



Linn County Fair was **H-O-T** and lots of great fun!



2023 entertainers: Smash Mouth, Clint Black and Granger Smith.

By Alex Pal
Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — Although unusually warm weather pressured total attendance at the Linn County Fair, revenue set a record, according to Fair & Expo Center Manager Kris Barnes. Barnes said this was the hottest weather for a fair on record. Attendance was 27,327, down about 7% from last year's \$239,408, but total admission, food and drink revenues were up by a total of \$33,000. Sponsorships were up an amazing 60%, topping \$148,000. "It went really well overall," Barnes said. "It was 97 degrees on Friday and 98 degrees on Saturday. That had an impact on attendance." But, Barnes said, the evening Main Stage acts — Clint Black, Smash Mouth and

Granger Smith — attracted packed crowds. Thankfully, fair staff added 350 reserved seats. "We had a great musical lineup," Barnes said. "I think adding acts to the Courtyard Stage was really well received. People seemed to enjoy listening to live music all day long." Daily acts included Loui Foxx Magic, The Junebugs, Randy Nicholson, Kickstar and Johnny Young. There were a couple heat-related medical issues that were handled quickly, Barnes said. Parking — which can be a sticky situation some years — went well, Barnes said thanks to added staff and new technology.

LINN COUNTY FAIR ... See Page 5

Farmers, others oppose proposed solar energy project

By Alex Paul
Linn County Reporter

BROWNSVILLE — Dozens of farmers climbed out of their combines and away from crop harvesting to voice their concerns about a proposed solar energy park that may be constructed about eight miles south of Brownsville at a meeting Tuesday, Sept. 25, at Brownsville City Hall. They were joined by others from throughout Linn County. The Muddy Creek Energy Park would produce 199 megawatts of power — enough to power 34,000 Willamette Valley homes — project applicants said. The listening session was sponsored by staff from the Oregon Energy Facilities Siting Council, as well as Paul Hicks from Tetra Tech Engineering and Brian Tran from Qcells, which is the sponsoring company involved, were on hand for what turned into a four-hour meeting.

Qcells is based in South Korea, but its U.S. office is in Irvine, California. It also produces its own solar panels in Georgia, Tran told the group. He said the company has signed lease agreements with land owners — two of which own more than 800 acres of the proposed 1,500 acres — and the site was selected in part because the Diamond Hill substation is already in place and has capacity to carry the electricity generated by the new operation. He added that there is a need for more power generation on the west side of the Cascades. Chase McVeigh-Walker and Todd Corbett of the Oregon Energy Facilities Siting

SOLAR PROJECT ... See Page 11



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Linn County Board of Commissioners



Roger Nyquist



Sherrie Sprenger



Will Tucker

The Board of Commissioners meet at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesdays and at the same time on Wednesday if needed.

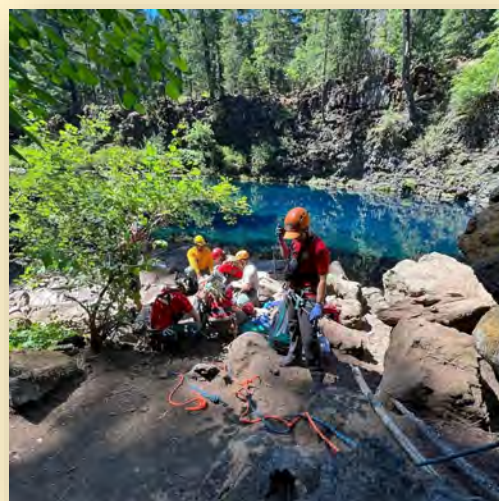
You can listen to the meetings by calling 541-704-3003 PIN 8442.

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SAR team jumps into action at Blue Pool

On Sunday, July 2, at approximately 1 p.m., Linn County Search and Rescue was alerted that a person was injured after jumping into Tamolitch Falls (commonly known as Blue Pool).

Linn SAR responded immediately, having concluded its 2023 Training Academy only half an hour prior to the alert. An initial hasty team was followed by a larger rescue team and Linn SAR was also joined by teams from Lane County Sheriff's Search and Rescue, Eugene Mountain Rescue, Sweet Home Fire District and Upper McKenzie Rural Fire Protection District. While the Forest Service temporarily closed down the area, members from all teams worked together to safely transport the patient out of the basin and to a more open area for an airlift. After the person had been moved and the landing zone sufficiently cleared, a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter out of North Bend arrived and hoisted the patient from the scene, along with a paramedic from Lane SAR.



