



# Brian Carroll: City kid with a country heart

*Retirement means travel adventures await*

**By Alex Paul**  
*Linn County Reporter*

**A**LBANY — With 25 years' experience under his belt as the director of the Linn County Parks & Recreation Department, Brian Carroll can now say he was naïve when he accepted the position in May 1997 and didn't realize what following founding parks director Dyrol "Burley" Burleson meant. "I had no idea who Burley was," Carroll said.

It didn't take long for Carroll to get to know Burleson — an Olympic runner and world-class miler at the University of Oregon — and find out what it took to build a foundation for what arguably is the best county parks system in Oregon.

Total annual income was less than \$300,000 when Carroll came on board. As he heads into retirement, his successor will manage a budget of about \$3 million. And the Parks Department operates without General Fund money, a goal first realized several years ago. Income is derived from camping fees, RV/marine fees and grants. The Linn County Parks system now has more than 33 sites, more than 600 camping spurs, a marina, the historical Moyer



*Linn County Parks & Recreation Director Brian Carroll retired the end of December, but is helping out until his replacement is hired.*

House and a museum. Customers can do everything from watch a

movie in the boxcar theater at the Linn County Historical museum

to paddle board at Clear Lake or camp in a

**CARROLL ... See Page 5**



*A Linn County Road Department bridge crew worker replaces a cap on a bridge on Glass Driver, south of Tangent.*

# Bridge crew battles effects of aging timbers

**By Alex Paul**  
*Linn County Reporter*

**A**LBANY — Do you have any idea how many bridges there are in Linn County? 20? 50? 100?

You're likely not even close.

There are 335 bridges in Linn County according to Roadmaster Wayne Mink.

That figure includes 306 concrete bridges and a mixture of concrete pipe or box culverts, covered bridges, 10 steel bridges and five timber bridges.

"We even have one pedestrian suspension bridge," said Operations Manager Kevin Hamilton. "It's on Island Inn Drive east of Lacombe. It serves a couple residences."

Many of those bridges rely on timber for structural support and after decades of use, many of those are in various stages of deterioration.

It's the job of the five-person Linn County Road Department bridge crew to repair or replace deteriorated bridges or bridge members.

Mink said Linn County has traditionally been a timber county and so it's no surprise that many of the bridges that were built decades ago rely on timber piling and support caps."

Over the years, when Linn County had two bridge maintenance crews, several bridges could be updated annually. Now, with fewer timber revenue dollars and one bridge crew, the Road Department can repair about six bridges per year, depending on degree of deterioration and weather conditions. If autumn months are dry and water levels low, the crew can work later into the year.

Mink said any bridge in the county that is more than 20 feet long is eligible to be inspected every two years under a federal program. That work is performed by a third-party, Mink said.

"The Oregon Department of Transportation arranges the inspections," Mink said. "That information data is fed into the National Bridge Inventory."

**BRIDGES ... See Page 6**

# Internet safety tips from the Linn County Sheriff's Office

We know a lot of children out there received gifts for the holidays that allow them to access the internet. These include phones, tablets, computers, and other online capable devices. Knowing this, we wanted to share some online safety tips to help keep our children safe.

**Parents:**

- Monitor your children's screen time. Have them leave it on the counter at night time when they go to bed, so you are aware of when they are using their phone.
- Limit what apps you allow your child to use. Predators often use apps with chat features such as Snapchat, Instagram, Roblox, Yubo and Kik. They will often pose as another child to gain your child's trust, convincing them to send inappropriate pictures or meet them somewhere.
- Periodically check your child's phone to make sure there is nothing on there that concerns you. Make sure you know their passwords to apps.
- Most phones as well as cell phone providers have tools that allow you to control what apps your child can access, the amount of "screen time" they can have, times they can use their phone for online purposes and more.

**Kids:**

- Don't give anyone your password, name, address, the name of your school, or any information about your family.
- Don't talk to strangers on the Internet, even if they seem to be in your age group. You don't have to respond to strangers that try to talk to you.
- Don't agree to meet anyone in person that you've met online.
- Don't visit a chat room without a parent's permission.
- Don't stay online if you see something you think your parents won't like.
- Don't post pictures of yourself without your parents' permission.
- Do not download or install anything on your computer without your parents' permission.
- If you are unsure if your parents would approve of something, ask. They only have your best interests at heart.

As always, communicate with each other about internet usage and any concerns.

The ABC House, located in Albany,



offers a free Smart Cyber Choices training that will show you how adults can empower children and teens to use technology safely and wisely. We encourage you to sign up for these trainings by visiting: <https://www.abchouse.org/training>.

[www.abchouse.org/training](https://www.abchouse.org/training).

We hope you and your children find these tips useful and will help keep them safe online.

## Linn County Board of Commissioners

**Roger Nyquist**



**Sherrie Sprenger**



**Will Tucker**



**Call 541-967-3825**



## Early morning excitement

No Linn County deputies nor OSU Extension-Linn County staff were injured January 12 when a Ford Explorer ran into their Tangent offices. The accident happened about 6:30 a.m. Deputies were at the LCSO substation on the other side of the building, but were not injured. Linn County General Services staff closed up the open wall and have been evaluating possible permanent fixes. The Extension Service office was closed for a few days pending temporary repairs.



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**Would you like to receive the newsletter?**

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





Linn County Clerk Steve Druckenmiller, Sheriff Michelle Duncan and Commissioner Will Tucker.

# Local elected officials take oaths of office

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**A**LBANY — According to Linn County Circuit Court Presiding Judge Thomas McHill the swearing-in of elected officials is an important part of the democratic process. It marks the end of campaigning and the beginning of public service.

Tuesday, Jan. 3, Linn County’s elected officials — Clerk Steve Druckenmiller, Sheriff Michelle Duncan and Commissioner Will Tucker — took their oaths of office in McHill’s courtroom.

“It is the right thing to do, to hold a celebration such as this,” McHill said. Justice Court Judge Jessica Meyer administered the oath of office for Linn County Clerk Druckenmiller. It was his 10<sup>th</sup> such ceremony.

