking for someone who is driven, organized, and passionate about handling the numerical storybook of a mission-focused organization! Are you a CPA? Do you love Excel unconditionally? Are you looking for a 4/10 schedule in the beautiful PNW in an industry that provides essential services to its local community? Give us a chance, apply today!

You'll be joining Clatskanie PUD's management team which is focused on executing both strategic initiatives and operational imperatives of the District. We strive to be Insightful, Professional, Collaborative, and Driven!

Compensation and position will be based on qualifications and experience with the pay range between $120,000 and $200,000, plus a generous benefits package. An application and full job description may be found on our website under About Us/Employment Opportunities at clatskaniepud.com. Submit completed application, résumé, and cover letter to Human Resources, PO Box 216, Clatskanie, OR 97016, secure fax 503-308-4884, or email: hr@clatskaniepud.com. This position remains open until 5:00 pm PDT, March 27, 2023 or until filled, with a flexible start date in April 2023. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Lynn Donner: ldonner@clatskaniepud.com or 503-728-2163.

Clatskanie PUD is an equal employment opportunity employer, following all necessary federal and state employment laws required. Clatskanie PUD will make reasonable accommodations for those covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Veterans will receive hiring preference as required by law.

Public Notices

PROTECTING YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

CC23-1746

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE LANDOWNERS OF THE CLATSKANIE DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT COMPANY

Notice is hereby given that the annual meeting for the landowners and Board of Directors of the Clatskanie Drainage Improvement Company, Columbia County, Oregon, will be held Tuesday, March 21st, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. at the Port of Columbia County's Office located at 555 SW Bryant Street in Clatskanie, OR. Notice is further given that all proxies must be in writing and signed by the owner. The meeting is to elect a director, adopt a budget and any other business that comes before the landowners. Dated this 7th day of March 2023. Elliot Levin Secretary Clatskanie Drainage Improvement Company Board of Directors.

CC23-1747

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE LANDOWNERS OF THE CLATSOP #15 DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT COMPANY, INC.

Notice is hereby given that the annual meeting for the landowners and Board Members of the Clatsop #15 Drainage Improvement Company, Columbia and Clatsop County, Oregon, will be held Tuesday, March 21st, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. at the Poplar Tree Nursery Office located at 91151 Old Mill Town Rd in Westport, OR. Notice is further given that all proxies must be in writing and signed by the owner. The meeting is to elect a director, adopt a budget and any other business that comes before the landowners. Dated this 7th day of March 2023. Kathy Haiby Secretary/Treasurer Clatsop #15 Drainage Improvement Company, Inc. Board of Directors.

CC23-1748

NOTICE OF VACANCIES ON COMMITTEE

The City of Rainier currently has vacancies on its Budget Committee and REDCO Budget Committee. Successful applicants will have the opportunity to help the city identify its budgetary priorities for the 2023-25 fiscal years. Committee members are expected to attend the public meetings in which the budget process will take place. Applications can be picked up at Rainier City Hall or online at www.cityofrainier.com and are due by March 27, 2023. Appointments to the Budget and REDCO Budget committees will be made at the City Council's April 3, 2023 meeting.

CC23-1738

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE LANDOWNERS OF THE BEAVER DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT COMPANY, INC.

Notice is hereby given that the annual meeting for the Landowners and Board Members of the Beaver Drainage Improvement Company, Columbia County, Oregon, will be held Tuesday, March 14th, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. at the Quincy Grange #321 located at 78314 Rutters Road in Clatskanie, OR. Notice is further given that all proxies must be in writing and signed by the owner. The meeting is to elect a director, review financials and discuss any other business that comes before the landowners. Dated this 27th day of February, 2023. Warren Seely, President Beaver Drainage Improvement Company Board of Directors.

CC23-1749

NOTICE OF WORK SESSION/MEETING

The Board of Directors for Clatskanie School District 6J will hold a Work Session/Board meeting on Monday, March 13th, 2023. The Work Session will begin at 5:30 PM at the Clatskanie Elementary Library (in person only), followed by the regular Board Meeting at 6:30 p.m. at Clatskanie Elementary Library and via Zoom. Both meetings are open to the public. Please see our website at www.csd.k12.or.us on the main page for directions to join the regular meeting via zoom meeting. Please see our website for an official agenda. The public is encouraged to attend.

