



Delivering targeted news for the McKenzie Valley community since 1978

### Opium king

James Lotan and the sleazy little band of well-heeled drug smugglers and human traffickers who worked with and for him

**PAGE 4**

### Country Kitchen

Where do many family activities occur? So often in the kitchen, especially when you have a large one.

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## Briefs...



Courtesy photo: row2k

The U.S. men's eight rowing team is coming back home with a bronze medal from the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics, a group that includes Grant High School alumnus Pieter Quinton, second from right. Like jigsaw puzzles? See how quickly you can rebuild this one and help the rowing team stroke their way to the top of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games. Go to: [tinyurl.com/c4dzs9aj](https://tinyurl.com/c4dzs9aj)



Springfield's "The Block Party," now in its fifth year, exists to celebrate Springfield on one magical night, Downtown, from 4 to 9 p.m. This year's beverage garden, sponsored by Zippy Fiber, will feature beverages from Plank Town Brewing, Oakshire Brewing, and Iris Vineyards.

Mr Ice Cream is the Children's Activity Sponsor, Hand of the Heart Massage is the Health & Wellness Sponsor, Pegasus Play House is the Performing Arts Sponsor, and the Sustainability Sponsor is Rise & Shine Social Enterprise.

This year, we feature a BIG Activity by Springfield Utility Board, Armani Auto Group Axe Throwing, Emerald Bath Works Photo Booth, and the Springfield Chamber Bayne Gardner Live Mural painting. The event, open to anyone, is sponsored by Springfield Block Party - Page 2



Support Local Foster Children with Donations of New Clothing. Valley River Center reports it is proud to host the Giving Tree: Give Back for Back-to-School event, supporting local children in foster care. It started on August 5th and runs through the 18th. Community members are invited to pick an apple off the apple tree, located next to JCPenney, and drop off new clothing items (with the apple tag attached) in the tree stump donation bins.

There will also be an option on August 19th, from noon to 2 PM, to bring your donation item and meet your favorite princesses at Valley River Center. Members from A Family For Every Child will be onsite to collect last-minute donations and provide Giving Tree - Page 2

## Yes, they did look twice....

### Plenty of drivers were taken by surprise when a giraffe went by

WALTERVILLE: The "custom" in Curanns Custom Taxidermy is something his clients have come to rely on. Earlier this month a lot of other people had the chance to see an example of his work when he drove the result of a major reconstruction project to its new home in Veneta.

Standing 10 feet, 2 inches tall, the giraffe on Curran's trailer made quite an impact on unsuspecting motorists when it came into view. Some were distracted to the point it made traffic merges challenging and one, Curran said, caused him to slam on his brakes while merging onto I-105 because "he was pacing me with his phone in front of his face."

While most of his work comes from hunters around the region who want to preserve an elk or deer, Curran is also certified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. That allows him to import skins from other countries like crates expected to arrive soon containing an elephant and a white rhino. And, though he admits the giraffe was one "of the bigger ones," he already had a shoulder-mounted one in his showroom and is currently working on a half-life Cape buffalo.

The full-size giraffe came his way via another taxidermist who bought it from a customer who had hunted it 25 to 30 years ago in Africa. Over the years it had deteriorated to the point Curran spent two months restoring it - rehydrating the skin and glues along with repairing areas that had pulled away from its foam core.

It's something that tall, luckily, the new owner's shop has a twelve-foot ceiling, where he placed it - next to his drum set.

If you'd like to see more of his work, Curran's Taxidermy showroom, at 39861 McKenzie Highway, is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, or call 541-746-7197.



Curran's Taxidermy

A ten-foot-tall giraffe isn't something you're likely to see on an everyday commute.

## Can rate changes incentivize consumer behavior?

### Eugene Water & Electric Board approves eco-friendly measures

By Bayla Orton  
EUGENE: While discussing rate changes, Eugene Water & Electric Board commissioners considered how these adjustments might influence Eugene businesses and residents to move toward more eco-friendly power and water alternatives that could improve the overall community.

"We want people to use less energy and electricity, and no matter what happens it will always be beneficial for us to use less electricity," said Commissioner Mindy

Schlossberg. "It takes a while to build habits in people, even though we might not need to do it right now, I think it's important."

Currently, the Eugene metro area has fixed rate charges, meaning that customers who use less electricity than other households or companies are being subsidized by the utility's kilowatt-per-hour measurement. The calculation keeps the fixed charge lower for

residents. However, opting for more energy-efficient methods can unintentionally push fixed rates for neighbors.

General Manager Frank Lawson explained that other Oregon communities have fixed charges 2 1/2 times greater than EWEB. Despite a lower rate, Eugene tenants and small businesses alike continue to struggle to pay for utilities—a difficult balance to maintain as each

group has its problems as well, he noted.

"Our businesses could move elsewhere if things get too expensive, setting all the burden on them also doesn't help low-income in our community," Commissioner Sonya Carlson noted. "Without these businesses, there are no jobs. There is no perfect solution, we all have to give a little bit in order to create the rate design

Rate changes - Page 10

## How much is lost after a forest fire?

### Burned trees are still here from the 2020 Holiday Farm Fire



Four years after the devastating Holiday Farm Fire, swaths of dead trees remain on many area hillsides.

Of forest properties burned in the 2020 Holiday Farm Fire, estimates are approximately 144,000 of that amount were on U.S. Forest Service land, 8,000 acres within Bureau of Land Management boundaries, and around 20,000 acres of private forest land.

More than 1 million acres were impacted around Oregon in that year - close to 3% of the state's forestland. Almost all of it was on the west side, where the industry is centered. Of private owners, Weyerhaeuser was the hardest hit - reporting third-quarter losses of \$80 million for timber it wasn't able to salvage. In a November 22, 2020, Oregonian article, Casey Roscoe, a senior vice president at Seneca Sawmill, said 640 acres of company timber burned in the Holiday Farm fire and 10,000 acres in the Archie Creek fire. She estimated their losses amounted to tens of millions of dollars.

Typically a 100,000-acre mature Douglas-fir forest yields about 1.5 billion board feet of lumber. If 30% of the timber could still be salvaged and sold at a reduced price of \$150 per MBF, the salvage value would be 1.5 billion board feet x 0.30 x \$150/MBF, totaling \$67.5 million.

# Letters to the Editor

## EV's equal savings

EVs are not necessarily heavier than gasoline cars. The best-selling EV in the world is the Tesla Model Y, which weighs about 4,300 pounds. My Honda Pilot weighs 4,500 pounds, a Ford F-350 7,400 pounds. An 18-wheeler comes in at 66,000 pounds...

If you have trouble believing that, realize that while batteries are heavy, EVs don't need a transmission, need far less steel, and can use more aluminum. Tesla is working on a structural battery pack, which would require even less excess material.

Yes, EV batteries can catch fire, but it is much more rare than a gas car, which carries a tank of volatile flammable liquid around (gasoline). When an EV battery catches fire, standard practice for fire departments is to cover it with a special blanket and smother it. But super rare.

If you're really eco-conscious EV batteries are super recyclable, because a used EV battery is like really high-grade ore, they can grind them up and process them just like they do ore. Tesla, the

most popular selling EV maker in the world doesn't get their lithium from Chile.

Also, regular cars need continuous complicated maintenance that EVs don't, which provides further savings for the environment.

