



# **NONPROFIT GUIDE 2021**

**Presented by The Chronicle & The Chief**

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## NONPROFIT GUIDE 2021

This special section is designed as a tribute to our local nonprofits and their commitment to their clients and to our community as a whole.

The nonprofits' commitment is of heart, passion and spirit and each helps strengthen our community every day.

The Chronicle and The Chief are proud to partner and support the nonprofits as they continue to strengthen the community's livability through inspiration, leadership and economic growth.

Our goal as your community newspapers and your daily online new source is to raise awareness of our community nonprofits, helping them to attract more volunteers, monetary donations, and increase memberships as well as partnerships.

We encourage you to support our community nonprofits.

Jeremy C. Ruark  
 Publisher / Executive Editor  
 Amy Trull  
 Marketing Consultant



The food bank currently operates at  
 474 Milton Way in St. Helens.

Jeremy C. Ruark / The Chronicle



## Caples House Museum

150 Years of Historic Preservation

### Opening for tours

Friday, March 12th

11:00 AM to 4:00 PM on Fridays  
 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM on Saturdays  
 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM on Sundays  
 or by appointment

All State & CDC mandates in place,  
 occupancy and group size is limited

Take a tour of Dr. Caples House, the pioneer Tool Shed and Children's Museum. Afterwards visit the tea cottage to purchase gifts, canned apple butter or apple sauce from the Heritage Orchard.

#### Tea & Sweets in the Cottage

from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

First and Third Fridays,

\$5 per person

No reservation required

1925 First Street, Columbia City, OR 97018  
 www.capleshouse.com  
 (503) 397-5390  
 capleshouse@comcast.net



Make a lasting  
 difference in the life  
 of a foster child in  
**Columbia County.**  
**Volunteer.**



**CASA**  
 Court Appointed Special Advocates  
 FOR CHILDREN

MULTNOMAH, WASHINGTON  
 & COLUMBIA COUNTIES

[casahelpskids.org](http://casahelpskids.org)

**(503) 410-5043**



Caples House Museum is a nationally registered historic landmark owned and operated by the Oregon State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

**By lifempowered**  
Nonprofit Advertorial



# lifempowered

Living inspired, fully empowered

After more than 40 years as Riverside, we are a full year into our new identity as lifempowered! Our mission is to support people to live the life they choose. As we work toward that goal, some key priorities are indicated. First, a living wage for our most valuable asset, the Direct Support Professionals (DSP's). In Oregon and across the nation, DSP's are over worked and undervalued by our funders. Hour to hour, their roles can swing from providing medical supports, teaching skills, preparing meals, driving, counseling or just being a friend and confidant. At a minimum, they are a reliable safety net for the people they support; adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, some of our community's most vulnerable citizens.

Their starting wage is barely above minimum wage.

We are actively engaged in ongoing legislative efforts to increase wages and build a rate structure into the State's budgetary process so that DSP's can have the dignity of a wage that their complex positions warrant moving forward.

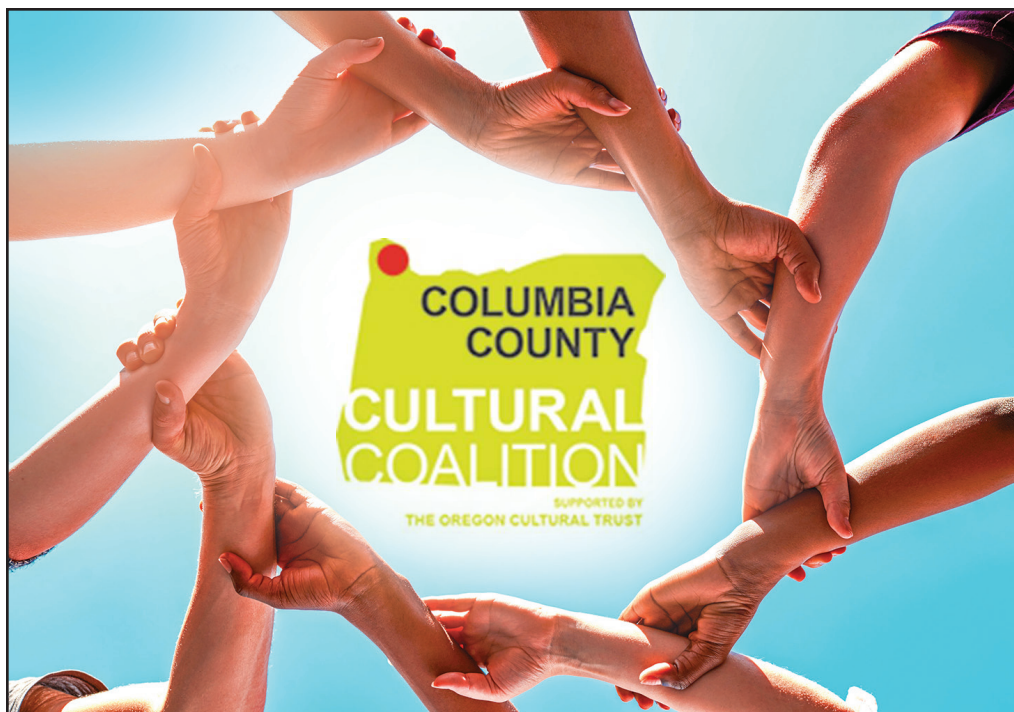
Additional efforts currently being undertaken by lifempowered include a community market study to indicate the feasibility of a capital campaign. Our goal is to build an "Empower-

ment Center" that will be a multi-purpose, completely accessible building to offer a large conference space for the people we support to participate in skill building courses, our staff to meet ongoing professional development goals, as well as it being available to the community at large for meetings, events and finally, replace our administrative offices. Our current administrative building is more than 40 years old and was never intended to be used in that capacity.