CC23-1745

CLATSKANIE PEOPLE'S UTILITY DISTRICT MEETING NOTICE

The Clatskanie People's Utility District Board of Directors has scheduled the next regular Board meeting for Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 6:00 pm in the community room of the District's administration building located at 495 E Columbia River Highway, Clatskanie. A Board Workshop will be held at 5:30 pm. An executive session may be called at the workshop and/or meeting, pursuant to: ORS 192.660 (2) (i) to review and evaluate the performance of an officer, employee, or staff member if the person does not request an open meeting. AGENDA CLATSKANIE PEOPLE'S UTILITY DISTRICT BOARD WORKSHOP Wednesday, March 15, 2023 5:30 P.M. I. GRANT COUNTY PUD PROJECT UPDATE: Kevin Nordt, Chief Resource Officer II. POLICY REVIEW: EH 512 Travel and Business Expenses III. STAFF REPORTS UPDATE CLATSKANIE PEOPLE'S UTILITY DISTRICT REGULAR BOARD MEETING Wednesday, March 15, 2023 6:00 P.M. I. PUBLIC COMMENTS II. CONSENT AGENDA · Minutes of Board Workshop, February 15, 2023 · Minutes of Regular Board Meeting, February 15, 2023 · Review payment of bills for February 2023 III. ACTION ITEMS · Policy Review: EH 512 Travel and Business Expenses · Date Change: May board meeting IV. DISCUSSION / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS · Board Comments & Calendar V. EXECUTIVE SESSION VI. ADJOURNMENT

CC23-1744

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

A public meeting of the 2023-2024 Mist-Birkenfeld RFPD Budget Commit-tee will be held Thursday, March 30, 2023, at 7:00 PM at the Mist-Birkenfeld Main Station located at 12525 Highway 202. This is a meeting where deliberation of the Budget Committee will take place. Any person may attend this meeting and discuss the proposed programs with the Budget Committee. BUSINESS TO BE CONDUCTED AT THIS MEETING WILL BE:

- Election of Officers - Presentation of Budget Message - Presentation of Budget Document - Discussion of the Budget Document - Public Testimony - Scheduling of possible future meetings. The proposed budget document will be available for inspection beginning March 22, 2023 at the Mist-Birkenfeld Main Station at 12525 Hwy 202, Mist, Oregon, during the hours of 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Joe Kaczenski Budget Officer

