

What's happening in Linn County, Oregon May 2023

## Healing in the Santiam Canyon



Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker, left, talks with project coordinator Joe Nicholes of Christian Aid Ministries in front of one of 17 new homes that have been constructed in the Santiam Canyon since 2021. Volunteer teams will build 10 more homes starting this Fall.

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**G**ATES — For Eugene Den Daas of Gates, the last three years have been rough.

He was one of many residents in the Santiam Canyon who escaped with their life, but lost everything else when fire swept through the area Labor Day weekend 2020.

Since then, Den Daas, 62, has been living in a camping trailer.

But in a few weeks, volunteers with Christian Aid Ministries will wrap up work on a brand spanking new home for Den Daas on the site of his former home. The home is based on one of several styles used by the volunteers, but with some modifications such as a vaulted ceiling in the kitchen/living room and nine-foot walls.

“It’s like Phoenix rising from the ashes,” Den Daas said, referring to the Ancient Greek tale of revival.

Den Daas is one of 27 canyon residents who have received new homes on both the Linn and Marion county sides of the Santiam River — Den Daas lives in Marion County.

And over the next year, 10 more homes will be constructed by Mennonite and Amish volunteers from around the country. So far, 625 volunteers have spent a week at a time and they came from 28 states and Canada.

**REBUILDING ... See Page 16**

*Clint Black — Smash Mouth — Granger Smith*

## Linn County Fair entertainment named



**CLINT BLACK**

**July 13**

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**A**LBANY — Clint Black, Smash Mouth and Granger Smith will headline the Main Stage entertainment at the Linn County Fair July 13-15 at the Fair & Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Road.

The concerts are free with paid admission, although reserved seating is available for \$25. Tickets go on sale May 1 at [www.linncountyfair.com](http://www.linncountyfair.com).

“This is an extremely talented and popular lineup,” said Fair Board member and Linn County Commissioner Roger Nyquist. “We hit all of the demographics with this trio, they are all great performers. I can’t wait for the fair to get here.”

Black — who has sold more than 20

million records — will get things rolling in his traditional country style on Thursday, July 13.

He will bring more than three decades of hits to the Main Stage, including his first smash hit, “Killin’ Time.” He has recorded a dozen studio albums, his latest “Out of Sane” will debut June 19.

Black’s musical career includes 22 number one singles, nearly two-dozen gold and platinum awards in the United States and Canada, a Grammy award, numerous CMA, ACM and American Music Awards. And if that isn’t enough, he has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

A Houston, Texas native, Black’s music remains true to his Texas roots.

**FAIR ENTERTAINMENT ... See Page 10**

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



The Linn County Reporter is digitally published monthly by the Linn County Board of Commissioners.

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Please send your email address to Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, apaul@co.linn.or.us or call 541-967-3825.

### 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

Call 541-967-3825



### Albany Fire Department to get new water tender

ALBANY — The Albany Fire Department is good at taking care of our equipment. Check out our sole water tender. This sizeable apparatus was born in 1994 and is still chugging along. This 53,000-pound diesel truck carries 3,000 gallons of water and a portable water tank. Many of our Albany communities do not have fire hydrants. Tenders ferry water to a fire scene where engines can draft from the tank and supply water to firefighters working to suppress the fire. Our mad maintenance skills have kept this important tool on the road, but we have received some great news. We were notified that AFD will receive a new Mobile



Attack Tender from the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal's (OSFM) Engine Program. The new tender will come pre-specified with a complement of basic equipment that closely matches the state's mobilization plan. AFD was one of 76 agencies chosen to receive this grant. The OSFM Engine Program funding was made possible through Senate Bill 762, Oregon's wildfire omnibus bill passed in 2021.



### Linn County Sheriff's Office enjoys tasty treats

The Linn County Sheriff's Office would like to thank Michelle Robinson and her family for again providing us with a great dinner last night.

Michelle and her family provide these dinners to the office as a show of appreciation for law enforcement, and we are so thankful for it.

This time she was joined by Pacific Perks (mobile café) which provided delicious Italian sdoas.

Our very own Sgt. Steve Frambes was recognized with a Certificate of Appreciation for the amazing work he does. Sgt. Frambes is always willing to help out anywhere he can. Sgt. Frambes

works closely with many of the cities in our county and helps build positive relationships between them and our office. Great job Steve.

Thank you, Michelle Robinson and family for all of your continued support. We truly love your meals and are so appreciative of you.

# Nate Mattson takes over Mad Platter Café

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**A**LBANY — After working at The Mad Platter Café for a couple months, 2012 Corvallis High School graduate Nate Mattson has taken over ownership as of April 3. Mattson 25, said he has enjoyed cooking since he was a child at summer camp.

“We had cooking lessons there and I always liked it,” Mattson said. “I have worked in restaurants, but I really don’t like the hours. Here, it’s 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. for now and it will go to 8 a.m., to 5 p.m. after baseball season.” The hour shift is because Mattson is in her second year as the freshman baseball coach at his alma mater, where he was a catcher and outfielder.

“I like cooking because food makes people smile, it makes them happy,” Mattson said. Mattson plans to expand the café’s menu with more salads, wraps, fresh fruit and gluten-free items.

“I am also going to have freshly baked items like lemon bars and



Nate Mattson

cookies,” Mattson said. Mattson has ordered Mad Platter Café’ T-shirts to help promote his

new venture. “People have been very nice,” Mattson said.

If you’re in a hurry, order ahead by calling 541-967-3877.

## New folks at Alcohol & Drug

Meet some of the new staff members at Linn County Alcohol & Drug. Left side of railing: foreground to background: Sarah Solus, clerical, Health Office Specialist; Sandi Sabedra, clerical, Health Office Specialist; Andrea Goff, adolescent team, Addiction Specialist. Right side of railing, foreground to background: Alex Keys, clerical, Health Office Specialist; Dani Klein-Sekiya, Adult Outpatient Team-addiction specialist; Danna Frenchko, outreach, Adult Outpatient team- Addiction Specialist; top, far right: Eva Arndt, Adolescent Team – Addiction Specialist.

## Sophia Myrick joins DA’s office staff

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**A**LBANY — Sophia Myrick, 25, has joined the Linn County District Attorney’s Office as a legal assistant. The Wasilla, Alaska native recently completed two degree programs at the University of Alaska-Anchorage. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in office services and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Justice.