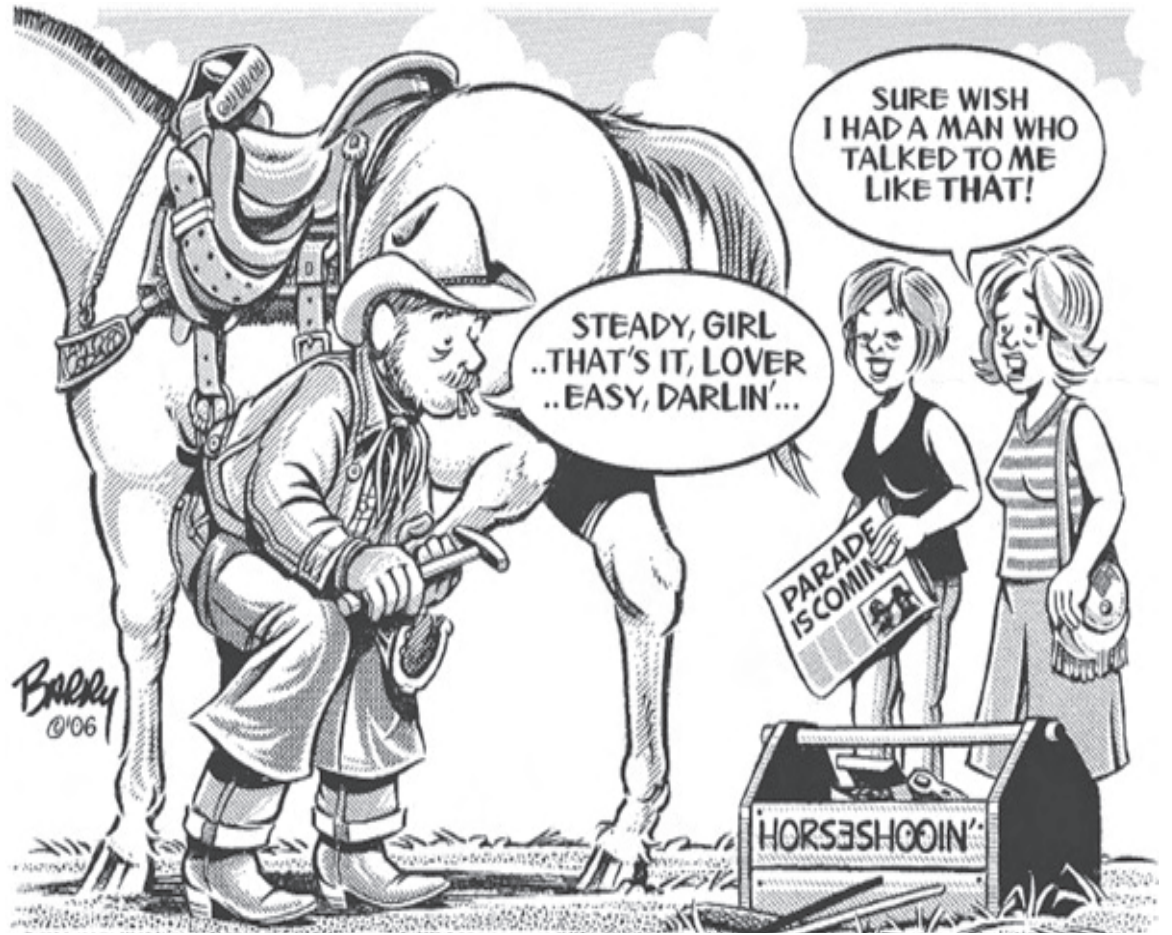
Pierce T Wetter III  
Springfield

## Revisit McKenzie River History at VMCC

Whether you are a history buff or a newcomer to the valley, you will not want to miss an evening with Margaret Beilharz at the Vida McKenzie Community Center (90377 Thomson Hwy, Vida.) She will share videos of the area from the 1960's to the 1990's on August 17th, starting at 7 p.m.

This will be a very casual, "Come as You Are" affair with no admission fee. The snack bar will be open and there will be time to visit with old friends or make new ones.

See you at the Center!  
Gerry Aster  
Vida



## Guest Opinion

### A government plan to rule out innovation

By Laura Schoppe

The federal government may soon finalize guidance that could weaken ownership of intellectual property throughout the U.S. economy. This would affect a huge swathe of industries, among them biotechnology, clean energy, agriculture, and defense.

More specifically, the new guidance would cause companies large and small, as well as their investors, to balk at licensing and developing promising new technologies -- with severe consequences for American innovation.

Shepherding a promising idea from lab to marketplace is already a daunting task, as I know firsthand. My consulting firm, Fuentek, helps universities, non-profit research institutions, and companies turn early-stage discoveries into real-world inventions -- a laborious and risky process known as "tech transfer." We've worked with more than 5,000 technologies in a wide range of industries and facilitated more than 500 tech transfer agreements.

The Bayh-Dole Act of 1980 invented tech transfer as we know it today, and has since created more than six million jobs and added nearly \$2 trillion to U.S. gross industrial output. Before the law passed, the government kept any patents resulting from federally funded research at universities. But government offices had no expertise in licensing patents, nor any incentive to do so. Taxpayers got little in return for their investment.

Bayh-Dole changed the equa-

tion by allowing universities to retain patents on their work, which enabled them to license the rights to private companies. The universities were also able to share their expertise with the new licensees, a critical part of successful product development. Tech transfer was born.

Now, the proposed guidance would reinterpret the section of Bayh-Dole that allows the government to "march in," to take patents from one company, and reassign them to another. By law, this can only happen if the licensee has failed to develop a product based on the patent. But under the new proposal, the government could march in if it decided a product's price was unreasonable. Though the original licensee took on the risk and expense of developing the new invention, rival firms would be able to copy it on the cheap.

The stated purpose of the proposed policy is to lower drug prices. But while I share that goal, the proposal fails to consider the risk and cost of bringing the first pill to market.

Converting an initial break-

through into a usable medicine requires a lengthy process of development, testing, and certification -- and most projects that enter this pipeline never come to fruition. Any successful medicine has to recoup both its own development expenses and those of the 10 that failed before it. If we don't allow companies to earn back these costs, they'll simply stop investing in new drugs.

If the government decides to upend decades of legislative precedent by moving forward with its march-in proposal, the effect will be to sharply curtail drug development. The broader impact will be even worse, because the guidance isn't industry-specific. It would apply to all fields in which government grants have contributed to new discoveries -- in other words, all high-tech sectors.

In short, if the proposed guidance is finalized, the United States will see an alarming loss of innovation as companies retreat from our most cutting-edge sectors -- with little or no upside. For the sake of our innovation-based economy, I urge the administration to reconsider.

Laura Schoppe is President of Fuentek, a Research Triangle-based consulting firm that helps universities, non-profit research institutions, and companies turn early-stage discoveries into real-world inventions. She has worked in the technology transfer field for 30 years. This piece originally ran in RealClearHealth.

## Letters to the Editor



Letters To The Editor should contain no more than 250 words. All letters must be signed and include an address and phone number. Addresses and phone numbers will not be published upon request. Deadline for submission is Monday at 5 pm.

## Briefs...

### Block Party

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field's The BLOCK Party, Plank Town Brewing Company and Pegasus Playhouse

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### Giving Tree

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information about their mission. People can also donate online at [pledge.to/VRC-backtoschool](https://pledge.to/VRC-backtoschool)

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(541) 822-3358 FAX (541) 663-4550  
MAILING ADDRESS: 59059 Old McKenzie Hwy.  
McKenzie Bridge, Oregon 97413

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## WEATHER REPORT

READINGS TAKEN AT THE US ARMY CORPS COUGAR DAM

READINGS TAKEN AT THE EWEB LEABURG POWERHOUSE

Date	High	Low	Rain	Releases	Date	High	Low	Rain	Riverflow
8/6	85	54	0	370 cfs	8/6	88	50	0	2,020 cfs
8/7	54	93	0	370 cfs	8/7	84	50	0	1,980 cfs
8/8	60	88	0	322 cfs	8/8	80	57	0	2,040 cfs
8/9	59	87	0	NA	8/9	90	55	0	2,000 cfs
8/10	59	87	0	NA	8/10	89	55	0	1,980 cfs
8/11	56	86	0	571 cfs	8/11	88	54	0	1,980 cfs
8/12	58	68	0	571 cfs	8/12	87	54	0	2,780 cfs

Friday 8/16		Saturday 8/17		Sunday 8/18	
McKenzie Valley Mostly Sunny 10% chance precip High: 81 Low: 54	Santiam Pass Mostly Sunny 20% chance precip High: 66 Low: 42	McKenzie Valley Mostly Sunny 20% chance precip High: 77 Low: 54	Santiam Pass Partly Cloudy 20% chance precip High: 63 Low: 41	McKenzie Valley Partly Cloudy 10% chance precip High: 79 Low: 50	Santiam Pass Mostly Sunny 20% chance precip High: 64 Low: 39

# Sheriff's Report

**Aug. 6: 6: 40 a.m:** Alarm - 39300 blk, McK. Hwy.  
**7:23 a.m:** Medical Info Call - 48000 blk, McK. Hwy.  
**1:44 p.m:** Civil Enforcement - 91700 blk, Blue River Reservoir Rd.  
**2:42p.m:** Assist Fire Department - 45900 blk, Goodpasture Rd.  
**6:24 p.m:** Reckless Driving - McK. Hwy. & Leaburg Dam Rd.  
**7:10 p.m:** Citizen Contact - Camp Creek Rd. & Stephens Rd.  
**Aug. 7: 1:51 a.m:** Prowler - 93000 blk, Marcola Rd. Deputies responded to the location for a report of a prowler outside. No prowler was located, and other residents did not believe there had been anyone outside.  
**11:22 a.m:** Assist, Follow Up - 59200 blk, N. Belknap Springs Rd.  
**12:15 p.m:** Suspicious Conditions - 55600 blk, E. King Rd.  
**2:00 p.m:** Disturbance, Dispute - 45600 blk, N. Gate Creek Rd. Deputies responded to a dispute over property. It was determined to be a civil issue.  
**3:21 p.m:** Abandoned Vehicle - 87800 blk, Cedar Flat Rd.

