

Lebanon man charged with manslaughter

A Lebanon man is facing manslaughter charges after a vehicle collision between Lebanon and Lacombe led to the death of an Albany man Thursday evening, June 12.

First responders received a call about a two-vehicle collision at the intersection of Lacombe Drive and Bond Road at approximately 7:32 p.m. on June 12. Upon arrival, Lebanon Fire District crews found two vehicles with significant damage, one of which was on its roof with occupants trapped inside.

Downed power lines were draped across both vehicles, creating a hazardous scene and igniting a small brush fire that was initially inaccessible. Firefighters were unable to begin rescue efforts until power was confirmed to be shut off by utility personnel.

Once the area was deemed safe, crews worked to simultaneously extricate the vic-

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Photo by Sarah Brown

From left, Strawberry Court princesses Hannah Savedra, Brooklyn Barnes, Kylee Thurman, Emily Gerig and Keira Noble perform a dance to the tune of "Girl's Just Wanna Have Fun."

Strawberry Festival, like, totally fun

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

The 116th annual Strawberry Festival invited the Lebanon community to have a radical time, with local organizations and the Strawberry Festival Association pulling out different elements of fun.

The Strawberry Festival Association – undergirded by hundreds of volunteers and thousands of volunteer hours – headlined the main events of the weekend with parades, live music, carnivals and fireworks.

This year's "Berries Just Wanna Have Fun" theme en-

ticed festival goers to break out their best 1980s-inspired outfits (including a mullet or two) and favorite vintage toys from an era that featured pop and rock music and electronic games.

Among the most common

See Festival, Page 11

Class of 2025 realizes results of growing through challenges

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

If one tried to describe Lebanon High School's Class of 2025, it might be something along the lines of "growth-minded," "adventurers" or "transformative learners."

That's because learning from experiences and challenges was a common theme found intertwined in the speeches from the class valedictorians during their high school graduation on June 3.

At the opening of the ceremony, Principal Craig Swanson pointed out that this is the first class to go through the entire four years of high school after COVID's disruption.

They had a childhood interrupted by a worldwide pandemic, and then entered the final stages of their education having to readjust from the chaos. But perhaps that would explain why everyone talked about trying new things and learning from challenges.

Valedictorian Roberto



Photo by Sarah Brown

Class of 2025 graduates fling their caps into the air at the conclusion of commencement.

Ponce urged his classmates to take opportunities when they arise because – even if there is minimal interest in it – they might still learn something or, heck, they

may even find they love it. And for the things they want to learn, "take your time" because it takes time to be good at something.

Valedictorians Elexis Wel-

stad thanked those who provided her a place to "grow and thrive," and Brooklyn Barnes urged the class to

See Class of 2025, Page 9

INSIDE



NATIONAL ROADSHOW STOPS TO SAMPLE THE GOODS AT LEBANON'S J&C BBQ
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EAST LINN CHRISTIAN GRADUATES EXIT HIGH SCHOOL WITH SOME FOND MEMORIES
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WILLAMETTE VALLEY POWWOW DRAWS BIG CROWD TO LEBANON
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OBITUARIES

Patricia Carroll
Oct. 26, 1955 - May 8, 2025

Patricia L. Carroll was born in Lebanon on Oct. 26, 1955 and passed away peacefully May 8, 2025.



She attended first grade at Crowfoot Grade School and subsequent years at Seaside schools. She graduated from Seaside High School in 1973 and received her associate degree from Linn-Benton Community College.

She worked several years at Lebanon Payless store and

worked at the first Oregon Walmart store. She transferred to the Longview, Wash., store, where she worked until retirement.

She enjoyed arts and crafts from a young age and loved cooking for family and friends. She loved the companionship of her cats Jax and Zoe. She was also an avid watcher of football.

She is survived by her dad, William Wage, by three days; her son, Jacob Rye; sisters Valerie Carroll, Cathy Hanzon and Kelly Bergevin; a grandson, Caeden Kelley; three granddaughters; and many beloved nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts and uncles.

