



Child winner: Brodie Gangle, Age 6, won a \$25 gift card.



Adult winner: Larissa Gangle won a one-year Brownsville Times print subscription.

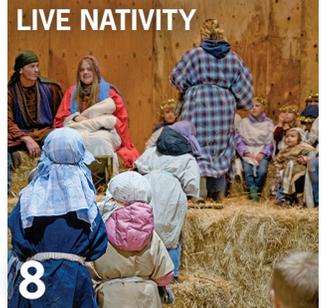
### INSIDE

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## Holiday Open House Planned at the Moyer House

BROWNSVILLE — The historic Moyer House will open its doors to the public Dec. 26–27 for a holiday open house hosted by the Women’s Study Club. Visitors are invited to step inside the beautifully decorated home and experience seasonal decor inspired by Christmas traditions of the past. Snow or shine, the landmark home at 204 N. Main St. in Brownsville offers a festive setting and a chance to enjoy local history during the holiday season. The open house will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days. ❁



COURTESY OF LISA KEITH



MIKAYLE STOLE

## Christmas Parlour Tour Continues Albany Preservation Tradition

By Mikayle Stole, Editor



MIKAYLE STOLE

Dr. Hulin House, a distinguished French Second Empire home built in 1879, glows with holiday lights as visitors gather on the front porch.

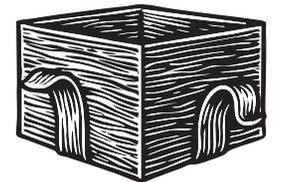
ALBANY — Albany’s 46th Annual Christmas Parlour Tour offered visitors a festive and intimate look inside the city’s architectural past during the Sunday, Dec. 14 event, continuing a preservation tradition that has connected the community with historic homes for more than four decades.

Hosted by the Monteith Historical Society, the Parlour Tour is part of Albany’s Historic Interior Home Tours program, which began in 1978 with

PARLOUR continued on page 2

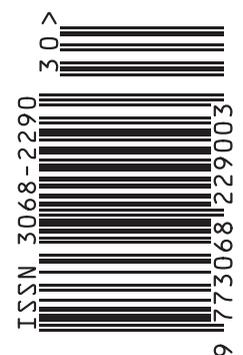


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## ONGOING EVENTS

### Not Your Grandma's Bingo

Mondays, Nov–Mar. 2, 2026 • 6:30–8 p.m.

Dixie Creek Saloon, 32994 OR-99E, Tangent

Tangent Together hosts an adults-only bingo night featuring cheeky humor, cash prizes, and \$1 game cards. Ages 21+ only.

### Free Coffee, Donuts, & Fellowship

Wednesdays • 9:30 a.m. at Central Valley Church, 657 American Drive (not a church sponsored event).

### Not Rocket Science Trivia

Thursdays • 6:30 p.m. (ongoing) • Free

Dixie Creek Saloon, 32994 OR-99E, Tangent

Weekly pub trivia with bragging rights on the line. Bring a team and play every Thursday night.

### Karaoke Saturdays at The Honey Hole

Saturdays • 7 p.m. • 10 W 1st St, Halsey

Sing your heart out every Saturday night! Enjoy \$3 Coors draft specials and a \$15 club wrap with fries while you take the stage.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Christmas by Candlelight

Wednesday, Dec. 24 • 6 p.m. • First Baptist Church  
27910 Seven Mile Lane, Brownsville

Join First Baptist Church for its annual candlelight Christmas service, featuring hymns, a devotional message, and the singing of "Silent Night" as candles are lit throughout the worship center. All are welcome. 541-642-3000

<https://www.fbcbrownsvilleoregon.org>



### Moyer House Holiday Open House

Friday–Saturday, Dec. 26–27 • 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

Moyer House, 204 N. Main St., Brownsville

The historic Moyer House will be decorated for the holidays and open to the public during a festive open house hosted by the Women's Study Club. Visitors are invited to tour the home and enjoy seasonal decor inspired by Christmas traditions of the past.

### Silver Screen Cinema:

#### "A Farewell to Arms"

Friday, Dec. 26 • 7 p.m. • American Legion Hall, 339 N Main St, Brownsville

Enjoy a post-holiday classic on the big screen with a special showing of the 1932 film adaptation of Ernest Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms," starring Gary Cooper and Helen Hayes. Arrive a little early for seating.

### Winter Whale Watch Week

Saturday–Wednesday, Dec. 27–31 • 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Multiple locations along the Oregon Coast

Trained Oregon State Parks volunteers will be stationed at 14 coastal sites to help visitors spot gray whales during their southbound migration. The Whale Watching Center in Depoe Bay will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

<https://stateparks.oregon.gov> for sites



### New Year's Eve Party

Wednesday, Dec. 31 • 6 p.m. • (541) 248-3060

Dixie Creek Saloon, 32994 Hwy 99E, Tangent

Ring in the New Year in Tangent with live music by Unfamiliar Friends and \$3 specials on all canned beer.

See page 12 for Brownsville Library events

## STAY CONNECTED WITH CENTRAL LINN!

Discover upcoming events or add your own to our community calendar:

<https://brownsvilletimes.org/community-calendar>

## PARLOUR *continued from cover*

a mission of sharing the city's heritage one home at a time. Organized by a volunteer committee, the tours celebrate craftsmanship, restoration, and the role homeowners play as caretakers of Albany's historic structures.

The Christmas Parlour Tour, held each December, complements the Summer Interior Home Tour traditionally held on the last Saturday in July. While the summer tour often highlights restoration projects and homes in progress, the December event offers a warmly decorated glimpse into Albany's historic districts, blending architecture with holiday traditions.

During this year's tour, homeowners across the city graciously opened their parlors to visitors, welcoming them into spaces showcasing original woodwork, period details, and thoughtfully curated Christmas decor. Several homes featured themed Christmas trees and seasonal collections, while docents and homeowners shared stories of preservation work and family history.



The Monteith House was stop nine on the Historic tour.

The Monteith House, Albany's oldest frame home, was decorated to reflect mid-1800s Christmas traditions, offering insight into how the holiday may have been celebrated in the city's earliest days.

Visitors also stepped inside the Presbyterian Church and Whitespires Church, where holiday decor and music contributed to the seasonal atmosphere. At the Carnegie Library, guests gathered near one of the building's two fireplaces as a reader shared "Twas the Night Before Christmas," creating a quiet, storybook moment in one of Albany's most treasured public spaces.

Both the summer and Christmas tours support the Monteith House Museum, a cornerstone of local preservation. Participation by homeowners is entirely voluntary, and homes featured on the tour must be at least 50 years old, though they are not required to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

As one homeowner noted in the tour program, preserving a historic home is about stewardship — recognizing that today's owners are just one chapter in a much longer story. Through events like the Christmas Parlour Tour, Albany continues to ensure those stories are shared, celebrated, and preserved for generations to come. 🌟



Visitors gather at the Carnegie Library as a reader shares "Twas the Night Before Christmas" beside one of the two library's fireplaces.

## Winter Whale Watch Week Returns to Oregon Coast Dec. 27–31

OREGON COAST — Oregon State Parks will host Winter Whale Watch Week along the Oregon Coast from Saturday, Dec. 27, through Wednesday, Dec. 31, offering visitors a chance to spot gray whales during their annual southbound migration.

Trained Oregon State Parks volunteers will be stationed at 14 coastal sites daily from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. to help visitors locate gray whales as they travel toward calving lagoons in Mexico. The volunteer-staffed sites are considered some of the best whale-watching locations on the Oregon Coast. A map of locations is available at <https://stateparks.oregon.gov>.

"This is a great time to see one of the world's longest migrations, as the gray whales are traveling by our coastline," said Park Ranger Peter McBride.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced the end of an Unusual Mortality Event impacting gray whales in 2023, after signs of population recovery. However, NOAA reports the population has since declined to its lowest level since the 1970s, with an estimated 13,000 gray whales along the West Coast.

In addition to whales, Winter Whale Watch Week provides opportunities to observe coastal birds and other marine mammals, with assistance from trained volunteers and park rangers.

The Whale Watching Center in Depoe Bay will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily during the event. Visitors can explore interactive exhibits, enjoy panoramic ocean views, and use provided binoculars. Park rangers will be available to answer questions.

Visitors are encouraged to dress for winter weather, bring binoculars, and follow beach safety guidelines, including staying out of fenced areas, checking tide schedules, and watching surf conditions.

More information is available at <https://stateparks.oregon.gov>. Visitors are invited to share photos and videos on social media using #ORWhaleWatch. 🌟

## BROWNSVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

### Brownsville's 2025 Holiday Lights Contest

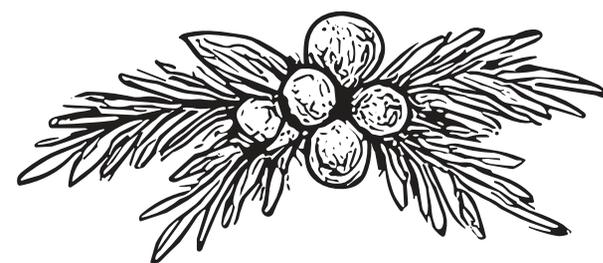
#### Sponsored by Pacific Power

Take a drive through Brownsville and enjoy 14 festive homes and businesses decked out for the season. The 2025 Holiday Lights Map is live, and this is your last chance to vote — voting ends Dec. 25.

Prizes will be awarded to the top vote-getters, and bragging rights last all year. Winners will be posted at the same web address after voting closes.

Thanks to Pacific Power and to everyone who keeps this beloved Brownsville tradition glowing.

Download the map, cast your vote, and return to see the winners at <https://www.historicbrownsville.com/holiday-lights-contest>. 🌟



PEOPLE OF LINN

# Pam and Adam Bring Vintage Christmas Magic to Brownsville

By Olivia Howard, Staff Writer

In every corner of our town, someone has a story that is worth hearing — stories of hard work, kindness, and humor. This community interview column will sit down with a local neighbor to highlight the people who give our town heart.

We begin with introducing two charismatic and creative members, Pamela Wright and Adam Tull.

Pam and Adam moved to Brownsville six years ago and will celebrate their seventh year in April. Before planting roots here with their two dogs, Poppy and Jackson, they lived in Eugene, about 30 minutes away.

Their move to Brownsville began almost by accident. One day, Adam was commuting to a job in Lebanon and asked Pam to ride along. They stopped for lunch at Armando's, and with time to spare, they took a drive through town. As they drove down Kirk Avenue, they spotted a beautiful, unique home for sale and immediately put in an offer.