“I always wanted to be a medical examiner, but I found that I actually liked justice work more than working with patients,” Myrick said.

She and her partner — who is studying at Oregon State — moved to the mid-valley in September. She enjoys photography and playing with her 4-year-old Boston Terrier, “Benito” called Benny.



Sophia Myrick

“I love it here,” Myrick said. She is looking forward to assisting the District Attorneys with their work loads.



# Commissioners oppose proposed Habitat Conservation Plan

*Editor's Note: At their April 11 meeting, Linn County Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker approved the following letter be sent to the Board of Forestry.*

April 11, 2023

Dear Board of Forestry Members: Jim Kelly, Chair; Liz Agpaoa, Karla Chambers, Ben Deumling, Chandra Ferrari, Joe Justice, Brenda McComb

Linn County is very concerned with the path the Board of Forestry (BOF) is on and with the continued refusal from the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) to engage with the counties creating a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The Linn County Board of Commissioners are elected to represent approximately 130,000 citizens; many of whom are employed in the forest products industry.

The Oregon Department of Forestry's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) will significantly reduce the volume of timber harvested on State lands which will result in a reduction in jobs and timber harvest revenue in our community. As Linn County turned these lands over to the BOF and ODF for management for our benefit, we count on the revenue from these lands and we expected to be involved and asked to support the HCP before it can move forward.

With more than 50 percent of Linn County land forestland, a reduction in timber harvest revenue and jobs will have a significant negative impact on our communities. Wood products manufacturing in Linn County generates millions of dollars in direct and indirect economic activity. If implemented, this Habitat Conservation Plan will reduce log supply which jeopardizes entire communities and not just those who work directly in the forest sector. The cost associated with public services, education, housing, etc. will, most likely, increase during the 70-year HCP permit period. Reducing revenue that supports these services will greatly impact our life and ability to deliver services.

In the work done by ODF, inaccurate numbers were used to project loss of jobs in the Environmental Impact Statement. The Environmental Impact Statement's modeling shows three jobs per million board feet of timber harvested. The Forest Products Industry standard uses 11-12 jobs per million board feet of timber harvested. ODF's Environmental Impact Statement only accounts for one-quarter of the jobs in the Forest Product Industry. The crude discrepancy underestimates and undervalues the impact of the loss of jobs, as well as, the impact on local communities and the disruption of families.

We believe the BOF and ODF will be in direct conflict of their obligation to the counties to manage forests for the 'greatest permanent value'. As the BOF and ODF are knowingly allowing this HCP to move forward using ODF's Forest Management Plan which has been proven in a court of law to be a failure. The court award \$1.1 billion to the counties suing the State and Board of Forestry for mismanagement of State timberlands while using the same Forest Management Plan as the HCP.

The BOF's decision to allow the HCP to move into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process without obtaining input and approval from the Council of Forest Trust Land Counties is appalling and needs to be addressed before moving forward. As projected in the Environmental Impact Statement for the HCP, harvest revenues will not cover ODF's costs associated with this HCP. Taxpayers will be burdened with the expense of this plan; many of whom will also be looking for work.

It is deeply concerning that the BOF and ODF would pursue a plan that would lead to its own insolvency and hinder its mission and contractual obligations. The current HCP, if implemented, would amount to gross financial mismanagement.

We find it alarming that wildfire is defined as a 'disturbance' in the Environmental Impact Statement. Wildfire, as a 'disturbance', is known to be most severe in passively managed forests. Fuel loads in passively-managed forests are greater than in actively managed forests, therefore, forest fire poses a significant concern to areas surrounded by passively managed forests. Forest fires also impact other industries our community relies on for revenue and the health of our residents. We've watched forest fires devastate rural communities around our State. Linn County is surrounded by forests and we do not want to add more fuel to any possible fires.

Wildfires consume forests, kill wildlife, pollute our air and damage waterways. The very animals the HCP is trying to protect are in greater danger in passively managed forest than a healthy actively managed forest. This HCP will decimate Oregon's ability to make climate-friendly wood products; the only building material that actually stores carbon. The HCP pushes the need for wood products on other countries ignoring available counties timber which creates a much bigger worldwide impact



Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker (white hard hat) examines wildfire damage in the Santiam Canyon, including loss of a ranger's station.



on the global environment with lesser developed countries, with inadequate environmental practices, filling the gap in the need for timber products.

The HCP will impact our ability to make advanced wood products like CLT for building. Wood is the only renewable and sustainable building material. The cement industry contributes five percent of the world's emissions and the steel industry contributes eight percent, whereas, the Forest Products Industry uses wood which sequesters carbon and locks it up unless it burns. The drastic decrease of available

timber will require us to import more of our wood products from other places that don't share our commitment to sustainability and will enlarge our carbon footprint. From a global perspective, we will do dramatic damage worldwide.

Since the 1990's, we've witnessed 90 percent of Federal timberland and hundreds of thousands of acres of State and Private timberland not being managed properly, in part, due to the Endangered Species Act being used to protect habitat. We are now witnessing the unintended consequences; increase of severe wildfires, longer fire seasons, loss of wildlife, loss of habitat, polluting our air and destroying watersheds all at an accelerating financial and environmental expense.

Studies show that the Northern Spotted Owl's population is steadily declining despite other HCP's dedicated to protecting and improving its habitat. After decades of our forests being set aside to protect the habitat of the Northern Spotted Owl, we now know the greatest threat to the Northern Spotted Owl is the Barred Owl and not the lack of habitat. The current HCP does not address the threat of the Barred Owl on the Northern Spotted Owl nor does it estimate future population targets of the subject species. Our concern is that the Northern Spotted Owl and other species could be used to perpetuate Habitat Conservation Areas when the other issues are not being addressed.

The benefits derived from the Habitat Conservation Plan, many of which are in dispute, do not justify the socioeconomic impact, environmental impacts, obligation of the State to manage forests for the greatest permanent value and loss of harvest revenue we depend on. The Linn County Board of Commissioners oppose the current proposed Western Habitat Conservation Plan which will have drastic direct and indirect impacts on residents, our community and our environment for over 70 years.

Please slow down and reject the current proposal.

*We find it alarming that wildfire is defined as a 'disturbance' in the Environmental Impact Statement. Wildfire, as a 'disturbance', is known to be most severe in passively managed forests.*



# Thank you veterans!

The South Willamette Valley Honor Flight crew from Linn County met at Linn County Veterans Services Thursday before heading to the Portland airport and then on to Washington, D.C. There were no WWII veterans on this flight. Veterans Services folks passed out water bottles and drove vans filled with veterans. They were escorted by the Linn County Sheriff's Office and Albany Fire Department.