**3:23 p.m:** Illegal Dump - Odin McGrew Springs.  
**3:58 p.m:** Assault - 55600 blk, E. King Rd.  
**4:28 p.m:** Assist, Information - Goats Rd. & Sunderman Rd.  
**5:37 p.m:** Suspicious Subject - 38800 blk, McK. Hwy.  
**7:15 p.m:** Welfare Check - 54500 blk, McK. Hwy.  
**Aug. 8: 2:57 p.m:** Hit & Run - 45600 blk, McK. Hwy.  
**6:14 p.m:** Assist, Follow Up - 49100 blk, McK. Hwy.  
**8:48 p.m:** Attempt To Locate Drunk Driver - 45100 blk, McK. Hwy.  
**Aug. 9: 5:00 p.m:** Criminal Mischief - 38400 blk, Shotgun Creek Rd.  
**3:47 p.m:** Water Rescue - Bellinger Landing.  
**3:32 p.m:** Motor Vehicle Accident, Unknown Injury - Marcola Rd. & Skyhigh Dr.  
**Aug. 10: 11:06 a.m:** Suspicious Conditions - Marcola Rd. Mp. 4.  
**11:53 a.m:** Water Rescue - Lat: 44.18457. Long: -122.102158.  
**1:32 a.m:** Motor Vehicle Accident, No Injury - Sunderman Rd. Mp. 1.  
**3:40 a.m:** Theft - Terwilliger Hot Springs.  
**12:35 p.m:** Disturbance, Dispute - 52600 blk, McK. Hwy.  
**1:43 p.m:** Smoke - Lat: 44.03336944. Long: -122.533483.

**3:04 p.m:** Traffic Hazard - McK. Hwy. & Cedar Flat Rd.  
**7:21 p.m:** Mental Subject - 92200 blk, Marcola Rd.  
**Aug. 11: 2:18 p.m:** Disturbance, Dispute - 92000 blk, Spicer Ln.  
**5:47 p.m:** Vehicle Stop - McK. Hwy. Mp. 29.  
**6:06 p.m:** Assist Oregon State Police - 42700 blk, McK. Hwy.  
**6:23 p.m:** Vehicle Stop - McK. Hwy. & Leaburg Dam Rd.  
**Aug. 12: 5:59 p.m:** Suspicious Conditions - 38800 blk, Camp Creek Rd.

Comments, as reported, may not be complete or accurate. If further information is required contact the Lane County Sheriff's Office.

# State Police Report

**Aug. 7: 20:11:** Assault - Domestic - 56000 E. King Rd. Troopers assisted Lane County Sheriff's Office deputies with an alleged report of domestic abuse. Deputy determined probable cause existed to arrest a resident at the location pursuant to Family Abuse Prevention Act. Troopers transported custody to Lane County Adult Corrections. Involved: 53-year-old female from Roseburg.  
**Aug. 11: 18:06:** Driving Under

the Influence of Intoxicants, Alcohol - Hwy. 126E, Milepost 36. Troopers were dispatched to a driving complaint. Dispatch advised a black sedan was unable to drive within its lane, swerving and going into the oncoming lane. Troopers located the vehicle parked near Milepost 20. The driver displayed signs of impairment and was ultimately  
[Continued On Page 11](#)

# McKenzie Fire & Rescue

**Aug. 5: 12:20:** 85000 block, Hicks Ln. Brush Fire. Mutual Aid to Pleasant Hill/Goshen Fire.  
**14:34:** 43000 blk, McK. Hwy. Water Craft Rescue. Assist Stranded Boater.  
**Aug. 6: 7:19:** 48000 blk, McK. Hwy. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, 1 Transported.  
**10:09:** 90000 blk, Lure Ln. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, 1 Transported.  
**22:35:** 44000 blk, McK. Hwy. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, Refusal Obtained.  
**Aug. 7: 12:16:** 87000 blk, Cedar Flat Rd. Medical, Trauma. Patient Assessed, 1 Transported.  
**13:12:** McK. Hwy./Flowerdale Rd. Motor Vehicle Accident. iPhone Activation; Unable To Locate.

**14:28:** 41000 blk, Deerhorn Rd. Down Line. No Arcing/Sparking, Provide Water Standby, Scene Turned Over to EWEB.  
**Aug. 8:** 38000 blk, E. Cedar Flat Rd. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, Refusal Obtained.  
**18:11:** 7000 blk, Thurston Rd. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, Refusal Obtained.  
**20:37:** McK. Hwy./Goodpasture Rd. MVA. iPhone Activation; UTLL.  
**21:12:** 40000 blk, McK. Hwy. Assist Police. Patient Assessed, Refusal Obtained.  
**Aug. 9: 0:41:** 40000 blk, Booth Kelly Rd. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, Refusal Obtained.  
**14:23:** 40000 blk, Booth Kelly Rd. Lift Assist Only.  
**15:45:** 1300 blk, McKenzie River Water Rescue. Rescue by Boat 5 and Boat 6; No Transport.  
**16:32:** 89000 blk, Marcola Rd. Mutual Aid. Disregarded.  
**Aug. 10: 1:23:** Sunderman Rd./Milepost 1. Mutual Aid. Disregarded by Dispatch.  
**11:59:** 57000 blk, McK. Hwy. Mutual Aid. Assist Upper McKenzie.  
**13:11:** McK. Hwy./Mp. 43. Mutual Aid. Canceled Prior to Arrival.  
[Continued On Page 11](#)

# Upper McKenzie Fire/Rescue

**Aug. 7: 20:57:** Vehicle Fire - Milepost 9, Clear Lake Cutoff near Blue Pool. Caller reports a semi on fire.  
**Aug. 8: 13:05:** Assist Police Dept. - McK. Hwy./Milepost 43. Active dispute involving a gun and possibly barricaded female subject threatening to kill herself.  
**Aug. 10: 11:50:** Water Rescue - Paradise Campground. 2 subjects hanging onto a boat lodged between two trees.  
 The Upper McK. Fire District's board of directors will hold its monthly meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, at the McK. Fire Station, 56578 McK. Hwy. in McKenzie Bridge.

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# Small-time political crook James Lotan became West Coast's opium king



By Slim Randles

By Finn J.D. John  
One of the most significant events in the history of the world took place in 1892, when a corrupt political hack named James Lotan managed to land a cushy government job as the head of the customs inspection service for the Port of Portland.

Believe it or not, Lotan's landing that job led directly to Pearl Harbor and eventually Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and indirectly to the defeat of Nazi Germany in Europe.

Not bad for a small-time white-collar criminal in a tiny backwater seaport town on the far side of the world, eh?

I realize you may be a bit skeptical of this claim. Bear with me while I unpack it and prove it to you, along with the strong possibility that most of us owe our lives and the continued existence of human civilization to James Lotan and the sleazy little band of well-heeled drug smugglers and human traffickers who worked with and for him, on the Portland waterfront in the early 1890s.

James Lotan was, writes legendary Portland historian E. Kimbark MacColl, "a maverick businessman-politician" and the half owner of the Stark Street Ferry. He was a low-level member of the Portland political elite, but he must have been a fantastic networker, because by about 1890 he had worked his way all the way up to the position of President of the Oregon Republican Party.

Lotan had started his rise to prominence a couple decades earlier as a shop foreman at the Oregon Iron Works, a Portland manufacturing plant that specialized in steam engines and boilers. At some point he connected with state Senator Joseph Simon, who was basically the head of one of Portland's two major Republican political factions. (The other was U.S. Senator John M. Hipple, who served in the Senate under the



UO Libraries  
An illustration of a group of smugglers bringing opium and illegal Chinese immigrants into Oregon, from a 1889 issue of Portland-based magazine *The West Shore*.

alias "John H. Mitchell," which he adopted years earlier while hiding from law enforcement after embezzling \$4,000 from his employer.)

By working as a fixer and odd-jobs man for Simon, Lotan worked his way to prominence, rising within the Republican Party with the fortunes of his faction. He was rewarded with a series of federal political-patronage positions — Portland Inspector of Shipping and Machinery, Boiler Inspector, and finally Customs Collector.

Along the way, his fortunes having risen nicely, he was able to join the exclusive Arlington Club and purchase a half-interest in the Stark Street Ferry.

By the time this happened, though, he had switched sides, and was now an avid Mitchell man.

And all these things came together with marvelous

serendipity in about 1892 when Simon left the state to join the Republican National Committee in Washington. Into the power vacuum Lotan rushed, becoming the president of the Oregon Republican Party, with broad agenda-setting power over what got done in Salem.

He was just in time to start putting the brakes on all the pesky bridge-building projects that the city of Portland had been working on. Naturally, as part-owner of the ferry that they would be replacing, he didn't think they should be built ... not, at least, unless he and his partners were, um, fairly compensated for it.