Adam remembers thinking, "This house would be a great display for Christmas." And Adam was certainly right. Anyone who drives down Kirk during the holiday season will be able to see the glow of Pam and Adam's house, covered in twinkling Christmas lights and vintage decorations. Many residents slow down just to take in the Christmas splendor.



MIKAYLE STOLE

Pamela Wright and Adam Tull's home on Kirk Avenue is decorated with vintage Christmas lights and holiday decor in this 2022 photo, taken during the Brownsville Chamber's Holiday Lights Contest.

Pam reveals that for her, Christmas has always been a special time. As a young girl, she would accompany her father to his side job as a window artist. He would paint fantastic illustrations of snowmen, Santa and his reindeer, and snowy landscapes on windows around town while she waited and watched from the car.

Today, Pam's passion shows in her vintage ornament collection, which includes pieces dating back to 1910. She goes all out for decorations every year, even having five trees in the house during the Christmas season.

Adam, who hadn't grown up with a big celebration of Christmas, says that his favorite part is decorating the house to make people happy and bring smiles to their faces.

Together, Pam and Adam say that they want to deliver the Christmas nostalgia to the community of Brownsville through their vintage wonderland each year. 🌟

## Ring in the New Year With First Day Hikes

Oregon State Parks invites residents to welcome 2026 outdoors with a First Day Hike on Thursday, Jan. 1. Guided outings will take place at 25 parks across the state, including locations throughout the Willamette Valley, offering a free and family-friendly way to start the new year.

Most hikes are led by park rangers or volunteers and range from short, accessible walks to 5-mile treks, giving participants a chance to enjoy local trails while learning about the natural and cultural history of Oregon's public lands.



An Oregon State Parks ranger helps two young visitors identify Sitka sedge along a trail at Shore Acres State Park, sharing hands-on lessons about coastal plants during a guided hike.

"Across Oregon, First Day Hikes have grown into a beloved New Year's tradition for visitors and staff alike," said Lisa Sumption, director of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. "On January 1, park rangers and volunteers share stories of park history, geology, wildlife, and plants as families and friends kick off the year together with an engaging outdoor adventure."

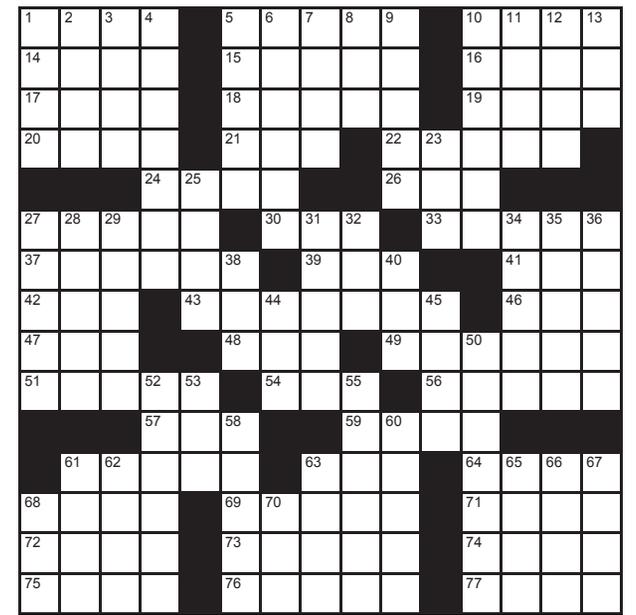
Hikes are free, but a day-use parking permit is required at some parks. Additional information, including hike times, meet-up locations, trail terrain, and any registration requirements, is available at

<https://stateparks.oregon.gov/index.cfm?do=things-to-do.events>

For questions about accessibility or to request reasonable accommodations, participants are encouraged to use the contact information listed on each individual hike's webpage.

Visitors should plan for winter weather, dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes, and bring water. Participants are also invited to share their experiences on social media using #ORfirstdayhikes or by tagging Oregon State Parks. 🌟

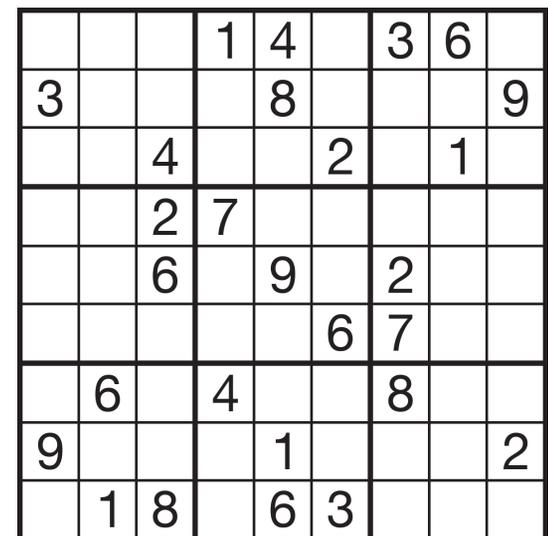
## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



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- |               |                      |             |                           |    |                         |
|---------------|----------------------|-------------|---------------------------|----|-------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b> |                      |             |                           |    |                         |
| 1             | Mud dauber, e.g.     | 54          | Affirmative vote          | 12 | Boundary                |
| 5             | Ham it up            | 56          | In what place             | 13 | Cereal grass            |
| 10            | Equal                | 57          | Water (Fr.)               | 23 | Current                 |
| 14            | Aweather's opposite  | 59          | Ancestry                  | 25 | Precious metal          |
| 15            | Morning prayers      | 61          | Defects                   | 27 | Salamanders             |
| 16            | ___ Godiva           | 63          | Newspaper workers (Abbr.) | 28 | Doofus                  |
| 17            | Den din              | 64          | Chafes                    | 29 | Shade                   |
| 18            | Zodiac sign          | 68          | Lager                     | 31 | Euphoric                |
| 19            | Craving              | 69          | Suite spot                | 32 | Be obliged              |
| 20            | Branch headquarters? | 71          | Foresaw                   | 34 | Scoop                   |
| 21            | Before "a boy"       | 72          | And others (Lat.)         | 35 | Type of circle          |
| 22            | Kinsman              | 73          | Delete                    | 36 | Maternal                |
| 24            | Grotesque            | 74          | Thought                   | 38 | Geological period       |
| 26            | Scare word           | 75          | Sunburns                  | 40 | Before (Poet.)          |
| 27            | Hot rod propellant   | 76          | Catches one's breath      | 44 | Botanist Gray           |
| 30            | Gr. letter           | 77          | Curious                   | 45 | Open wide               |
| 33            | Looney Tunes coyote  | <b>DOWN</b> |                           | 50 | Pickle                  |
| 37            | Food, e.g.           | 1           | Alert                     | 52 | Gems                    |
| 39            | Veneration           | 2           | Health-giving plant       | 53 | Adage                   |
| 41            | Author Beattie       | 3           | Salty septet              | 55 | Firstborn               |
| 42            | Succeed              | 4           | Vex                       | 58 | Guide                   |
| 43            | Curtain              | 5           | Spam medium               | 60 | Man and Wight           |
| 46            | Kind of test         | 6           | Thomas a Becket, e.g.     | 61 | Salad cheese            |
| 47            | Raiment              | 7           | Elevator man              | 62 | Skinny                  |
| 48            | Adder                | 8           | Dead heat                 | 63 | Terminal info           |
| 49            | Young bird           | 9           | Result                    | 65 | Change                  |
| 51            | Footfalls            | 10          | Feisty                    | 66 | Social affairs          |
|               |                      | 11          | Above a Viscount          | 67 | Rock                    |
|               |                      |             |                           | 68 | Put one's two cents in? |
|               |                      |             |                           | 70 | Norse coin              |

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- TRONH OLPE \_\_\_\_\_
- CDYAN ECAN \_\_\_\_\_
- CIOTNKGS \_\_\_\_\_

**PUZZLE Solutions on page 11**

## BROWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL

# Funding Support, Audit Results and Community Updates Highlight Council Meeting



The Brownsville City Council met 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2025, at City Hall to conduct regular business and hear reports from local organizations, city departments, and staff.

## Council Business

The minutes from the Nov. 18, 2025, meeting were unanimously approved.

## Presentations

**Central Linn Community Foundation** — Chenoweth Robertson reported on a successful year of fundraising and requested the City's continued annual support of \$1,500. Councilor Chambers moved to increase funding to \$2,000, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Brownsville Art Association** — Dr. Lori Garcy updated the council on gallery operations, noting that 43 local artists are currently selling work through the Art Center. She highlighted art classes and education programs, a book section featuring local authors, "Grandma's Attic," which offers donated art supplies at low cost, and a thriving holiday market that sold \$3,500 in local art in a single day. City Manager Scott McDowell praised Art Center staff and credited the organization with bringing positive energy to downtown Brownsville.

**Annual Audit Review (FY 2024–2025)** — Representatives from Singer Lewak conducted the City's annual audit, reporting an efficient process and well-prepared staff. McDowell added that careful cost control resulted in positive cash flow, with results exceeding expectations.

**Cybersecurity Review** — City staff reported that cybercrime continues to rise nationwide, driven by increasingly sophisticated scams and artificial intelligence. The City is strengthening its cybersecurity defenses as insurance costs increase. Councilor Winklepleck expressed concern for elderly residents and emphasized the importance of education and awareness.

## Department Reports

**Sheriff** — Deputies conducted 20 traffic stops and responded to a crash on Seven Mile Lane. No thefts or property crimes were reported. Incidents included an arrest involving assault on officers, a BB-gun shooting inside a residence, and vandalism at Pioneer Park where a vehicle caused significant damage to prairie grass. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Linn County Sheriff's Office.

**Public Works** — City water is now supplied by the new well rather than the river. Crews are ahead of schedule on leaf removal and continue clearing fallen trees and branches. Wet conditions have delayed road grading.

**Administrator** — The Christmas parade and tree lighting were declared a major success, drawing more than 1,000 people. Thanks were extended to CONNECT Linn County for organizing the event and to Cascade Timber Consulting for donating the 20-foot Christmas tree. Planning is already underway for next year's celebration.

## Council Actions

The council approved the following resolutions unanimously:

- Resolution 2025.19 — Oregon State Treasury Fund Transfers
- Resolution 2025.20 — Audit Division FY 2024–2025
- Resolution 2025.21 — Geider Building Permit and SDC Refund

Approved action items included authorizing a Canal Company agreement letter, scheduling the annual council goals review, and allowing the City to assist Central Linn School District administratively with grant applications. No funding was requested or approved.