Be aware of the Emerald Ash Borer

Oregon State University CORVALLIS — On June 30, 2022, emerald ash borer was discovered in Forest Grove, marking the first confirmation of the invasive pest on the West Coast.

In Oregon, the establishment of EAB could devastate whole habitat types that are dominated by Oregon ash, such as ash swales and sensitive riparian zones. It could also reduce urban forest cover. This pest has proven deadly to all ash species in North America and Europe, including the native Oregon ash (Fraxinus latifolia).

State officials are working to determine how far and how fast this destructive insect is spreading in Oregon, and have a temporary quarantine for Washington



Thanks for the invite

Thank you to the Lebanon Boys and Girls Club for hosting us at their Safety Town this past Friday. We had a great time interacting with the kids and staff. We went over some important water safety information with the kids to help keep them safe this summer.



Porter Olsen, 6

Celebrating the 4th of July in grand style



Lining up for the annual grand bicycle parade.

For the Olsen, Burnett and Reynolds families, camping at River Bend County Campground is an annual event, which isn't all that unusual for Oregon families.

But while this crew enjoys the beauty of East Linn County, they also celebrate the holiday with their own parade and teach their children and grandchildren about the meaning of Independence Day.

Families include Jerad and McKenna Olsen, Rick and Alice Burnett and Dick and Mary Sue Reynolds and all of the kids. Jerad, McKenna and her dad, Rick, all work for the Linn County Road Department.

McKenna said the kids have lots of fun, but they also take part in a history lesson put on by the Grammas, bike decorating and a bike parade around the entire campground. They wrap up the day with a birthday cake for America. Last year the kids created and sign their own version of the Declaration of Independence.



The Olsen sisters, Kinley, left, and Olivia, 8-year-old twins.



Learning about our country's history, above, and making a copy of the Declaration of Independence.



A tasty holiday tradition in Crawfordsville

My son-in-law Michael Maynard (teal-colored shirt) is a lieutenant with the Lebanon Fire District, but on the 4th of July he becomes a BBQ pit master. Since 1978, his family has hosted an in-the-ground pig roast and potluck at their home in Crawfordsville. This year was no exception. No invitations are sent out, but if you attend, you are expected to sign his mom Carol's guest book. The pig goes into the ground the night before and depending on size, comes out about 10 to 12 hours later. It's a great time and a fine holiday tradition.

— Alex Paul



Guess what time of year it is ... go ahead, guess ... yep, time for chip sealing

The Linn County Road Department got a warm up session on their summer chip sealing program July 6 working on roadway from the Albany city limits east past Scrael Hill Road, according to Operations Manager Kevin Hamilton.

"We were using an asphalt emulsion that is new to us. This is a pilot project for that material," Hamilton said. "This is a product called PM CRS-2h which is manufactured by Albina Asphalt. We use a variety of asphalt emulsion products in our chip seal program. Which product we used is determined by the performance characteristics of the emulsion and how we expect that to match to the conditions of the project."

Hamilton said the total project was about a mile and a half long.

"The volume of traffic at this location, and especially the turning action at the intersection with Scrael Hill Road will provide a good stress test for our evaluation of this product," Hamilton said.

Hamilton added, "People may ask why we chip sealed a road that was in pretty good condition. The answer is that chip seal is a pavement preservation treatment. We want to preserve good pavement. It is far more expensive to wait for it to degrade, and then have to rehabilitate it. The cost savings of this program are realized over the lifetime of the pavement."





Linn County Fair 2023



It was hot Saturday, July 15, at the Linn County Fair, about 98 degrees during the day, but it cooled off by the time Granger Smith took the Main Stage.



Dr. Ben Braat received a Golden Ticket to the Linn County Fair for his 58 years of service to the mid-valley. He has been a tremendous friend to the fair and to thousands of 4-H and FFA kids over the years. He is flanked by Sheriff Michelle Duncan and Fair Board member Kerry Johnson.

Linn County Fair ... From Page 1

“We used hand-held credit card scanners and the average car transaction was just six seconds,” Barnes said. “It really moved things along.”