He was well on his way to losing this fight when the city came to the state Legislature to request bonding authority to build the Bull Run water project. Lotan wasn't a Legislator himself,

but he was in a position to set party priorities, and he told the city he'd be glad to put their request right at the top of the priority list, and help them get the bridges done ... if they'd agree to buy his ramshackle, dilapidated, obsolete ferry from him for \$50,000 (\$1.75 million in modern money, not bad for a boat on a rope!).

The Portland mayor and City Council members raged, but there was little they could do. The city needed the Legislature to approve the bonds, the Legislature was Republican, and Lotan, as head of the GOP, was in a position to lean on folks to keep the city's request from reaching the floor.

In the end, they talked him all the way down to \$40,000 — for a ferry that probably was worth less than \$1,500 as it sat.

But Lotan was not depending just on this little blackmail scheme to make him rich. Remember that plum government job he landed in 1892? Customs Collector for the Port of Portland? That was his golden ticket.

You see, "Customs Collector" was what the top local job in the customs department was called. Lotan was the big boss, the one person responsible for making sure nobody was smuggling anything through the Port of Portland. Stuff like, oh, I don't know ... shiploads of illegal immigrants, steamer trunks packed with illegal drugs, things like that.

Which meant, of course, that James Lotan was in the best position of anyone in Portland to go into the illegal-immigrants-and-drugs business.

Which he promptly did by reaching out to a business friend, a recently widowed Scot named William Dunbar, probably through the Arlington

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Windy, Doc and the rest of the bunch may be found in the book *Home Country* from Rio Grande Press. <http://nmsantos.com/Bookstore/Misc-Books/Home/Home.html>

**Quote of the Week**  
"The stock market is filled with individuals who know the price of everything, but the value of nothing."  
Ken Fisher

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**HERE'S HOW:**

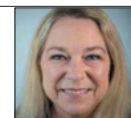
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## Gardening Tips

By Kym Pokorny



Oregon State University

OSU Extension Service

### Tips on keeping harvested potatoes fresh



Amanda Loman

Be sure potatoes are clean and completely dry before placing them in storage.

Would you like your homegrown potatoes to stay fresh and last longer? Research has shown there are best practices for harvesting and storing potatoes to ensure freshness.

First, check for harvest maturity by digging up a potato. If the skin rubs off easily, wait another week before harvesting, said Heidi Noordijk, Oregon State University Extension Service Small Farms coordinator. To help prepare potatoes for storage, cut back on watering in mid-August. Let the vines die back before harvesting.

Clean potatoes before storing them. You need only brush off the soil on potatoes grown in coarse, sandy soil. But if the soil is fine, sticky clay, your potatoes may need washing. If so, be sure they are completely dry before placing them in storage. Minimize tuber exposure to light while cleaning.

Cure newly dug and cleaned

potatoes for a week to 10 days in a dark, well-ventilated area with moderate temperatures and high humidity, and they will last longer, Noordijk said. After curing, slowly drop the storage temperature to about 40-46 degrees for table use. Potato tubers are about 80 percent water, depending on the variety, so high storage humidity is recommended to prevent shriveling.

Potatoes can be stored in perforated plastic bags to maintain proper humidity levels. Home storage options include a designated refrigerator between 40-46 degrees, an insulated garage, or a cool basement.

Storage temperatures below 38 degrees can cause sugar buildup or sweetening, according to Noordijk. Fried products from such tubers are darker and oilier than those from tubers stored at higher temperatures. While

low temperatures can “sweeten” tubers, high temperatures often lead to excessive decay, shriveling, and sprouting.

Sort out and cull injured and diseased spuds before storing them long-term. Store only healthy potatoes in well-ventilated containers. Eat the ones hit by your shovel and those with bad spots or disease in the first month or so after harvest, as injured potatoes don’t last. They also may spread spoilage or disease microorganisms to other potatoes.

Make sure to keep the storage area dark as the light will turn tubers green and make them unfit for table use, Noordijk said. The green color is caused by chlorophyll, common to all green plants. Chlorophyll is harmless but is frequently accompanied by high levels of a toxic alkaloid called solanine. While small quantities of solanine are harmless, too many green potatoes can lead to illness. Therefore, discard all potatoes with excessive greening.

Grow potatoes that keep well. Red potatoes usually don’t keep as long as yellow or white varieties. Thin-skinned potatoes don’t last as long in storage as those with thick skins, such as russets. Late-maturing varieties almost always store better than early types.

With proper storage, well-matured, late-season potatoes will stay in good condition for seven to eight months. When storage temperatures exceed 46 degrees, potatoes should be kept for two to three months, but sprouting and shriveling may occur.

“Planting sprouted, shriveled tubers the following spring is not recommended because of excess disease levels, particularly viruses,” Noordijk said. “Whenever possible, plant only certified, healthy seed potatoes.”



## Country Kitchen

By Mary Emma Allen



### MEMORIES OF A FAMILY KITCHEN

My daughter came home with the book, *The Kitchen in History* from our favorite thrift store. It contains the history of kitchens and their evolution throughout the ages from prehistoric times to the 1970s when the book was written. I’ve often published articles about the joys of a kitchen, the place where families gather and the various ones where I’ve lived. Many family memories are made there, conversations take place, numerous recipes are cooked and served, and the methods of cooking and utensils used have greatly evolved over the years.

Where do many family activities occur? So often in the kitchen, especially when you have a large one. Think back to your childhood and recall your family’s activities. Was it in the family kitchen where meals were prepared and eaten, discussions took place, friends gathered, games played, and homework done?

The kitchen of my childhood was a large farmhouse one with wood burning cook stove, large wooden table that seated eight, and a couch for relaxing or recuperating from illness. This wasn’t a picture book kitchen. But this was the room where the family spent much of our time. My daughter and then the grandchildren gathered in our kitchens, too.

#### Seasonal Activities

It was the “heart of the house,” where we ate, entertained, did schoolwork, nursed sick pets, stirred up new recipes, and worked on craft projects. In winter it usually was the warmest room in the house. Many an evening I sat before the stove doing my schoolwork. Cats and perhaps a puppy often snuggled underneath the woodstove for warmth.

Around the table we youngsters congregated with our friends for cocoa and cookies after skating and sledding parties on the farm. Often we’d end the day popping

corn, toasting marshmallows, and making fudge on the kitchen stove.

In summer, the kitchen was the hub of canning activities. Mother, Sister, and I, frequently assisted by a neighbor lady, prepared fruits and vegetables for canning. Sometimes when the kitchen was so hot from constantly heating the canner on the wood stove, the menfolk hauled the table under the trees in the front yard where we’d work and serve meals.

#### Today’s Family Kitchen

Even today, the kitchen often is the family gathering place. Children still work at craft projects, hang school papers on the refrigerator, learn to bake and cook, arrange bouquets of wild flowers in season, display their collections of frogs and salamanders in spring, and chat with Mom after school over cookies and milk.

This room is a learning place, a sharing place, the heart of the home, even though it may not always be the picture book room you see in glossy magazines. It’s a place for living and growing and cooking fun family meals.

**BAKED ACORN SQUASH with APPLE FILLING** - Wash 2 acorn squash, cut into halves lengthwise; scoop out the seeds and fiber. Place in a baking pan with the cut side down. Add ½ inch boiling water. Bake at 400 degrees F. for about 20 minutes.

Using 3 tart apples, peel, core and dice them. Mix with ¼ cup melted butter and ½ cup maple syrup or honey.

Take squash from oven, and turn cut side up. Brush with melted butter. Fill squash with apple mixture. Cover the pan with foil, and then continue baking at 400 degrees F. for 30 minutes, or until the apples and squash are tender.

(c) Mary Emma Allen

(Mary Emma Allen researches and writes about family history from her New Hampshire home.)

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**On the newsstands in the August 15<sup>th</sup> edition of McKenzie River Reflections or online at:**

**[tinyurl.com/bpeftenb](http://tinyurl.com/bpeftenb)**

**McKenzie River Traveler’s Guide**

Explore our “60-Mile Main Street”

# Community Notes

## AA Meetings

AA meetings are held on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. and Sundays at 5 p.m. at the McKenzie Valley Presbyterian Church in Walthersville. plus in McKenzie Bridge at 6 p.m. on Thursdays at the McKenzie Bridge Christian Church.

## July - Aug. 20

### Free Summer Meals

Free Summer Meals will be served from 8 a.m. to noon at the At the McKenzie Community School, 51187 Blue River Drive. No sign-up, paperwork, or cost is required! Just show up and enjoy nutritious meals: Breakfast: 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. Lunch: 11 am to noon

## August 15

### Leaburg Food Pantry

The Leaburg Food Pantry will be open from 3 to 6:30 p.m. at the McKenzie Bible Fellowship, 45061 McKenzie Hwy. All are welcome! Please send folks!