In a perfect world, the Empowerment Center will include facilities for fitness, relaxation/meditation and overall health that will be a free to our employees and the people we support 24/7.

A state of the art accessible kitchen will be another opportunity to support community partners as well as teach independent living skills to the people we support.

We are so thrilled with the possibilities and can't wait to share more information about the project and how you can be part of it! If you are interested in how you can join and support this exciting process, contact Cindy Stockton directly at [cindys@lifemp.org](mailto:cindys@lifemp.org). You may think you don't have something valuable to offer, but you might be surprised at how far your time, energy and expertise may go!



**COLUMBIA COUNTY CULTURAL COALITION**  
SUPPORTED BY THE OREGON CULTURAL TRUST

The Columbia County Cultural Coalition honors Darrel Whipple, who served the CCCC from its founding and was for many years its Chair. Darrel has been selfless in his leadership and in his service to Columbia County. The CCCC Board Members offer him their love and thanks.

For further information about the CCCC and its activities, see our website: <http://columbiacultural.org>.



**CCMH**  
COLUMBIA COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

CCMH creates safe and supportive opportunities for healing and recovery, enhancing the overall quality of life for members of Columbia County.

**Columbia Community Mental Health**

is a non-profit agency dedicated to excellence in behavioral healthcare.

We are open and provide tele-health appointments. If you are in crisis, call: (503) 782-4499

Let the team know we are doing: [contactccmh@ccmh1.com](mailto:contactccmh@ccmh1.com)



**Main Campus:**

58646 McNulty Way  
St. Helens, OR 97051

**Walk-In Clinic Schedule**

Mon and Tues, 1pm-3pm  
Thurs and Fri, 9-11am

*\*call if these days/times don't work for you*

**Youth and Family Building:**

58581 Columbia River Highway  
St. Helens, OR 97051

**Walk in assessment schedule**

Mon 8-10:30am and Thurs 3-5:30pm

# Renovations to begin for new food pantry



Jeremy C. Ruark / The Chronicle

The Columbia Pacific Food Bank expects to start renovation construction at its new location in February. The food bank purchased the old feed and seed building on Columbia Boulevard in 2018 and hopes to be moved in by fall.

**MONIQUE MERRILL**  
chronicle2@countrymedia.net

Columbia Pacific Food Bank will have a new home by the end of year.

The nonprofit anticipates starting renovation construction on its new space in February with the goal of being fully moved in by fall of this year, Columbia Pacific Food Bank Executive Director Casey Wheeler said.

The food bank currently operates at 474 Milton Way in

St. Helens, a space the organization has outgrown after over 20 years of operation in it. In 2018, the food bank purchased the old Columbia Electric Feed & Seed building on Columbia Boulevard in St. Helens with the aim of renovating the larger space to serve the nonprofit's growing needs.

## Pandemic impact

Columbia Pacific Food Bank was in the midst of a capital campaign to raise

money for the costs associated with outfitting the new facility when the pandemic swept across the state, preventing in-person fundraising efforts. Despite the setback, progress has continued.

"The internal timeline had to be extended due to the pandemic, but our public timeline is still on target," Wheeler said.

The food bank is contributing an additional \$175,000 from its reserves to the project—which has been largely funded through a \$1.5 million Community Development Block Grant, as well as fundraising efforts and donations from businesses and individuals. Donations are still welcome, he said.

"Additional donations will help reduce the overall cost to the food bank for the project," Wheeler said. "Additional donations will help us replace these funds that would go to paying for food."

## More space

The new facility is approximately five times the size of the current space, and will feature a shopping-style pantry with produce, nonperishables and both frozen and refrigerated goods. Construction plans also include space for a community room, office spaces, distribution and packing areas, both a walk-in freezer and refrigerator and a bottle return.

## Ongoing efforts

The pandemic not only interrupted the food bank's capital campaign, but also brought upon a wave of increased need—which Wheeler said the food bank was able to meet.

"We were well prepared to meet unanticipated food needs when an emergency occurs within the county and were successful in making addi-

tional adjustments as needed," Wheeler said.

What has stood out most to him over the last 10 months of operating during the pandemic has been the reaction from the community.

"The outpouring of support from the individuals, organizations, businesses and governments in Columbia County," he said. "This enabled us to increase our countywide distribution from 12 tons a week to 19 tons a week at the height of the pandemic."

The organization is now distributing an average of 16.5 tons of food a week, he said. Additional resources becoming available reduced the need slightly over the course of the pandemic, Wheeler said.

More seniors and families with children have been using the food bank, and fewer individuals, he said. The increased demand has been felt across the county, but the St.

Helens food pantry has seen the largest increase, he said.

In addition to ramping up distribution to meet the food needs, and adjusting along the way, the organization has found a way to continue to ease the burden on its partners as well. County food pantries, senior centers and SAFE will not be charged for food purchases made from the the food bank for at least the next year, Wheeler said. This is made possible due to donations from individuals, organizations, businesses and a myriad of COVID-related grants, he said.

"We anticipate this to continue through the end of the calendar year and may continue past depending on the length of the pandemic and funding streams," he said.