Meyer praised Druckenmiller for his “wisdom and knowledge of our election system.” She said she sought his counsel before seeking office and he has become a “great mentor and leader.”

Druckenmiller said when he came to work for the county in 1979, there was no camaraderie among staff members.

“People didn’t get along,” Druckenmiller said. “We have developed into one of the most well run and efficient counties in the state. We focus on cooperation, kindness and respect.”

He praised his staff and said they all showed up every day during the height of the pandemic.

“No one stayed home,” he said. “I love you guys. You are the best staff ever.”

Circuit Court Judge Rachel Kittson-MaQatish administered the oath of office for Commissioner Tucker.

She praised Tucker as someone who truly cares about others.

“He makes a friend wherever he is,” she said. “He helps everyone.” She called him a leader and pointed out his role in turning the Linn County Fair & Expo Center into an emergency shelter for people and animals during the Labor Day 2020 Santiam Canyon fires. Tucker and Judge Kittson-MaQatish worked together for several years on a fundraiser for military veterans and Tucker and his wife have been known to take families into their own home to help them in their time of need. Tucker is serving his fifth term in office.

Michelle Duncan was appointed sheriff a year ago upon the retirement of Sheriff Jim Yon.

She won election in November and is marking her 25<sup>th</sup> year with the Linn County Sheriff’s Office.

“She has been fully committed to every opportunity she has been given,” Judge Kittson-MaQatish said. “She is committed to keeping the peace with dignity, honor and compassion. It’s hard to keep the peace.”

Sheriff Duncan was sworn in by her children, Jacob and Kendall Leggate.

“The campaign was tough on my family, my staff and the county as a whole,” Sheriff Duncan said. “Linn County loves our Sheriff’s Office. I am thankful to the former sheriffs who supported me.”

Duncan said the campaign was at times “painful” but it showed her “how wonderful Linn County is.”

She added that her staff “kept their heads up and got the job done.”

She is now focused on mentoring staff. “There is nothing more rewarding than watching someone else grow professionally,” she said.



Commissioner Will Tucker takes the oath of office administered by Circuit Court Judge Rachel Kittson-MaQatish.



Jacob and Kendall Leggate administer the oath of office for their mother, Sheriff Michelle Duncan.



Above: Justice Court Judge Jessica Meyer administers the oath of office for Clerk Steve Druckenmiller. Below: Druckenmiller addresses the audience during the ceremony.





From 1979 Democrat-Herald ...  
The night Clear Lake  
Lodge burned

Linn County Planning & Building Department Director Steve Wills used to visit Clear Lake Resort often when he was a child. On one trip in the summer of 1979, his family was camping at U.S. Forest Service Campground Clear Water Cove on the south side of the lake when the lodge — built in the 1950s — caught fire and burned to the ground.  
“I was asleep, but the next day, we went over and looked around,” Wills said.  
The building was destroyed, as was a wooden rowboat the family had rented the day before. His parents took photos of the building’s remains and the damaged rowboat, shown below.  
In all, lodges at Clear Lake burned in 1931, 1950s and 1979.



# 5 in family barely escape blaze

By Peggy McMullen  
Democrat-Herald Writer

Five members of a family living at Clear Lake Lodge near Hoodoo Ski Bowl barely escaped a fire that destroyed the building early Sunday morning.  
A fast-moving fire destroyed the lodge — owned by the Association of Santiam Fish and Game Commission — shortly after 1 a.m. Sunday.  
The David Hartzell family of Oakridge, sleeping in the cabin when the fire broke out, managed to escape by dropping 20 feet from the second-story of the building, only moments before the building collapsed in flames.  
According to Hartzell’s mother, Geneva Hartzell of Rt. 2, Box 275AA, Albany, the five members of the family were sleeping upstairs when the fire started. At around 1 a.m., Mary Alice Hartzell, 31, and her daughter, Michelle, 10, heard a popping noise from the lower story and went to investigate. As the two reached the bottom of the stairs, Mrs. Hartzell put her hand on the door. The door, which was apparently unfastened, swung open and flames and smoke shot into the stairwell.



Mrs. Hartzell and her daughter ran upstairs. As they reached the top of the stairs, the bathroom in front of them was already on fire.  
Mrs. Hartzell yelled for her husband, David, 33, and their two sons, Robin, 11, and Jim, 17, to wake up.

Hartzell grabbed Robin and swung him out a window, dropping the boy 15 feet to the ground. He told Jim to follow. Meanwhile Mrs. Hartzell and Michelle went out a window and made their way across a singled eave, then dropped to the ground.

As Hartzell and Jim followed, the second story collapsed beneath them.

Campers near the cabin said they heard an explosion and as they rushed from their tents, saw the building engulfed in flames.

Mrs. Hartzell of Albany said she and her husband drove up to the cabin site, arriving at around 3 a.m. and took her son’s family to Lebanon Community Hospital, where all but Mary Alice Hartzell were treated and released. She was transferred to Albany General Hospital where she is in fair condition today with a fractured heel.

None of the family was burned.

The family was from Oakridge but had been living in the cabin for the summer. Mrs. Hartzell said they lost all of their possessions in the fire, including two family pets.  
“We’re just so happy they’re alive,” said Mrs. Hartzell of Albany today. “This has just been a nightmare. It is one of those things you think will never happen to you and then it does.”



Steve Wills’ parents took these photos of the damaged boat the family had used the day before the fire and the remains of the lodge.

## BRIAN CARROLL

### From Page 1

It's about 3,000 miles from Staten Island, New York, (population about 500,000) where Carroll grew up and Linn County, where Carroll fulfilled his goal of working in the outdoors — specifically parks.

“My dad took me hiking and backpacking as a kid,” Carroll said. “We hiked in the Catskills and the Adirondacks and along the way I met park rangers. By the time I was in junior high I knew I wanted to be a ranger. It was a cool job.”