Public Notices

CC23-1728

TS No. OR06000057-22-1 APN 19015 TO No 220445422-OR-MSI TRUSTEE'S NOTICE OF SALE

Reference is made to that certain Trust Deed made by, JEFFREY L HAMMANS as Grantor to TICOR TITLE INSURANCE COMPANY as Trustee, in favor of MORTGAGE ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION SYSTEMS, INC. ("MERS"), as designated nominee for EAGLE HOME MORTGAGE, LLC, Beneficiary of the security instrument, its successors and assigns, dated as of September 15, 2009 and recorded on September 30, 2009 as Instrument No. 2009-009189 and the beneficial interest was assigned to LAKEVIEW LOAN SERVICING, LLC and recorded November 9, 2020 as Instrument Number 2020-011758 of official records in the Office of the Recorder of Columbia County, Oregon to-wit: APN: 19015 PARCEL 2 OF PARTITION PLAT NO. 1998-14, RECORDED MARCH 18, 1998, FEE NO. 98-02859, IN COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON. TOGETHER WITH A 25 FOOT EASEMENT FOR INGRESS AND EGRESS OVER PARCEL 1 OF PARTITION PLAT 1998-14, AS DISCLOSED ON THE FACE OF THE PLAT MAP. Commonly known as: 72695 APIARY ROAD, RAINIER, OR 97048 Both the Beneficiary, Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC, and the Trustee, Nathan F. Smith, Esq., OSB #120112, have elected to sell the said real property to satisfy the obligations secured by said Trust Deed and notice has been recorded pursuant to Section 86.735(3) of Oregon Revised Statutes. The default for which the foreclosure is made is the Grantor's failure to pay: Failed to pay payments which became due Monthly Payment(s): 1 Monthly Payment(s) from 12/01/2021 to 02/28/2023 at $23,520.75 Late Charge(s): 1 Monthly Late Charge(s) 188.16 By this reason of said default the Beneficiary has declared all obligations secured by said Trust Deed immediately due and payable, said sums being the following, to-wit: The sum of $182,497.10 together with interest thereon at the rate of 5.37500% per annum from November 1, 2021 until paid; plus all accrued late charges thereon; and all Trustee's fees, foreclosure costs and any sums advanced by the Beneficiary pursuant to the terms of said Trust Deed. Wherefore, notice is hereby given that, the undersigned Trustee will on June 27, 2023 at the hour of 12:00 PM, Standard of Time, as established by Section 187.110, Oregon Revised Statues, at the west entrance to the Columbia County Courthouse, 230 Strand St., Saint Helens, OR 97051 County of Columbia, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash the interest in the said described real property which the Grantor had or had power to convey at the time of the execution by him of the said Trust Deed, together with any interest which the Grantor or his successors in interest acquired after the execution of said Trust Deed, to satisfy the foregoing obligations thereby secured and the costs and expenses of sale, including a reasonable charge by the Trustee. Notice is further given that any person named in Section 86.753 of Oregon Revised Statutes has the right to have the foreclosure proceeding dismissed and the Trust Deed reinstated by payment to the Beneficiary of the entire amount then due (other than such portion of said principal as would not then be due had no default occurred), together with the costs, Trustee's or attorney's fees and curing any other default complained of in the Notice of Default by tendering the performance required under the obligation or Trust Deed, at any time prior to five days before the date last set for sale. Without limiting the Trustee's disclaimer of representations or warranties, Oregon law requires the Trustee to state in this notice that some residential property sold at a Trustee's sale may have been used in manufacturing methamphetamines, the chemical components of which are known to be toxic. Prospective purchasers of residential property should be aware of this potential danger before deciding to place a bid for this property at the Trustee's sale. In construing this notice, the masculine gender includes the feminine and the neuter, the singular includes plural, the word "Grantor" includes any successor in interest to the Grantor as well as any other persons owing an obligation, the performance of which is secured by said Trust Deed, the words "Trustee" and "Beneficiary" includes their respective successors in interest, if any. Dated: 2/8/23 By: Nathan F. Smith, Esq., OSB #120112 Successor Trustee Malcolm & Cisneros, A Law Corporation Attention: Nathan F. Smith, Esq., OSB #120112 c/o TRUSTEE CORPS 17100 Gillette Ave, Irvine, CA 92614 949-252-8300 Order Number 89327, Pub Dates: 2/24/2023, 3/3/2023, 3/10/2023, 3/17/2023, THE CLATSKANIE CHIEF

The Public Notice deadline is Wednesdays by noon.

Late submissions are not guaranteed to make it into the paper.

Sports

CMHS Athletic game schedule

Saturday March 11
- Booster Club Spring Sport Clean Up from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Meet at the football grandstands to help prep the baseball, softball, and track facilities for this spring. Lunch will be provided.

Monday March 13
- HS V Baseball @ Horizon Christian Start 2:30 p.m. (JV) 4:30 p.m. (V)
- HS Softball vs. Rainier 3:30 p.m. (JV) 5 p.m. (v) *new location & JV game

Tuesday March 14
- HS JV Baseball vs. St. Helens: Dismiss 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday March 15
- HS Baseball vs. Naselle 3:30 p.m. (V) 5 p.m. (JV)
- HS Softball vs. Naselle 3:30 p.m.(V) 5 p.m. (JV)
- HS Track @Scappoose 4 p.m.

Friday March 17
- HS V Baseball @ Weston-McEwen 4:30 p.m.
- HS V Softball @ Weston-McEwen 4:30 p.m.
- HS Track @Molalla 4 p.m.

Saturday March 18
- HS V Baseball @ Pilot Rock (DH) 1 p.m.
- HS V Softball @ Pilot Rock (DH) 1 p.m.

COVID

From **Page A1**

through their detection of wastewater and case counts. However, case count data is not as reliable as it was earlier in the pandemic.

"In the beginning of the pandemic, we really paid such close attention to case counts, but as people are testing at home, or not even testing, or not reporting, those case counts have really lost accuracy," Sharff said. "But based on wastewater and what is being reported, it appears that case counts have gone up, but I guess the silver lining is that hospitalizations have been very stable; they've plateaued at about 250 per day and are forecasted to stay at this rate."