*To donate or learn more about the Columbia Pacific Food Bank, visit [cpfoodbank.org](http://cpfoodbank.org).*



## Turning Point Community Service Center

*To assist members of our community with a helping hand*

**Kelly Miller**  
Executive Director

220 E. Columbia River Hwy  
PO Box 773, Clatskanie, OR 97016  
[turning3point@gmail.com](mailto:turning3point@gmail.com)  
[www.clatskanieturningpoint.org](http://www.clatskanieturningpoint.org)  
Phone: 503-728-3126  
Fax: 503-728-5182



**Food boxes:**  
Mon Tue & Thur from 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
**Thrift Store:**  
Mon Tue & Thur from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.



Every year Kiwanis Club of St. Helens contributes thousands of dollars to needy children and families throughout Columbia County.

Club members raise money by volunteering time and energy to see fundraising activities are a success. You can help your community by volunteering or becoming a member.

To find out how you can help, contact any St. Helens Kiwanis member or email [sthelenskiwanis@gmail.com](mailto:sthelenskiwanis@gmail.com)

# Thumbs Up! HOPE Chest opens



Local dignitaries gathered for a ribbon cutting ceremony Monday, Nov. 9, at the new HOPE Chest Thrift Store in Rainier, with Mayor Jerry Cole giving the thumbs up at the event.

**JEREMY C. RUARK**  
[jruark@countrymedia.net](mailto:jruark@countrymedia.net)

A new store has opened up in downtown Rainier that will help fund the city's local food bank.

HOPE Chest Thrift Store operators and local dignitaries held a grand opening with a ribbon cutting Monday afternoon, Nov. 9, at the store, located at 107 E. 1st Street in

Rainier.

HOPE Chest Director Kelly Miller said the store was established for two reasons.

First, Rainier did not have a thrift store, and second, the store is designed to help cover the costs of the local food pantry.

"The food pantry is not able to do fundraisers due to the pandemic, so in order for us to provide for our com-



A variety of clothes and other items are available at the thrift store.

munity, we needed to create a new source of income for the pantry and that was my vision for the thrift store," she said.

Rainier Mayor Jerry Cole said he was hopeful that the new thrift store would be a successful funding option for the local pantry and that the business gives locals a close option for donating items that they may not need or want.

"But it is also important

to see a new storefront in our downtown," Cole said. "Anytime we have a storefront with a business in it, that has a compounding positive effect on every business as well."

Miller also oversees Clatskanie's Turning Point, another food pantry and thrift store and the two pantries have been busy meeting the needs of local families.

"We are serving in total



Shelves have been set up to hold many of the smaller donated items at the thrift store.

about 240 families," she said. "That includes meat, fresh produce, daily products, shelf items, everything that you would normally need."

Miller said there are variety of reasons that the families need to seek the help of the local pantries.

"It is not just low income families," she said. "It is everybody needing help currently, all the way from a homeless client to the execu-

tive who has had their hours cut or they have left their job because of the pandemic."

The Rainier HOPE Chest is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday and is supported by a volunteer staff.

*To donate items, or to make contributions, call the HOPE Chest Thrift Store at 503-556-0701, or email to Hope97048@gmail.com.*



## What is Connect St. Helens?

ConnectSH is a grassroots effort to recreate the culture and community of St. Helens, Oregon, so that each of its residents finds a place where they belong. The CDC says the cure for societal ills like suicide, depression, etc is human connection. In point of fact, healthy relational connections across generational boundaries have been scientifically shown to restore a full spectrum of health benefits to all ages ... but they never tell us how to connect. They just assume we know how to have relationships with each other.

That's where ConnectSH comes in. We are educated by science, perspective, and have created practical tools for connecting with each other - and we aim to get the people of St. Helens connected and building relationships one story at a time. We care about our community because we care about you. This is the heart of Connect SH.

Join the movement today and let's connect. You belong. You matter. We will help you find your place and thrive right where you are by helping you nurture the connections you already have, and the connections you have yet to discover.

Find us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or visit us at [www.connectsh.org](http://www.connectsh.org). Then join us for one of our monthly breakfast meetings, storytelling events, local community events, and more. We look forward to hearing your story.



# Nonprofit organizations in Columbia County

This is a list of nonprofit organizations in Columbia County compiled by The Chronicle and The Chief. It is current as of Feb. 24, 2021. We at The Chronicle and The Chief would like to extend our gratitude for the service you provide to our county. If you represent or are a part of a nonprofit in Columbia County and want to be included in the 2022 edition of the Nonprofit Guide, please reach out to us at [atrull@countrymedia.net](mailto:atrull@countrymedia.net) or call 503-397-0116.