Of Irish heritage, Carroll grew up in a heavily Italian-Jewish neighborhood and had a paper route, so he got to know nearly all of his neighbors. It was there he learned to appreciate the diversity of cultures in America. That diversity can be found at campgrounds across the county every summer.

Carroll said he was in junior high when he knew he wanted to explore the West. That's how he ended up in the wildland recreation management program at the University of Idaho.

In the summer months, he worked for the Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service in Washington, Wyoming and Nevada. His experiences ranged from working in the Okanogan Valley of northern Wash-



Carroll enjoys looking through the Clear Lake Resort scrapbook.

ington State — where he would ride his motorcycle into Canada on his days off — to a remote outpost at the Toyabe National Forest near Las Vegas, where the ranger station was at 8,000 feet elevation.

Carroll met his future wife, Linda, while at the University of Idaho. She grew up in a small farming town in Idaho. Linda was a high school teacher, but has spent almost 25 years with Linn-Benton Community College. She is now the Dean of Health Care. They have three grown daughters, Megan, Sierra and Savannah.

After college, Carroll landed a job with the Whitman County, Washington Parks Department in Pullman, where he spent nine years.

“We did everything from take care of the fairgrounds to set up interpretive programs,” Carroll said.

He was excited when the Linn County position opened up.

“I always thought I was going to be a back-



Backpacking trips with his father when he was young, piqued Brian Carroll's interest in all things outdoors, from mountain biking to hiking.

country ranger,” Carroll said. “I found you can have more immediate impact at the county level. We had vacationed in Oregon a lot and I knew this would be a good fit.”

Carroll said when he came to the Courthouse to do some research about the job, he met former County Treasurer Shannon Willard — who knew what he was up to before he even introduced himself.

Carroll said he and the Board of Commissioners have shared a key goal — to make the parks self-sufficient.

“We have added facilities such as River Bend, Clear Lake Resort, Edgewater Marina and Calkins Point Boat Ramp. We recently added the former Cascadia State Park and for several years we have managed the U.S. Forest Service campgrounds near Cascadia.”

Linn County acquired Clear Lake Resort from the Santiam Fish and Game Association for \$100,000 in 2007 and has made numerous upgrades since, including cabin renovations, the addition of yurts and moving a large fuel tank used to feed a generator away from the lake itself.

Carroll said none of that could have happened without an outstanding staff that has not grown significantly numbers wise.

“We have been fortunate to have a talented crew that could build things,” Carroll said. “We can leverage grant money with our labor and in turn, we have created some amazing facilities.”

He said former parks crew leader Richard Frick brought years of experience as a building contractor to the job as did several of his team members. They built numerous structures throughout the parks system. They could build projects at a fraction of the

cost faced by other parks departments.

Carroll said the development of the highly-popular 90-acre River Bend Campground that opened in 2005 and the many improvements at Clear Lake Resort are his favorite accomplishments, but adds that is due to “partnerships that began falling in place” between Linn County and other agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Forest Service.

“There is a lot of trust that has been developed over time and that has benefitted people across the board,” Carroll said. “What we have found is that people don't really care whose jurisdiction a park is under, they just want us to do a good job. Everything is clean, safe and in good working order.”

Carroll said the implementation of a Transit Lodging Tax by the county has helped provide more income stability for the parks in recent years.

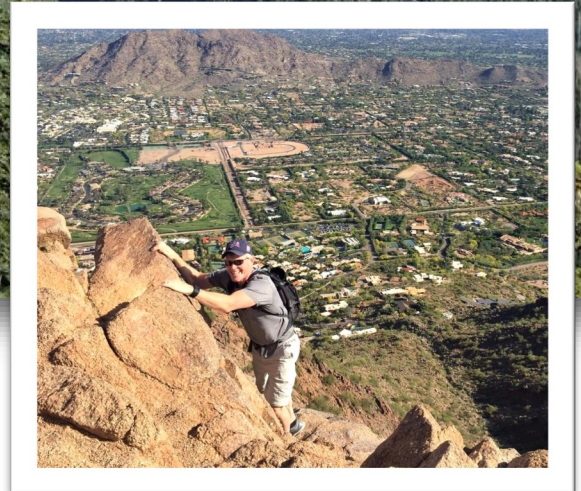
Whoever succeeds Carroll — a search is underway now — will have to jump into the job running.

“There are three grants in the works and implementation of the Lewis Creek Park planning project is ready to start coming to fruition,” Carroll said. “We still have the property on Seven Mile Lane that can be developed.”

The new director will also be faced with updating 50-year-old infrastructures at Sunnyside Park near Sweet Home and Waterloo County Park near Lebanon.

Carroll says travel — foreign and domestic — are his retirement goals, including a trip with his father to Ireland. He enjoys mountain biking and he and Linda plan to go camping right in the middle of summer, something that's been difficult to do the past 25 years.

“I am going to get to enjoy my summers,” Carroll said. “It's time. It's been a great career, a wonderful experience. I have truly enjoyed it because I have gotten to do a little bit of everything.”



One job experience Carroll never thought he would encounter was overseeing the Linn County Historical Museum in Brownsville.

“It reminds me a little of my fairgrounds work in Washington,” Carroll said. “We have a small paid staff and lots of volunteers. They do this because they love it, not because they make much money.”

Carroll said working with people who care so much “keeps me grounded.”

“I tried to give them the tools they need to get their jobs done and appreciate them,” Carroll said.

Linn County Commissioner Roger Nyquist said Carroll is the type of person who, “never cared about taking credit, or who got the credit — just about getting it done” and added, “Never, never did he over-promise, he just always seemed to over-deliver.”

Nyquist praised Carroll as “a quality person who attracted quality people to work with him.”

Fellow Commissioner Will Tucker said Carroll's successes are a vital economic driver for area communities.

“Brian has dramatically increased the number of people who come to Linn County to camp and fish,” Tucker said. “All of that means more jobs, more people coming to town to buy equipment and food.”

Carroll's work has been noticed at the national level as well as locally.

In 2014, Linn County received the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Excellence in Partnership Award, a national honor.