There were 12 food booths and 83 commercial vendors.

Total carnival income was down about 11%, likely due to the hot weather, especially during the afternoon hours.

Barnes said the Hell on Hooves rodeo on Thursday night and the Wild and Woolly Mutton Bustin’ on Friday night filled the Calapooia Arena.

The 4-H and FFA Fair, which ran from Monday through Saturday, attracted a large number of animals as well and bidding topped \$1.3 million, another outstanding year. Animal totals: 4-H and FFA cattle, 93; open cattle, 50; 4-H and FFA dairy, 17; open dairy, 7; 4-H and FFA dairy goats, 46; 4-H and FFA meat goats; open sheep, 75; 4-H and FFA swine, 184; all small animals, (Santiam Building), 395.

Roger Nyquist, chairman of the Linn County Board of Commissioners and a member of the Fair Board, said that despite the hot weather, “we had another outstanding year.”

“This year’s fair was again led by great community support for our 4-H and FFA kids and some outstanding musical entertainment,” Nyquist said. “Scott Schuler, who took on sponsorships for us, was outstanding.”

Nyquist said the cost of musical entertainment continues to climb and that will “make it challenging going forward to maintain the quality of our musical lineup.”

Nyquist added, “We thank the community for supporting our fair and there doesn’t seem to be any end in sight for community support for our local kids raising animals. Kris Barnes and Rachel Lytle in their first full year of putting on the fair, brought energy and a new look to some things.”



Left: Fair Board President Kris Latimer addresses the crowd. Above: KRKT’s Scott Schuler with Granger Smith.



Per tradition, Commissioners Will Tucker, Roger Nyquist and Sherrie Sprenger, joined by Sheriff Michelle Duncan, handled serving chores at the annual ice cream social for seniors Thursday, July 13 at the fair.



Linn County Fair 2023



Linn County Fair 2023



State offers tips on protecting yourself following DMV hack

SALEM — The Oregon Driver and Motor Vehicles department has confirmed that cybercriminals have copied information on an estimated 3.5 million Oregon driver's licenses and identification card holders as part of the global MOVEit Transfer attack. That's bad news because your driver's license contains plenty of information about you, including your birthdate, home address and even your height, weight, and eye color, according to the state Attorney General's Office. Scammers can use some of this information to steal your identity and apply for credit cards, loans, and unemployment benefits in your name.

"Learning that personal information most Oregonians gave to their government has been exposed in a data breach is highly distressing," said Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum. "While the state works to identify who was impacted and what data was exposed, please follow these recommendations to stay safe."

If you have an Oregon driver's license or ID card, here's what you should do:

Order copies of your free credit reports and review them for inaccuracies.

You are entitled to a free copy of each of your three credit reports, one each maintained by the national credit bureaus of Experian, Equifax, and TransUnion, each year. You can get these reports from <http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com>.

These reports list your personal information, any recent bankruptcy declarations or foreclosures, and your open credit card and loan accounts, including how much you

owe on each of these accounts.

If you notice loans or credit accounts on your reports that you know you never opened on your own, you know someone is using your personal information to steal your identity.

Fortunately, even if thieves have already opened accounts in your name, you can take action to stop future damage.

You should notify the banks or financial institutions behind the credit card or loan accounts opened fraudulently in your name. Explain to these institutions that you did not apply for these accounts or loans and that you are a victim of identity theft. The financial institutions will close these accounts. If you act quickly, you likely will not be responsible for charges made on fraudulent credit cards you didn't apply for, and you may not have to pay back loans that thieves took out in your name.

If you receive notices from the



Oregon Employment Department about benefits you've never applied for, contact them as soon as possible.

Visit unemployment.oregon.gov and click on "ID Theft" to fill out an ID Theft Reporting Form.

- Set up a profile change alert if you use mobile or online banking tools.
- If your personal information on your bank's website or app changes without your authorization, that is typically a sign of identity theft.
- To stay safe, set up a profile change alert through your bank's website or app. The alert can warn you when there's been a change to your login information.
- If you have been a victim of identity theft, report it immediately.

If you suspect that a criminal has

used your driver's license information to steal your identity, make a report online at IdentityTheft.gov. For more information about identity theft, visit the Oregon Department of Justice online at <http://www.doj.state.or.us/consumer-protection/id-theft-data-breaches/identity-theft/> or call the Attorney General's Consumer Hotline at 1-877-877-9392.