## Amani Center (Columbia County Child Abuse Assessment Center)

Address: 1621 Columbia Blvd., St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: [www.amanicenter.org](http://www.amanicenter.org)

Phone number: 503-366-4005

Email: [info@amanicenter.org](mailto:info@amanicenter.org)

## CASA for Children

Address: 2514 Sykes Rd., St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: [casahelpskids.org](http://casahelpskids.org)

Phone number: 503-410-5043

Email: [casa.office@casahelpskids.org](mailto:casa.office@casahelpskids.org)

## CCMH (Columbia Community Mental Health)

Mailing Address: PO Box 1234, St. Helens, OR 97051

Office Address: 58646 McNulty Way, St. Helens, Oregon 97051

Phone: 503-397-5211

Website: [CCMH1.com](http://CCMH1.com)

Email: [contactccmh@ccmh1.com](mailto:contactccmh@ccmh1.com) or

[Jacquelync@ccmh1.com](mailto:Jacquelync@ccmh1.com)

## Clatskanie Arts Commission

Address: 75 S. Nehalem, Clatskanie, OR 97016

Mailing: PO Box 1110, Clatskanie, OR 97016

Website: [clatskaniearts.org](http://clatskaniearts.org)

Phone number: 503-728-3403

Email: [elsawooley1@gmail.com](mailto:elsawooley1@gmail.com)

## Clatskanie Farmers Market

Address: Copes Park, 11 Lillich St., Clatskanie, OR 97016

Website: [clatskaniefarmersmarket.com](http://clatskaniefarmersmarket.com)

Phone number: 360-612-7027

Email: [CFMmarketmanager@gmail.com](mailto:CFMmarketmanager@gmail.com)

## Clatskanie Foundation

Address: 75 S. Nehalem, Clatskanie, OR 97016

Mailing: PO Box 243, Clatskanie, OR 97016

Website: [clatskaniefoundation.com](http://clatskaniefoundation.com)

Phone number:

Deborah Hazen: 503-338-8268 and

Elsa Wooley: 503-338-9770

## Columbia Chorale of Oregon: River City Singers and River City Children's Choir

Address: 34976 Roberts Ln., St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/RC-SCCO>

Email: [mallen@opusnet.com](mailto:mallen@opusnet.com)

## Columbia City Community Library and Secondhand Prose Used Book Shop

Address: 2000 Second St., Columbia City, OR 97018

Website: [freewebs.com/cccomlibrary](http://freewebs.com/cccomlibrary)

Phone number: 503-366-8020

Email: [ccclibrary@live.com](mailto:ccclibrary@live.com)

## Columbia County Cultural Coalition

Address: 29232 Huber Rd., Scappoose, OR 97056

Website: [columbiacultural.org](http://columbiacultural.org)

Phone number: (503) 543-3222

Email: [drmtrenchardsmith@gmail.com](mailto:drmtrenchardsmith@gmail.com)

## Columbia County Habitat for Humanity

Address: 164 Little St., PO Box 921, St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: [habitatcolumbiacounty.org](http://habitatcolumbiacounty.org)

Phone number: 503-366-1400

Email: [info@habitatcolumbiacounty.org](mailto:info@habitatcolumbiacounty.org)

## Columbia Health Services

Address: 2370 Gable Rd., PO Box 995, St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: [www.columbia-health.org](http://www.columbia-health.org)

Phone number: 503-397-4651

Email: [contact@columbia-health.org](mailto:contact@columbia-health.org)

## Columbia Pacific Food Bank

Address: Physical :474 Milton Way, St. Helens OR 97051

Mailing: PO Box 1031, St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: [cpfoodbank.org](http://cpfoodbank.org)

Phone number: 503-397-9708

Email: [cpfb@cpfoodbank.org](mailto:cpfb@cpfoodbank.org)



St. Helens Day Breakers Kiwanis "Serving the Children of the World"



The Day Breakers plan to hold the Children's Fair in October 2021 and resume the Safety and Bike Rodeo in May 2022.

We work with local students to improve grades (elementary) and to help teens stay in school. The ever-popular Shred Day will be held this summer.

Meetings: Second and fourth Tuesday, 7 am, on Zoom. To visit a meeting, or for more information, call or text Marilyn Allen at 503-396-0939.



106 W. B St, Rainier, Oregon 97048, Located inside Rainier City Hall on the 3rd fl.

Open every Saturday from noon until 4 pm, except major holiday weekends.

Website: [Rainiermuseum.org](http://Rainiermuseum.org) Email: [rainiermuseum@hotmail.com](mailto:rainiermuseum@hotmail.com)

Our museum is currently working with city hall on planning the 100-year Anniversary of Rainier City Hall which is on April 13, 2021. Our museum is working hard to raise money to build a new museum, please help us by sending a donation to ROHM, PO Box 762, Rainier OR 97048. Note on check; in care of the museum building fund.

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## CONNECT St. Helens

Address: 59902 Tamarack Dr., St. Helens, OR 97051

Mailing: PO Box 711, St. Helens, OR 97018

Website: [www.connectsh.org](http://www.connectsh.org)

Phone number: 360.244.3631

Email: [connect@connectsh.org](mailto:connect@connectsh.org)

## HOPE of Rainier

Address: 404 E. A St., Rainier, OR 97048

Website: [www.hopeofrainier.com](http://www.hopeofrainier.com)

Phone number: 503-556-0701

Email: [hope97048@gmail.com](mailto:hope97048@gmail.com)

## lifempowered

Address: 105 Port Ave., St. Helens, OR

Website: [www.lifemp.org](http://www.lifemp.org)

Phone number: 503-397-1922

Email: [cindys@lifemp.org](mailto:cindys@lifemp.org)

## Monday Night Live Alanon Family Group

Address: PO Box 69, St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: [oregonal-anon.org](http://oregonal-anon.org)

Phone number: 503-369-1195

## NAMI Oregon (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

Address: 4701 SE 24th Ave. Ste. E, Portland, OR 97202

Website: [www.namior.org](http://www.namior.org)

Phone number: 503-230-8009

Email: [namioregon@namior.org](mailto:namioregon@namior.org)