## Reducing food waste

Linn County Healthy Communities Coordinator Diego Nieto and WIC Dietitian Serena Stearns-Garland provided information to folks at the opening of the Albany Farmers Market about Food Waste Prevention Week. The duo offered information about free composting bins, how to make no-waste veggie broth and passed out handmade food fridge magnets, plus educational materials about



## OSU Extension — Linn County



### Tractor Safety Class at Knife River Training Center

Spring break kicked off the first class of youth tractor safety this season. Knife River Training Center graciously hosted the class and provided lunch for all the participants each day. Pape Machinery in Tangent provided the equipment for the class and we are so thankful for the community support so that we can prepare these youth for the workforce. We had 31 participants successfully complete the three-day course.

This class is just one of many that will be offered in the Willamette Valley in the next couple of months. Tractor Safety Training and Certification courses are sponsored by the OSU Extension Service. Training will include online work, homework and tractor driving. These classes are for youth, ages 14-17, who are interested in summer employment opportunities in the upcoming agricultural season.



### Teen Ambassadors Take On the Red Solo Cup Challenge in March

During the March Ambassador meeting, teens participated in creating structures with red solo cups.

However, there was a catch.

The students had to use a rubber band, with strings attached and given to each team member exclusively to move the cup! It was a big challenge, but our teens were up to it!



### CloverDays Spring Break Camp

Linn County 4-H hosted CloverDays over spring break, reaching 20 youth through a three-day camp.

The day camp, hosted at the OSU Extension office in Tangent, was three hours each morning. Activities included flower pot painting, knitting with straws, coding with Ozobots, planting flowers, learning about plant parts, creating warm fuzzies, creating t-shirt design submissions for fair, and making their own "campfires."

Snacks were included each day, which included Carrot and Banana Smoothies and Peanut Butter Veggie Dip (both OSU Extension Food Hero recipes), and microwave s'mores.

Five teen leaders assisted with the camp, providing older youth mentorship to the young participants.



# LCSO dispatchers handled 62,354 calls last year

## Linn County Sheriff's Office

**A**pril 9-15 was National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.

We wanted to take a moment to recognize our amazing dispatchers.

The Linn County 911 Center is the primary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for Linn County and North Albany. All 911 calls placed within Linn County or within the city limits of North Albany come to our 911 Center.

Our dispatchers work tirelessly taking calls and dispatching for eight Fire Departments, Emergency Medical Services, Linn County Parole and Probation and of course your Linn County Deputies throughout the county.

In 2022, our 911 Center handled 62,354 911 calls. They also handled 97,406 non-emergency calls for a total of 159,760 calls!

Our dispatchers take all sorts of calls. From animal complaints, to people not breathing, to assaults, trespassing and everything in between.

Our dispatchers help callers through stressful times, helping them remain calm and get the information needed in order to take the best course of action in any given situation.

Whether it's helping a family safely deliver their baby or taking nonstop calls during the wildfires of 2020,



your 911 dispatchers are here for you.

Our dispatchers are here to serve the community. They serve an

important role in public safety and live our mission statement every day of "Keeping the peace with dignity, honesty and compassion".

We appreciate all the hard work the men and women do for us here at your Linn County Sheriff's Office 911 Dispatch Center!



## Visitors to the Edward C. Allworth Veterans Home

*Linn County 4-H and FFA members took some of this year's livestock projects to the annual spring fling held at the Edward C. Allworth Veterans Home in Lebanon. Everyone had fun.*

# Linn County's favorite Easter bunnies



**Adalyn Rose Hawkins, 9 months, granddaughter of Treasurer Michelle Hawkins. She's not real sure about that big ole bunny.**



**Josselyn Jimenez, 6, daughter of Laura Jimenez, Maternal Child Health Program, and below with her Great-Grandmother Lupe Lopez.**



**Wrenley Grace, 3 weeks, granddaughter of Lisa Vanderwood, Assessment & Taxation.**





# Linn County's favorite Easter bunnies



Easter was "eggs-tra" special (I couldn't resist it) for the Meyer family, now that 4-month-old Pearce is here. From left to right: Monty, Marsha, Colin holding Pearce, Emily and in the back Amber and Cameron. Marsha is the Senior Administrative Assistant for the Board of Commissioners.



Above: Julie Mercer's granddaughter, Blair, 10 months, wore the pink gingham romper Julie made for my daughter Catherine in 1994, background. Julie noted that Easter is a little cooler here than in South Carolina, so Blair also sported a cardigan that was her mother's. Julie works in the Alcohol & Drug Department.



Right: Brynn Johnson, 9 months, daughter of 4-H program coordinator Abby Johnson, looking mighty spiffy in her new Easter dress.



Right: Jax and Lainey Leland, 10 and 8, got plenty of Easter candy over the holiday weekend. They are the children of Courtney Leland, Linn County Commissioners Office.



Left: Cinderella is a year-and-a-half recent Safe Haven adoptee! She enjoyed her first Easter with her new family, bunny ears and all. She had a lot of fun hunting for eggs with puppy treats inside. Cinderella is the furry friend of Melissa Albion at the Juvenile Detention Center.



# Linn County Fair entertainment ... From Page 1

"I try to make records that don't fit into a trend," Black said of Out of Sane. "I never wanted to start a trend, and I'm not going to chase a trend, either. To me, a great band will always sound great, today and in ten years. If you listen to this record, it's not about fitting into today's country, or yesterday's country, or tomorrow's country, it just is."

San Jose rock band Smash Mouth takes the stage Friday, July 14 and brings nearly 30 years of making music to Linn County.

The group is well known for "Walkin' on the Sun," 1997; "All Star," 1999; "Then the Morning Comes," 1999; and a cover of the Monkees' smash hit, "I'm a Believer," 2001.

In their early days Smash Mouth was associated with the punk music scene, but after nearly 30 years, their style has evolved into pop or alternative rock.

Like Clint Black, Granger Smith is a born and bred Texan and although his career has been relatively short, he is on his 10<sup>th</sup> studio album.

Smith will close out the fair with a Saturday, July 15 concert.

His fans are part of what is called the "Yee Yee Nation" and he enjoys a social media following of more than 12 million fans. His videos have topped one billion views.