She is predeceased by her mother, Betty Wage, her dad Bill Carroll, her son, James Rye, and her husband, Steve Rye, as well as her grandparents, Al and Emma Seiders, and Arley and Hazel Carroll.

There will be a Life Celebration held for her. Please email gouldk63@gmail.com for details. In lieu of attendance, you can donate to Heartland Humane Society in Corvallis.

Death Notice

Steve W. Hyder, 72, of Chelalis, Wash., a former Lebanon resident, died Sept. 26, 2024.

He grew up in Lacombe in

an extended logging family and was a 1970 graduate of Lebanon Union High School. He started logging out of high school for Willamette Industries on Snow Peak, and was a cutter for 45 years.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Barrie Glyn Jones, 61, of Lebanon, died May 23, 2025. Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Robert Marron Wynhausen, 84, of Lebanon, died April 3, 2025. Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Rose Mary Mays, 71, of Lebanon, died May 11, 2025. Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Henry "Hank" Chambers, 99, of Lebanon, died May 5, 2025. Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Dorothy Jane Grove, 93, of Lebanon, died May 12, 2025. Sweet Home Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Dorothy Roberta McCarthy, 97, of Lebanon, died June 7, 2025. Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

EVENTS

Spend time at
Healing Garden

Lebanon Community Hospital is hosting a series of monthly cultural events at the Boulder Falls Event Center and patio, 605 Mullins Dr. through the summer.

Yoga in the Garden: Sunday, June 22, at 10 a.m. - Join Jenni Harper for a relaxing one-hour yoga session for adults. Suggested donation of \$5 to \$15 per person. Registration is required.

Japanese Percussion: Sunday, June 22, at 12 p.m. - Enjoy a performance of Japanese percussion instruments by Monmouth Taiko.

Bonsai Techniques: Sunday, June 22, at 2 p.m. - Lee Cheatle from the Bonsai Society of Portland will share bonsai history, techniques and design.

Garden Grooves Community Concert; Saturday, July 26, at 6 p.m. - The Fabulous Bad Cats, an original rockin'

blues band, will play classic hits from Johnny Cash to Prince. They have

performed throughout the Pacific Northwest since 2002.

Melodies and Masterpieces: Sunday, Aug. 3, from 1-3 p.m. - The Orchid Trio, a Portland-based string trio, shares chamber music appreciation. Enjoy music while learning new art forms: Japanese origami class from 1-2 p.m., kokedoma (moss ball) class from 1-2 p.m., koto (a Japanese instrument) demonstration at 2 p.m.

Healing Garden Lecture: Thursday, Sept. 18, at 6 p.m. - Diane Durston, curator emeritus from the Portland Japanese Garden, will discuss Japanese philosophies of Wabi Sabi and forest bathing. Registration is required.

For more information or to register, visit samhealth.org/LebanonHealingGardens or contact Brandy O'Bannon at bobannon@samhealth.org.

Learn about
Indoor gardening

Master Gardeners will host free monthly lectures on indoor gardening at the Lebanon Senior Center, 80 Tanager St.

Last lecture will be about seed starting for winter; Aug. 23 - tips for seed saving and identifying peak produce ripeness.

Bring your questions. For

more information, contact Sheryl Casteen at casteen@aol.com.

Brownsville
Farmers Market

The Brownsville Farmer's Market is looking for vendors for the 2025 season. The market is held from 3-6 p.m. on Thursdays at 185 Main St., Brownsville (across from Dari Mart). For more information, contact Melissa Selby at 541-223-4980 or info@gocfa.org.

Japanese Healing Garden
tours

The Lebanon Community Hospital Foundation will host free monthly tours of Samaritan Lebanon Community Hospital's Healing Gardens this spring and summer.

The gardens offer serene spaces for quiet walks, reflection and a chance to escape everyday distractions and stresses.

Brandy O'Bannon, Lebanon Community Hospital Foundation executive director, invites all community members to join her for these special tours. The one-hour tours will guide visitors through the Samaritan Health Sciences Campus Entrance Garden and Campus Garden, providing insights into their history and maintenance while allowing guests to soak in the peaceful atmosphere.