## August 16

### Yoga in Leaburg

Yoga in Leaburg meets from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. at McKenzie Fire & Rescue's Training Center, 42870 McKenzie Hwy, every Friday.

## August 17

### A Dime At A Time

The Bottle Boys are busy from 10 a.m. to noon at the Leaburg Store, 42840 McKenzie Hwy. for Saturday morning sorting sessions. Donations can be dropped off at the Leaburg Store and maybe help us bag up the containers! Funds from plastic, glass, and aluminum containers go toward the rebuilding of the O'Brien Memorial Library in Blue River, McKenzie River Clinic, and the Vida McKenzie Community Center - all destroyed in the Holiday Farm fire.

## August 17

### BINGO at 1966

Join us for bingo this Saturday, at 1966 Bar & Grill, Tokatee Golf Club. Bingo will start at 6 pm! So feel free to come early for food and drink. Four rounds of bingo, \$5/3 cards, and you can buy as many cards as you'd like.

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## August 17

### Movie Night

"McKenzie in the 1960's" Movie Night at Vida McKenzie Community Center, from 7 to 9 p.m. Margaret Beilharz will present films from the 60's to the 90's highlighting river history. Enjoy visiting with friends and feast on goodies from VMCC's snack bar. Everyone is invited.

## August 19

### McK Fire Board

The McKenzie Fire District Board will meet from noon to 1 p.m. at the Leaburg Training Center, 42870 McKenzie Hwy. Call 541-896-3311 for more information.

## August 19

### Upper McK Fire Board

The Upper McKenzie Fire District Board of Directors monthly meeting will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. at the fire station, 56578 McKenzie Hwy. in McKenzie Bridge. For more information, 541-822-3479.

## August 19

### Homeschool Club

The Cascade Homeschool Club will host an open house from 1 to 3 p.m. on Monday, August 19th, at the Vida McKenzie Community Center. The CHC will meet from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Monday in September, October, November, March, April, and May. 4-week units will culminate with an opportunity for children to showcase their talents. This program will serve families of school-aged children and recruit community members with skills they'd like to share with local youth. People are invited to share ideas, co-create something extraordinary, and foster a love of learning within our special McKenzie River community and beyond. Features will include homeschool support, Community service, Personal growth, Friendship, Adventure, Gameschooling, STEM, Cooking, Theater, Arts & Crafts, Nature Study, Music & Dance. For more information contact [cascadehomeschoolclub@gmail.com](mailto:cascadehomeschoolclub@gmail.com)

## August 20

### Family Story Time

The Family Story Time will be held from 10 to 11 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall, 37529 Upper Camp Creek Road. Have some special fun at Camp Creek Church for children 5 and under (with their adults) to enjoy stories, singing,

laughter, and friendship!

## August 20

### Board of Commissioners

Lane County Board of Commissioners. Harris Hall, 125 E 8th Ave, Eugene. The Board of Commissioner meetings begin at 9 a.m. in Harris Hall, unless otherwise noted on the published agenda. Regular Board Meetings are scheduled for Tuesday. Wednesday Board meetings are on an as needed basis.

## August 17

### Luncheon Listening

The Vida McKenzie Community Center invites all interested residents to a free Luncheon Listening Session about its Social Model Senior Center, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.. We want to hear what you would like this program to become.

## August 20

### Walthersville Grange

The Walthersville Grange #416 will meet from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at 39259 Camp Creek Road.

## August 21

### Board of Commissioners

Lane County Board of Commissioners. Harris Hall, 125 E 8th Ave, Eugene. The Board of Commissioner meetings begin at 9 a.m. in Harris Hall, unless otherwise noted on the published agenda. Regular Board Meetings are scheduled for Tuesday. Wednesday Board meetings are on an as needed basis.

## August 10

### BINGO at VMCC

Bingo at the Center occurs the second Saturday of the month. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and games start at 7. Poker happens every second and fourth Wednesday, starting at 6 p.m.

## August 19

### Meet & Greet at VMCC

On August 19 there will be a Meet & Greet at VMCC, where families can learn about the new Homeschool Hub that will be launched on Mondays at the Center. Hear what Courtney Queen of Cascade Homeschool Club envisions for this wonderful program.

## August 20

### Senior Center Program

On August 20th, share a complimentary lunch at the Center and help design VMCC's Senior Center programming. Orchid Clinic will be providing community resource information.

## August 24

### Wine Tasting

Who doesn't love wine tasting? McKenzie Crest Winery will be offering wine tastings at the Center on August 24th, October 19th, and November 16th. Meet these local winemakers and enjoy the "fruits of their labor." Their tastings always incorporate surprises such as offerings from local craft-people and makers of art.

# It's almost Fair Time!



The Walthersville Grange is hosting the 72nd annual Walthersville Community Fair on September 7, starting at 9 in the morning and going until 4 PM. Bring your entries of canning, baking, flowers, fruits and vegetables, antiques, arts, and textiles/handicrafts from 7 to 9 AM. Judging starts at 9:30 AM. Scheduled events will be the Walthersville Waddle 5K run/walk starting at 9 AM this year. Sign up online. Just search for Walthersville Waddle 5K. Registration is \$25 for adults, \$20 for seniors, and \$15 for youth (add \$15 if you want a Waddle T-shirt). Sign up before August 22 to be guaranteed a T-shirt. You can also sign up the day of the Waddle, but a T-shirt cannot be guaranteed. Contact Rose for Waddle information at 541-968-1047. Flag raising will be at 10 AM. The parade will begin at 11 AM. This year's theme for the parade is "A Wilderness Wonder."

Contact Dani at 541-520-1827 to sign up for the parade or for more information about the parade. The famous Walthersville Grange chicken barbecue starts at 11:30 AM. The dinner will consist of a half chicken, corn on the cob, beans, coleslaw, and dessert, all for \$15. There will also be hotdogs with a bag of chips for \$3 for those who prefer. Raffle tickets will be sold throughout the day and the drawing will start at 3 PM. There will be lots of vendors to shop from. If you are a vendor and want to have a table to sell your wares (tables are \$20), please contact Paula at 541-561-3407 to sign up for a space. We hope you will come join us at the fair and check out the new windows that are already installed and the new siding should be up by then. For other information call 541-521-4760 and leave a message; calls will be returned. See you at the fair.

## Opportunities for homeschoolers and 60+ seniors

As Vida McKenzie Community Center was rebuilding, following the Holiday Farm Fire, a "Homeschool Hub" and a "Senior Center" were on its short list of new programming. Surprisingly, both programs are taking shape simultaneously. As a bonus, there are opportunities for these programs to interface in interesting and creative ways.

Courtney Queen and two other dedicated, local moms have designed the Cascade Homeschool Club. It will meet at VMCC throughout the 2024/2025 school year from 10:00a.m. to 2:00p.m. every Monday in September, October, November, March, April and May for 4 week units. These units will culminate in an open house where the children showcase their talents. This could include anything from culinary items made in VMCC's kitchen, to music/dance or arts/crafts...the options are endless.

If you or your family/friends are curious about this extraordinary program, come to Vida McKenzie Community Center on August 19th at 1:00p.m. to learn more and to determine how to become involved. Refreshments will be

served. Are you a senior (60+ years of age) or a family member of a senior? On August 20th at 11:30, please return to VMCC for a free luncheon during which the designing of the Social Model Senior Center will begin. VMCC does not presume to know what seniors desire for this program but it knows there is a need for one. Your input is essential. Orchid Clinic will also be on hand to provide an array of community resources.

How can these two programs overlap? VMCC believes there are opportunities for learning and sharing that bridge generations. Depending upon their particular learning unit, Cascade Homeschool Club youth may prepare a part of the seniors' meal or decorate the seniors' tables with floral arrangements/holiday décor. Student arts/crafts will be displayed for seniors' enjoyment or youth may perform music/dance for the delight of Senior Center participants. In turn, seniors may impart skills to youth through storytelling, short tutorials and more.

Vida McKenzie Community Center believes that rural communities have opportunities for connection that become more challenging in urban environments. Come to the Center and imagine new possibilities.