His first album, "Backroad Song" ran to number 1 on the charts — one



**SMASH MOUTH**

**July 14**

of the Top 10 most played country singles in 2016 — followed by "If the Boot Fits," a top five hit.

His album, "When the Good Guys Win" spawned the hit "Happens Like That" that was certified RIAA Gold.

His new book, "If Your' City, If You're Country," hit number one on the Amazon best-selling list.

Smith has an alter ego called "Earl Dribbles Jr., who anchors



**GRANGER SMITH**

**July 15**

the You Tube series, "The Smiths". His family also operates an outdoor clothing company called, "Yee Yee Apparel."

Smith has also entered the acting world, debuting in the Pureflix film, "Moonrise" which is available for streaming.

In 2020, Smith received the CMT Award for Quarantine Video of the Year.

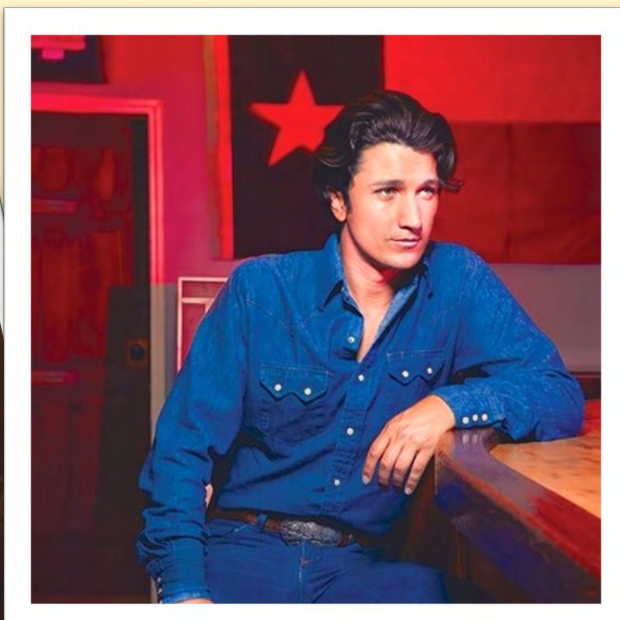
## Linn County Fair

July 13-14-15, 2023

**General admission:** Adults: \$9 on-line; \$10 at gate; seniors; \$7/\$8; children 12 and under, free. Parking, \$5/day.

**On-line tickets:**  
[www.linncountyfair.com](http://www.linncountyfair.com).

**Concerts:** Free with paid general admission; \$25 for reserved seating.



# Oregon Jamboree announces lineup additions

Courtesy The New Era

**S**WEET HOME — The Oregon Jamboree has nearly completed its lineup for the weekend of Aug. 4-6.

Newly announced are Larry Fleet, Drake Milligan, Alana Springsteen, Toast and Jam, George Ducas, Ben Fuller and Cloverdayle.

They will join Main Stage headliners Lynyrd Skynyrd, Cody Johnson and Parker McCollum, along with supporting acts Lainey Wilson, Ashley McBryde and Kameron Marlowe.

Oregon Jamboree Lineup

Not all the big names are on the Jamboree Main Stage this year.

The Deschutes Brewery Park Stage lineup includes headliners Warren Zeiders, Ned LeDoux and Shane Profitt, with Jackson Michelson, George Ducas, Scruggs and The Steelbenders, Dry Canyon Stampede, Eli Howard and The Greater Good, Jake and The Hill People, Pulp Western and Kaden Madden.

"Last year we definitely had some pretty big names on the Deschutes Stage, who really kept our patrons engaged," festival Director Robert Shamek said. "The whole Sankey Park is such a nice park now; people just love to cross that bridge and hang out there. I'm pretty sure we're going to pack that park again like we did last year."

# Steps to Mental Fitness

How's your mental fitness? Much as you can build your cardiovascular or muscle strength by exercising, you can build mental fitness by embracing new ideas and behaviors. Here's your training guide:

**1. ACCEPT YOURSELF.**

Learn to understand and accept your preferences, passions and needs. Remember: No one knows you like you do. Spend quiet time writing in a journal or meditating. Talk to a friend about what matters most to you. Don't blame others for your problems. If your life is boring—or if you feel put upon or neglected—admit it and do something about it.

**2. MAKE YOUR NEEDS KNOWN.**

Express yourself and present your feelings without attacking others. If you have trouble expressing your feelings to others, learn new communication skills. Don't expect other people to read your mind.

**3. DEMONSTRATE BEHAVIOR THAT REFLECTS HIGH SELF-ESTEEM.**

Relate to yourself and others in ways that reveal that you care for yourself. Use positive body language and project a positive attitude. Look alert and interested and keep a cheerful smile. Practice good grooming habits and dress appropriately for the occasion.

**4. DEVELOP YOUR POTENTIAL.**

Make full use of your abilities and cultivate your personal interests. Learn through reading or taking adult education classes. Try new and interesting things you have never done before. Commit yourself to improving your nutrition, getting adequate rest and starting a regular exercise program. Seek out optimistic people.

**5. LET GO OF NEGATIVE JUDGMENTS.**

People often "push your buttons" when they reflect parts of your own feelings or behavior that you don't like. Instead of judging others, learn to appreciate their unique strengths.

**6. PLAN FOR SUCCESS.**

Emphasize what you do well. Learn to value and build on your strengths. Take disappointments in stride. Everyone experiences failure at times. The most successful people learn from their disappointments, rather than allowing themselves to be defeated by them.

**7. THINK POSITIVELY.**

Embrace your good qualities and look ahead to a positive future. Believe that you have the power and ability to transform negative situations into more satisfying experiences.

**8. LEARN TO ESCAPE WHEN APPROPRIATE.**

It's good to confront people and problems head-on, but sometimes, taking the path of least resistance is the best solution. Be aware of when your expectations of yourself are unrealistically high. Add variety to your life by planning some new activities. Don't depend exclusively on others to add excitement to your life.

**9. FIND WAYS TO HELP OTHERS.**

Refocus some of your attention away from your own concerns and toward the needs of others. Volunteer for a community project or help a person who is in need of companionship. Listen with all your attention when involved in a conversation.

**10. BE WILLING TO SEEK HELP WHEN NEEDED.**

Find people you can talk to when you have problems. If your cares seem overwhelming, seek professional help. Counseling may be helpful if the intensity of your feelings doesn't go away after sharing them with friends or family or if you experience persistent feelings of worthlessness or low self-esteem.