## Discussion

Council discussed rising costs for the 2026 Fourth of July fireworks celebration, noting expenses may double to \$10,000 to \$12,000 in honor of the nation's 250th anniversary. November financials were also presented.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. 🌟

## HALSEY CITY COUNCIL

# Street Vacations, Audit Approval, and Infrastructure Updates Highlight December Meeting

HALSEY — The Halsey City Council met Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. for its regular monthly meeting at City Hall. Mayor Jerry Lachenbruch presided, with six councilors present. Councilor Karl Kropf was absent.

## Public Safety Update

Linn County Sheriff's Sgt. Steven Frambes reported that November was a relatively quiet month in Halsey, with 42 complaints or incidents investigated. Deputies issued three traffic citations and six warnings, with no arrests or traffic crashes reported. Frambes noted an increase in package thefts countywide and advised residents to retrieve deliveries promptly. He also addressed concerns about traffic enforcement on Falk Road and Highway 228, citing limited staffing availability.

## Community Foundation Presentation

Chenoweth Robertson of the Central Linn Community Foundation presented a donation request and provided an overview of the organization's mission. The foundation distributed \$10,000 in grants last year to local nonprofits, including Sharing Hands and the Calapooia Food Alliance.

## Citizen Comments

Two residents spoke in opposition to the proposed H Street improvement project. Mark Broad and Nicklous Rousseau expressed concerns about property impacts, questioned the project's benefits, and urged the council to consider redirecting grant funds to other areas of town.

## City Administrator Updates

City Administrator Briana Parra reported on a range of ongoing projects, including:

- **Economic Development:** A REAL intern continues updating the city's business webpage with expanded resources, a business directory, and a planned "Halsey Highlights" promotion series.
- **Infrastructure Projects:** An environmental impact study is required before Phase 2 of the city's well replacement project can proceed. Sewer inflow and infiltration repairs remain on track for bidding in January, with construction planned for spring 2026.
- **Park Projects:** Final materials for Memorial Park improvements have been ordered. Tree replacement is planned for spring, potentially in conjunction with an Arbor Day event. Council members assisted with repairs to deteriorating picnic tables.
- **Community Engagement:** The Library Committee is collecting recipes for a community cookbook to be made available through the Halsey Library.

## Public Works Report

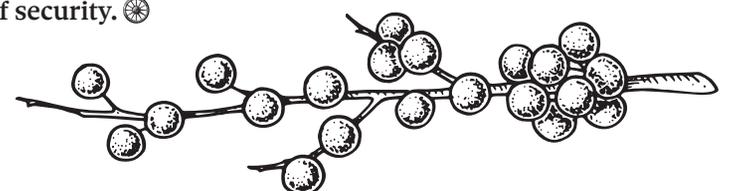
Public Works reported producing 3,368,757 gallons of water in November, an average of 112,291 gallons per day. Wastewater collection totaled 2,268,000 gallons, averaging 76,000 gallons per day. Staff responded to a high-service alarm at the Blue Heron drainage pump station and found a failed float and chewed pump power cords caused by a trapped nutria. The pump station was cleaned, and the animal was removed; staff are awaiting delivery of a replacement float before completing installation. Crews also hauled fallen leaves from the park, repaired water damage at City Hall after a leaking water cooler by replacing four ceiling panels, installed two new stop signs, and completed required water testing, including annual nitrate sampling and additional multi-year testing for synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, radium, and uranium.

## Council Actions

Council unanimously approved a \$500 donation to the Central Linn Community Foundation and accepted the fiscal year 2024–25 audit, which reported no violations.

Council reviewed proposed street vacations on West A and West B streets, with a public hearing scheduled for January. Council also approved the vacation of West N Street and conducted the first reading of Ordinance 2025-449.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m. following an executive session on facility and staff security. 🌟



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**HEALTH & WELLNESS**

# The Quiet Struggles Many Face During the Holiday Season

By Jeff Brown, Staff Writer

The holiday season is often pictured as a time filled with family gatherings, traditions, and warm celebrations, yet many people face emotional difficulties that rarely appear in festive images. In small towns, where neighbors often know one another well, these struggles can be easy to overlook. While financial concerns are common during this time of year, loneliness and depression often weigh just as heavily and are far less visible.

Local counselors note that feelings of isolation tend to grow when people compare their personal experiences to the joyful scenes portrayed in advertisements, social media, and holiday events. Those who have lost loved ones, live far from family, or have recently gone through major life changes may find the season especially challenging. Even individuals who appear active in the community can feel disconnected during the weeks surrounding Christmas and New Year's Day.

Short winter days can also contribute to low energy and reduced motivation, making it harder for some residents to stay engaged. Social expectations may add pressure to appear cheerful, which can make it difficult for people to admit that they are struggling. For many, the constant reminders of gatherings and togetherness highlight what is missing rather than what is present.

Communities can play an important role in easing this burden. Local churches, senior centers, service clubs, and libraries often create opportunities for connection through shared meals, craft nights, volunteer projects, and seasonal events. These gatherings, even when small, can give residents a sense of belonging.

There are also simple steps individuals can take to support neighbors who may be facing mental or emotional challenges. A regular check-in by phone or in person can help someone feel seen and valued. Invitations to meals or outings, even if declined, show that care and friendship remain available.

Practical help can also make a meaningful difference. Offering a ride to an appointment, helping with errands, or spending time with someone who lives alone can ease stress that builds quietly over time. Listening without judgment gives people the space to share what they are experiencing without fear of criticism.

Residents can also encourage the use of local mental health services. Many small towns have counseling centers, hotlines, or faith-based programs designed to offer support. Removing the stigma around asking for help is one of the most powerful things a community can do. When mental health is treated as a normal part of overall health, people feel more comfortable seeking assistance.

It is also important to watch for signs that someone may need more help than a friendly visit can provide. Noticeable changes in mood, withdrawal from regular activities, or expressions of hopelessness should be taken seriously, and reaching out to family members or local professionals may be necessary.

The holidays are intended to bring light during the darkest part of the year. By paying attention to the quieter struggles behind the season and offering steady support, small towns can help ensure that no one faces that darkness alone. 🌟

# Postcards Home: Two Messages, Two Years, One Community

From the Editor's Collection

By Mikayle Stole, Editor

I collect postcards addressed to Brownsville — small, personal pieces of local history that often raise as many questions as they answer. Two postcards in my collection, written just two years apart, offer glimpses of family life in the early 20th century and an open invitation for community memory to fill in the gaps.

The earlier of the two was mailed from Portland at 6 p.m. on Dec. 16, 1914, and addressed to Mrs. Gusta Swank of Brownsville. Its message is brief and tender: "Dear Ma, We got your letter this morning. I will write you a letter tonight good-bye." It is signed simply, "Delberta."

I purchased the Swank postcard in 2021 and was able to research the family soon after. Augusta "Gussie" Swank, born Maria Emaline Augusta Snider in 1855, was a pioneer descendant whose life followed the westward movement that shaped Oregon. She and her husband, William Harmon Swank, raised their family near Brownsville and are buried in unmarked graves in the Swank family plot.

The second postcard was purchased more recently, in 2025, leaving little time yet for research. It was mailed from Olympia, Washington, and postmarked Dec. 23, 1916. The card is addressed to Arthur Beldon of Brownsville. It carries a deeply affectionate message from a grandmother longing for family connection during the holidays: "Dear Beldon, please write me a letter.



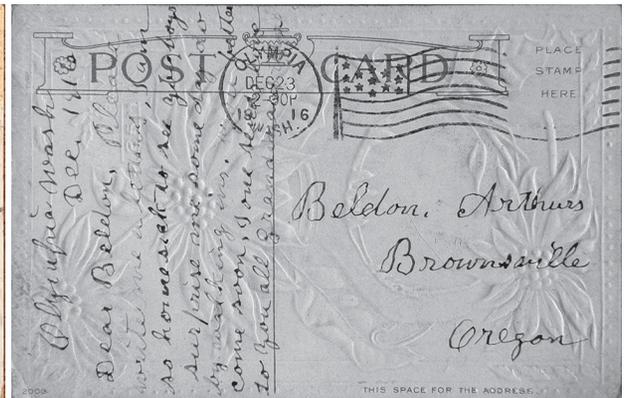
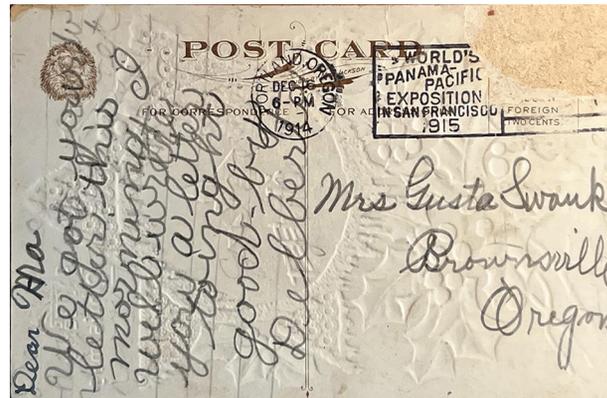
I am so homesick to see you boys, Surprise, and someday do by walking in. You'd better come soon. Love to you all, Grandma."

At this point, I have not researched the Beldon family at all. That is intentional transparency, not omission. Sometimes the most valuable historical work begins by asking the community for help.

Both postcards were purchased at Isabella's Pioneer Marketplace before the shop closed. Together, they remind us that history survives not only in official records, but in everyday correspondence — goodbyes, reassurances, and expressions of longing sent through the mail.

If you recognize the Beldon name, know of an Arthur Beldon connected to Brownsville, or have family stories that might relate to this postcard, I would love to hear from you. These small notes were once private messages. Today,

they are an open invitation to help preserve Brownsville's shared past. 🌟



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## WORSHIP DIRECTORY

### Brownsville Assembly of God

313 Washburn St · 541-466-5030

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.  
Sunday Services 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.  
Classes Wednesday 7 p.m. all ages

### Brownsville Christian Church

117 N Main St · 541-466-3273  
<https://brownvillechristianchurch.com>

Sunday Service and Children's Church 11 a.m.  
Adult classes 10 a.m.

### Brownsville Community Church

198 Washburn St · 541-936-9131  
<https://hislifeinbrownsville.com>

### Brownsville Mennonite Church

34795 OR-228 · 541-466-5622

### Central Valley Church

657 American Dr · Halsey · 503-602-6796  
<https://www.cvchalsey.com>

Sunday Corporate Service 8 a.m.  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m. (during school year)  
Sunday Service: 10:30 a.m.  
Monday Prayer 7-8 p.m.  
Wednesday Community Coffee & Donuts 9:30 a.m.