## OSSDAR Caples House Museum Complex

Address: 1925 1st St., Columbia City, OR 97018

Website: [www.capleshouse.com](http://www.capleshouse.com)

Phone number: 503-397-5390

Email: [capleshouse@comcast.net](mailto:capleshouse@comcast.net)

## Rainier Oregon Historical Museum (ROHM)

Mailing Address: 106 W. B St.,

Rainier, OR 97048, mailing PO Box 762,

Rainier, OR 97048

Phone: 360-751-7039

Website: [Rainiermuseum.org](http://Rainiermuseum.org)

Email: [rainiermuseum@hotmail.com](mailto:rainiermuseum@hotmail.com)

## Rotary Club of Columbia County

Address: PO Box 721,

St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: [Rotary.org](http://Rotary.org)

Phone number: 503-369-1375

Email: [amy.grubb@waunafcu.org](mailto:amy.grubb@waunafcu.org)

## SAFE of Columbia County

Address: PO Box 22, St. Helens 97051

Website: [www.safeofcolumbiacounty.org](http://www.safeofcolumbiacounty.org)

Phone number: 503-397-6161 crisis line,

503-397-7110 office line

Email: [ellynb@safeofcolumbiacounty.org](mailto:ellynb@safeofcolumbiacounty.org)

## ShoeString Community Players

Address: PO Box 481, St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: <http://www.sscptheater.org/>

Phone number: 503-366-4406

Email: [info@sscptheater.org](mailto:info@sscptheater.org)

## St. Helens Day Breakers Kiwanis

Address: PO Box 314, St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: <https://kiwanisdaybreakers.com/Page/14268>

Phone number: Steve Howell, President, 503-369-0588

Email: [howellsteven49@yahoo.com](mailto:howellsteven49@yahoo.com)

## St. Helens Kiwanis Club

Address: P.O. Box 295, St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: [sthelens-or.kiwanisone.org](http://sthelens-or.kiwanisone.org)

Email: [sthelenskiwanis@gmail.com](mailto:sthelenskiwanis@gmail.com)

## Are you SAFE?

Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking are NEVER okay!  
You are not alone. We are here to help.

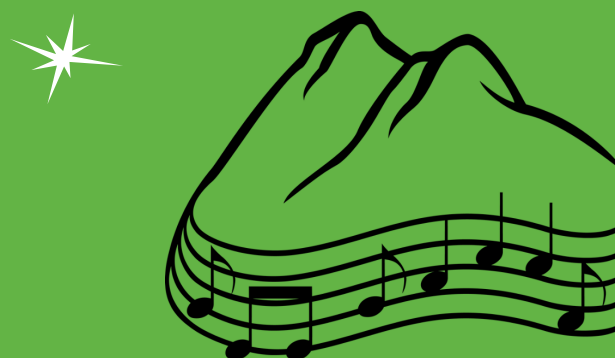


24 Hour Crisis Line: 503.397.6161

Spanish Speaking Line: 1.844.953.0441

[www.safeofcolumbiacounty.org](http://www.safeofcolumbiacounty.org)

## The River City Singers and The River City Children's Choir



## We've got big plans coming up!

If you'd like to be part of them,  
contact Marilyn at (503) 396-9039

Times have been tough -  
but keep a song in your heart.



## Nonprofit organizations in Columbia County

### St. Helens Lions Club

Address: P.O. Box 1359, St. Helens, OR. 97051

Website: [www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/sthelens/index.php](http://www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/sthelens/index.php)

Phone number: 503-396-7046 (President, Linda McCoy)

Email: [lmmcocy4967@gmail.com](mailto:lmmcocy4967@gmail.com) (President, Linda McCoy)

### St. Helens Senior Center

Address: 375 S. 15th St., PO Box 692, St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: [shseniorcenter.org](http://shseniorcenter.org)

Phone number: 503-397-3377

Email: [manager@shseniorcenter.org](mailto:manager@shseniorcenter.org)

### Top Notch Thrift Store, supporting the St. Helens Senior Center

Address: 1844 Columbia Blvd., St. Helens, OR 97051

Website: [tnthriftstore.com](http://tnthriftstore.com)

Phone number: 503-397-5386

Email: [manager@tnthriftstore.com](mailto:manager@tnthriftstore.com)

### Turning Point CSC

Address: 220 E. Columbia River Hwy., Clatskanie, OR 97016

Website: [www.clatskanieturningpoint.org](http://www.clatskanieturningpoint.org)

Phone number: 503-728-3126

Email: [turning3point@gmail.com](mailto:turning3point@gmail.com)

### United Way of Columbia County

Address: PO Box 538, Rainier, OR

Website: [www.unitedwayofcolumbiacounty.com](http://www.unitedwayofcolumbiacounty.com)

Email: [info@unitedwayofcolumbiacounty.com](mailto:info@unitedwayofcolumbiacounty.com)

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# NAMI offers families support

JEREMY C. RUARK

[jruark@countrymedia.net](mailto:jruark@countrymedia.net)

A key local nonprofit established to assist families who have loved ones suffering mental illness, is National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Columbia County.

We reached out to NAMI spokesperson Judy Thompson to explain the mission of the local chapter and when it was established.

**Judy Thompson:** Interestingly, this organization was formed in 1979 by two mothers who both had sons diagnosed with schizophrenia. The mothers were unhappy with the lack of services and treatment of those living with mental illness. As they were tired of being blamed for their sons' mental illness, they found others with similar concerns. In 1979 formed National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. In 1997 the legal name was changed to the acronym NAMI and in 2005 the backronym changed to NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness.