Tours will take place at 10

a.m. on the second Friday of each month at the gazebo located at the Boulder Falls Event Center, 605 Mullins Drive. No registration is required. Upcoming tour dates: July 11, Aug. 8, Sept. 12.

For more information, contact Brandy at bobannon@samhealth.org or visit samhealth.org/LebanonHealingGardens.

Trails work day

Build Lebanon Trails will hold a trail workday from 9-11 a.m. on Saturday, July 12, at the Cheadle Lake Boat Ramp parking lot (north shore off River Drive).

Volunteers will be trimming brush and tree limbs near the gravel third-finger trail. Anyone interested in helping is asked to bring their favorite trimming tool, boots, gloves and sturdy

clothing. Long sleeves and pants are encouraged in case there's poison oak.

Lebanon garden
tour June 21

Master Gardeners will host its first-ever Lebanon Garden Tour from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, June 21, starting at Ralston Park Rose Garden.


Tour a range of garden styles - from wedding-worthy to edible food bonanza - plus a rainwater-irrigated landscape and one yard with five different gardens. This is a walking tour, so wear your comfortable shoes. Vendors will be at Ralston Park selling their plants and art.

Tickets are \$20. For more information, visit LinnMasterGardeners.com.


Stand By Me Day

The annual Stand By Me Day in Brownsville will be held Saturday, July 26, throughout Brownsville. More details to come.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Information for the Public Safety report and Courts in Lebanon Local is sourced from local law enforcement and fire agencies. Incident details, which may not always be available from agencies in time for publication in our weekly paper edition, are often updated online at sweethomenews.com as information becomes available. Addresses provided generally denote the location of the incident or arrest, occasionally indicating the origin of the call.

It is crucial to emphasize that our reporting of an individual's arrest or citation for a crime does not imply guilt. Determination of guilt can only be established through legal proceedings in court. We commit significant effort to following through as cases move through the judicial process.

Following is a list of abbreviations that may appear in our log reports: LCSO (Linn County Sheriff's Office); LPD (Lebanon Police Department), SHPD (Sweet Home Police Department); OSP (Oregon State Police); LMC (Lebanon Municipal Court); LCCC (Linn County Circuit Court); LCJC (Linn County Justice Court); SHMC (Sweet Home Municipal Court); AMC (Albany Municipal Court); LCS (Linn County Supervisory), OSPB (Oregon State Parole Board), 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).

June 12

12:05 a.m. - Jordan Eathan Davis, 27, arrested on LMC warrant, 000 block N. 2nd St. Report taken.

8:23 a.m. - Sterling Daniel Sherburn, 25, cited on LMC warrant for FTA in criminal citation case, 900 block Park St. Cited to appear July 22 and released. Report taken.

9:08 a.m. - Blake Joseph Siebert, 21, cited for speeding, 40/25, Williams/Vine streets.

9:22 a.m. - Stephen Michael Scantlin, 52, cited on LMC warrant for FTA in criminal citation case, cited to appear July 22. Also cited on LCJC warrant, and for driving while suspended, driving uninsured, failure to register vehicle. Vehicle towed.

9:35 a.m. - Minor injury crash reported at Denny School Rd./Oak St. Driver, whose name was not listed in LCSO log, cited for failing to obey traffic control device.

12:45 p.m. - Caller reported motorcycle riding on trail behind Riverview School for "last two weeks" at various times during day, and is "destroying the trail."

12:59 p.m. - Angela Marie Ricker, 44, cited for driving

while suspended, driving uninsured, using cellphone while driving and for warrant. 1400 block S. Main St. Report taken.

2:22 p.m. - Tina Ann Rood, 48, cited on LMC warrant for FTA in criminal citation case; Robert Gerald Hunter 35, cited on LMC warrant for probation violation; 700 block Grant St. Both cited to appear July 22. Report taken.