Sharff attributed this drop in hospitalization rates to the increased immunity to COVID through vaccination or prior infection. Sharff said that experts are not sure what the future of the virus will look like. One of the concerns would be a variant that evades immunity from immunization or prior infection. However, Sharff said this has not happened yet, and so the next steps are difficult to predict.

Sharff said what health officials expect will be handling COVID on a more seasonal basis. Like a seasonal Influenza vaccine, an updated shot may be administered to help address the ebbs and flows of illness.

In the future

In terms of vaccines, there's this shift toward an annual COVID vaccination, similar to an annual Flu shot. [The advisory committee] are actually evaluating this right now," Sharff said. "I think for high-risk populations, so those who are elderly, or those who are immunocompromised, or those who have significant medical conditions, it makes sense to have that boost in immunity each year with an updated COVID shot. Although the timing, should it be in the fall or should it be in the spring, or when it should be administered, is still uncertain."

As COVID becomes more embedded in our society, Sharff wanted to ensure people that the measures our health systems have put in place do work. Vaccines provide good protection against the disease, according to Sharff. Additionally, anti-viral medications like Paxlovid are good measures for preventing severe illness.

"If you haven't been infected, you will probably get infected at some point, and if you've already been infected, there's a very high likelihood that in the future, you will get reinfected; that's just the nature of this virus. But the tools we have through vaccination and anti-virals do work," Sharff said.