Consider freezing your credit.

A credit freeze prevents creditors — such as banks or lenders — from accessing your credit reports. This will stop identity thieves from taking out new loans or credit cards in your name because creditors won't approve their loan or credit requests if they can't first access your credit reports.

You will have to freeze your credit with each bureau: Experian, Equifax and TransUnion.

When you freeze your credit with each bureau, it will send you a personal identification number. You can then use that PIN to unfreeze your credit if you want to apply for a loan or credit card. You can also use the PIN to freeze your credit again after you've applied for loans or a new credit card.

If you have been a victim of identity theft, place a one-year fraud alert on your credit reports.

This alert tells creditors that they must take reasonable steps to verify that it is actually you who is applying for credit or loans in your name. To do this, you only need to contact one of the three national credit bureaus. That bureau must then inform the other bureaus of your fraud alert.

Practice campsite safety

Linn County Sheriff's Office

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

- Lock your vehicle. When venturing off on an early morning hike, lock your personal belongings out of sight in your vehicle, or better yet, carry them with you. If you're tent camping, valuables can easily be stolen.

- Get an extra set of eyes. If you leave your campsite for a day trip, ask your neighbors to keep an eye on it for you.

- Lock items to a tree. If you have an expensive grill or bike, secure them with a cable locked around a nearby tree.

- Properly store your food. Thieves can also take the form of furry critters. Store your food in airtight containers. This not only keeps it fresh; it prevents animals from noticing its scent and raiding your campsite.

- Keep an eye on Mother Nature. Mother Nature can quickly whip up a summer storm. Make sure your belongings are properly secured. Store expensive items in your car or RV. Properly stake items to help keep them secure from strong winds.

- Dry your gear during the day. If you have expensive camping gear that needs to air out, do it during the day. Never assume you can leave it out overnight and expect it to be there in the morning.

- Leave it at home. Camping provides an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors with family and friends. Leave the tablet or laptop at home and enjoy a simpler life.

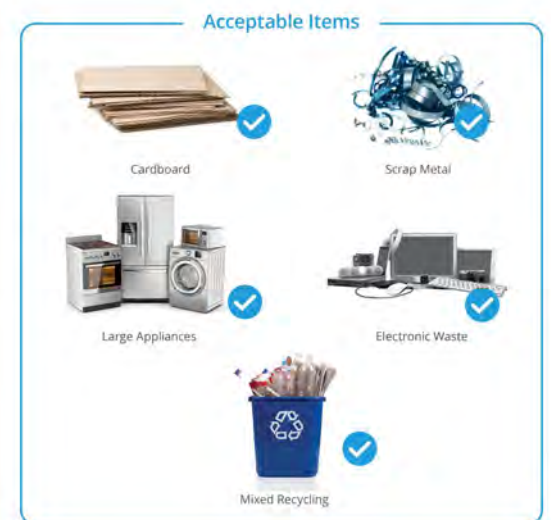


Lebanon Community Recycling Event

Saturday, August 5, 2023
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
305 W. Oak Street
Lebanon, OR



Sustainability in Action



Don't forget to send us your vacation or summer fun photos.



Final Native Encampment August 25-27 at Cascadia County Park

The final native encampment of the summer will be held at Cascadia County Park from August 25-27.

Free admission.

Native American crafts, music, dancing, food.

Come learn about Native American culture.

Previous encampments this summer have been held at Roaring River County Park and Waterloo County Park.



Free admission



Enjoying a Willamette River float

New Linn County Parks Director Stacey Whaley found time on July 29 to float the Willamette River past McCartney Boat Ramp and took out at Peoria County Park, which she proudly noted, are both managed by the Linn County Parks Department.



Fire School returns to Sweet Home after four-year hiatus

By Benny Westcott
The New Era

SWEET HOME — That plume of smoke rising over Foster Lake Friday morning, June 30, was a good thing.

The five-day Mid-Willamette Valley Inter-agency Wildland Fire School returned to Sweet Home last week for the first time since 2019, following a COVID pandemic-induced hiatus.

The training program public and private agencies culminated with a live fire exercise Friday on Marks Ridge, just outside of Sweet Home. More than 200 wildland firefighters and instructors participated.