In 2022, when Linn County officially took possession of the historical Cascadia State Park, State Parks Director Lisa Sumption praised Linn County Parks.

“Brian, you do have the best county parks system,” and noted, “you set the bar really high for the state and the county.”

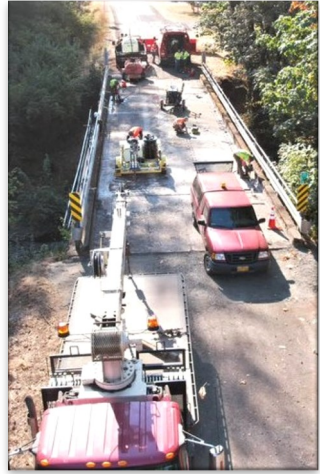
Carroll actually retired the end of December, but is working on contract until the new parks director is on board.

# BRIDGES

From Page 1

Bridges less than 20 feet long are inspected by Linn County staff.

Bridge inspections and load limits took on stricter standards after the passage of HB 2017, Mink said.



“We used to have seven or eight bridges that were weight

limited and now we have about 50 this year,” Kevin Hamilton said. “It isn’t that the bridges are deteriorating faster, it’s that the evaluation system has changed statewide. People will see more weight limit signs being posted.”

The Linn County Road Department operates with funds from gas taxes and timber revenues — which have dwindled in recent years. The Road Department does not receive any General Fund tax dollars.

“HB 2017 was supposed to include money, but so far it’s been a lot of stick and very little carrot,” Mink said.

Mink said another issue affecting bridges is that trucks and farm equipment are getting heavier.

Damage to a roadway is greater if a short truck is hauling 80,000 pounds compared to a semi hauling the same amount of weight.

“Emergency vehicles such as fire trucks are also getting much bigger,” Mink said.

Hamilton said priority of repairs is based on “the severity and nature of decay.”

Hamilton said Kevin Groom is a registered Professional Engineer (PE) with over 30 years prior bridge design experience, including the private sector and ODOT. He saves Linn County money by designing most of the bridge repair projects in-house.

Mink said that even if federal and state dollars poured into county road programs designated for bridges, it would take some time before the number of bridge contractors would ramp up adequately.

“Right now, there are probably 10 qualified bridge contractors in the state,” Mink said. “There are more than 7,000 bridges in Oregon.”

Hamilton said finding qualified staff is also an issue.

“Three of our five bridge crew staff have been with us three years or less,” Hamilton said. “The loss of timber revenue was a big hit. We are basically operating with the same budget as 20 years ago, but with much higher costs. Everything is more expensive.”

Groom said the general public needs to become more aware of bridge issues due to the shifting regulations regarding load limits.

“People need to actually pay attention to the reader boards we put up and watch our website for road closure information,” Groom said.



**Above:** Road Department staff install shear studs on a bridge on Lulay Road near Scio.



**Right:** Temporary cap installation on a bridge on Glass Drive.

**Bottom:** Road Department work on a cap replacement on a bridge on Glass Drive.





## Concerned about dams, water management

**S**WEET HOME — About 60 people filled the Sweet Home Senior Center Jan. 11 for a public hearing concerning the long-term management plans for Foster and Green Peter Reservoirs. Staff from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presented an overview of the various potential management plans and then met individually with people at information tables throughout the room. Because the management plans will affect all 13 mid-Willamette projects, similar meetings were held in Eugene, Springfield and Stayton. Information about the management plans is contained in a 2,200-page document known as the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement that was last updated in 1980. The current document took three years to develop. The Corps of Engineers is making changes due to a federal judge’s order concerning fish passage issues at dams. The Corps’ preferred plan for Foster and Green Peter Reservoirs would see Green Peter’s water level dropped by several hundred feet by the end of summer and remain at that level until spring. The goal is to lower Green Peter’s water level to the point it makes out-migration of juvenile salmon easier. Scientists believe fish migration increases if the water level is near the outlet levels in the dams. Anglers were concerned that migration will not only include salmon, but kokanee and bass as well. Experts said that is likely true, but the remaining fish should grow larger due to less competition for food. The preferred alternative carries an estimated annual price tag of \$52 million. The comment period will end at 11:50 p.m. on Thursday, February 23.

— Information courtesy The New Era newspaper

## Old friends visit in Linn County

**B**ishop Eliudi Issangya of Tanzania, Africa, visited his friend Commissioner Will Tucker last week. Bishop Issangya operates schools, medical clinics and an orphanage in the village of Sakila — population 4,000 — and Commissioner Tucker and his family, as well as other mid-valley residents, provide financial support and volunteer labor. For example, in 2018, Samaritan Health Services donated numerous hospital scrubs to the Sakila medical clinic and volunteers from River Center church in Lebanon have completed electrical projects on-site. Bishop Issangya has spent 35 years planting 1,600 churches and 7,000 pastors in his homeland. There are more than 1,000 students at local schools. It is summer in Tanzania and last week’s chilly weather didn’t go unnoticed by the Bishop, who was going to visit sponsors in Montana next. He went shopping for warm clothes while in Linn County.



## Ric Lentz is new SAR leader

**R**ic Lentz is the new LCSO Search and Rescue coordinator. He succeeds long-time coordinator Sgt. Joe Larsen. Lentz joined Linn County Sheriff’s Office as the Emergency Manager in August 2021, and he’s worked with SAR on numerous missions in addition to his emergency management responsibilities. Originally from Florida, Lentz spent several years in emergency services working with different national parks. Lentz’s most recent position before joining the Linn County Sheriff’s Office was as a Law Enforcement and SAR/EMT Park Ranger at Crater Lake National Park. During his time with us, Lentz has made a point of emphasizing cross-trainings between local teams and using his park service experience to adapt with changes in search and rescue trends. Most recently, to address the rising number of medical emergencies in wilderness areas, Lentz spearheaded the creation and certification of a medical response team within Linn County SAR. Sheriff Michelle Duncan said, “We look forward to working with Ric as our new SAR Coordinator and are excited for his leadership in continuing to improve and grow our capabilities.”