## A friendly furry visitor ...

Linn County Commissioner Sherrie Sprenger had some special guests Wednesday, April 12. Tara Williams, a victims advocate with Albany Police Department

dropped by with Bentley, APD's wellness dog -- a handsome 2-year-old black lab. Bentley had many friendly visitors from several Linn County departments. When he isn't visiting courthouse folks, Bentley is making his way around town, especially at area schools.



# May is Mental Health Awareness Month

WHEREAS, mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, all Americans experience times of difficulty and stress in their lives; and

WHEREAS, promotion and prevention are effective ways to reduce the burden of mental health conditions; and

WHEREAS, there is a strong body of research that support user-friendly tools that all Americans can access to better handle challenges, and protect their health and well-being; and



WHEREAS, mental health conditions are real and prevalent in our nation; and

WHEREAS, with effective treatment, those individuals with mental health conditions can recover and lead full, productive lives; and

WHEREAS, each business, school, government agency, faith-based organization, health care provider, veteran's groups and citizen has a responsibility to promote mental wellness and support prevention efforts; and

WHEREAS, Linn County, as well as the nation as a whole, is finally returning to normal after an infectious disease outbreak, it is important to remember that feeling anxious, confused, overwhelmed or powerless remain as common problems and are quite normal. By limiting media consumption, staying connected with loved ones and staying active we can maintain our mental health as we try to protect our physical health; and

WHEREAS, the Linn County Mental Health Advisory Board is emphasizing that there is no health without mental health by being involved with Public Service Announcements, Health Fairs, public speakers and various trainings regarding mental health issues;

*THEREFORE, the Linn County Mental Health Advisory Board, do hereby proclaim May, 2023 as Mental Health Awareness Month in Linn County, Oregon. We also call upon the citizens, governmental agencies, public and private institutions, businesses and schools in Linn County to recommit our community to increasing awareness and understanding of mental health, the steps our citizens can take to protect their mental health, and the need for appropriate and accessible services for all people with mental health conditions.*

**"Anyone can get broken and anyone can live, anyone can find hope."**

- Reach out for help
- Call 988 for non- life-threatening support
- Oregon Youthline: 877-968-8491
- Text "TEEN2TEEN"- 838 863
- LGBT Youthline: 800-268-9688
- LGBT text: 647-694-4275
- Crisis text line: 741-741
- Domestic violence line: 800-656-SAFE (7233)
- Sexual assault line: 800-656-HOPE (4673)
- Runaway line: 800-231-6946
- Self-injury support: 800-Dont Cut (541-366-8288)

**Linn County Mental Health Crisis Team: 5451-967-3866**  
**Office hours: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Friday**



## Visiting the Juvenile Detention Center

It is always a special day when therapy dogs visit young folks at the Linn County Juvenile Detention Center.



# Retired Clerk's staffer was foster parent to more than 200 kids

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**A**LBANY — Roberta Beldon only worked in the Linn County Clerk's Office for six years, but the quiet woman made a positive affect on both her co-workers and the general public, according to County Clerk Steve Druckenmiller.

"We truly enjoyed having Roberta here," Druckenmiller said Friday afternoon before a party in her honor. "She is a wonderful person, a pleasure to be around and definitely very good helping the public."

Beldon, 65 in May, and her husband Bob, a retired truck driver, plan to move to Georgia to be closer to relatives.

In addition to her work — which Beldon called extremely rewarding — the duo have been foster parents to 193 children in Marion County as well as many in Linn County.

She calls working with children her ministry in life and she plans to continue working with youngsters at the family's church in Georgia.

"My mom and dad had foster kids," Roberta said. "We want to help kids know there is a kind voice and a better life out there."

The Beldons have three grown sons, Gary, Danny and Matthew and an adopted daughter who had been one of their foster children, Nevaeh — heaven spelled backwards.

Roberta said she has been offered several jobs in the family's new town of Byron, Georgia.

"I might do some work, but for a



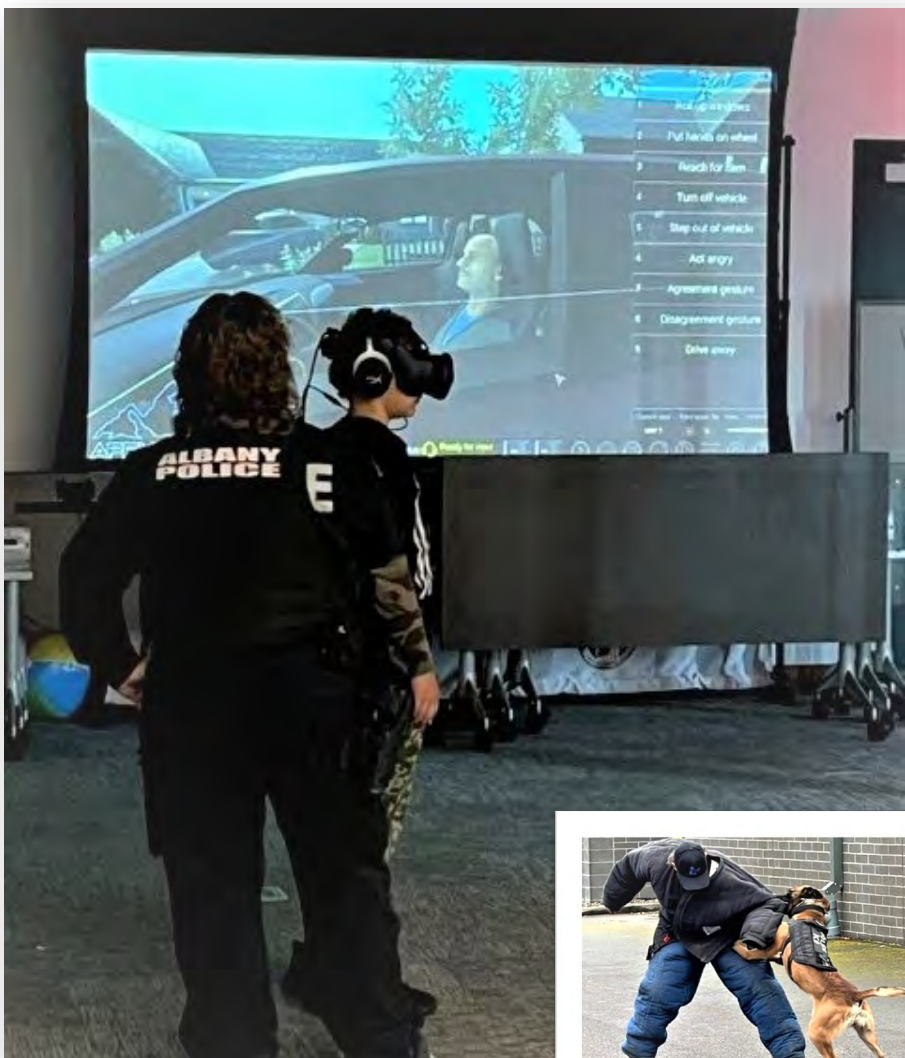
Roberta Beldon worked for Linn County for six years, and her positive attitude made her a popular coworker in the Clerk's Office.