NAMI's mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals living with mental illness and for their families and loved ones. NAMI offers Education, Support, and Advocacy as the building blocks to improving quality of life. NAMI is a national organization in all 50 states including Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. Oregon has 16 county affiliates within our state.

### Why is this support group needed in our community?

**Thompson:** Mental illness is no different than any other illnesses that brings fear, stress, guilt, sadness, chaos, isolation, helplessness, hopelessness, hospitalizations, legal and financial issues, treatment, chronic long-term concerns and feelings/issues of being alone. Imagine having a few of these feelings/issues and then imagine having all of them at once. These feelings/issues are impossible to withstand and navigate alone. This where folks with similar experiences offer insight, modeling successful outcomes. Being there to educate, support, and advocate for each other living with the challenges that mental illness brings to individuals, families, and loved ones with mental illness is so important. NAMI gives this platform for education, support, and advocacy at no cost to those receiving resources.

**From your insight, what help can those engaging with NAMI do to help those who have loved ones with mental illnesses? What do these folks need and why?**

**Thompson:** Engaging with NAMI is the first step to find education and understanding. Many times a loved one's illness is something



Courtesy photo from NAMI Columbia County

that has progressed overtime with family and friends only knowing something was wrong and then having their loved one diagnosed with a mental illness they know nothing about.

The need to "know what you don't know" certainly revolves around mental illness. Reaching out to NAMI is a quick way to get information on mental illness and find support. NAMI has many resources and programs such as Family to Family, NAMI Basics, Peer to Peer, Ending the Silence, Suicide Prevention, Homefront for Veterans and many more. NAMI resources are available in non-English and Culturally Diverse.

### How has the pandemic impacted the efforts of NAMI?

**Thompson:** The pandemic has made in-person support groups difficult, limiting the number of people that can gather. Having the continued isolation can make feelings/issues more challenging to find balance in one's life. NAMI acted quickly to bring online meeting platforms and one is able to access all around the nation. However, nothing replaces that hug of support from those who care about us. The annual state and national conferences that so many people from all walks of life look forward to attending, also went to online platform. Fundraising events that are important for nonprofit organizations also are impacted.

The Annual NAMI Walks that happens all across our nation is now virtual. Our NAMI Walks Northwest is Saturday, May 22, and is virtual, you are all invited to join our local Columbia County team!

**Briefly address your concern about suicides and what your group is, or could be, doing to address that issue?**

**Thompson:** With the pandemic creating so much isolation and changes in our everyday

life, people are at greater risk for suicide and this does come up in our conversations. We have lost many of the everyday opportunities to bring that little moment of joy that many times carries us through the day, we can be slow to find new routines to keep us balanced. We know depression can sneak up on anyone.

Having awareness, education, finding ways to stay in touch, not being held back by stigma and guilt. Having resources with NAMI, National Suicide Prevention, Lines for Life, Veterans Suicide Hotline are all resources to have ready.

### For those who would like to be engaged with NAMI, how can they do so now and into the future?

**Thompson:** Contact NAMI Oregon for information on local activities, online meeting links, resources, programs. Just know eventually we will have that in person meeting freedom again.

### Feel free to add any other comments you might have.

**Thompson:** Many times folks will reach out in crisis and when feelings/issues calm down stop staying engaged with their support systems, not realizing the personnel growth and benefit from staying engaged with a support group or organization will be a productive path for the "long haul" that mental illness brings individuals, families, and friends.

### What is the best phone number and/or email we can publish for those who might want to be in touch with NAMI?

**Thompson:** You may reach NAMI Oregon at 503-230-8009, or email [namioregon@namior.org](mailto:namioregon@namior.org)



# Child Victims in Columbia County Still Need Services

By Amani Center  
Nonprofit Advertorial

Where do kids go to tell some of the most traumatic stories of their short, little lives? Stories of abuse. Chronicles of neglect. Instances of violence both witnessed and experienced. Before the Amani Center (Columbia County Child Abuse Prevention Center) children from all over Columbia County had to overcome obstacles to travel the distance to Portland and sit in emergency waiting rooms filled with additional trauma cases that “out-weighed” their own, awaiting interviews with multiple medical personnel who often lacked the proper training to perform medical evaluations that were developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed and specific to child abuse. They would relive the details of their experiences, sharing them with first responding officers, detectives, attorneys, grand jury, judges and sometimes again in court, further exacerbating the effects of their abuse.

In 2000, the Amani Center was established by local community members to address the need for local, responsive resources for children and families impacted by abuse and neglect. Since 2003, the Center has been providing forensic interviews and medical evaluations, as well as support resources and assistance in navigating the investigative process, for local children and their non-offending family members and caregivers. Amani Center staff conduct neutral forensic investigations in the form of interviews and head-to-toe medical exams that are provided to detectives and the District Attorney to determine a child’s safety, as well as next steps that need to occur in a case.

These services are provided free of charge to the child and their family, with expenses covered by medical insurance reimbursement and Crime Victims Compensation, as well as competitive grant funds from foundations and federal and state governments; corporate donations; fundraising revenue; and

contributions from individual donors. The Amani Center depends heavily on the generosity of like-minded individuals, companies and foundations who see the value in intervening on behalf of a child, shifting their life of trauma and suffering toward a road of healing and recovery, ending the cycle of abuse and improving the overall outcomes of individuals and our community.