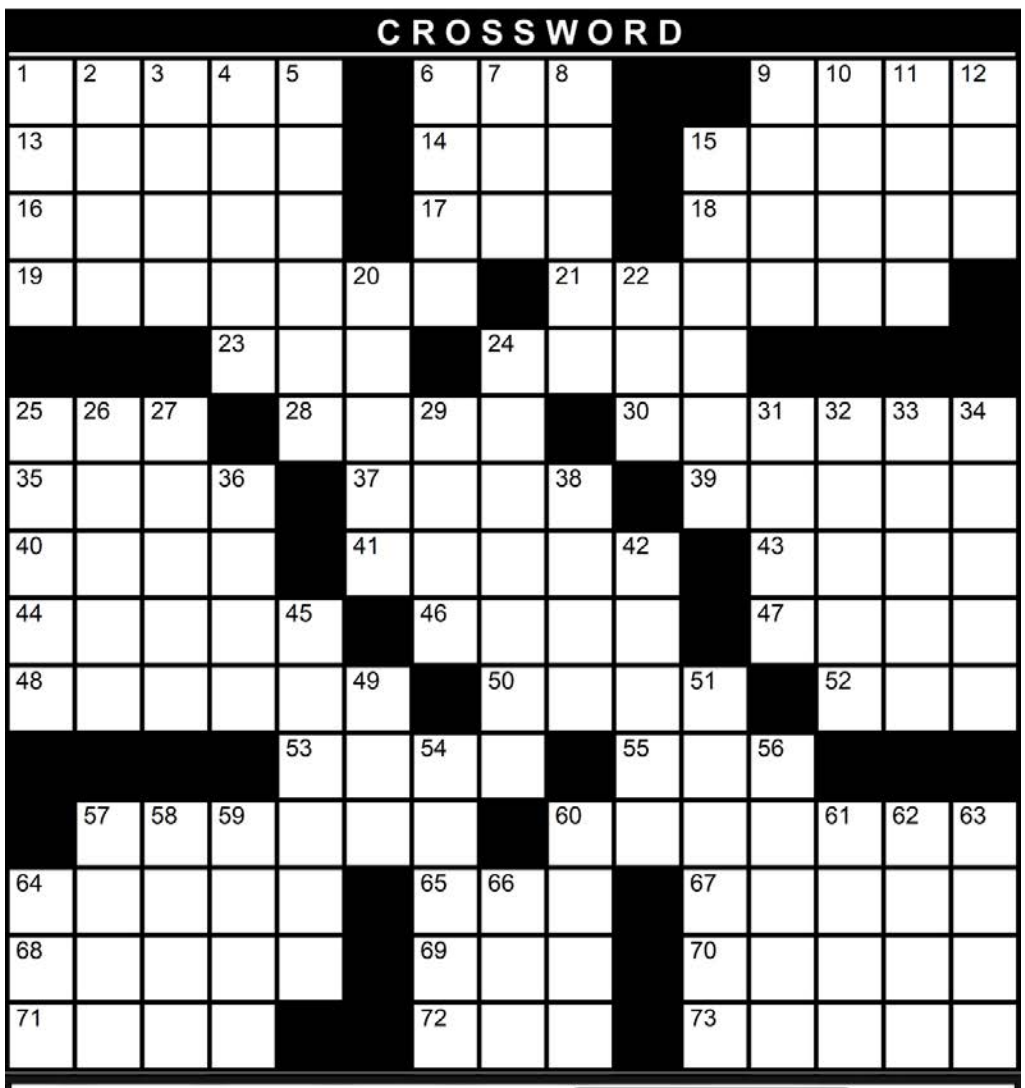
Takeaways from the first three years

Three years into the pandemic, Sharff wanted to draw attention to the loss of trust in public health messaging. As a result, there has been a dip in routine childhood vaccinations such as Flu, Measles, and Polio. Sharff wants the public to know that these routine childhood vaccines are "safe and important."

"Despite the polarized discussions that we've had, with all of the politics of COVID, that it's really important to stay up-to-date on your routine vaccinations," Sharff said. "We don't want to see a resurgence on some these diseases that we've finally gotten control of, like Measles, like Polio, like Pertussis."

As a worker on the front lines, Sharff said that the pandemic has taught us about "humility, and constantly learning new information, and flexibility to shift our thinking as new information arises." Despite issues with bed shortages or lack of healthcare workers, this pandemic has been an exercise in "humility and collaboration" for Sharff and our public health systems.

Crossword Puzzle



STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THEME: COLLEGE BASKETBALL

ACROSS
1. Matt Damon/Ben Affleck 1999 movie
6. *Top seed
9. *Player's target
13. Earth Day month
14. State V.I.P.
15. ____ firma
16. Rationalistic theology
17. Former name of Tokyo
18. Formed a curve
19. *One-____-____ rule
21. *Last year's NCAA men's tournament winner
23. Lenon's wife
24. E-mail command
25. Bug spray brand
28. "By ____ of" or "by means of"
30. Like certain floss
35. Life stories, for short
37. Gulf War missile
39. Dough
40. Tiny purse or case
41. Mandarin's headquarters
43. Like an omelette
44. Jaunty rhythms
46. Derived from capable
47. Party in Maui
48. Trouser measurement
50. L in SNL
52. *Encouragement from coach
53. Foretell
55. Lt.'s subordinate
57. *J in NJCAA
60. *Gambling scheme
64. Dick Van Dyke's "____ ____ a Happy Face"
65. Freudian topic
67. Kind of ray
68. Silly
69. Mudbath site
70. Artemis' companion
71. Type of salmon
72. College entrance exam
73. Instagram videos

DOWN
1. Bit of baby talk
2. Precedes sesame
3. Power system
4. Botch
5. Marcona nut
6. Curved molding
7. Endorsement
8. Call forth
9. Not his
10. Aquarium show star
11. Mine deposits
12. Water lily leaf
15. One behind the other
20. *Like crowd of fans?
22. "____ the crowd goes wild!"
24. Misstep
25. Obelus, pl.
26. Oddball's attempt? (2 words)
27. *Each player gets 5 before disqualification
29. *Org.
31. Witty Coward
32. Dress up or deck out (2 words)
33. Blue-Green scum
34. *Easiest shot?
36. Location
38. Hero shop
42. Never say what?
45. Abduction of the ____ Women, Roman myth
49. Farm call
51. Bewitch
54. One step to success?
56. Close call
57. Elliot Page's 2007 role
58. Home of Jazz
59. Unacceptable, to a baby
60. Gravy holder
61. ACL location
62. Short for "and elsewhere"
63. Small amounts
64. Selfie, e.g.
66. *Qualifying ____, eligibility criterion

Solution to crossword in next week's issue of The Chronicle.

Columbia County
HOME & GARDEN
SHOW
VENDORS WANTED
Contact Jon at 503-397-0116
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Scout's Cookie season returns to Columbia County

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Girl Scouts Olive Campbell and Kida Lujano and their cookie stand in 2022.

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Girl Scout cookie season is approaching, and for Columbia County's six girls scout troops, this marks the busy season.

The troops have already made their initial orders, and their digital cookie-selling sites have been set up, receiving orders for delivery and shipping.