### Crawfordsville Calvary Chapel

38353 Glass St · 541-730-4519  
<https://www.crawfordsvillecc.org>

Sunday Service 10 a.m.

### First Baptist Church of Brownsville

27910 7 Mile Ln · 541-642-3000  
<https://www.fbcbrownvilleoregon.org>

Sunday Services and Nursery 9 and 10:45 a.m.

### Halsey Mennonite Church

910 E 1st St · 712-432-8773  
<https://www.halseymennonite.org>

Sunday Service 10 a.m.  
1st & 3rd Sunday evening 6 p.m.  
Prayer meeting 1st & 3rd Wednesdays 7:30 p.m.

### Harvest Reformed Baptist Church

411 W 2nd St · Halsey · 541-220-1902  
<https://harvestrbc.org>

Sunday School 9 a.m.  
Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday Fellowship Meal Noon

### Holy Trinity Catholic Church

104 W Blakely Ave · Brownsville · 541-367-2530  
[holytrinitybrownvilleor@gmail.com](mailto:holytrinitybrownvilleor@gmail.com)

Weekday Mass Wednesday Noon  
Sunday Service 11:30 a.m.

### Oakville Presbyterian Church

29970 Church Dr · Shedd · 541-758-0647  
<https://oakvillechurch.org>

Sunday Service 10 a.m.

### Riverside Christian Fellowship

29360 Abraham Dr · Shedd (Peoria) · 360-880-4734

Sunday Prayer 9:30 a.m.  
Sunday Service 10 a.m.  
Sunday School 11 a.m.

### Spirit of the Valley United Methodist Church

611 W 3rd St · Halsey · 541-654-8144  
[spiritofthevalleyumc@gmail.com](mailto:spiritofthevalleyumc@gmail.com)

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

### The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

1111 North Main St · 541-570-2903  
Sunday Service 10 a.m.

### Valley Christian Fellowship

690 W 2nd St · Halsey · 732-434-3592  
<https://vcfhalsey.com>

Sunday Service 10 a.m. & Wednesdays 7:15 p.m.



## Live Nativity at the Freitag Farm in Halsey

By Sharon K. Banks, Staff Writer

HALSEY — A live performance of the biblical Nativity story was presented at the Freitag Farm in Halsey on December 15 and 17, offering families a heartfelt and memorable start to the Christmas season.

The production was led by Christian Freitag, owner of the farm, along with his wife Melanie. Christian guided the audience through the Nativity story with scripture readings and Christmas carols outlining the events surrounding the birth of Christ. Mary and Joseph entered the stable, followed by the angel's appearance to the shepherds, who then made their way to the manger, accompanied by a live lamb, a calf, and a baby goat.

Many children participated in the performance, all dressed in traditional biblical attire. The Wise Men arrived bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, completing the familiar and beloved scene.



STEPHEN A. BRENNER



STEPHEN A. BRENNER  
Sophia Tidwell, 1, pauses inside the barn during the Live Nativity dressed biblical attire.

Adding to the authentic farm setting were some unscripted moments: cows could be heard mooing from the other side of the barn, a rooster crowed loudly (a detail not found in scripture), and at one point a chicken swooped down from the rafters, briefly dive-bomb-



STEPHEN A. BRENNER  
Families gather on hay bales inside the Freitag barn during the Live Nativity performance on Dec. 15 and 17. The barn was transformed into a simple stable setting.

ing the audience to everyone's amusement.

Members of the Freitag family led the crowd in a full round of Christmas carols, filling the barn with music and holiday cheer. Now in its 15th year, the Live Nativity at the Freitag Farm has become a cherished tradition and a special part of the Christmas season for many local families.

Following the performance, guests were invited to the Freitag home to enjoy refreshments and warm fellowship, rounding out a truly festive community gathering. ☼



STEPHEN A. BRENNER  
Following the Live Nativity, guests were welcomed into the Freitag family's lodge to enjoy refreshments, conversation, and fellowship.

## MOUNTAINTOP REFLECTIONS

### A Child is Born

By Jacquie Hoekstra, Columnist

I was privileged to travel to Florence, Italy, in 2017, to celebrate a milestone birthday we will not discuss here. I was struck by this Botticelli painting hanging in the Uffizi Gallery. It was commissioned for the altarpiece in the church of San Barnaba in Florence and was placed above the high altar from around 1488 into the 17th century. It depicts Mary holding the baby Jesus, with angels on either side. I have cropped the full image down to draw attention to this area. The angel on the left holds a crown of thorns, while the angel on the right holds the three nails of his crucifixion. It speaks to the purpose of Jesus' birth.

"For to us a child is born. To us a son is given; and the government will be on his shoulders. His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6WEB). Isaiah penned these words 700 years before the birth of Jesus. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1WEB). This is the first sentence of the Apostle John's Gospel. Paul wrote to the Philippian church about thirty years after Jesus' death, "Have this in your mind, which was



JACQUIE HOEKSTRA  
Detail from a Botticelli altarpiece showing Mary and the Christ Child, flanked by angels holding symbols of the Crucifixion. Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy.

also in Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, didn't consider equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled

himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, yes, the death of the cross (Philippians 2:5-8WEB).

He left heaven to live among us, subjected to us, yet without sin to pay the price for our sins. He would make the way for us to live eternally with him, returning to his heavenly home with all authority, having defeated sin and death once for all. (Hebrews 2:14; Romans 6:10, 23; Galatians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:24, 3:18) We celebrate the birth of Emmanuel, God with us, standing in awe of the only God who would leave his glorious abode to live among us sinners, to show us the way, and to pay our penalty, so that we can live with him in glory. As you take in the manger scene this year, remember this Child came with you and the Cross in mind, and rejoice. ☼

AMERICAN LEGION

Christmas in the North Atlantic: Part 1 of 2

By an ordinary seaman

The Christmas we carry in our heads, the one playing on the small screen of our private imagination, is always sweet. It has snow falling like a soft hush, the tree glowing with a thousand impossible lights, and the people we love laughing that perfect, easy laugh. The soundtrack swells with Bing Crosby promising a white, perfect day.



USS Wagner (DER 539) underway circa 1958. The radar picket destroyer escort served in the North Atlantic during the Cold War. Photo: U.S. Navy / Naval History and Heritage Command (NH 79811), public domain

Twice in my Navy days, right when the air should have been filled with chestnuts roasting, I found myself doing just that, bobbing along with about 200 other fellas in the cold, dark wash of the North Atlantic somewhere between the southern tip of Greenland and the spot where the Titanic sank. In those days, the USA was concerned that

the USSR would fly in and drop a nuclear bomb or two on a few of our cities. The USS Wagner, DER 539, and its crew existed to detect such an attack and provide "early warning" (20 to 30 minutes, maybe). The only Russians I ever saw appeared as dashes on the radar screen or x's on the plotting board.

That Christmas Eve, the sea was choppy. She was pitching us around like dice in a tin can. I was strapped in my bunk because if you weren't tied down, you'd become just a loose chunk of sailor rolling across the deck. Of course, we could not see the waves, but we sure could feel them. When we hit the top of a wave, the ship's

massive propellers would come clear out of the water, giving the whole vessel a violent shiver and shake, before dropping down with a whopping, teeth-rattling thud. Sleep was certainly not invited to that party, so I carefully rolled out of the sack. The long, dark night was just beginning, and I was going to need something more substantial than a rattling berth to make it through.

To be continued. ☺

But if you've lived long enough, you know the world is run by messier rules. Life's music tends toward dissonance. The snow is usually just rain, the friends have their usual squabbles, and the most essential souls — the doctors, the watchmen, the young men and women in uniform — are always standing in the lonely breach, doing the work that keeps the perfect movie running for everyone else.



December Birthday Celebration

BROWNSVILLE — On December 13, the community gathered to celebrate the birthdays of two of Brownsville's most cherished residents, Cheryl Haworth and Fran Wepler. Family members traveled from as far away as Oklahoma, New York, and Colorado to join in the special occasion.

The celebration included a beautiful ceremony featuring Cheryl Haworth and Don Andrews' ten grandchildren and two great-grandchildren who were dressed in traditional white attire inspired by the Swedish St. Lucia celebration, complete with floral wreaths worn on their heads. St. Lucia Day, observed on December 13, is a Scandinavian tradition honoring Saint Lucia and symbolizing light during the darkest time of the year. The ceremony traditionally features children dressed in white to represent purity and hope, with wreaths and candles signifying the return of light.

The event was well attended and filled with joy, laughter, and a strong sense of community, making it a memorable celebration for everyone involved. ☺



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**CRITTER CHRONICLES**

**Eva and the Silent Bear Cubs**

By Sharon K. Banks, Staff Writer

Once upon a snowy December at the Banks' home, lived a majestic husky named Eva. With her piercing blue eyes and dramatic flair for howling at the microwave, Eva was the queen of her household. She was known far and wide (okay, mostly by the UPS driver and the squirrels) for her regal fur and... unique sense of judgment.

One chilly morning, her humans decorated the house for Christmas. As part of the holiday cheer, they placed a family of small, fluffy, red-and-green-dressed stuffed bears on the staircase. They had button eyes, crocheted sweaters, stitched smiles, and jingle bells on their hats. In the humans' eyes, they were festive decor. But to Eva? They were puppies.



"Oh my dog!" Eva gasped (in her head). "Who abandoned these tiny creatures on the stairs. Poor things must be freezing!"

Determined to rescue the silent fluff balls, Eva gently picked

them up one by one and carried them to her bed, where she nestled them in a pile of chewed blankets and one mysterious slipper.

Over the next few days, Eva went full-on mama bear (or, more accurately, mama husky). She licked them lovingly, curled around them at night, and barked protectively anytime someone tried to touch them.

But the bears... never moved. Never barked. Never even blinked. Eva started to worry. "Maybe they're shy," she thought. "Or maybe they're just... really well-behaved." But deep down, she had a sinking feeling that something was wrong.

She nudged the smallest bear with her nose. Nothing. She licked its fuzzy little face. Still nothing. With mounting panic and a dash of husky-level drama, Eva made a decision: medical intervention was required. She started with Bear #1. She gave it one last hopeful nudge, and when it failed to respond, she gently — but decisively — chewed its ear off. And then Bear #2. "Sorry, sweetie. Mommy has to do this."