Questions? Gerry Aster 541-896-3001, [gerryaster@gmail.com](mailto:gerryaster@gmail.com)

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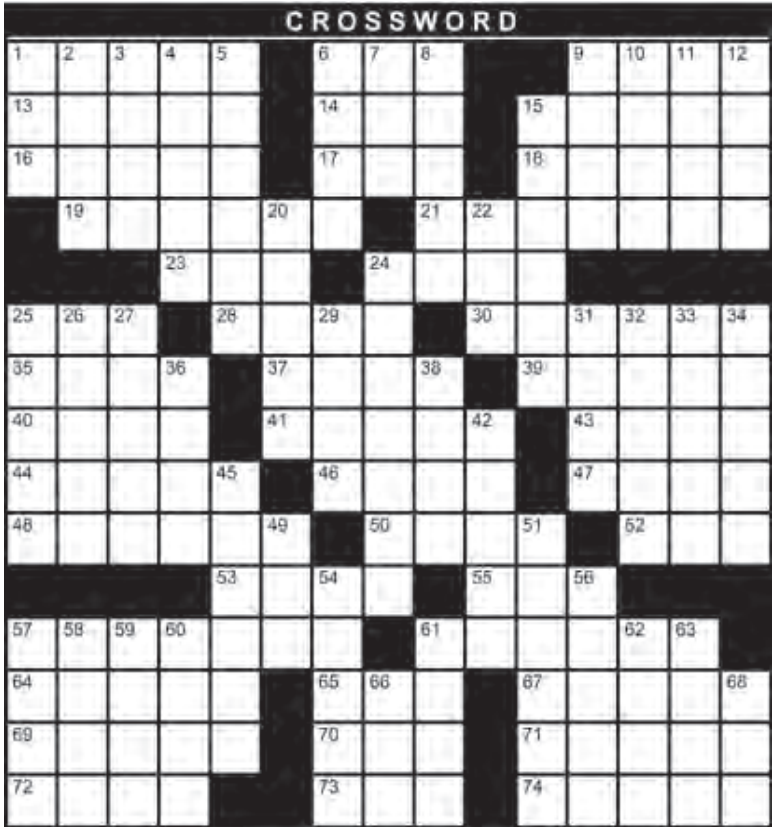
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<h2>An Invitation to Worship</h2>	<p><b>Living Water Family Fellowship</b> Pastor - Doug Farrington 52353 McKenzie Hwy - Milepost 42 541-822-3820 Gathering Sundays at 10:00 AM, Children's ministry also. Come early for a meet and greet continental breakfast and coffee at 9:30 AM. Thursdays, 6:00 PM. Celebrate Recovery (12 Step Program)</p>
<p><b>McKenzie Bible Fellowship</b> 45061 McKenzie Hwy - Vida, Oregon <b>Sunday Worship - 10:00 a.m.</b> Youth Ministries KidsFest Family Activities Small Group Fellowships Men's &amp; Women's Bible Studies Call 896-3829 for information <a href="http://www.mckenziebible.com">www.mckenziebible.com</a></p>	<p><b>Catholic Church</b> <b>St. Benedict Lodge Chapel</b> 1/2 mile off Hwy. 126 on North Bank Rd., McKenzie Bridge Sat. Eve. 5:00pm Sun. Morn. 9:30am web page: <a href="http://sblodge.opwest.org">sblodge.opwest.org</a></p>
<p><b>McKenzie Valley Presbyterian Church</b> Please join us for worship Sundays at 10:30 am, either in church on Hwy. 126 just east of Walthersville, or on our Facebook livestream. You may also make prayer requests, or request an emailed or earth-mailed bulletin -- phone or send email to Nancy Ashley, <a href="mailto:nancy.w.ashley@gmail.com">nancy.w.ashley@gmail.com</a>, 541-914-1986. We would love to meet you! <b>Milepost 13 McKenzie Hwy. (541) 747-2604</b></p>	

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- level: \_\_\_\_ Division I  
 47. Extend credit  
 48. \*Seventeen games in NFL  
 50. Somewhat (2 words)  
 52. "Whatever Will Be, Will Be" singer  
 53. Mare's baby  
 55. Not a friend  
 57. \*55 of them  
 61. \*Home of the NFL Hall of Fame  
 64. Hole-borer  
 65. For every  
 67. Color red on coat of arms  
 69. Birds of ill omen  
 70. Outrage  
 71. \_\_\_\_\_ shopping cart  
 72. Party barrels  
 73. Sound from one of #69 Across  
 74. Homes for #69 Across

**DOWN**

1. Down in the dumps  
 2. Cry of contempt  
 3. Marine eagle  
 4. Wake Island, e.g.  
 5. Kismet, pl.  
 6. Foolish one  
 7. Even, poetic  
 8. Useful contraption  
 9. Lamborghini model  
 10. Unfavorable prefix  
 11. "As \_\_\_\_ on TV"  
 12. Suspend  
 15. Astrigents  
 20. "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey," e.g.  
 22. Venomous Egyptian snake  
 24. Deducible  
 25. \*One of 2 NFL founding teams still in league  
 26. Lock horns  
 27. Waterwheel  
 29. Outline  
 31. Et alii, abbr.  
 32. Got along  
 33. \*Like indoor eight-men football  
 34. \*Career NFL passing yards record holder  
 36. Without  
 38. Wild guess  
 42. Israelian port  
 45. Errand-runners  
 49. Neither's partner  
 51. Nuku'alofa language  
 54. Meat jelly dish  
 56. Musician's exercise  
 57. "Go \_\_\_\_ Go!"  
 58. Fishing decoy  
 59. Awestruck  
 60. Archery wood  
 61. "Ship, Captain, \_\_\_\_"  
 62. Cutlass or Delta 88, for short  
 63. Remaining after deductions  
 66. \_\_\_\_ of Good Feelings  
 68. Lusitania's last call

# Stay in touch with what's happening - open the McKenzie Community Calendar!

Click here or go to: [tinyurl.com/yeye92hx](http://tinyurl.com/yeye92hx)

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1. Command to Fido  
 6. Sheep not yet sheared  
 9. Cap and gown accessory  
 13. Blood line  
 14. Ancient Chinese dynasty  
 15. Ringworm  
 16. Driver's license notation  
 17. Not outs  
 18. Like Cheerios  
 19. \*Piece of football equipment required since 1943  
 21. \*Peyton or Eli  
 23. Napkin spot

24. Eminem's 2002 hit "\_\_\_\_ Yourself"  
 25. Embargo  
 28. Feed storage cylinder  
 30. Like house from a kit  
 35. Greek god of love  
 37. Smokes  
 39. \*Super Bowl I M.V.P. Bart \_\_\_\_  
 40. Taj Mahal locale  
 41. \*Career rushing yards record holder  
 43. Equals squared  
 44. Regretting  
 46. \*Highest college football

Solution on Page 9

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**A Moment in Oregon History**

By Rick Steber  
(www.ricksteber.com)

**August 17** - In August 1923 Silverton residents Frank and Elizabeth Brazier and their daughters Nova and Leona, embarked on a cross-country trip in their Overland Red Bird automobile. The Braziers dog, a bob-tailed Scotch collie and shepherd mix named Bobbie, rode outside on the luggage rack. On the ninth day of their vacation, in the town of Walcott, Indiana, Bobbie ran away. Six months later Bobbie appeared back in Silverton. Practically every newspaper in the United States ran a story about Bobbie's amazing 3,000-mile journey home. Robert Ripley's "Believe It or Not" radio show featured Bobbie; a book was written, and Bobbie even starred in his own movie, "Bobbie, The Wonder Dog."

**Fishing Report**

**McKenzie River:** All hatchery rainbow trout released into the McKenzie River are marked with an adipose fin clip and anglers must release all non fin-clipped (wild) trout in the mainstem river. The lower 11 miles of the McKenzie River below the Hayden Bridge - and the McKenzie River upstream from Forest Glen Boat Ramp at Blue River - are restricted to angling with lures and flies only, and all trout must be released.

**Trout Stocking Schedule:** Trout stocking is underway on many lakes and reservoirs throughout the state. Releases of 8" to 10" hatchery fish this week were: McKenzie River above Leaburg Dam - 850, McKenzie River below Leaburg Dam - 2,000, and Leaburg Lake - 1,000.

**Fish Counts**

**August 6, Willamette Falls**  
Spring Chinook - 21,866  
Summer Steelhead - 18,248

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A	O	R	T	A	W	E	I	T	I	N	E
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1	6	9	4	8	2	3	5	7
5	2	4	3	7	1	9	8	6
7	8	3	9	6	5	2	1	4

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**Independent commission would set pay rates for elected OR officials**



Tada Images/AdobeStock

**Oregon is the only state on the West Coast where lawmakers set their pay.**

By Eric Tegethoff  
Oregon News Service

Supporters of a ballot measure that would establish an independent commission for setting the pay of elected officials have launched a campaign.

If passed in November, Measure 116 would set up the Independent Public Service Compensation Commission - to decide salaries for elected officials including the governor, state lawmakers, judges and district attorneys.

Robin Ye is the political and strategy director for the organization East County Rising, which is supporting the measure.

"It's about fairness and accountability and transparency in our government, which I think will add faith to our government," said Ye. "It's a common sense solution to give power back to Oregonians and to protect our democracy."