Clerk Steve Druckenmiller presented Beldon with a plaque during a retirement party in her honor on April 14. He said she was a pleasure to be around and she focused on helping the public in any way she could.

while, I'm going to relax," she said.

Working at the Clerk's Office has been extremely rewarding, she said.

"It has been fun, a blast," Roberta said. "It also benefitted me. It really helped me build up my confidence and it has been interesting. I have gotten to learn so many new things."



## APD hosts first Youth Police Academy

**W**e are still catching our breath. On April 22 we hosted 39 middle school kiddos for our first Middle School Youth Police Academy Day.

It was a day packed with a lot of hands-on activities and learning about law enforcement in our community. The kids got to see our K-9s in action, try out the virtual reality shoot/don't shoot scenarios, learn about the drug and fentanyl epidemic, run the Oregon physical ability test, apply a tourniquet, see the Bearcat and other SWAT tools, shoot a taser, discuss social media vs reality and learn about what cops do all day.

We learned some stuff too:

- Middle schoolers ask some great questions.
- Middle schoolers can really put down the food. We mean really.
- Middle schoolers like constant action. No need to rest. Ever.
- Some middle schoolers never stop talking.

Thank you to Dutch Bros Coffee for supplying copious amounts of hot chocolate to us for free. Thank you Cork's for the donuts and Chipotle for the lunch. We had a great day.



Several hundred people attended the "I Am for the Child" luncheon to support Linn County Court Appointed Special Advocates April 19 at the Boulder Falls Conference Center in Lebanon.

# Court Appointed Special Advocates reach out

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**L**EBANON — During her more than 30 years as an attorney, Judge Heidi Sternhagen sometimes didn't understand the importance of Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteers. Now that she is a Linn County Circuit Court Judge who focuses on juvenile dependency

cases, she knows fully how important it is that young people have a consistent figure in their life, someone who will always be there for them in

good times and bad.

Judge Sternhagen was the keynote speaker April 19 at the annual "I Am for the Child" luncheon held at the Boulder Falls Conference Center in Lebanon.

Several hundred people attended the event, which is returning to in-person after an absence due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sternhagen said adults come and go in the lives of children in foster care. They may move between foster homes, their teachers change as the child changes addresses, their parents have issues and fail to care for the child.

But Sternhagen said she has learned the CASA volunteers are present for their children and that consistency makes a huge difference.

And, she emphasized, the child's best interest is the sole focus of the CASA advocate.

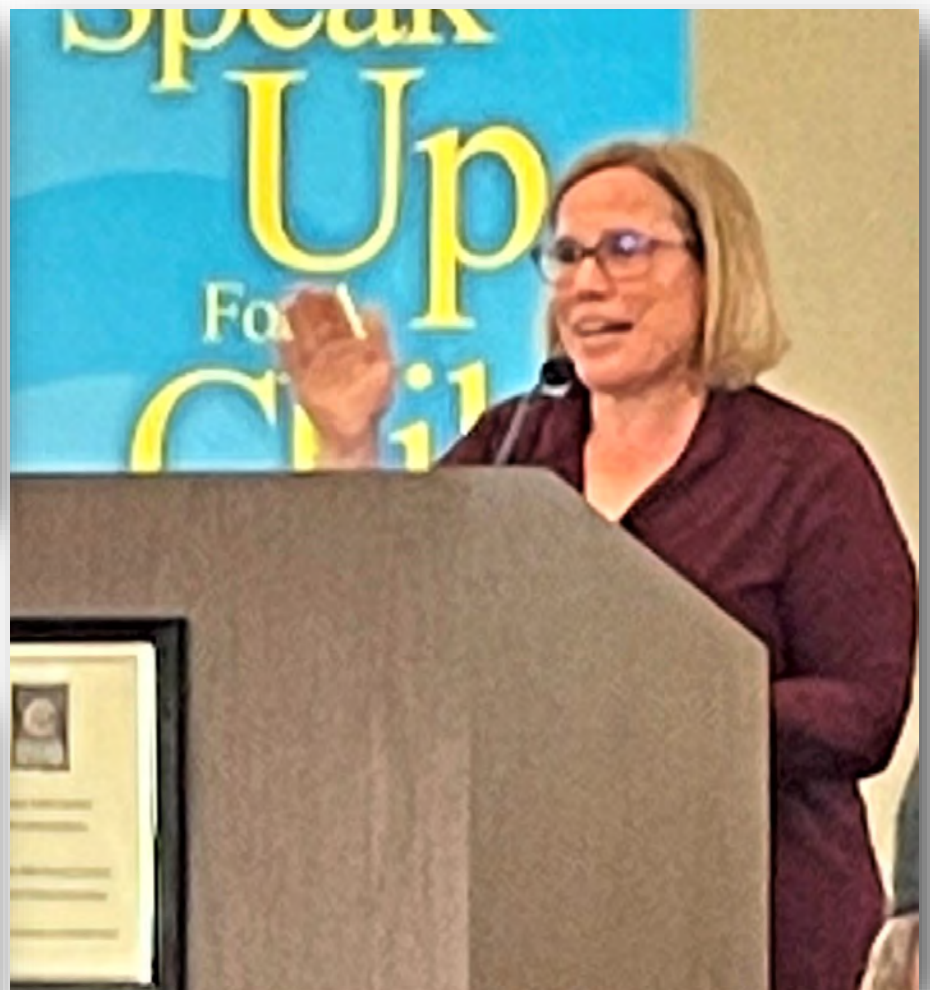
Sternhagen added that adults — who primarily come to the court hearings because children are in school — lead busy lives and there are many court cases. A CASA volunteer devotes his or her time solely for one or two children.