By the time her humans walked in, they found Eva surrounded by five earless Christmas bears and looking deeply confused, like a mother who just realized her kids were actually throw pillows.

"Eva!" shouted her human. "What did you DO?" Eva tilted her head, ears perked up innocently, as if to say, "They were emotionally unavailable, Sharon." From that day forward, Eva never trusted anything with button eyes again. But every Christmas, when the humans brought out the holiday decor, she would eye the new stuffed animals with suspicion... and maybe, just maybe, a little hope. Because Eva wasn't just a husky. She was a mother in denial. ☼

**The Life of a Playground**

By Lynlee Bischoff, Staff Writer

BROWNSVILLE — Parks are an important component of any healthy community. It is where we can go to be in nature, meet friends, and gather as a community. It is also where we take our kids to play. For many, the playground is the heart of the park.

With plans for a new playground in our future, it would be interesting to explore what is involved in making that happen. Playgrounds nowadays are radically different from the playgrounds of old. While the basic activities remain the same (climbing, swinging, sliding) the structures themselves have become incredibly high-tech.

Let's start with the basics. Play structures, like everything in this world, have a life expectancy. For our current play structure, it is around 20 years, give or take depending upon the use/abuse. Thankfully for us, aside from a broken slide, ours is heading toward retirement (estimated to be 2027), looking pretty darn good, but its time is close at hand. Throw in the river's encroachment, and well, changes are coming.

As mentioned earlier, playgrounds are not what they used to be, especially those designed specifically for City Parks. These structures are of a much higher quality than, say, something you'd buy off the Internet. This is why making a new playground happen takes YEARS. There are planning meetings, piece selections, discussions about user age ranges, location, desired feel, etc., etc., etc. Think of it as a giant jigsaw puzzle with different people working on different sections until it all comes together.

And at the same time, all this is going on, there are the financial pieces, because these things do not come cheap. But seriously, you get what you pay for. The manufacturer's representative I spoke with said, "Everything is more expensive now. In 2015, we did a \$700,000 installation in Redmond that could easily cost \$1-1.5 million today. She mentioned that people often fail to consider all the elements that can drive up costs, like materials, tariffs, labor costs, even surfacing materials and application. Costs add up.

Given the costs involved, grants can be a necessity. Thankfully, there are an incredible number of grants out there to help cities create amazing spaces. A simple Google search of "Oregon State Park Grants" will bring up PAGES of grants geared explicitly towards helping parks and recreation happen in Oregon. The City of Halsey recently utilized a matching grant to help pay for its playground.

One of the coolest things I learned while researching this article is an organization called Kids Around the World. They take retired playgrounds, dismantle them, and ship them to impoverished communities worldwide. Their goal is to ensure that every child has access to play. It seems a fitting retirement for good playgrounds.

Thanks for reading. We are so blessed to have a wonderful park. It is a place we all share. It has a heart. I look forward to watching it transform in the coming years. See you on the trails. ☼

**OBITUARY**

**Lorna Ann Ellefson**

Sept. 22, 1931 – Dec. 16, 2025



Lorna Ann Ellefson, 94, of Brownsville, passed away Tuesday, December 16, 2025. She was born September 22, 1931, to Mary (Fairman) and Herman Clyde Strong in Eugene, Oregon.

She moved to Brownsville as a child in 1935 and

lived there her entire life. Lorna married Clifford Ellefson in 1949. She worked in the telephone communication industry and retired from Quest in 1993. She attended the Brownsville Christian Church.

Lorna enjoyed gardening, loved spending time with her grandchildren, and liked to go square dancing.

Her children survive her: Michael L. (Amber) Ellefson, Steven R. (Irene) Ellefson, Carolyn S. (Mike) McCord; nine grandchildren and 26 great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Clifford S. Ellefson (2014); her sister, Doris Voight; and her parents.

Funeral service will be 11 a.m., Saturday, December 27, 2025, at Sweet Home Funeral Chapel. Sweet Home Funeral Chapel is handling arrangements. Visit <https://sweethomefuneral.com> for more information. ☼

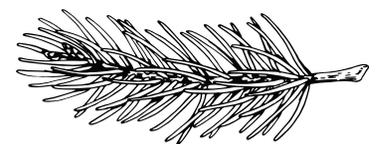
**Weigh In: Proposed State Parks Fee Changes**

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is accepting public comments on proposed rule changes that would guide the management of reservations, rate ranges, and fee waivers at Oregon State Parks.

The proposed rules would update cancellation policies, adjust fee waiver guidelines, and introduce dynamic pricing. Under dynamic pricing, fees could vary based on factors such as day of the week, season, holidays, amenities, and overall demand.

These changes do not automatically raise current park fees, but they would give OPRD more flexibility to adjust prices gradually over time as costs and usage patterns change.

Learn more and submit public comment by January 15 at <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/prp/pages/prp-division%2015.aspx>. ☼



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TABLE TALK: DINING IN AND AROUND BROWNSVILLE

# Kim's Kafé Impresses with Fresh Options and Friendly Service

By Jeff Brown, Staff Writer

TANGENT — My wife and I had been hearing a steady stream of praise about Kim's Kafé, Subs, Salads and Wraps, the new spot over in Tangent at 32050 Birdfoot Dr. It is just a short drive down the road from us, so we finally decided it was time to see what all the talk was about. We are glad we made the trip.

The first thing we noticed when we walked in was how clean, bright, and welcoming the space felt. Second was definitely the friendliness of the staff. The dining area is decorated with photos and small knick-knacks that give it a cheerful, personal touch. It has that warm, comfortable atmosphere that makes you feel at ease right away.

I ordered the Chicken Bacon Ranch Wrap, while my wife chose the TBA Roll made with turkey, bacon, and avocado. Both meals were excellent. My wrap was just the right size, filled generously but not so full that it fell apart. The pepperoncino added a lively kick, elevating each bite. My wife enjoyed her TBA just as much and said she would order it again without hesitation.

In addition to all the sandwiches and wraps, they offer a wide selection of ice creams, cold drinks, and coffee and tea. While looking over the menu, I also noticed their party platters, which can serve groups of ten to thirty-five people or more. It seems like a handy choice for office lunches, family gatherings, or community events.

Prices are very reasonable, with most sandwiches and wraps running between \$11 and 13. They also offer several salads and a lineup of hot sandwiches. I already know I will be trying the Reuben on our next visit. A kids menu is available as well, making it convenient for families.

Kim's Kafé is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday. With good food, friendly service, and a tidy, inviting dining area, it is well worth the short drive. Our first visit certainly will not be our last.

Pepperoncino is spelled correctly per the inter web, but my word program doesn't like it, you could say, "those spicy little chopped up peppers or whatever." ☺



## Sharing Hands Holiday Hours

Holiday donation hours: Dec. 24 and Dec. 31, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The thrift store closes at 1 p.m. Dec. 24 and is closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day. ☺

### GROCERY LIST

#### Holiday Items

- Frozen Turkeys
- Stove Top Stuffing
- Cranberries
- Sweet Potatoes or Yams (fresh or canned)
- Marshmallows
- Green Beans French Style
- Cream of Mushroom Soup
- Velveeta Cheese
- Parmesan Cheese (plastic jar)

#### Condiments

- Salad Dressings
- Mayonnaise
- Ketchup

#### Breakfast

- Cereals
- Oatmeal

#### Canned & Jarred Goods

- Dinty Moore Beef Stew
- Kraft Mac and Cheese (individual cups)
- Soups
- Jellies
- Syrup
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## CENTRAL LINN HIGH SCHOOL

## Darrelle Parker Leads Learning Beyond the Classroom

By Sharon K. Banks, Staff Writer

Central Linn High School provides an exceptional range of educational opportunities — many shaped by the dedication and vision of longtime teacher, Darrelle Parker.

Darrelle grew up on a small grass seed farm outside of Silverton, where her passion for agriculture began in the Silverton High School FFA program. After earning her State FFA Degree, she attended Oregon State University as an Agricultural Education major. At OSU, she was active in Collegiate FFA, Sigma Alpha, and the OSU Dressage Team, and completed internships at the Benton County Fairgrounds. She earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees before joining Central Linn in 2006.

Originally, she was the full-time Agriculture instructor. Darrelle later added science to her credentials, expanding course offerings and strengthening both the Agriculture Program and FFA chapter. One of her most significant contributions has been creating eight College Now courses including Biology, Anatomy, Animal Science, Forensic Science, and Psychology that allow students to earn college credit and save families thousands of dollars.

Darrelle also helped grow the school's Career and Technical Education program by creating courses in Natural Resources, Forestry, and Fish & Wildlife, which led to the formation of the Central Linn chapter of Future Natural Resource Leaders (FNRL). She secured a grant for a portable sawmill, giving students hands-on training in chainsaw safety, choker setting, and fire hose use, all key skills for Oregon's forest and wildfire industries. She takes students to compete at the Oregon Logging Conference and to Fire School at Camp Tadmor for immersive firefighter training.

After a break from FFA leadership, Darrelle returned as co-adviser, then unexpectedly found herself running the entire program alone. Her leadership through two challenging years ensured the Agriculture Program and FFA chapter survived when they were at risk of being lost.

Today, Central Linn offers hands-on agricultural experiences rare in small districts. The school's land lab includes two barns where students can raise animals. Students welded the pens, installed automated watering systems, and managed daily operations. Senior Isabella "Izzy" Curtis oversees the land lab, assisting classmates like Brooklyn Winningham, who plans to study Veterinary Science, and Nikki Billington, who intends to pursue criminal justice with a K-9 focus.

Darrelle's teaching is known for real-world learning: dissections, cadaver lab visits, chainsaw training, and more. When transportation became a barrier, she earned her commercial driver's license to bus students herself. Known as "The Mrs. Frizzle of Central Linn," she's recognized for her quirky science earrings, bus-driving skills, and classroom lizard.

Beyond teaching, she advises the National Honor Society, serves as VP of the teachers' association, supports the Equestrian Team, and even plays saxophone in the pep band.

For nearly twenty years, Darrelle Parker has helped Central Linn students discover their strengths, pursue their goals, and prepare for bright futures — leaving a lasting impact on the school and community. 🌟



Darrelle Parker was recognized as the 2025 Agricultural Educator of the Year by the Linn County Farm Bureau on November 13, 2025.

## CENTRAL LINN SCHOOL BOARD

## Board Selects Engineering Firm for Seismic Improvements

On December 15, The board voted unanimously to approve the RFP selection committee's recommendation to move forward with an intent to proceed with PIVOT Architecture of Eugene to lead the \$2.5 million Seismic Grant project at the elementary school. Two firms submitted proposals for the project, with the second proposal coming from WRK Engineers of Vancouver, Washington.