## 2023-2025 Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) awards announcement for Linn County

By Reagan Maudlin, Special Rural Transportation Coordinator

Linn County wishes to acknowledge and congratulate the 23-25 Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) recipients.

STIF funds are comprised of two categories each reflecting unique requirements and priorities. Linn County is diligent in understanding and considering broad factors when it comes to designating funds. Linn County is dedicated to stewarding public dollars in the most equitable way possible with the entirety of Linn County held as a priority. Linn County, in its entirety, is our "community," and we are honored to serve our community.

**STIF Population funds (traditionally, Special Transportation Funds or STF)** are open to a variety of transportation providers including non-profits and client only services. STIF Population projects are aimed at directly benefiting the elderly and persons with disabilities. The estimated 23-25 allocation for STIF Populations funds amounts to \$670,821.



### We congratulate the following recipients of 23-25 STIF Population Funds:

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Albany Paratransit/Call-A-Ride                  | \$50,000  |
| 2. Lebanon/LINX                                    | \$138,821 |
| 3. Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments     | \$36,000  |
| 4. Oregon Mennonite Residential Services           | \$15,000  |
| 5. Sunshine Industries Unlimited, Inc.             | \$65,000  |
| 6. Senior Citizens of Sweet Home Inc. Dial-A-Bus   | \$50,000  |
| 7. Senior Citizens of Sweet Home Inc. Linn Shuttle | \$196,000 |
| 8. Volunteer Caregivers                            | \$120,000 |

Each recipient of STIF Population Funds has a history of serving Linn County as prior recipients of Special Transportation Funds (STF). They have demonstrated a long-time commitment to providing quality services for more vulnerable populations and have a reputation of giving life changing rides. Our sincere gratitude to the recipients for continuing in the important work that they do.

**STIF Payroll Funds** are only open to Public Transportation Service Providers and intergovernmental entities. They are aimed at improving and/or expanding public transportation services and continuing to support STIF funded improvements and/or expansions to date. The call for STIF Payroll projects resulted in an overwhelming response with every proposal reflecting a sensitivity to the needs of Linn County and an ambition to improve their services. All of the applications have been of high quality and impressive in scope. Due to the limited resources, the funds are insufficient to meet every ambition. The selection process is handled with deliberation and sensitivity to all criteria included in the process. These are very difficult to decide as all the proposals have been worthy of funding and, unfortunately, no one was able to be granted their full ask. The estimated 23-25 allocations for STIF Payroll funds amounts to \$4,361,150.

### We congratulate the following recipients of 23-25 STIF Payroll Funds:

**Linn County Program Development and Admin** **\$215,000**  
Expenses associated with Linn County serving the required role as the Qualified Entity

**Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments** **\$50,000**

Seamless Transit, maintains existing bus tracking software and public user interface. This project began in 21-23 and has yielded successful results with ease of information access and navigation tools for public transportation riders.

**Senior Citizens of Sweet Home Inc./Linn Shuttle** **\$880,000**

An ongoing, existing, Linn County commuter service project representing Sweet Home, Lebanon, and Albany. The Linn Shuttle has been successful in service expansion beginning in 2019-2021 and continues to maintain the successful service expansion to date.

**Senior Citizens of Sweet Home Inc./Dial-A-Bus** **\$502,000**

Project maintains existing Dial-A-Bus Services, a door to door service that connects passengers to other public transportation routes/providers and serves to help many people retain living independently in their homes without more costly interventions.

**Project 8 City of Albany Linn Benton Loop** **\$99,000**

Project maintains ongoing Linn-Benton Loop services and is jointly funded with Benton County. This service takes riders between Albany and Corvallis. In combination with other services, it serves an important role in connecting riders to public transportation options in Benton County significantly expanding the geographic area Linn and Benton County residents can reach by public transport.

**Project 9 City of Albany Loop Expansion** **\$683,000**

Project maintains successful STIF funded Loop expansion services that began in 2021.

**Project 10 City of Albany ATS Expansion** **\$1,276,850**

Selected as the only new expansion for 23-25, this project is an ongoing effort to expand the Albany Transit System services anticipated to launch in 2023.

**Project 11 Lebanon/LINX** **\$1,618,000**

Project includes a variety of Lebanon public transportation services including: inner city fixed route services, paratransit services, and a pilot expansion effort launched in 23-25 to reach the citizens of Brownsville and connect them to the other communities in Linn County.

Linn County expresses their sincere gratitude for the hard work and dedication of our public transportation providers in their service to the community of Linn County in the transportation sector. Additionally, Linn County applauds our public transportation services providers for their ongoing commitment to work collaboratively with one another creating a system that is interconnected and extends transportation services to as large an area of Linn County as possible.

Linn County has additional STIF awards to announce at a later time as the STIF Plan reflects match funds reserved for capital needs requests from the above named public transportation providers for: bus acquisitions, site improvements, and stop improvements. \$400,000 is reserved to allocate for these match requests pending the outcomes of their source funding.

The STIF Plan also reflects a minimal reserve to buffer challenges in future biennia; \$600,000 for Payroll projects and \$15,000 for Population (STF) projects in 2025-2027.

ODOT economists have said they predict a potential increase in STIF allocations for the 23-25 biennium, the reserve accounts have been inflated by 20% of the current estimate to capture those funds *should they actualize*. That's a potential of an additional \$1,006,394 combined between Population funds and Payroll funds captured in the STIF Plan for allocation during the 23-25 biennium. Payroll Funds received in excess of the 23-25 STIF Payroll estimates have the first priority to support the Albany ATS expansion efforts to close a gap in needed resources for success. We are excited and proud of Albany's efforts to revamp their services and hope for resources to allow us to increase support throughout the biennium.



### Ouch!

*Lots of rain and some pretty good winds recently sent a tree toppling into a building that contains sand at the Sweet Home Road Department compound. Crews quickly removed the downed tree and repairs are pending.*





OSU Extension — Linn County

# Regional fire specialist joins OSU Extension

By Alex Paul  
Linn County Reporter

**T**ANGENT — Kayla Bordelon knows she has a big job ahead of her as one of six Regional Fire Specialists recently hired by the Oregon State University Extension Service.