The live fire was a controlled burn of slash piles created by forest management activities. It presented trainees with a final challenge for the week: applying their newly acquired skills and technique, learned in classroom settings, to suppress and mop up a real fire.

"Cascade Timber Consulting, a local forest landowner, provides a new field site each year and we are very grateful," said Fire School Co-Incident Commander Craig Pettinger, of the Sweet Home Oregon Department of Forestry unit.

"The live fire exercise provides an invaluable training experience – working in smoke, hiking through uneven terrain, and working closely with crew members to dig fireline – these are all things they'll experience this season as wildland firefighters."

This year, the field site used for the live fire was located north of Foster Lake, approximately two miles northeast of Sweet Home.

Firefighters included employees of the ODF, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, private companies like Weyerhaeuser and Starker Forests, and local

rural fire district members. People came from regions spanning from Oregon's coast to the Cascades to participate. The training was geared toward first time firefighters and those with minimal experience to allow them to get tangible experience fighting fire in a wildland setting.

"We've been in fire school all week with a lot of classroom and a little bit of field time, and today they get to put all the pieces together of everything they've learned," Pettinger said during the live fire. "We've got live fire on the ground, and the goal that I gave them for the end of the day is no heat and no smoke when everybody goes home." Once the firefighters get through the training, they're ready for the real thing.

"Essentially they're certified and trained after this exercise today," Pettinger said.

"They could end up on a fire tomorrow." He added that "It's a curriculum that we've built and it's nationally recognized. That's the training firefighters have to go through." He said the live fire is the most important part of the week. "To me, this is the most important, but they need to learn about it before they do it," he said. "We wouldn't want this to be the first thing in the week. It'd be chaos."

He spoke of protecting the area.

"Everything out here has a value," he said.

"These trees are valuable, and there's valuable habitat for wildlife. That's important and we want to protect that.

"But then it comes down to how people are building homes in the wildland urban interface, and that's a pretty valuable resource as



More than 200 wildland firefighters from around Oregon participated in fire school in late June in Sweet Home.

well," he continued.

To folks living in that area, he said "The best thing they can do is make sure we can get into their place and they have a structure that's defensible."

just felt right, seeing everybody show up to the school, and then knowing that we were going to have this live fire," he said. "It just feels like we're giving the students a complete package."

Adaptations were made by CTC in how

the area was prepared "We were able to have them pile [materials] a little bit differently for the fire school – a little bit smaller piles that we can easily take care of," he said.

While the event is just a training, the crew is still coping with a real fire, of course, which must be taken seriously.

"There's always a risk involved in it," Pettinger

said.

"We had the conversation all week on whether we were going to do live fire or not, because it is getting warm and dry. We made the decision this morning to light one pile, and we just kind of watched it for 20 minutes to see what it was going to do, and it didn't spread, so we were like let's give the students what they really want. Let's give them some fire."

One of those students is Sabrina Giuliotti. An intern for Starker Forests this summer in between her studies at Oregon State University, she is one of six other Starker interns who went to fire school in order to prepare themselves in case there is ever a fire on the property.

"I'm just excited to be here and learn more about firefighting," she said. "It takes a lot of work and grit. So, I know I have a lot of respect for firefighters. Especially digging a hand line, it's a lot of work, just knowing how to keep a pace and stamina.

"I've also learned how dangerous firefighting is, and how important it is to have situational awareness and to be aware of your surroundings and looking out for everybody that you're working with," she continued.

Giuliotti noted that fire can spread fast in wildland settings. "When there's a crown fire, it can go super quick." She said "I think getting this hands-on training before you go out with an actual crew is really important, because you

realize the importance of teamwork, and the different techniques with the tools." She noted that "I had never worked with fire at all before, and now I feel like I've gotten a ton of experience in the classroom and learned a ton from my instructors."

Safety comes first. "We are all trying to put out fires here, but the most important thing is safety, and that everybody comes home," she said. "So that's what we will make a priority."

Springfield based ODF firefighter Connor Reardon said the live fire is "a good opportunity for a lot of new firefighters and more seasoned firefighters to train.

"You have a lot of things that can burn in the forest," he said. "The fires that you see out in the forest are larger scale than the fires you see in town. If those large-scale fires aren't stopped and controlled, it could pose a threat to small and large communities alike."