2:45 p.m. - Courtney Nicole White York, 32, cited for speeding, 41/25, Brewster Rd./Grant St.

3:22 p.m. - Austin Alton Wayne Jones, 28, arrested on AMC, LMC, LCCC, SMC warrants. Lodged at Linn County Jail. Custin J. Jones, 24, arrested on AMC, LMC, LCCC, SHMC warrants. Lodged at Linn County Jail. Reports taken. 3100 block Santiam Hwy.

5:19 p.m. - Sean Anthony Lindsey, 36, cited for operation of unsafe vehicle, Main/Jennings streets.

7:33 p.m. - Hit and run reported at 5th/Oak streets. According to LPD, caller, driving Kia Sorrento, was hit by gray sedan which left imprint of license plate on rear bumper of caller's vehicle. Police following up. No other reported damage to caller's vehicle or injuries.

8:06 p.m. - Crash reported Main/Oak streets. According to LPD, a Buick rental vehicle driven by Dezi Larae Valentine, 42, and a Toyota, driven by Jaquelin Edna Sanville, 84, were driving abreast southbound on South Main Street when the Toyota merged into the Buick's lane and side-swiped it. Passenger in Buick complained of sore elbow. No citations issued. Both vehicles towed.

8:47 p.m. - Crash reported in BiMart parking lot, 2590 S. Santiam Hwy. According to LPD, "newer" Toyota Tacoma driven by Crystal Juarez Nunez, 27, backed into a 2008 Toyota Rav 3 driven by Karson Michael Bonney, 20. Minor damage, drivers exchanged information.

9:46 p.m. - Ashley Taylor, 54, of Idaho, cited for failure to obey traffic control device, Main Rd./Hobbs St.

June 11

2:18 a.m. - Richard Walls, 54, of Lebanon, cited for warrants, 1200 block E. Grant St. Report taken.

2:35 a.m. - Traffic stop in 32800 block Berlin Rd. Two juveniles out after curfew. One was transported home. Report taken.

4:04 a.m. - Joseph Williams, 38, of Lebanon, cited for driving while suspended, driving uninsured. 37900 block Golden Valley Dr.

6:37 a.m. - Steven David Willert, 59, arrested on Parole Board felony warrant, 2600 block Santiam Hwy. Lodged at Linn County Jail.

8:17 a.m. - Rebecca N. Slocum, 48, cited for failure to obey traffic control device.

8:33 a.m. - Natasha Nicole Betts, 32, cited for driving while suspended, driving uninsured, using cellphone while driving, Williams/Isabella streets.

9:14 a.m. - Monte Dale Lee, 53, cited on LMC, LCCC warrants, Main/Maple streets. Cited and released.

9:56 a.m. - Christopher Lawrence Babcock, 40, cited for failure to maintain seatbelt, 1700 block Main St.

10:22 a.m. - Shyann Josephine Lunski, 20, cited for using cellphone while driving, E/Main streets.

10:34 a.m. - McKenzie Fay Shipley, 31, cited for using cellphone while driving, Main/Oak streets.

10:57 a.m. - Linda Meadors, 66, of Brownsville, cited for failure to obey traffic control device following minor crash at Hwy. 34/Steckley Rd., area where road is closed for construction.

11:12 a.m. - Benjamin Philip Hyatt, 46, arrested on LMC, SHMC warrants after caller reported that male was blocking sidewalk in area of Main/2nd streets. Cited and released.

11:33 a.m. - Male juvenile, 17, cited for improper display of license plate, 2nd/Kees streets.

12:01 p.m. - Chaz Everet Lindsey, 19, cited for speeding, 40/25, Main Rd./Wildwood Dr.

12:30 p.m. - Anthony Lee Marker, 34, cited for failure to use seatbelt, 1700 block S. Main St.

12:52 p.m. - Jeffery Wofinbarger, 46, of Scio, cited for speeding (on motorcycle), 87/55, 37300 block Hwy. 226.