But she's excited about the challenge.

Bordelon started working out of the Tangent office in September and is getting to know people in her 11-county area — from The Dalles to southern Lane County.

The fire program was approved by the Legislature in 2019 with a goal of supporting more cross-boundary work, plus increasing education and outreach opportunities statewide.

Bordelon has always been interested in environment issues, but she is also intent on studying how people interact with their environment, especially in the face of climate change and intensifying wildfires.

"I come from a family that understands wildfire," Bordelon said. "My dad worked for the Oregon Department of Forestry and my brother is a wildland firefighter."

Bordelon earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Puget Sound in 2007, and later a Master of Science in Natural Resources (2018) and a Ph.D. in Environmental Science (2022) from the University of Idaho in 2018 and 2022 respectively.

"I'm a social scientist," Bordelon said. "How can communities adapt to climate change and wildfires, while supporting people?"

Bordelon said central and eastern Oregon have experienced wildfires on a more annual basis than western Oregon due to their drier, warmer summers. With climate change, as western Oregon experiences drier, hotter summers, wildfire dangers increase, Bordelon said.

And since western Oregon forests are more densely forested, and develop more underbrush and forest floor debris due to more annual rainfall, the intensity of fires can be much greater.

"We can modify wildfire behavior, but we need to pick up the pace," Bordelon said. "Fuels reduction practices like mechanical thinning and prescribed burn can help moderate fire behavior, which is especially important around high value areas, like human communities."

Bordelon is focusing her work as a Regional Fire Specialist in three key areas:

- Deliver public education and outreach with partners, such as Fire Districts, to implement trainings for community members to understand wildfire and make decisions about reducing community exposure.
- Equipping people with tools and resources mitigate risk.
- Supporting land management

**QUOTABLE**  
*"I'm a social scientist. How can communities adapt to climate change and wildfires, while supporting people?"*

partners, such as the Oregon Department of Forestry, county planners and others to carry out community risk reduction projects that are cross-boundary and have landscape level effects.

- Key topics in the OSU Extension Fire Program work include: collaborative natural resource management, community wildfire preparedness, wildland fuel reduction and fire management, prescribed burning, timber and range management

treatments to build fire resistance and resilience, post-burn recovery and workforce development.

Bordelon said she wants to support landscape level fire risk reduction efforts.

"I partner with the U.S. Forest Service, NRCS, Oregon Department of Forestry and others," she said.

Bordelon has experience working with both the Forest Service and the National Parks Service. She also spent time in the Peace Corps in Central America.

Bordelon said Oregonians have long made plans concerning living with earthquakes and they should also develop dialogues about living with wildfires.

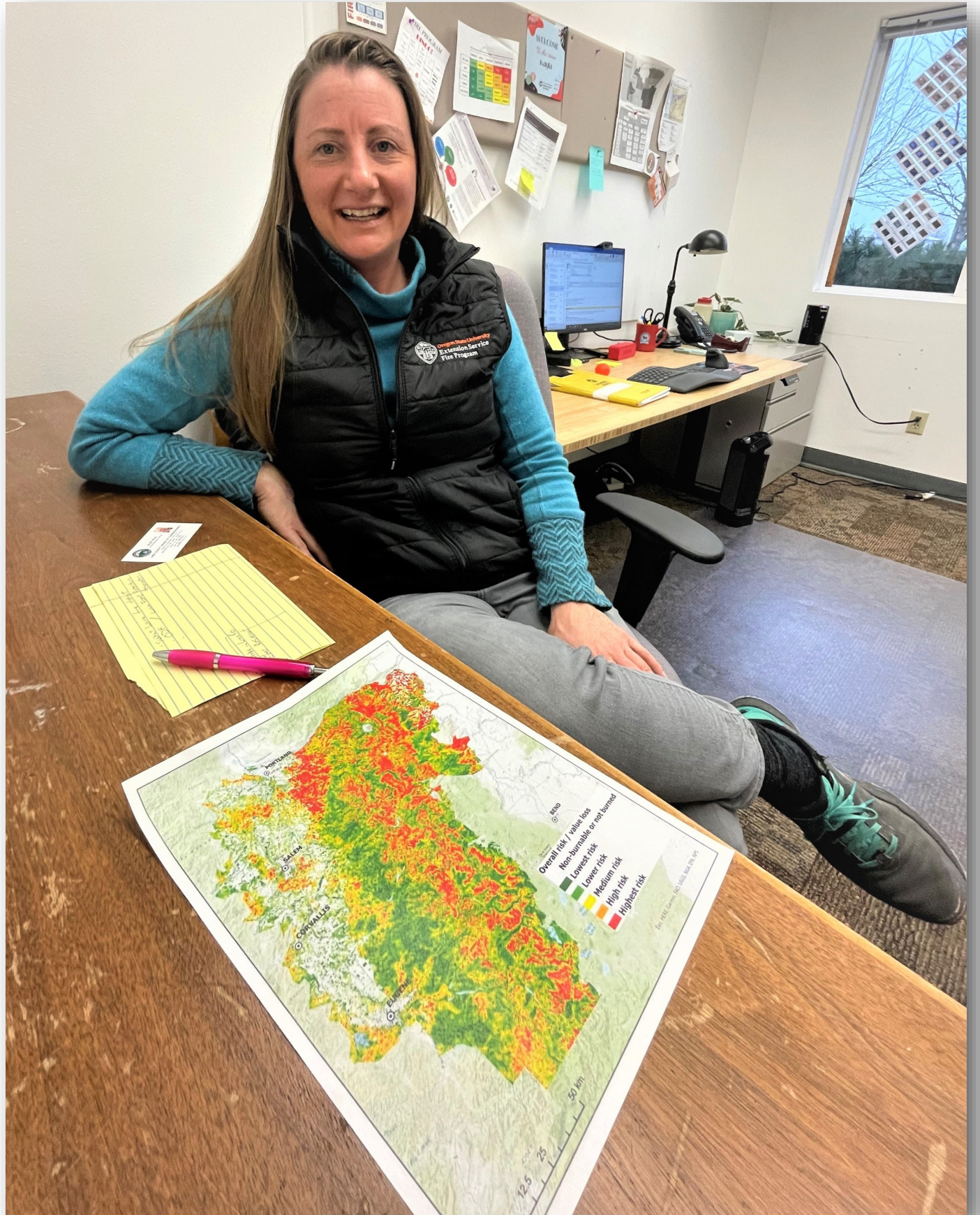
"Wildfires are going to happen,"

she said. "We must understand the best way to plan and react. The 2020 wildfires were big eye openers for people."