Judge Sternhagen said she now looks at the CASA report first-thing.

"I want to know what's going on with this child," she said. "What does this child need?" She praised CASA volunteers for helping children get the educational support they need to succeed.



**Above:** CASA Executive Director Leslee Mayers; **Right:** Linn County Circuit Court Judge Heidi Sternhagen; **Below:** Sean Morgan.



Sean Morgan, community resource officer for the Sweet Home Police Department, echoed Judge Sternhagen's comments, noting that he sees both sides of the issue. He sees law enforcement officers dealing with potentially abusive or destructive parents, as well as CASA volunteers trying to intervene for children. In his case, he and his wife are fostering her nephew and Morgan now sees the value of a CASA up close. He praised his nephew's CASA volunteer for his commitment and says that effort is paying off. His nephew is now doing well in school, in fact, he is at or above grade-level. "You are helping break the cycle of abuse," Morgan said. "You are standing up for the defenseless. You are doing good work, the

best work." Morgan said the work of CASA's means young people will be able to avoid the path of their parents. CASA executive director Leslee Mayers said that in Linn County there are 103 children being represented by CASA volunteers, which is about 45% of those in need. She said volunteer training can now be completed on-line, making it more convenient. Volunteers are asked to commit to at least two years' service. According to materials distributed at the luncheon, nearly 600,000 children nationwide will find themselves in foster care this year. The average child will spend about 20 months in foster care and will change homes three times.

A child with a CASA is half as likely to enter the foster care system, are more likely to succeed in school and less likely to spend three or more years in foster care. The good news is there are 76,000 CASA volunteers nationwide helping more than 251,000 children. The bad news is there are more than 400,000 children still waiting. The Linn County CASA Board of Directors are: Greg Anable, president; Rebekah Brown, secretary/vice-president; Tom Hatley, treasurer; Sylvia Ebbert, past president; Val Decker, Susan Marie Alquist, Chrystal Harris, Emily Harfouche and Brenda Wampler. To learn more about CASA of Linn County, how you can volunteer, or donate, visit [www.linncasa.org](http://www.linncasa.org), or call 541-926-2651.

# Carriage Me Back to 1923 May 6-7 in Brownsville

**B**ROWNSVILLE — They say, "the times they are a changing" and they sure were in 1923. The Great War "to end all wars" was over but there was no way back to the idyllic horse and buggy past. In 1923 women were voting! They were wearing pants and, gasp, smoking in public!



This year's "Carriage Me Back" in Brownsville will take us back to 1923 on Saturday, May 6 and Sunday, May 7.

Call the Linn County Museum at 541-466-3390 to reserve your place on the horse-drawn carriage for this year's entertaining docu-drama based on history and flavored with artistic license.

Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. An entire carriage — which holds 20 — can

be reserved for \$225.

In 1923, prohibition was the law of the land, creating a nation of scofflaws. Yes, Oregon was stuck in the mud, but there were stern souls determined to stand above the muck and create a cleaner, more prosperous future for Brownsville.

The ladies in banker

Thompson's Italianate Mansion are attempting to carry on as if all is well, planning a gathering for that distinguished archeologist who had just blown the dust off that tomb in far off Egypt.

Women, young and old, are polishing their social graces with Emily Post's rules of etiquette book, surely a guide for the troubling future seen dimly on the eastern horizon.

Climb aboard the 1923 Carriage,



understanding the past is key to the future.

After a three-year pandemic-induced hiatus, this beloved fundraiser for the Linn County Historical Museum is back in full swing.

Hop on the carriage and travel back in time to Brownsville in 1923.



# State Fire Marshal's Office offers fire safety webinars

**A**s summer nears, the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office is sponsoring a series of webinars to help families make their properties more fire resistant.

**May 3: noon – 1 p.m.**  
**Firewise USA: What motivates people to start a community**

It takes a community to rise to the challenge of wildfire in Oregon. Kick off Wildfire Awareness Month with a discussion about how communities can work better together on wildfire preparedness and how your community can take your neighborhood to the next level. Register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwpduyppjgiGdRPOsDX1xT-b6p73KAgBz9Gw>

**May 10: noon – 1 p.m.**  
**5 E's of CRR (focus on wildfire) – for fire service**

Our actions in the fire service are based on the national community risk reduction framework. Come join a discussion focused on applying the 5 E's to wildfire mitigation in Oregon communities. Register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMpdeirrT-soHN3CKcLcvxh9dTN4u-rD1PaE>

**May 16: Noon – 1 p.m.**  
**CWPP 101**  
Planning at the right levels leads to action in our communities. Come learn about the keystone planning tools for communities with wildfire risk: Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP). Whether you have an existing plan or want to

learn how to start one, join fellow wildfire planners for CWPP 101. Register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcvceCsrTMsGtzELx-iBN2HQyHs54LT9TDcz#/registration>

**May 24: Noon – 1 p.m.**  
**Emergency Preparedness**  
Evacuations during an emergency can happen in a matter of minutes. Are you prepared and ready to go at a moment's notice? Join the OSFM and the Department of Emergency Management and learn from the experts about all things evacuation preparedness. Get ready today to be prepared for tomorrow. Register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAqfuivpzMvH9dNhS-l0T94T4kAzSBzifB1>

**May 31: Noon – 1 p.m.**  
**Fire-resistant plants and flammable plants**

Add a splash of color and a bit of flair to your defensible space plan. Join the OSFM as we dive into fire-resistant plants. Some are better than others. We'll talk about which to add or keep and which could spell disaster. Register: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctdOihrtSqEtyohn\\_DhyJiZKNKRIgdpOks](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctdOihrtSqEtyohn_DhyJiZKNKRIgdpOks)

**June 14: Noon – 1 p.m.**  
**Public Safety Power Shut-off**  
Are you ready in the event of a public safety power shutoff? From food to medication, how do you

prepare for the lights to be turned off during dangerous weather conditions to prevent wildfires? Join us as we talk with the experts. Register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctfiurzgpEtaTaD-r7oc251Z1OCQjbgAK1>

**June 21: 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**  
**Fire season forecast**

There are many aspects that go into predicting a wildfire season. Will the snowpack and wet early spring have an impact on this fire season? Join us for a discussion with experts on how the 2023 fire season is shaping up. Register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZErfgCgrzktGtDFjExtjiTcs2z2Icr0wqxq>

It's flower time at the Linn County Juvenile Detention Center. View what's available and order at <https://new-beginnings-garden.myshopify.com/>

**May 2:** Annuals available. First-come, first-served. Customers will be notified by email when their order is ready to be picked up within 24 hours at the sallyport

**May 10:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., annuals/baskets/plants available on a trailer at Oak Creek facility, 4400 Lochner Road.