3:15 p.m. - Shawnte Marie Guyette, 39, arrested on LCCC warrants after disturbance in 200 block Cascade Dr. Lodged at Linn County Jail.

3:23 p.m. - Crash reported in area of Santiam Hwy./Main St. Vehicles involved were 1995 Chevy Tahoe driven by Malachi Laurenz Farnsworth, 23, and 2006 Chevy Silverado driven by Charles Arthur Bias Jr., 57. No injuries, damage under \$2,500, no citations listed.

3:37 p.m. - Hit and run reported in area of 3rd/A streets, near Fish Express, during Strawberry Parade, June 7. While parked at location, caller's vehicle, a black 2014 GMC Terrain, was

See Public Safety, Page 5

CIRCUIT COURT

Warrants are out on the following individuals: Omar Edgar Arroyo, Elias Nicolas Azar, Jonathan Edward Betar, Christina Marie Cash, Austin Shane Conner, Steven Michael Cooley, Nicholas Orval Duncan Jr, Donald Kay Flanigan Jr, Selina Renee Ford-Blackburn, Steven Edward Grimm, Aaron Thomas Halvorson, Robert Edwin Hoskinson, Bruce Clifton Kelly, Faron Walter Kennedy, Alan Kenneth Kilmer, Caden Jason Scotty King, Brent Jay Klient, Adam Christien Knoll, Andrew Donald LeGore, Mikel Vincent Lizama, Christopher James Lloyd, Heather Dawn Meeks, Mainor Misael Lucas-Velasquez, John Andrew Mance, Rosemary O. Saviour, Donald Shane Simmons, Brandi Lynn Trelstad, Russell Dale Truedson, Darnell T. Wells, Jessica Ashley Wynne

Ryan Charles Allen, 38, sentenced May 14 to 36 mos. supervised probation and \$400 in fines after pleading guilty to assault IV and no contest to three additional counts of assault IV. Another assault IV count, four counts of strangulation and three counts of criminal mistreatment I were dismissed.

Jaiden Dutch Basham, 22, charged May 23 with DUII, recklessly endangering another person, two counts of criminal mischief II, theft I by receiving, and failure to perform duties of driver when property is damaged.

Makaylee Diane McCaydeez Brewer, 27, charged May 22 with tampering with a witness.

Ethan Hunter Dysinger, 24, charged May 20 with DUII (liquor), reckless driving, recklessly endangering another person, open container and driving while suspended.

Chelsea Christine Elkin, 33, charged June 2 with DUII (liquor), reckless driving and two counts of recklessly endangering another person.

Matthew Clifford Gaechter, 47, sentenced June 11 to suspension of driver's license for 90 days, 10 days compensatory service in lieu of jail, 18 mos. bench probation and a \$100 fine after pleading no contest to fleeing or attempting to elude.

Kennedy Duran Gonzales, 29, charged June 12 with burglary I and theft III. Bail set at \$10,000.

Taha Munye Haji-Mohamed, 24, sentenced June 10 to one year suspension of

driver's license, seven days jail, seven days compensatory service, 24 mos. bench probation and \$1,255 in fines and fees after pleading no contest to DUI (liquor) with a .12% BAC. A charge of failure to install IID dismissed.

Kylor Hartman, 25, sentenced June 6 to 10 days compensatory service in lieu of jail, 18 mos. supervised probation and \$626.35 restitution after pleading guilty to identity theft.

Ernesto Patrick Huerta, 46, charged May 28 with failure to report as a sex offender.

David Michael Idsinga, 40, charged June 13 with DV unlawful use of a weapon, three counts of DV menacing, and DV harassment.

Kyran Alias Larsen, 27, sentenced May 27 to one day jail, three days compensatory service and 24 mos. supervised probation after pleading guilty to DV assault IV and menacing.

Andrew Robert Maloney, 43, charged May 28 with DUII (liquor) and reckless driving.