Abuse, neglect, witness to violence, drug exposure, marital discourse, parental incarceration, death or suicide of a family member are all examples of “Adverse Childhood Experiences,” just to name a few. As described by the CDC, Adverse Childhood Experiences (or ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0-17 years), as well as aspects of a child’s environment that can undermine their sense of safety, stability, and bonding. ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood. ACEs can also negatively impact education

and job opportunities (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/index.html>). These long-term effects drain our social services, overburden our medical care system and negatively impact employers’ abilities to support and retain quality workers. In short, early intervention in Adverse Childhood Experiences such as abuse, neglect and witness to violence by agencies like the Amani Center, have a long-term benefit to the overall health of our community and society at large.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the Amani Center had tracked year over year growth, since 2015, providing services for 157 children in 2015, and increasing to 350 children in 2019. 2020 saw a slight dip due to intermittent restrictions in meeting in person, as well as the need to alter how many children the Center could see in a week, however, the need in Columbia County was tracking for continued growth prior to the pandemic. And now, Amani Center services are just as critical in serving the youth

and families of the county. Not only are they receiving weekly calls to process new clients, the cases that are coming in are more severe, indicating that intervention is happening later in the cycle of abuse. This comes from a lack of mandatory reporters and safe adults that children have to turn to due to school closures, cancellation of sports, and reduced in-person contact with other trusted adults with whom to share their situation and seek help. The kids entering the Center over the past 6-10 months have sustained increased physical abuse and higher exposure to drug endangerment, as well as severe medical neglect. The trends indicate that, while reports and some types of abuse may appear to be dropping, family dynamics and the stresses of pandemic related situations such as job loss, food insecurity, financial strain and mental fatigue from extended quarantine are affecting children whose families are impacted by such challenges.

There is hope for children who have suffered from child

maltreatment, the overarching term of abuse, neglect and violence. Children are very resilient, and given the chance, can thrive when surrounded by safe, supportive environments. The intervention that occurs through an Amani Center assessment provides resources and tools for children and families to begin the healing process and move towards a life of recovery.

If this organization sparks an interest in how you might support and serve local children experiencing abuse and neglect, you can contact the Amani Center directly to find out how to get involved. Email Beth Pulito at [bpu-lito@amanicenter.org](mailto:bpu-lito@amanicenter.org) or call 503-318-0568. To learn more about the Amani Center, visit their website at [www.amanicenter.org](http://www.amanicenter.org). Financial support is always welcome and necessary to continue implementing the mission. Donations can be made online on their website or by sending a check to: Amani Center, PO Box 1001, St. Helens, OR 97051.

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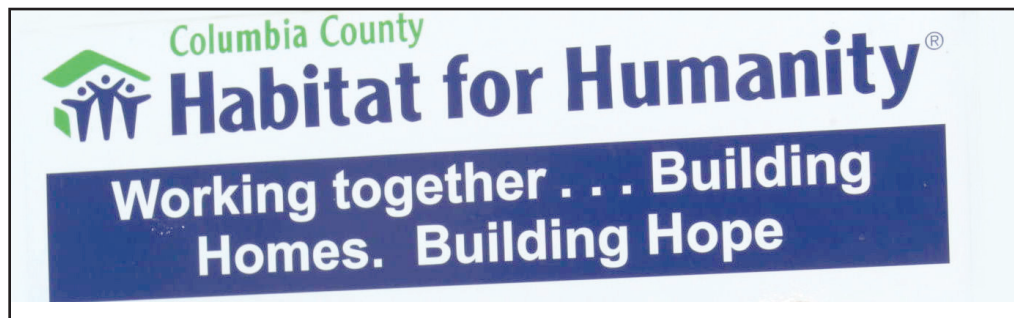
# Building hope, one home at a time

**JEREMY C. RUARK**  
jruark@countrymedia.net

Following back-to-back home dedications, two local families are moving into their new townhomes in St. Helens this week, thanks to Columbia County Habitat for Humanity (CCHFH) and dozens of volunteers.

The homes are CCHFH's first ever multi-family project. During the dedications, both the new home owners shared their overwhelming thanks for the opportunity to have a stable home and their excitement of being homeowners, according to CCHFH officials.

In addition to getting their keys, the homeowners were presented with gifts and prayers from the Faith Build partners and a donation of



gifts cards from Scappoose Grocery Outlet.

The townhomes are the tenth and eleventh homes built by the local nonprofit which works to give a hand up to low income families. CCHFH Executive Director Jennifer Anderson said since the nonprofit was established in 1999, it has built 11 homes, seven of those in the last

seven years.

"Transformative is the best word to describe this project," Anderson said. "Our volunteers started out cleaning up this blighted property in the fall of 2019. It is amazing to see donations and hard work from so many in our community come together to create these latest two beautiful homes."

Anderson said the homes just finished and CCHFH's next project are on land purchased by the nonprofit from an estate. She said volunteers are vital to the homebuilding projects.

"Mike Stone is our volunteer construction manager, Bob Bay and Dick King are highly skilled volunteer builders that act as our lead

construction volunteers," she said. "They are on site most of the time. Other volunteers come from our church partners or people that sign up at the Restore to help. We do hire some sub contractors for plumbing and electrical work."

The COVID-19 pandemic created many hurdles, including limiting the number of volunteers on site, increasing material costs and disrupting fundraising, according to Anderson, but she said the efforts will continue.