Bordelon said her new job is a perfect fit for her skills. She will spend the bulk of her time interacting with community members and about 10% of her time with research projects.

"Right now, I'm listening and learning," Bordelon said. "I want to understand what community needs and priorities are."

Making fire plans starts with understanding that "not all fires are the same," Bordelon said. "There is good fire and bad fire." "Good" fires can be low ground fires that clear areas of brush, serving as a "cleaning service" for the forest and preventing catastrophic fire outcomes during extreme weather events.



Kayla Bordelon is the new Regional Fire Specialist covering an area from The Dalles to southern Lane County. She is shown with a fire map of her coverage area.



## Learning how local government works

Linn County Clerk Steve Druckenmiller, left, and Commissioner Will Tucker, talked to student leaders sponsored by the Albany Chamber of Commerce on January 11. Students were shown a video about how county governments work, prepared by the Association of Oregon Counties and were given a more up close look at Linn County government by the local elected officials. They also visited Linn County Circuit Courts on their visit to the Courthouse.

## IT Department connects Health Annex

By Steve Braaten  
IT Director

Precision Fiber has completed the 10GB Single Mode fiber installation between the Courthouse and the Health Annex.

This new fiber gives us a 10x speed increase to the Health Annex and allows us to finally modernize the Annex server room to meet any current and near-future

network demands. The connection will also greatly benefit the Health Annex site, providing faster network speeds to site network switches and thereafter to the end users.

This project has taken us much longer to complete due to an out-of-date Pacific Power lashing agreement, global fiber supply outages and then schedul-

ing conflicts between Precision Fiber/Core Source Utilities/and Linn County.

Thankfully all issues have been addressed and as a result, we now have a new fiber connection that will provide years of benefit to Linn County.

Thanks go to the Linn County Network and Server Team: Karen Guilford, Mike Armstrong, Rob Hooper, and Lily Daudert.



Thanks for reading the Linn  
County Reporter

Please send story ideas to Alex  
Paul at [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us)

## Busy year for Linn County Sheriff's Office

2022 was another busy year for the Linn County Sheriff's Office. Deputies responded to 32,938 calls for service resulting in 5,020 reports being taken. Arrests for crimes and "non-traffic citations" (violation Possession of drugs, minor in possession of alcohol, warrants that are ordered to be cited, etc.) totaled 4,128. Deputies responded to 467 injury crashes and 534 non-injury crashes throughout the county. Deputies issued 2,235 traffic citations and 2,604 warnings.

## Peter Freitag joins IT staff

ALBANY — Peter Freitag, 41, has joined the Linn County IT Department as a systems administrator.

Freitag is a 2000 graduate of South Albany High School and has taken classes at Linn-Benton Community College.

He is a lifelong computer user and has worked for companies in Eugene and Corvallis. Most recently he was with Cyber Lock in Corvallis, which manufactures electronic locks.

The Albany resident says he enjoys computer work because he enjoys solving problems.

He has specialized in software support and testing for several years.

When he isn't working, Freitag enjoys playing video games.

"We selected Peter from among 30 applicants," IT Director Steve Braaten said. "He is the most qualified and will be a great fit."



Peter Freitag

Braaten added that Freitag, "has excellent PC support skills and is committed to customer support."



## Thank you, Emma!

Friday, the Linn County Sheriff's Office was honored to join the Albany Police Department and Kindness 911 in recognizing Emma Cranston for her fundraising \$50,000 for Doernbecher Children's Hospital.

Emma is a 10-year-old cancer survivor from Albany, who wanted to do something to raise money for other kids who were going through the same things she had. Being an avid baker, Emma started by selling scones to raise money. This small operation quickly turned into much more.

With the help of Fred Meyer and Franz, Emma was able to help create "Emma's Donuts".

Emma created the donut design and they



were sold at over 60 Fred Meyer bakery locations around the Pacific Northwest. All the proceeds from the donut sales went directly to Doernbecher's. Emma was able to make a \$50,000 donation.

Kindness 911 presented Emma a "Kindness Citation" which will allow her to make another donation courtesy of Kindness 911 to a charity of her choice.



# Strawberry Cheesecake Bites

Courtesy: allrecipes

Looking for a special treat for your special someone this Valentine's Day?

Strawberries are stuffed with a cream cheese filling for a cute two-bite dessert. Can be prepared the night before, but not much earlier than that as the berries may become soggy.

**Prep Time:** 20 mins

**Cook Time:** 5 mins

**Additional Time:** 20 mins

**Total Time:** 45 mins

**Servings:** 12

## Ingredients

- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese
- ½ cup confectioners' sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 12 large fresh strawberries, hulled
- 2 tablespoons graham cracker crumbs
- 2 (1 ounce) squares semisweet chocolate chips (Optional)
- 1 teaspoon canola oil (Optional)

## Directions

- Line a baking sheet with waxed paper.
- Beat cream cheese, confectioners' sugar, and vanilla extract in a bowl until smooth.
- Spoon the mixture into a piping bag fitted with a large round tip.
- With a sharp paring knife, cut a cone shape out of the top of each strawberry to leave a small hollow.
- Pipe about 1 tablespoon of the cream cheese filling into each strawberry, making sure that the filling overflows a bit out of the top of the strawberry.
- Place the graham cracker crumbs into a shallow bowl. Dip the filled side of the strawberry into the graham cracker crumbs, coating the exposed filling with crumbs.
- Melt the chocolate and canola oil in a microwave-safe glass or ceramic bowl in 30-second intervals, stirring after each interval, until warm and smooth, 1 to 3 minutes (depending on your microwave).
- Dip the unfilled ends of the strawberries into the melted chocolate and place on the prepared baking sheet;



## Commissioners get update on controlling agricultural weeds

**A**LBANY — Linn County prides itself on being the “grass seed capital of the world”, but not every grass is a good grass.