The board is expected to vote on approval of the final contract at its January business meeting. 🌟

## CENTRAL LINN RECREATION ASSOCIATION

## CLRA New Board: Inspiring Future Cobras

By Eva Wada, Staff Writer

Get ready for an electrifying year of youth sports! The Central Linn Recreation Association (CLRA) is thrilled to announce its new volunteer board, bringing fresh energy and expertise to Cobra athletics.

Leading the charge is new CLRA President and Baseball Director, Ashley Moore, who is determined to succeed by managing "the crucial, behind-the-scenes operational work — like keeping nonprofit information current and handling communications with parents and athletes" while fueling inspiration. She's joined by Katie Morris, the new Director of "Lil Hitters," preparing for the spring baseball season. Mark your calendars: Spring Sports registration opens early on January 1 at <https://www.clrasports.org/>

The board is a blend of returning dedication and new enthusiasm. Jenn Walton has stepped into the role of Vice President and Volleyball Director. She captured the welcoming spirit: "CLRA is unique and has a small-town feel. Anyone can join and volunteer." Along with Safety Coordinator Heather Fleckenstein, Board Members at Large, Brye Lester and Levi Gatchet, ensure a secure and nurturing environment. Heather shared, "We have a community where lasting relationships are developed and continue to grow" — for volunteers and participants alike.

Returning Treasurer, Chriszma Erickson, is on top of scholarships to keep sports accessible to all. The CLRA Board agrees, "We want sports to be available to as many athletes as possible, regardless of financial situations or skills." Rounding out the executive team, Central Linn High School Alumni Eva Wada has joined as Secretary.

Want to join the momentum? Key Director positions are still open, including Basketball, Softball, Soccer, and Football. All are invited to the board meeting at the Brownsville Recreation Center on January 21 at 7 p.m. to learn how to fill one of these roles and inspire the next generation in our community. 🌟



Pictured (Left to Right) Chriszma Erickson, Jenn Walton, Heather Fleckenstein, Ashley Moore, Brye Lester, and Eva Wada



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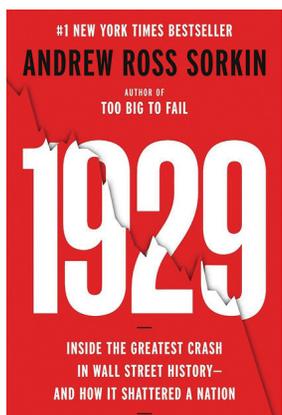
SHERRING BOOKS

From History to Mysteries: New Arrivals

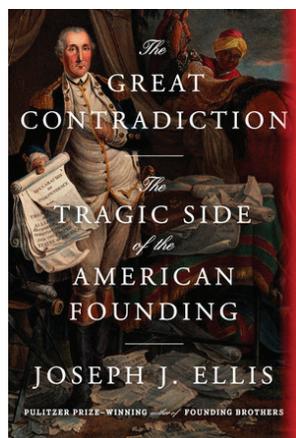
By Sherri Lemhouse, Brownsville Librarian

Adult Non-Fiction

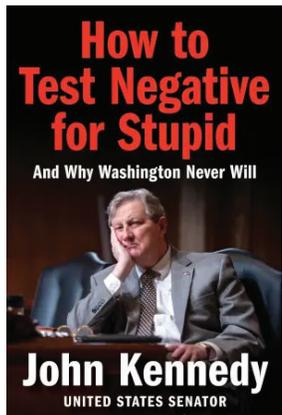
“1929” by Andrew Ross Sorkin is a detailed account of the 1929 Stock market crash. This book explores greed, speculation, and human folly that led to the collapse. It draws parallels to today’s financial markets.



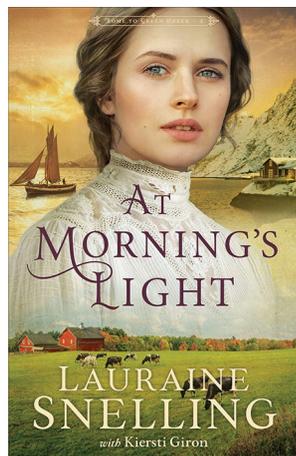
“The Great Contradiction” by Joseph J. Ellis is a patron request and is about the tragic side of the American founding.



“How to Test Negative for Stupid” by John Kennedy has been requested by several patrons.



Adult Fiction



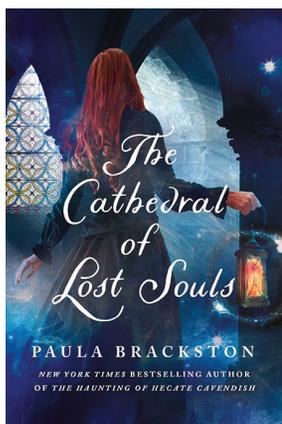
“At Morning’s Light” by Kiersti Giron and Lauraine Snelling is the second book in a series. This is a heartwarming story of family and love on the Midwestern frontier.

“The Last Sister” by Kendra Elliot is the first book in the Columbia River mystery series. If you like Robert Dugoni, Allison Brenna, or David Baldacci, you might try these mysteries.



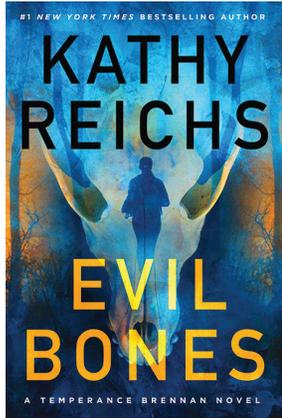
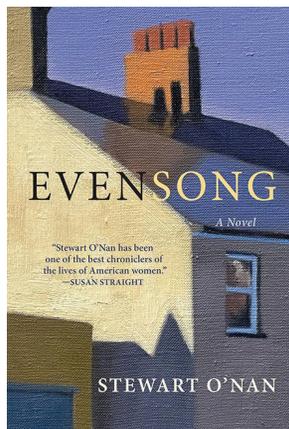
“In the Pines” by Kendra Elliot is book 3 of 6 in the Columbia River series. We are working on getting the whole series. Let us know what you think!

“The Cathedral of Lost Souls” by Paula Brackston



“Evensong” by Stewart O’Nan is an intimate novel that follows The Humpty Dumpty Club, a group of women who band together to help one another as they face the challenges of their golden years.

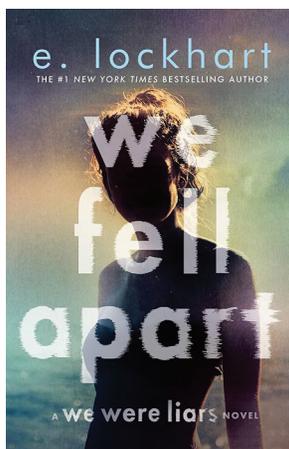
is the second book in the Hecate Cavendish series, a historical/fantasy ghost story set in 1881.



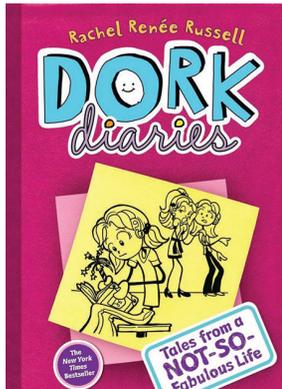
“Evil Bones” by Kathy Reichs is the 24th book in the Temperance Brennan series. A terrific mystery writer similar to Patricia Cornwell, Tess Gerrits, and Michael Connelly.

Young Adult

“We Fell Apart” by E. Lockhart is the second book in the We Were Liars series and an editor’s best pick for 2025 for young adults.



Junior



“Dork Diaries Tales from a Not-So-Fabulous Life” by Rachel Renee Russell is the first in the series. A replacement of a well-read Library copy, these new books are full-color editions.

“Easy Quilting for Kids” by CICO Kidz include 35 fun quilting, patchwork, and appliqué projects for children aged 7 years and over.



BROWNSVILLE LIBRARY

Friends Book Sale Brings Holiday Cheer and Strong Support for the Library

By Sherri Lemhouse, Brownsville Librarian

The Friends of the Library Book Sale was a fabulous success! Do you remember the amazing gift books? How did the gals decorate 117 of them? There are fewer than 15 left as of this writing (December 16). Plus, it is the first year we have taken only one vehicle load to St Vincent’s in years. Our Friends grossed over \$1,800 for library programs. The librarian is over the moon.

The librarian and volunteers wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year. We hope you have lovely books to read, and will stop by the front desk to let us know what you loved about your most recent read, and what you are looking forward to!

Regular Library Hours

Sunday and Monday: Closed, Tuesday and Wednesday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday: 1 to 7 p.m., Friday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The library is located at 146 Spaulding Ave, Brownsville. Call 541-466-5454 or visit <https://www.brownsvillecommunitylibrary.org> for more information. Follow on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BVORLibrary>,

Holiday Closures

The Brownsville Library will be closed for Christmas, December 24–25, New Year’s Eve Day, December 31, and New Year’s Day, January 1. We wish you all the best this holiday season.

BROWNSVILLE LIBRARY CALENDAR

Parents & Pals Story Time

Wednesdays • 10–10:15 a.m.

A short story time followed by free play together.

Songs, Rhymes & More Story Time

Fridays • 11 a.m.

Story time with rhymes, songs, and a craft activity.

Brownsville Stitchery Group

Wednesdays • 1–3 p.m.

Bring your project, have some fun — get things done!

Library Advisory Board Meeting

Thursday, Jan. 8 • 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. • Kirk Room

Monthly meeting of the Brownsville Community Library Advisory Board. Open to the public.

Estate Planning: Wills

Thursday, Jan. 15 • 7 – 8 p.m. • Kirk Room

Learn the basics of estate planning with a focus on creating a will.

Estate Planning: Advance Directives

Thursday, Jan. 22 • Noon – 1 p.m. • Kirk Room

An informational program on advance directives and planning for future health care decisions.