Twenty-two states have independent compensation commissions, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

If it's approved, the commission would set pay rates every two years. Officers or employees

of the state and registered lobbyists cannot be part of the commission.

The campaign supporting Measure 116 includes an a wide array of organizations, including the Latino Network Action Fund, Oregon League of Conservation Voters, and Oregon Nurses Association.

The measure was referred to the ballot by the Legislature in 2023, and Ye said it has broad support.

"A majority of Oregonians and an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of legislators understand that the current system doesn't make sense, and it isn't fair, and it is a problem," said Ye. "And it's up to Oregonians to decide what's the right fit for Oregon."

Oregon established an independent pay commission in 1983, but it went defunct in 2000. The commission was reestablished in 2007, saw its funding cut in 2008, and was eliminated again in 2017.

oregonnewsservice.org

Support for this reporting was provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

**Air quality advisory lifted for eastern Lane County**

**Weather pattern shift brings relief**

The Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA) has lifted the air quality advisory for eastern Lane County that has been in effect since July 26, 2024. After 17 days of heightened concern due to wildfire smoke, a shift in weather patterns has brought a welcome improvement to air quality in the region.

A persistent northwest airflow across the state has been instrumental in clearing smoke from the area. While this is good news, LRAPA reminds residents that wildfire season is not over, and conditions can change rapidly.

For the next few days, LRAPA expects air quality in eastern Lane County, including areas such as Oakridge and the McKenzie River Valley, to remain in the Moderate range overall. Some periods of Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (USG) conditions may occur at midday, particularly in river valleys where smoke may linger until morning inversions lift. The best air quality is anticipated during late evening hours.

The National Weather Service forecasts a cooling trend with increasing morning clouds. This weather pattern is expected to help dampen ongoing wildfire activity and further improve air quality conditions.

Current air quality conditions can be checked on the Oregon Smoke Information Blog or by visiting the EPA's Fire & Smoke Map: <https://fire.airnow.gov/>

While the advisory has been lifted, smoke can still irritate the eyes and lungs and worsen some medical conditions. People most

at risk include infants and young children, people with heart or lung disease, older adults, and pregnant individuals. LRAPA advises residents to remain vigilant and take precautions when air quality deteriorates:

- \* Stay inside if possible. Keep windows and doors closed. If it's too hot, run air conditioning on recirculate or consider moving to a cooler location.

- \* Avoid strenuous outdoor activity.

- \* Use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters in indoor ventilation systems or portable air purifiers.

- \* Be aware of smoke in your area and avoid places with the highest levels.

- \* When air quality improves to moderate or healthy (yellow or green on the Air Quality Index), open windows and doors to air out homes and businesses.

- \* If you have a breathing plan for a medical condition, be sure to follow it and keep any needed medications refilled.

Cloth, dust, and surgical masks don't protect from the harmful particles in smoke. N95 or P100 respirators approved by NIOSH may offer protection, but they must be properly selected and worn. Select a NIOSH-approved respirator with an N, R, or P alongside the number 95, 99, or 100. Learn how to put on and use a respirator. Respirators won't work for children as they don't come in children's sizes. People with heart or lung conditions should consult their health care provider before wearing a respirator.

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# Oregon on track to set new wildfire record for acreage burned

Already, 1.3 million acres have been blackened and several dozen homes destroyed



Northwest Interagency Coordination Center

The Falls Fire northwest of Burns on Monday, Aug. 5, 2024. It has burned more than 146,000 acres, destroyed 13 homes and 15 other structures.

By Lynne Terry  
Oregon Capital Chronicle  
The wildfire season in Oregon has likely not yet peaked and already 1.3 million acres have been blackened or are ablaze, with 34 large fires burning.

And five of them have spread over 100,000 acres each.

“We are on a trend of possibly setting a record in the state of Oregon for the amount of acres affected by fire,” Carol Connolly, a spokesperson for the Northwest Interagency Coordination Center, which coordinates fire resources, told the Capital Chronicle. “Typically the Northwest peaks around Aug. 14, so we still have a while to go in this fire season.”

Since 1992, when the center started tracking burned acreage, only the 2020 Labor Day Fires came close, with about 1.2 million acres burned in 11 counties. But those blazes were much more destructive to communities, killing nine people and destroying more than 5,000 homes.

This year, the fires have destroyed at least 30 homes and more than 60 other structures, with hundreds of buildings remaining under threat. One death has been reported this year: Air tanker pilot James Bailey Maxwell, 74, died while working in the vicinity of the Falls Fire on July 25.

The wildfires have prompted Gov. Tina Kotek to declare a statewide emergency and ask for federal help and regulatory flexibility for farmers and ranchers. She’s also invoked the Conflagration Act nine times. The most recent was on Monday for the Elk Lane Fire, which has burned nearly 5,100 acres northwest of

Madras in Jefferson County. She also invoked the act last Thursday for the Telephone Fire in Harney County, which has scorched more than 50,000 acres northeast of Burns. It is threatening more than 150 homes and about 350 smaller structures, with evacuation orders in place.

“Conditions are prime for high fire activity today, and the fires continue to test our crews’ fortitude and resilience, but lines are holding,” the Harney County Sheriff’s Office said in a Tuesday update on Facebook.

Kotek’s invocation of the Conflagration Act allows the state fire marshal to unleash resources to protect homes and people threatened by the Telephone Fire, which the sheriff’s office said is likely to remain active on Tuesday.

The weather across much of Oregon has been cooler in recent days but the forecasters predict hotter and drier conditions later this week.

“Ongoing incidents will see increasing areas of active fire behavior as both cloud cover and surface moisture is transported away this week,” the Northwest Interagency Coordination Center said in a morning briefing.

The fires have prompted the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to issue air quality alerts, with the most recent one on Monday when DEQ warned residents of unhealthy, smoky conditions in eastern Douglas, Grant, northern Harney, northern Klamath, eastern Lane, northern Malheur and eastern Wheeler counties. Officials also said that people in Crook, Deschutes, Jackson, Jefferson, Josephine and

Lake counties could face intermittent smoke, which can irritate the eyes and lungs and worsen some medical conditions. Children and older adults along with those who are pregnant or have heart or lung disease are especially at risk.

Connolly of the coordination center said Tuesday that in Oregon, the Diamond Complex of nine fires that have scorched more than 6,600 acres east of Roseburg in the Umpqua National Forest is a top priority. It threatens four houses, 70 mixed commercial and residential buildings and 39 small structures along with utility services and access to Crater Lake along Highway 230.

Officials have deployed more than 550 people to the fires along with four helicopters to fight the blazes from above. It could take until mid-October to snuff the blazes, the coordination center said.

Among the five fires over 100,000 acres, the Durkee Fire in Baker and Malheur counties remains the biggest in Oregon. It has burned nearly 295,000 acres and destroyed four homes and 19 other structures. It is now 86% contained, which means firefighters have stopped the spread on most of the perimeter.

The Battle Mountain Complex of four fires west of Ukiah has scorched more than 188,000 acres. The fires have destroyed seven homes and 10 other structures and are 39% contained.

The Northwest Interagency Coordination Center said on Tuesday: “Crews will continue mop-up operations around the entire perimeter of the fire.”

The Falls Fire northwest of Burns has burned more than 146,000 acres and is 75% contained. The fire is running through timber and evacuation orders are in effect, the coordination center said, with road and trail closures in the area. The fire has destroyed 13 homes and 15 other structures.

The Lone Rock Fire southeast of Condon has burned more than 137,000 acres and is 92% contained. The Gilliam County Sheriff’s Office said on Facebook on Tuesday that the acreage blackened is not likely to grow, with a few acres in forestland in Wheeler County “proving difficult to contain.”

“However, the fire crews in those areas are working hard to ensure any activity is contained within the already burnt areas of the landscape and will not become an external threat to the areas,” the sheriff’s office said.

And the Cow Valley Fire in Malheur County northwest of Ontario, which scorched more than 133,000 acres, is now 99% contained. It destroyed two homes and five smaller structures.

oregoncapitalchronicle

# Rate changes

Continued From Page 1

we want in the future.”

“I would love to see us try to weatherize the rental stock to move to more efficient heating and cooling methods. Right now, there is no incentive for a landlord to put in a heat pump, to weatherize a house because they aren’t paying. This is an issue we’ve had for years,” according to Commissioner John Barofsky. “The cleanest kilowatt is the one that isn’t being used,” he added.

Although discussing this matter for the majority of their meeting, the board left with a multitude of questions to consider before their scheduled October assessment.

“Should we charge a different rate based on your income? Should we charge a restaurant a different amount than a hospital or a brewery? Should who you are and what you use the electricity for matter? Or should we focus on the price of the service we are offering?” asked Lawson.

Besides rate changes, the board also discussed communications with Eugene’s administration.