In fact, certain grasses are considered weeds, OSU Extension crop



specialist Christy Tanner told Linn County Commissioners Will Tucker and Sherrie Sprenger Tuesday morning.

Tanner updated the commissioners — Chairman Roger Nyquist was not present — on her work studying methods to control “roughstalk bluegrass” in mid-valley grass seed fields.

Tanner said weeds are harmful in two key ways — they rob the soil of vital nutrients and water that could feed grass seed crops, ultimately reducing yields and weed seeds contaminate “good” seed that can lead to reduced harvest prices and increased seed cleaning costs.

Roughstalk bluegrass is a cool-season perennial grass (which means it can germinate for several years in a row) that is commonly found in the Midwest.

Tanner said it is unknown how it got to the mid-valley, although some believe it was transported here on farm equipment.

It thrives in wet, cool climates like Oregon.

Tanner said some of her projects focus on identifying roughstalk bluegrass infestations with a drone and high-definition camera that can differentiate many spectrums of colors and infrared. Roughstalk bluegrass appears to have a “neon green” color.

Tanner said OSU research is also looking at which herbicides are most effective with roughstalk bluegrass control as well as advanced methods to apply herbicides (weed killing chemicals).

Those methods include using a drone equipped with a camera and GPS system to pinpoint roughstalk bluegrass plants and matching the data compiled with high-tech spraying equipment that directs the herbicide on only the weed and beneficial neighboring grasses, or to only spray between crop rows.

Tanner also talked about vole infestations, a common problem in the mid-valley.

She is also using a drone and camera system to pinpoint heavy vole crop damage and is seeing a 90% accuracy rate.



## Renewing their oaths

**W**hen a sheriff is elected or re-elected, every sworn deputy retakes their oath to fulfill their law enforcement duties under the sheriff's new term of office.

With Sheriff Duncan's election, each sworn deputy must also receive new commission cards which serves as proof of identification to perform law enforcement duties under her authority.

At LCSO we believe our non-sworn employees are just as valuable to our team and encourage them take part in this important ceremony.

To accommodate all employees and their schedules, numerous swearings-in are held within the first few weeks of the new year.

# Emergency SNAP payments end soon

Oregon Health Authority

February is the last month the federal government will allow Oregon to issue expanded pandemic emergency food benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Households that receive SNAP will continue to receive their regular SNAP benefits after February.

If you or someone you know needs low-cost or free food, these resources remain available:

- Check out Oregon Food Bank’s food finder tool for help finding a food pantry in your area.
- Call 211, text your zip code to 898-211, or search at [www.211info.org](http://www.211info.org)
- A variety of food resources are available through Oregon Department of Human Resources.
- Older adults and people with disabili-

SNAP emergency food benefits are ending soon, and we know it’s stressful.

**We’re here to help you through this.**

If you have questions, call the ONE Customer Service Center at **1-800-699-9075** or visit your local Oregon Department of Human Services office.



ties seeking food resources can check out Aging and Disability Resource Connection of Oregon; 1-855-673-2372.

• Contact your local Community Action Agency for food resources and support.

If you have questions about your SNAP benefits, call 1-800-699-9075, Mon. to Fri., 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

To learn more, read the news release from Oregon Department of Human Services: <http://ow.ly/NA3L50Mux9L>

# FY 2023-24 budget process begins Feb. 9

ALBANY — Linn County staff and elected officials will begin building the 2023-24 budget with a Financial Outlook Zoom meeting at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 9, according to Linn County Administrative Officer Darrin Lane.

In a memo, Lane said elected officials, department heads and Budget Committee members will discuss the financial outlook for FY2023-24 as well as the next three years. Lane said this will be an opportunity to review and discuss the long-range financial outlook and goals, objectives and priorities for the county.

The first in-person meeting will be at 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 2, Room 200. Budget Officer Michelle Hawkins will provide guidance and fund limits to affected staff. “Growth” budget items will be listed separately.

Improvement projects for buildings managed by General Services must be coordinated prior to data submission.

Data must be to the Budget Officer by close of business on Friday, April 14.

All departments/offices must have their individual information to the Budget Officer no later than Friday, April 21 so that information can be assembled into books for Budget Committee members.

Budget presentations will be made from Monday, May, 1 through Friday, May 5, at the Linn County Fair & Expo Center.

A budget decision is expected to be made by May 5 and the budget is scheduled for adoption on Tuesday, June 27.

# Marine patrol deck hand wanted

Applications are being accepted for Marine Patrol Deck Hand for the Linn County Sheriff’s Office.

Duties include assisting the Marine Patrol Deputy in enforcement of boating laws and ordinances, investigation of boating accidents, water-based search, rescue and recovery opera-

tions, identification and/or removal of navigational hazards and addressing vessel operation.

This is a seasonal, temporary position to fill a contract with the Oregon State Marine Board. Typically, this position will run from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend time periods



(late May through early September). Position duration is subject to change. For more information and to apply, visit <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/linnsheiff/>



# Smile, everyone!

Staff from the Linn County District Attorney’s Office recently took time to have a group photo taken. If your office would like individual or group photos taken, please contact Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, at 541-967-



# Juvenile Department youth learning about hatching eggs

Check out the newest project at the Linn County Juvenile Detention in partnership with OSU Extension-Linn County.

The team received 12 chicken eggs from Oregon State University’s 4H Embryology program.

Young people have been monitoring the eggs and learning about caring for them until hatching