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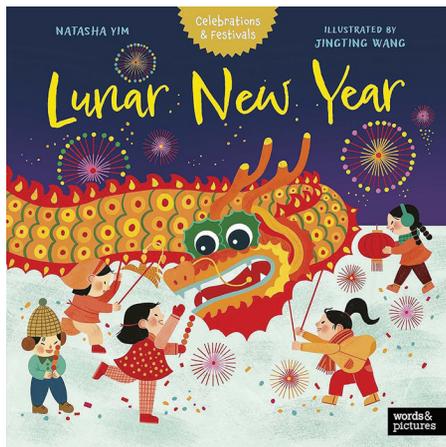
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KIDS' KORNER

# Celebrating Special Days Around The World

By Nancy Diltz, Staff Writer

The world is a wide, varied, and beautiful place. What a wonderful world! There are many languages, cultures, religions, and celebrations taking place across the globe. Many of you celebrate Christmas on Dec. 25, but are you familiar with Komodo No Hi in Japan? Matariki in New Zealand? Inti Raymi in Peru? Midsummer in Sweden? Passover in the United States? Or Diwali in India?



celebration through the story of a young girl named Ling and her family as they prepare for and enjoy the year's most important Chinese festival.

According to the publisher's summary, the book explains that the Lunar New Year "lasts for 15 days full of preparation, celebration, and symbolism." A 16-page fact section follows the story, offering more detailed information about how the festival is celebrated in China and around the world. The book also includes hands-on activities such as riddles, instructions for making a red envelope, and a recipe for Lunar New Year pot sticker dumplings.

Readers can explore the traditions surrounding Lunar New Year preparations, the Reunion Dinner on New Year's Eve, New Year's Day fireworks and dragons, the legend of the New Year Monster, and much more, as described in the publisher's summary.

You can learn about these celebrations and many more through books, online resources, and televised programs.

One annual cultural festival, the Lunar New Year celebration in China, is featured in the children's book "Lunar New Year" by Natasha Yim, part of the "Let's Celebrate" series. The Chinese Lunar New Year begins with the first new moon of the year, falling sometime between Jan. 21 and Feb. 20. The book captures the magic of the cel-

REAL ESTATE LINE

# Winter's Real Estate Lull Is the Perfect Time to Prepare to Sell

By Jenna Stutsman, licensed Real Estate Principal Broker in Oregon

It's the holiday season, and with the twinkling lights and sprigs of holly comes a slower real estate season. In November and December, many buyers choose to take a break from looking, and sellers hold off on listing their homes. That's okay. All industries have seasons, and ours slows down right about that time. November's statistics, compared to October's, reflect that. The median sale price went from \$400,000 to \$395,000. The average days on market increased by five. But 2026 is looking like it will be a fantastic year in real estate. Let's consider this the winter's nap before the surge.

If you are considering selling after the new year, now is the time to start preparations. One of the most important things to do when selling your home isn't a renovation project at all. You need to minimize the stuff. Start packing, maybe get a storage unit or use the garage, and reduce, reduce, reduce. Most occupied homes would sell best with at least 50 percent of the things gone. Less clutter makes the home feel bigger, cleaner, less chaotic, and lighter. Start with the knick-knacks on your tables, shelves, counters, and nightstands, especially personal things like family photos. Take toothbrushes and other toiletries and store them in drawers. Next, if able, most homes could do with a lot less furniture than we have. The ideal living room on the market would have a couch, a coffee table, one or two chairs, a lamp, and maybe one side table. A bedroom would have a bed, two nightstands, and maybe a dresser. Most of us, including me, live with more than that. When on the market, less is more. It makes a difference in the listing photos and to buyers when they come to tour in person. It may feel like a headache now, but when your home sells for more because of it, you will be doing a happy dance.



920 Filbert St, Brownsville, OR 97327 is listed at \$405,000.

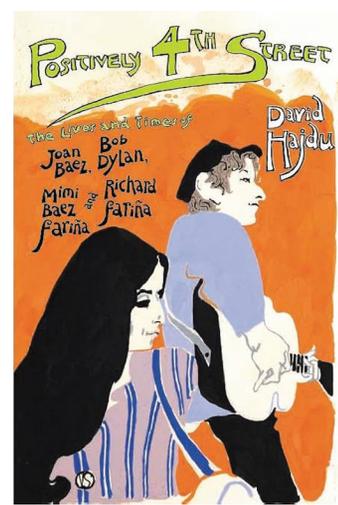
Wishing you all a happy New Year!

BOOK REVIEW

# The Gift of Music

By Nancy Diltz, Staff Writer

A new vinyl record was the highlight of my Christmas gifts. Later, an eight-track tape, then a cassette tape, and a new CD came in first place as my favorite gifts. A "Meet the Beatles" album, "Dark Side of the Moon" on 8-track, a "Rumours" cassette, and "Born in the U.S.A." on CD were my treasures through the 1960s, '70s, and '80s.



One musician who has stood the test of time, releasing his first album in 1962 and hinting at a new release of 2025 studio sessions, is Bob Dylan. To understand Dylan's life and work, the books "Positively 4th Street: The Lives and Times of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan and..." by David

Hajdu (2001) and "Boy from the North Country" a new novel by Sam Sussman (2025), can provide two very different perspectives on the lives of folk musicians like Bob Dylan and his peers.

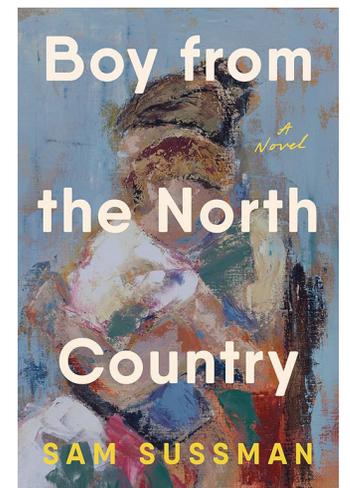
The following description is taken from the publisher's summary.

"'Positively 4th Street' is the story of how four young bohemians on the make — Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Mimi Baez, and Richard Fariña — converged in Greenwich Village, fell in love, and invented a sound and a style that became one of the most lasting legacies of the 1960s.

When Bob Dylan, at 25, wrecked his motorcycle on the side of a road near Woodstock in 1966 and dropped out of the public eye, he was recognized as a genius, a youth idol, and the authentic voice of the counterculture. Greenwich Village, where he first made his mark as a protest singer with an acid wit and a barbed-wire throat, was unquestionably the center of youth culture.

So embedded are Dylan and the Village in the legend of the Sixties — one of the most powerful legends of our time — that it is easy to forget how it all came about."

In addition, a brand-new novel about Bob Dylan's family roots may interest you. Sam Sussman's debut autofiction novel, "Boy from the North Country," published in late 2025, explores the possibility that Bob Dylan is the narrator's father. Sussman's own life inspires the



story and takes a personal look at his mother's relationship with Dylan in the 70s. The book goes beyond just a simple question of paternity and into themes such as one's identity and love itself.

The 2024 motion picture, "A Complete Unknown," a biographical look at Dylan's early years, is also available to rent or buy on several streaming platforms. Bob Dylan's 2009 release "Christmas in the Heart" might be this year's must-have on your wish list. "Positively 4th Street: The Lives and Times of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan and..." by David Hajdu is available at the Brownsville Library.

## WHERE TO BUY & SELL

**Eva Atchley**  
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EVAJAG@YAHOO.COM

**Sheila Ridinger**  
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## Brownsville Christmas Eve

By Jeff Brown, Staff Writer

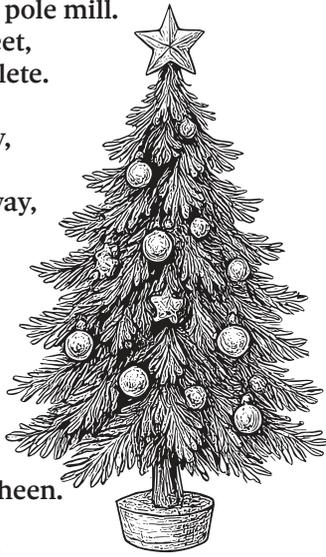
'Twas the night before Christmas and the whole town was still,  
Not a grape fan humming, not a sound from the pole mill.  
Shop windows glowed softly along the quiet street,  
While families settled in and the town felt complete.

Children slept lightly with stockings hung neatly,  
Dreaming of presents and holiday treats.  
Neighbors wrapped cookies to share down the way,  
Small acts of kindness that brighten the day.

Snow fell in whispers on rooftops and rails,  
Soft as the stories in old winter tales.  
Dogs curled by the fire in a warm little heap,  
Content in the calm of a small town asleep.

Down in the Park stood the tall evergreen,  
Shining with brand new lights that cast a clear sheen.  
It glowed in the stillness, a bright, gentle mark,  
A fresh sign of Christmas at the edge of the park.

'Twas the night before Christmas, and peace filled the air,  
A reminder that magic still lingers out there.



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**Office Hours:** Tuesday-Saturday 9 a.m. to noon, Thursdays 1 to 4 p.m.

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## POWERING LINN

### Are Solar Panels Safe? Understanding Lead and Cadmium in Simple Terms

By Kayl, Enders, guest writer

As solar energy becomes more common, many people wonder whether the materials inside solar panels pose any risk. The good news: the small amounts of lead or cadmium used in some panels are safely sealed inside and tightly controlled by the industry.

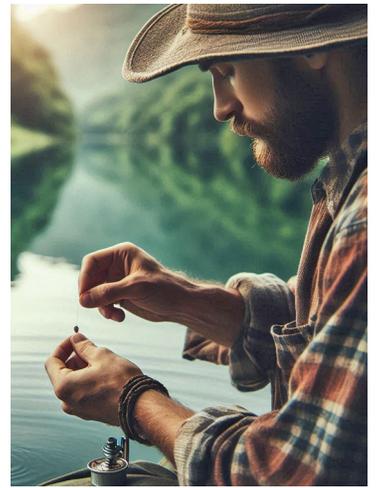
Most solar panels contain a tiny amount of lead — about 12–15 grams, roughly the size of a small marble or fishing weight. This lead is used in the solder that connects the silicon cells. It makes up less than 0.1 percent of the panel's total weight and is fully enclosed in glass and aluminum. Because of this, it can't leak out during everyday use. Manufacturers are also actively working to eliminate lead entirely, and modern recycling can recover almost all of it at the end of a panel's life.

Cadmium is found only in a specific type of thin-film solar panel called Cadmium Telluride (CdTe) panels, which make up just a small share of the solar market. Typical rooftop panels — the ones most homeowners buy — contain no cadmium at all. In CdTe panels, the cadmium is not in its pure, hazardous form. Instead, it's part of a stable compound that doesn't dissolve in water and doesn't escape when the panel breaks. Studies show minimal leaching, even under landfill conditions, and most of the material remains trapped in the glass even during fires.

CdTe panels use only a small amount — about 23 grams of cadmium per kilowatt of panel capacity, again less than 0.1 percent of the panel's weight. These panels are mainly used in large solar farms and are valued for their exemplary performance in hot or low-light conditions.