"We are planning a three bedroom home in St. Helens," Anderson said. "We are working with an architect that is donating the plans. We hope to submit an application for a building permit soon. The family selection process is closed now for that home.

Families accepted into the CCHFH program are required to complete financial education and home ownership classes. The families purchase homes with mortgages that are designed to help them build equity at a rapid rate.

CCHFH is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International. There are 25 affiliates in Oregon. Each Habitat affiliate is an independent, locally managed organization which coordinates local construction and selects partner families.

Collectively, Habitat for Humanity has helped more than 29 million people construct, rehabilitate or preserve homes worldwide since its founding in 1976.

*For more information, call Columbia County Habitat for Humanity at 503-366-1400.*

Chronicle photo

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[habitatcolumbiacounty.org](http://habitatcolumbiacounty.org)

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# United Way reflects on 2020

**CLAIRE CATT**  
*Chronicle Guest Column*

As they reflect on the 2020 giving year, The United Way of Columbia County's board and staff are feeling proud of the variety of impacts they were able to make thanks to the wonderful donors and partners through a pandemic plagued year.

### Generous support

Starting with the establishment of its COVID-19 Relief Fund in March 2020, seeded by a generous donation from the Oregon Community Foundation, United Way has raised over \$25,000 to support local non-profit urgent and emergent needs related to the pandemic. Ten project requests were funded through this fund supporting a range of things from personal protective equipment,



Jeremy C. Ruark / The Chronicle

food, basic necessities, utility assistance, virtual education equipment for low-income youth, home delivered meals for seniors and much more.

Another area United Way has been able to help this

past year is its regular role in facilitation and administration of federal funds to local food and shelter agencies via the Emergency Food and Shelter Program under FEMA and the Department of Home-

land Security. Three funding phases have been conducted during the pandemic, and with United Way's help, \$78,507 has been awarded to Columbia Pacific Food Bank.

### Imagination Library program

In addition to supporting critical needs in the community during these challenging times, one area United Way has been proud to champion is Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program, ensuring our early learners, ages zero to five receive their free book in the mail every month until they turn five. Since the local program establishment in 2018, it has gained 1,632 early learner participants in Columbia County, and has distributed over 19,000 books.

United Way has received overwhelming positive feed-

back from families, businesses, and citizens for providing this powerful program to our children that yields so many positive short and long-term benefits to the child, their family and to society.

### Show the love

United Way is profoundly grateful for its generous founding sponsors and partners. For the month of February, United Way is doing a "Show the Love" campaign to raise money for the program that needs community support to achieve sustainability. Twenty-five dollars is the ask and covers one year of books for one local child. No admin fees are taken from United Way, as the program is run in the goodwill spirit for our children.

United Way continues to support local partner agency

non-profits, with annual grants to support specific programs in the health, education and financial stability silos that drive progress towards our vision: Columbia County will have thriving communities with opportunities for a better life for all.

United Way continues to listen to and act on the ever-changing community needs and is here as a cornerstone resource for our community.

### Be engaged

To make donations, visit [www.unitedwayofcolumbia-county.com](http://www.unitedwayofcolumbia-county.com) or mail to PO Box 538, Rainier, OR.

*Claire Catt is the executive director of Columbia County United Way. She may be reached at [clairec@united-wayofcolumbiacounty.com](mailto:clairec@united-wayofcolumbiacounty.com) or at 503-556-3614.*

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Illustration courtesy of Lower Columbia Engineering

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MARCH 10 - APRIL 9, 2021

MARCH 10 - APRIL 9, 2021



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**The Chronicle & The Chief**

Office phone: 503-397-0116  
1805 Columbia Blvd. St. Helens, OR 97051



# Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

is now available throughout Columbia County

Columbia County children from birth to their 5th birthday are eligible to receive a free book each month sent to them at their home address:

Parents can now enroll their age-eligible children online at:  
[imaginationlibrary.com/usa/affiliate/ORCOLUMBIA](http://imaginationlibrary.com/usa/affiliate/ORCOLUMBIA)

More information is available at:  
[www.unitedwayofcolumbiacounty.com](http://www.unitedwayofcolumbiacounty.com)  
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- \* By maintaining exercise stations at McCormick Park;

For more information, call 503-396-7046

**Join us – We serve better together**



The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is a national grassroots organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for those living with mental illness as well as individuals and families who's love ones face the challenges of mental illness.

NAMI Columbia County support group focuses on self care of individuals and families who's lives are affected by mental illness of a loved one.

Even though we are not having our support group in person, that does not stop us from reaching out to each other, phone, e-mail, drop off a surprise bouquet, a card in the mail, many forms of tech/social media and zoom chats are all ways we can keep connected and support one another. NAMI Oregon has over 20 online weekly support groups in 16 counties around our state. This makes a resource available and an

opportunity to meet others and be in the safety of your own environment. If there is a topic one would like to have support with for self and others, contact NAMI Oregon. Be kind to others and yourself. Remember self care!

NAMI Columbia County is active in supporting local organization that promote mental health. Contact NAMI Oregon for resources, programs for Support, Education, Advocacy.  
[www.namior.org](http://www.namior.org), 503.230.8009.  
[www.facebook.com/ColumbiaCountyNAMI](http://www.facebook.com/ColumbiaCountyNAMI).

**Donations direct to NAMI Oregon to support NAMI Columbia County**  
 4701 SE 24th Ave. Suite E Portland, OR 97202

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