Commissioner Brofsky, board president Matt McRea, and General Manager Lawson recently met with Eugene Mayor Lucy Vinis, city manager Sarah Madery, and Counselor Groves to discuss policy-related needs. Topics included climate programs, water supply, and wildfire mitigation with an eye toward productive changes and shared goals for the metro area. Lawson emphasized the meetings will continue to find overlaps between the values of city government and the utility, in hopes of helping each other.

“As a community, we won’t know until they (the city) know what EWEB will be charged,” Frank Lawson said, as some stormwater, wastewater, and fire mitigation fees are mandated on the board. Those types of charges will impact community rates, he noted.

By October, the board plans to have developed a proposal that outlines the various elements and values of the new rate structure.

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# New opportunities for homeschoolers and 60+ seniors

As Vida McKenzie Community Center was rebuilding, following the Holiday Farm Fire, a “Homeschool Hub” and a “Senior Center” were on its short list of new programming. Surprisingly, both programs are taking shape simultaneously. As a bonus, there are opportunities for these programs to interface in interesting and creative ways.

Courtney Queen and two other dedicated, local moms have designed the Cascade Homeschool Club. It will meet at VMCC throughout the 2024/2025 school year from 10:00a.m. to 2:00p.m. every Monday in September, October, November, March, April and May for 4 week units. These units will culminate in an open house where the children showcase their talents. This could include anything from culinary items made in VMCC’s kitchen, to music/dance or arts/crafts...the options are endless.

If you or your family/friends are curious about this extraordinary program, come to Vida McKenzie Community Center on August 19th at 1:00p.m. to learn more and to determine how to become involved. Refreshments will be served.

Are you a senior (60+ years of age) or a family member of a senior? On August 20th at 11:30,

please return to VMCC for a free luncheon during which the designing of the Social Model Senior Center will begin. VMCC does not presume to know what seniors desire for this program but it knows there is a need for one. Your input is essential. Orchid Clinic will also be on hand to provide an array of community resources.

How can these two programs overlap? VMCC believes there are opportunities for learning and sharing that bridge generations. Depending upon their particular learning unit, Cascade Homeschool Club youth may prepare a part of the seniors’ meal or decorate the seniors’ tables with floral arrangements/holiday décor. Student arts/crafts will be displayed for seniors’ enjoyment or youth may perform music/dance for the delight of Senior Center participants. In turn, seniors may impart skills to youth through storytelling, short tutorials and more.

Vida McKenzie Community Center believes that rural communities have opportunities for connection that become more challenging in urban environments. Come to the Center and imagine new possibilities.

Questions? Gerry Aster 541-896-3001, gerryaster@gmail.com

## Multiple Northwest wildfires likely to burn until fall rains arrive

Firefighters are actively battling many wildfires currently burning in Washington and Oregon. With widespread lightning expected this month, fire managers will be adopting a strategic approach to integrate risk management, ecosystem resilience, and community involvement on long-duration fires before typical east wind events potentially arrive around the beginning of fall.

“Our planners are taking a realistic look at current wildfires, expected new fires, and the resources we have

to help us safeguard human lives and property while enhancing our ability to respond to wildfires in high-risk areas,” said Jacque Buchanan, Regional Forester for the Pacific Northwest Region of the Forest Service.

Among other tactics, firefighters working long-duration wildfires will focus on identifying and preparing a network of primary and contingency containment lines to help stop fires as they approach critical areas like communities, powerlines, water supply systems, and natural and cultural

resources.

“Firefighting is inherently risky. Our role as fire managers is to develop strategies that maximize success while minimizing the risk of injury or death to emergency responders,” said Kelly Kane, Acting Fire, Fuels and Aviation Director for the Pacific Northwest and Alaska Regions. “There is no structure that is worth the life of the sons, daughters, parents, siblings and friends that make up our wildland firefighting workforce.”

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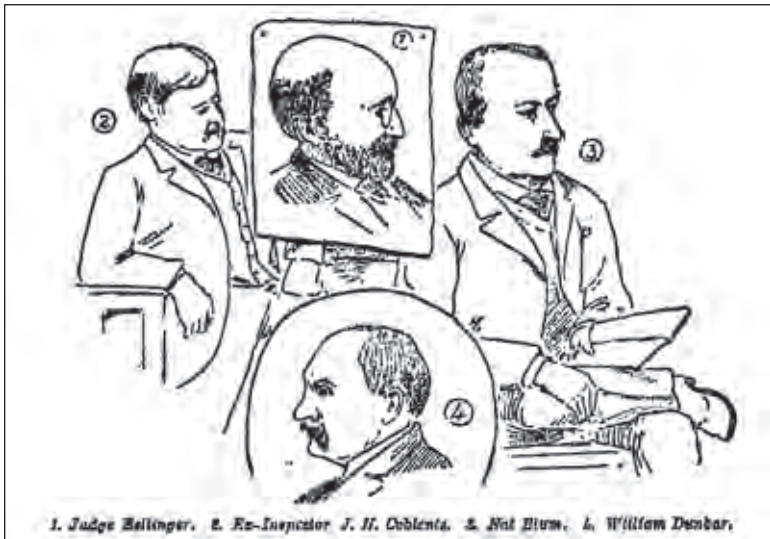


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# Opium king

Continued From Page 4



1. Judge Ballinger, 2. Ex-Inspcctor J. H. Coblenz, 3. Nat Blum, 4. William Dunbar.

A drawing from early in the trial. Coblenz was one of the customs inspectors working under James Lotan. William Dunbar was one of the other defendants. The Oregonian's coverage was much less thorough than the Telegram's, especially after Lotan's involvement became apparent, but the Oregonian did have the advantage of a staff artist.

Club.

The two of them soon had a good working plan, and it really did look like a good one. Dunbar was the owner of Turner Flouring Mills as well as a wholesale grocery business called Dunbar Produce and Grocery. He also co-owned the Merchants Steamship Company, a shipping firm with a fleet of two full-size blue-water steamships.

The Merchants Steamship vessels were then busy hauling Turner Mills wheat and flour

across the Pacific Ocean to China — Dunbar really was the guy who opened that trade line for Oregon. But the ships were coming back from China in ballast, which bothered Dunbar a lot. Like a stereotypical Scot, he hated the waste of those empty journeys.

So the plan became to fill those empty steamships up with people — Chinese workers, who each paid a steep price for the chance to be smuggled into the U.S. to work on labor gangs.

This scheme made both Dunbar

and Lotan a lot of money, and probably would have kept on doing so if Dunbar had not gotten greedy and decided to go into opium smuggling as well.

Well, actually, Dunbar probably wasn't the one who decided to start smuggling opium. Most likely that innovation came from Dunbar's business partner, the co-owner of Merchants Steamship — a flamboyant, morally flexible cigar merchant named Nat Blum.

(Sources: *Merchants, Money and Power*, a book by E. Kimbark MacColl published by Georgian Press in 1988; *Agony of Choice: Matsuoka Yosuke and the Rise and Fall of the Japanese Empire*, a book by David J. Lu published in 2002 by Lexington Books; archives of *Portland Morning Oregonian* and *Portland Daily Telegraph*, 1893)

Finn J.D. John teaches at Oregon State University and writes about odd tidbits of Oregon history. His most recent book, *Bad Ideas and Horrible People of Old Oregon*, published by Ouragan House early this year. To contact him or suggest a topic: finn@offbeatoregon.com or 541-357-2222.

Continued Next Week

## McKenzie Fire & Rescue

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Aug. 10: 19:08: 87000 blk, Cedar Flat Rd. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, 1 Transported.

23:41: 90000 blk, Marcola Rd. Mutual Aid. Cancelled Prior to Arrival.

Aug. 11: 17:07: FS 1806 Rd. Smoke Scare. Confirmed Smoke by ODF Showing from Little Cowhorn Fire.

McK. Fire & Rescue will hold its monthly Board of Directors meeting on Monday, Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, at noon, in the Leaburg Training Center, 42870 McK. Hwy. The district

maintains Facebook, Twitter, and web pages. If you have a question or concern about any Fire District business, give Chief Bucich a call @ 541-896-3311. If he is unavailable, please leave a message and he will respond ASAP.

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## Sheriff's Report

Continued From Page 3

taken into custody. Vehicle was released to another on the scene. Involved: black Ford Fusion, 41-year-old female.

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Summertime is here, Wouldn't you rather stay in the McKenzie Valley instead of driving to tow "looking for bargains?"

How about spending a couple of hours at the swimming hole instead of stressing out in summer traffic?

Wouldn't it be better to spend the evening fishing instead of driving back and forth and getting nowhere?

You can invest your time and dollars locally by supporting your neighborhood businesses. The community you support will be a better one to live in and enjoy.

**McKenzie River Reflections** [mckenzievalleypump.com](http://mckenzievalleypump.com)

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