The bottom line: The lead and cadmium used in solar panels are present in very small amounts, locked safely inside, and handled with strict industry

controls. For everyday use, solar panels pose minimal risk, and recycling programs are continually improving to recover these materials when panels reach the end of their life.



A fisherman crimps a small lead weight onto a fishing line — about the same amount of lead used in the solder of a typical solar panel, where it is fully sealed inside glass and aluminum layers.

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**SHERIFF'S REPORT**

Information in the Sheriff's Report is provided by The Linn County Sheriff's Daily Media Log of Dispatched Calls and Cases. Incident details may be limited or delayed depending on agency availability prior to our weekly publication deadline. Addresses typically reflect the location of the incident or arrest, though in some cases they may indicate the origin of the call.

An individual's arrest or citation reported here does not imply guilt. Guilt or innocence is determined only through the judicial process.

The following is a list of abbreviations that may appear in our log reports: LCSO (Linn County Sheriff's Office); OSP (Oregon State Police); LCCC (Linn County Circuit Court); LCJC (Linn County Justice Court); AMC (Albany Municipal Court); FTA (failure to appear); FTC (failure to comply). A roman numeral listed after a charge means that the charge is that numbered-degree: theft I (first-degree theft).

**Saturday, Dec. 13**

7:08 a.m. — Deputies responded to a report of a horse on private property in the 29100 block of Lone Pine Rd, near Washburn Heights, Brownsville, which has been a reoccurring incident for several years. Deputies were unable to contact the horse owner. Report pending.

3:01 p.m. — Deputy received a report of a cold shoplift in the 300 block of S 3rd St, Harrisburg, and began an investigation. Report pending.

5:14 p.m. — Enrique Antunez Nunez, 46, of Harrisburg was arrested for an outstanding warrant and littering in the 800 block of Burton St, Harrisburg. Report pending.

9:50 p.m. — Deputy helped a sheep get back into its field at Ogle Rd/Linn West Dr, Shedd.

**Sunday, December 14**

2:35 a.m. — Deputy contacted an intoxicated male in the 200 block of N 3rd St, Harrisburg. Deputy provided him a ride to his residence.

6:01 p.m. — Deputy re-

sponded to a two vehicle crash. Brady McNulty, 45, of Roseburg was cited for dangerous left turn at the 32900 block of Diamond Hill Dr, Harrisburg. Report pending.

**Monday, December 15**

11:53 a.m. — Caller reported a female allegedly screamed and requested a welfare check on her trailer in the 32900 block of Diamond Hill Dr, Harrisburg. Deputies attempted to contact female, but there was no answer.

4:00 p.m. — Caller reported butcher paper and meat near the dog park in the 300 block of Sommerville Ave, Harrisburg. Deputy arrived and discovered a whole butchered deer carcass. OSP was notified and will handle the investigation.

8:34 p.m. — A citizen reported found property in the 400 block of Depot Ave, Brownsville. Deputy took the property to later be logged in LCSO Property and Evidence. Report pending.

8:52 p.m. — Cow Smith, 32, of Harrisburg was issued a criminal citation in lieu of custody for Criminal Mischief III for causing damage up to \$300 at the Diamond Hill RV Park in the 32900 block of Diamond Hill Dr, Harrisburg.

**Tuesday, December 16**

1:27 p.m. — Deputies recovered a stolen vehicle originating from a neighboring agency at Timber Rd/Courtney Creek Drive, Brownsville. Report pending.

2:43 p.m. — While a deputy was on normal patrol, the deputy heard a dog barking for a long period of time in the 100 block of W A St, Halsey. Deputy located owner and issued a warning.

5:30 p.m. — Caller reported a suspicious vehicle in the 25600 block of Timber Rd, Brownsville on Cascade Timber Consulting property. Deputy contacted the suspicious vehicle parked in front of the CTC UP100 gate after dark. Deputy warned

the people with the vehicle about blocking gates.

8:02 p.m. — Deputies investigated the death of a 54-year-old male in his home in the 28200 block of Lark Ln, Shedd. Non-criminal, report pending.

10:46 p.m. — Deputy contacted a citizen regarding a civil dispute on property near Harrisburg in the 22400 block on N Coburg Rd.

**Wednesday, Dec. 17**

1:42 a.m. — Deputy assisted the road dept. with clearing a tree hazard across N Coburg Rd near Priceboro Dr, Harrisburg.

4:07 a.m. — Deputy contacted occupants of suspicious vehicle in the 24600 block of Peoria Rd, Harrisburg, who were taking a nap from a drive.

4:38 a.m. — Deputy removed a downed tree in the 29800 block of Peoria Rd/Main St, Shedd that was blocking a lane.

9:20 a.m. — Caller reported a suicidal subject in the 31800 block of Dahlia Ln, Tangent. Deputy spoke with individual and they were not suicidal.

11:06 a.m. — Deputy assisted a Diesel vehicle having emission problems in the 1000 block of N Main St, Brownsville.

1:58 p.m. — Caller reported a suspicious vehicle in the 27300 block of Peoria Rd, Halsey. Deputy documented suspicious activity.

4:16 p.m. — Caller reported a domestic disturbance in the 32900 block of Diamond Hill Dr, Harrisburg. Deputies responded and spoke with the involved parties who stated they intended to separate for the evening.

8:10 p.m. — Deputy responded to a report of a violation of order in the 800 block of Centennial Ct, Halsey. Investigation ongoing, report pending.

10:36 p.m. — Deputies responded to a reported trespass at the Brownsville Saloon located in the 400 block of N Main St,

Brownsville. An employee wanted the incident documented and for the female to be trespassed indefinitely.

**Thursday, Dec. 18**

7:20 a.m. — Deputy presented to students for Wellness Day at Central Linn High School, Halsey.

7:44 a.m. — Caller reporting someone using a business dumpster to dispose of their trash in the 32100 block of Old Hwy 34, Tangent. Suspect was identified but was unable to be contacted. Investigation ongoing, report taken.

4:05 p.m. — Deputy removed debris from road due to winds at Beta Dr SW/Hwy 99E, Tangent.

4:15 p.m. — Deputy investigated a littering site in the 36700 block of Kirk Dr, Brownsville. No suspects at this time. Report taken.

5:53 p.m. — Caller reported a non-injury motor vehicle accident at Brush Creek Rd/West Bush Creek Rd, Sweet Home. Vehicle was towed prior to deputy's arrival.

6:12 p.m. — Deputy checked a residence for a runaway juvenile for another agency in the 300 block of Schooling St, Harrisburg. Juvenile was not there.

8:09 p.m. — Caller reported a vehicle aggressively driving through a large puddle repetitively in the 700 block of LaSalle St, Harrisburg. Deputy contacted the driver who agreed to stop.

**Friday, December 19**

10:51 a.m. — Caller re-

ported a customer assaulted an employee in the 32900 block of Hwy 228, Halsey. Deputy collected the caller's statement. The victims of the incident did not contact law enforcement. Report taken.

5:30 p.m. — Deputies assisted OSP with an RV fire in the 32400 block of Hwy 99E, Tangent. The vehicle was removed under its own power.

8:31 p.m. — Deputy observed an unoccupied suspicious vehicle at Eagle Park, Halsey, and also noticed the dog park parking lot is flooded.

9:26 p.m. — Deputies, road and fire departments responded to a Jeep with two occupants that went off the Linn West Rd, Shedd, in a high-water area. The Jeep was pulled back onto the road. No injuries.

**Saturday, Dec. 20**

8:15 a.m. — Deputy responded to single vehicle non-injury crash at Tangent Dr/Tangent Loop, Tangent. Report taken.

10:46 a.m. — Jeffery David Walters, 32, of Brownsville was issued a citation for failure to obey a traffic control device in the 200 block of E Bishop Way, Brownsville.

1:43 p.m. — Caller reported theft of their recycle can by a neighbor at the 31900 block of A St, Shedd. Neighbor claimed it was accidental and was warned for his actions.

4:13 a.m. — A citizen reported a cow outside of the fence at Gap Rd/Northernwood Dr, Brownsville, but the cow was not reportedly a traffic hazard. ☼

**Joni's Xmas Eggs**

- 1 pound of round or long loaf sliced sourdough bread cut in cubes.
- 1 diced onion
- 1 ½ cups grated cheddar cheese
- 1 ½ cups grated Monterey Jack cheese
- 5 beaten eggs
- 2 cups milk

Mix bread, onion, and cheeses. Beat eggs with milk and add to cheese mix. Mix thoroughly. Bake in buttered pan 350°F for 45 minutes.

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# The High Cost of Drinking and Driving — For Families, Friends, and Communities

By Jeff Brown, Staff Writer

Every time someone gets behind the wheel after drinking, the consequences can be devastating for them, for their loved ones, and for an entire community. According to recent data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 12,429 people died in alcohol-impaired driving crashes in 2023. That works out to approximately one death every 42 minutes.

Alcohol doesn't just make driving riskier; it also impairs judgment, reaction time, coordination, and decision-making. Even a relatively small amount of alcohol can significantly reduce a driver's ability to react and stay safe on the road.

Sadly, the victims of these crashes are often not just the impaired drivers themselves. In crashes involving alcohol, passengers, other motorists, pedestrians, even children can lose their lives. In fact, alcohol-impaired driving accounts for about



30 percent of all traffic-related deaths in the U.S. in 2023.

The ripple effects extend far beyond the crash site. Families are left to cope with unimaginable grief, guilt, anger, and long-term emotional trauma. Loss of a loved one or serious injury can lead to financial hardship, medical bills, funeral costs, loss of income, and strained relationships for

years to come.

Communities also pay a heavy price: emergency services tied up responding to crashes, increased demand for medical care, psychological support, court cases, and lost productivity. These tragedies can cast a long shadow over entire towns, especially small communities where everyone knows one another.

What's more, many of these deaths are preventable. By choosing not to drink and drive, planning a sober ride home, designating a driver, calling a taxi or ride-share, or waiting until sober, every person can help prevent a tragedy.

In small towns like ours, where each loss is felt by neighbors, friends, and families, the decision to stay sober behind the wheel is not just personal. It's a decision that can save lives. 🍷

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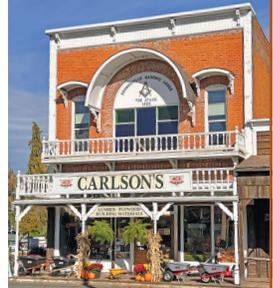
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