# Rebuilding homes in the Santiam Canyon ... From Page 1

In all, they have contributed more than 27,000 hours of labor, according to project coordinator Joe Nicholes, one of few paid staff members. The volunteers even pay their own way to Oregon, although they are housed at the Gates Church of Christ and a kitchen team feeds them well.

“Our motto is feed ‘em well, work ‘em hard and they will come back,” Nicholes said with a smile.

So far, two homes have been built on the Linn County side of the river and two more are planned next year.

Nicholes and his wife Mandy live in Virginia, but in the last year, they have been home only four weeks. His wife and their two daughters — ages 16 and 13 — are with him on this adventure and he said, they are loving the area. In fact, his daughters are volunteering by putting finishing touches on homes.

“We start in the Fall and we’ll soon have 10 homes going and they will be in various stages,” Nicholes said.

By Spring, each of the homes — ranging in size from 650 square feet to nearly 1,600 square feet — get wrapped up. The volunteers provide labor, but homeowners pay for materials and any items required by local rules such as using certified electricians and plumbers. In some states, the volunteers are allowed to handle all phases of the project.

Nicholes said this is his fifth year with the program and he has worked in Texas, Tennessee and Puerto Rico. He brings years of experience building log cabins to his new role. In the summer, unless there is an emergency somewhere, he builds emergency trailers at the CAM headquarters in Ohio.

“I knew when I was a kid that I wanted a job where I could help people,” Nicholes said. “I’m living that dream and my wife and family love it too.”

Nicholes admits it can be a challenge working with a new team of 15 volunteers every week. Three crew leaders and three cooks stay a month at a time. Volunteers come from all walks of life, from accountants to farmers and computer technicians.

“They are asked to fill out a survey of their skill levels,” Nicholes said. “Some weeks we get more done than other weeks, but it gets done.”

Mike Stair is pastor of the Gates Community Church, which was a focal point after the 2020 fires.

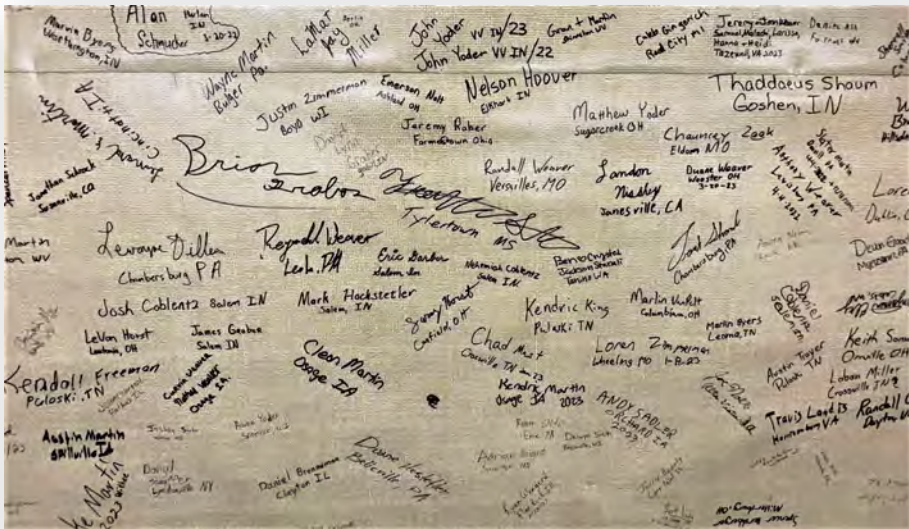
In 2021, Christian Aid Ministries approach Pastor Stair about using the church as the project headquarters.

Nicholes said he gets as much out of the program as the homeowners

“It feels so good to get to know the homeowners and to hear their stories,” Nicholes said. “Thursday nights, we get together with homeowners and they share



Eugene Den Daas, left, tells Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker, center, and Joe Nicholes of Christian Aid Ministries about his new home in Gates (Marion County). Den Daas, 62, has lived in a camping trailing almost three years. He plans to move into his new home in May. Below: Names of some of the 625 volunteers who have worked in the Santiam Canyon over the last two years and one of the new homes being framed up, right.



their stories.”

“It has been a wonderful thing,” Pastor Stair said. “It’s great for our community and it’s great for our church.

We get to know these folks from Christian Aid Ministries. Joe even

preached on Sunday while I was in the Midwest visiting my dad.”

The church and Christian Aid Ministries has been working with the Santiam Integration Team, coordinating things such as receiving \$10,000 worth of donated food over the last

two years. Folks in the canyon have also donated paper products such as paper towels and bathroom tissue.

Linn County Commissioner Will Tucker met with the team Thursday morning and pledged to deliver two pallets of potable water.”

“Almost three years after the fires, some people are still struggling,” Commissioner Tucker said. “Memories haunt people, adults and children alike.”

Immediately after the fires that burned several hundred thousand acres of private and public land, Linn County set up an emergency shelter at the Fair & Expo Center, Tucker told Nicholes and Pastors Stair. Over two weeks, the county housed 1,000 people, 1,000 large animals and 1,000 small animals.

Numerous community members donated everything from food to haircuts and medical care.

Nicholes shared a story that a national beer company once donated a considerable amount of canned drinking water.

The only problem was the cans looked like regular beer cans and the word “water” was pretty small and hard to read.

“People would drive by and see all of the volunteers drinking what they thought was beer,” Nicholes said. “It was funny, but we had to stop that.”

Nicholes said some volunteers and crew leaders have shown up more than once.

“This really puts life into perspective,” Nicholes said. “Every time I get home, I get rid of more stuff. It’s just stuff.”

Nicholes said his full-time crew leader is Hosea Miller and team secretary is Marlene Miller from Tennessee.

“We feel very blessed to be here,” Nicholes said. “This is a good community and we are very well-accepted. I’m glad we’re staying for another year.”

If you would like to learn more about Christian Aid Ministries, visit <https://christianaidministries.org/>.