He added that "Trainings like these are so crucial so firefighters can stop fires early on, so they don't become one of those incidents that the public sees in the news."

He noted that "Fire season is a very short window in Oregon, but it's getting longer in recent years. The trainings are really important because there is a short turnaround for new seasonals to come on and refresh their skills and knowledge of wildland firefighting. The endeavors to train people to know how to fight fire early on is extremely important to prepare to fight those fires during the summer."

He was happy to see fire school back in action. "Although this is the first live fire training exercise and fire school we've had in recent years, all agencies have put in tremendous amounts of work to train their firefighters to fight wildland in the summers," he said. "And I think having fire school for the first time in a while has just been a bigger benefit and asset to this upcoming season and the seasons to come."

But the important work doesn't stop with firefighters.

"Coming up into the middle of the summer, it's important for people to be aware of the changing conditions and weather, and the serious potential of wildland fire," Reardon said. "Being aware of those things makes firefighters' jobs a lot easier."



Michael Dunne of KLCC radio in Eugene recently interviewed Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker about the importance of wildland firefighters.

Here is a link to that interview:

<https://www.klcc.org/podcast/oregon-on-the-record/2023-07-14/wildland-firefighters-oregons-unsung-heroes>

His

advice is particularly timely. "Fire season is upon us," he said. "We wish it wasn't yet, but it's warm and dry and it's going to get a lot warmer and drier this next week. It's extremely important that [firefighters] know the actual job. Once you've actually done it, I think it sticks with you."

He said that Cascade Timber Consulting is a partner in fighting fire as well. "As a land owner, they have that responsibility," he noted. Pettinger has been involved with the fire school for 23 years and still enjoys it.

"I like seeing the new folks get excited about it," he said. "Some of them might not carry on with this as a career, but after the fire school you just see the smiling faces and they kind of get hooked."

He said that "We have to keep recruiting folks into this, because people get older, they retire, they move on," he said. "But this job is not going to go away. Fires are not going to quit happening."

He said the Sweet Home community is happy to have the school there.

"COVID was the big thing that kept us from doing it," he said. "We did some training at other facilities, but it didn't include live fire. So we just didn't feel good about it.

"When we started this week after not having done it for a couple years, it

Solar project

From P. 1

Chase McVeigh-Walker and Todd Corbett of the Oregon Energy Facilities Siting Council, facilitated the meeting.

They emphasized numerous times that the process of approving or denying this project is in its earliest phase. He said the council has 140 days from the time Qcells makes a formal application to a decision.

Corbett said there are seven major steps in the review process and applicants must meet 16 standards.

Currently, Qcells has submitted a Notice of Intent and not a formal application.

Although many people spoke in person and via telephone, key issues included:

- Is Qcells trying to do an “end run” around Linn County’s land use process? (Officials said since the project involves more than 150 acres, the applicant has the option of going before a local board or the Energy Facilities Siting Council. Qcells has opted for the council, but can change that decision when the company files a formal application.)
- Why would this type of operation be allowed on 1,500 acres of “prime farm land?” Officials said solar projects can be sited on prime ground with a conditional use overlay.
- What about wildlife? The area is a prime site for a threatened bird — the Streaked Horn Lark — and in the flyway for thousands of migrating birds annually. There is a large herd of elk — estimated at 80 to 100 — that roam the area. Will a large chain-link fence surrounding the project push the herd onto nearby Interstate 5?
- How will grasses and weeds be controlled? Tran said the plan is to use sheep to graze the site, but local farmers said that is only viable in the spring for rainfalls stop in July. They are concerned that the site will soon be covered in weeds or those weeds will be controlled with large amounts of herbicides. Tran said the company will also mow the site as needed.
- What is the project’s time period? Tran said the project would start in the third quarter of 2025 and be completed by the end of 2026. He said the project would employ 100 to 300 people during the construction phase and 1 to 3 people afterwards.
- In addition to jobs and the economic ripple effect — workers will buy gasoline, food and other items while here — Tran said Linn County should see an additional \$1.6 million annually in increase property taxes. He added, that Qcells, like all other solar projects, receive incentive tax credits.
- People were concerned about the project’s affect on area farms, some of which have been in the same family for generations. How will this project affect property values? Some said the project will be plain “ugly” and will be visible from I-5.
- How will the solar panels be disposed of? Will harmful chemicals leach off the panels and into the ground or area water sources?