The weekend of Mar. 10, the Columbia County troops will get their shipments of cookies and begin making deliveries. The scouts will begin their storefront sales on Mar. 17. They will continue each weekend until Apr. 23. If people want more information on where they can find these pop-up locations, a "cookie locator app" can be downloaded once the selling operation is up and running.

More than just a lesson in sales

Cookie sale proceeds go to funding the troops' goals. What these goals look like varies for each scout and troop. Service Unit Leader Shannon Vaerewyck has been involved with the Girl Scouts for more than 20 years now, and she says the cookie selling provides more than just money.

"Yes, we're selling cookies, and the public loves them. It's a tradition and we really enjoy doing it, but the girls learn so much from selling cookies; it's not just about making money," Vaerewyck said. "It's about time management, confidence building, goal setting, it's about working together as a team."

The Girl Scout Cookie lineup features the usual suspects and some new options. Thin Mints and Somoas are the top two sellers, with Tagalongs right behind, according to Vaerewyck. Last year's new addition Adventurefuls will be in stock after supply chain issues last year. A new cookie this year, the Raspberry Rally, is available for online purchase.

The troops in Columbia County represent a broad range of ages, from kindergarten to seniors in high school. While adults assist each troop, Vaerewyck said this looks different for the different age groups.

"The whole goal is, even if they're in kindergarten, just to say, 'Would you like to buy a box of cookies?', is a huge thing for a little kid to talk to somebody that they don't know," Vaerewyck said. "Of course, we have adults there assisting them, but by the time they get to be in high school, us adults are standing there supervising, the girls are running it, they are making the change, and they're doing all of the questions and the stocking of the cookies, and they're running their booth. Usually, by the time they're 3rd grade, they should be efficiently running their cookie season with just the parents driving them there."

The goal of the leaders is to get the girls to the point where they are running the show, and the leaders are guiding them.

"We just want to make sure that the girls are as self-sufficient as possible. It's their troop; it's their decision on where that money goes and how they're going to raise it," Vaerewyck said.

This year, Vaerewyck and her St. Helens troop will raise money to visit California this summer. Last July, Vaerewyck and her troop traveled to the United Kingdom after raising funds during the pandemic. Vaerewyck's troop has six girls, with around 90 in Columbia County overall.

Looking for leadership

While participation numbers have been steady on the scout side, Vaerewyck said there has been a shortage of leaders for the program. Vaerewyck also trains scout leaders, and she said getting parents to understand that they can juggle their responsibilities and be involved with the scouts has been difficult.

"We really are struggling, and this is not just our county; it's just across the board, is getting adults to step up and volunteer as troop leaders, and, you know, help change a girl's life," Vaerewyck said. "So that's why we offer all of this training for them. We try to make it as easy as possible, but I don't know where that magic line is that makes them go, 'Oh, I can hop that line, and we're ready to go,' I don't know."

For Vaerewyck, leaders' experience can be just as influential as their impact on their scouts. According to Vaerewyck, some of her most powerful experiences have been interacting with her former scouts and having them recognize her positive role in their experience.

"You get a lot out of it as an adult as well. You're not just there. As far as personal growth, it's a huge thing. There's a lot of personal growth at the adult level, including the girl level, by becoming a troop leader," Vaerewyck said. "I honestly would not do it if I didn't think that I was helping change a girl's life in a positive manner."

For people interested in getting involved with the Girl Scouts or want more information, visit www.girlscoutsosw.org.

"Support your girls. They live local, they work hard local, our volunteers are all local, and the girls are changing the world," Vaerewyck said. "These girls are true leaders."

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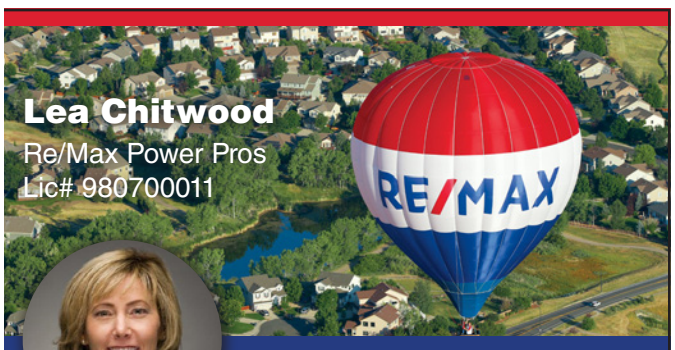
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