Brownsville City Councilor Lynda Chambers makes a point during the Tuesday night’s meeting.

- Will there be noise associated with the operation? The large batteries — the size of a shipping container — will be self-contained and use fans for cooling, so they may emit some noise.
- How will Qcells deal with light pollution from security lamination? The company will build to code.
- Will approving this large project set a precedent of allowing similar projects on land zoned Exclusive Farm Use?

Learn more about the proposed project and view a process timeline at <https://www.oregon.gov/energy/facilities-safety/facilities/Pages/MCEP.aspx>



State Rep. Shelly Boshart Davis talks with Chase McVeigh-Walker and Todd Corbett after the meeting.



One of more than 100 people who attended the meeting, reviewing information boards.

Inter-agency learning exercise: hazardous materials response

By Mark Dodge

For the Linn County Reporter

ALBANY — Samaritan Albany General Hospital was an excellent setting to conduct a learning experience about Hazardous Materials response.

On July 14, more than three dozen representatives including public health, emergency managers, hospital administrators, and the Oregon Department of Human Services Emergency Management team gathered to see first-hand, what equipment is used in a HazMat response.



Across Oregon, 13 Hazardous Materials Teams are available with a common array of equipment to support local agencies. In addition to career and volunteer firefighters, members of these 13 HazMat teams also include representatives from law enforcement and public works specialists who cross-train with their regional teams.

In the Willamette Valley, HazMat Team 5 (Lebanon Fire District, Corvallis Fire Department and Albany Fire Department) has the responsibility to cover a section of the state beyond Santiam Junction all the way back to Newport. Members of these teams including Lt. Shane Castle of the Albany Fire Department can assemble a decontamination station in under 90-minutes.

Hazardous Materials trucks like this are equipped with a portable weather station. This allows for real-time monitoring of changes in wind direction and temperature which can affect coordinating the responders with the local incident commander.

Hospital partners during a hazardous materials exposure are prepared to receive patients after being decontaminated either near the event site or just outside of the emergency department. Upcoming drills in Region 2 will demonstrate these capabilities.

Portable shelters are available to deploy during severe weather to prevent hypothermia as well as protecting hospital staff once they enter the hospital for care and treatment.

Containment of the water runoff and detergents requires temporary storage. Using a combination of pumps, tanks and portable bladders, this 'grey' water can be managed before entering a municipal facility for treatment. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is also deployed during a HazMat response.

Brennan Upton, Emergency Management Coordinator for Samaritan Health led the exercise. His background includes an exciting career in the US Air Force before joining Samaritan Health earlier this year.

Brennan and his team hosted a briefing including a demonstration of the patient processing techniques. Future opportunity for support from the Medical Reserve Corps may include deployment of portable shelters, patient registration, monitoring and reunification especially in a MCI (Mass Casualty Incident) as part of a medical surge event.

As First-Responders, having managed



Brennan Upton, left, of Samaritan Albany General Hospital and Howard Ferguson, Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center.

exposed patients on-scene or even at the hospital involves cleaning equipment too. Everything from stretchers to boots need to be cleaned before being returned to the agency. Documentation and inventory control are essential to a successful response.

Transporting patients to a higher level of care after a Hazardous Materials exposure sometimes requires air support. During this exercise, LifeFlight Network sent one of its helicopters to Albany

General Hospital. Casey Schein, RN and her flight nurses provided an opportunity to explore this air-ambulance. To reduce response times even further in the Willamette Valley, LifeFlight Network recently opened their tenth base at McNary Field in Salem and also operates bases in Washington, Idaho and Montana.

LifeFlight Network operates fixed wing medical transport aircraft. These flying ICU (Intensive Care

Units), allow for long distance flights of up to 1800-miles when time is critical to patient care. Air crews including critical care nurses can be en route within 10-minutes of a call, day or night.

Thank you to Christina Bunnell Emergency Preparedness Administrator at Salem Health, and the Samaritan Health staff at Albany General Hospital for arranging this unique exercise.



HAZMAT 5 team and Region 2 Healthcare Coalition members.



Lt. Shane Castle of the Albany Fire Department.



Casey Schein, RN (LifeFlight) and the LifeFlight team.