Peggy Sue Pitts, 37, charged May 19 with DV assault IV. Bail set at \$20,000. She was sentenced June 5 to 36 mos. supervised probation and a \$200 fine after pleading no contest to the charge. In a separate case, she was sentenced to 24 mos. supervised probation and \$400 in fines after pleading no contest to two counts of FTA I; two additional counts were dismissed.

Michael James Ridders, 52, charged June 4 with bur-

See Circuit Court, Page 13

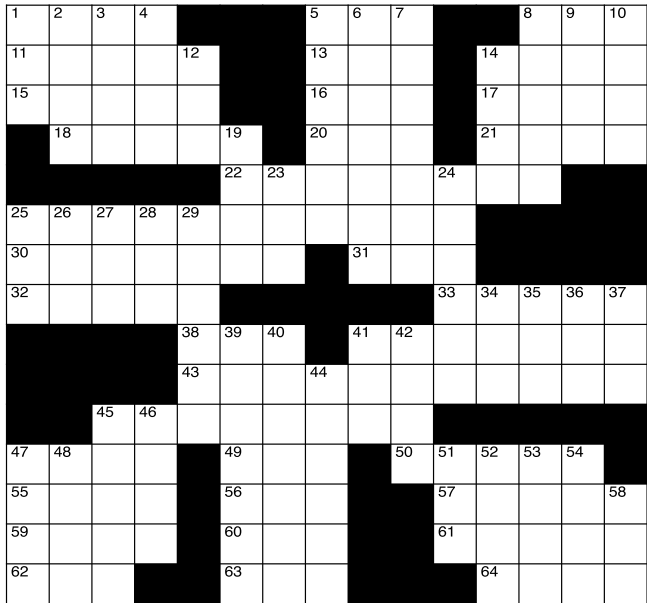
Crossword KEY
Puzzle on page 4

A	R	A	B		C	P	A		A	S	H												
L	O	G	I	A		A	R	T		O	B	E	Y										
A	C	H	E	D		N	A	E		T	E	R	M										
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SUDOKU KEY
Puzzle on page 4

6	3	1	4	9	5	8	2	7
5	9	8	7	1	2	6	3	4
7	2	4	6	3	8	9	1	5
8	7	2	5	4	1	3	6	9
4	5	3	2	6	9	1	7	8
1	6	9	8	7	3	4	5	2
2	1	6	9	8	7	5	4	3
9	4	7	3	5	6	2	8	1
3	8	5	1	2	4	7	9	6

CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS

1. Member of a Semitic people

5. Certified public accountant

8. Residue

11. Sayings attributed to Christ

13. The products of human creativity

14. Listen to

15. Longed

16. No (Scottish)

17. Descriptor

18. Yankees' sensation Judge

20. Zero

21. Comics legend Lee

22. Honorary title holder

25. "Uncle Joey"

30. Graceful and stylish

31. Pitching term

32. Former Mets outfielder Jones
33. One who avoids animal products

38. Quick to learn

41. Mechanism in an organ

43. Redo with new materials

45. Epics

47. Wings

49. Extrasensory perception

50. Cavalry sword

55. Bangladeshi monetary unit

56. Not the bottom

57. Afflicted

59. Bound

60. One who is highly skilled

61. Jewish spiritual leader

62. Tall, rounded vase

63. Liturgical language of Hinduism (abbr.)

64. Cheek

CLUES DOWN

1. Pie ___ mode

2. Portuguese cape

3. Ottoman military title

4. Movable frame used in burials

5. Type of coal

6. A treeless grassy plain

7. Artist's workroom

8. Assists

9. Protein-rich liquids

10. A song of praise to God

12. Much ___ about nothing

14. Japanese city

19. Atomic number 10

23. Egyptian goddess

24. Go places

25. Having ten

26. Complete

27. Automotive belt

28. Psyche
29. Melodious bird

34. Medical personnel

35. Acquired

36. Type of beverage

37. Neither

39. Spanish monetary units

40. Small area of grass

41. Your

42. Diana ___, singer

44. Salt's partner

45. Made of wood

46. No longer alive

47. Alaskan island

48. Wild animal's resting place

51. Swiss river

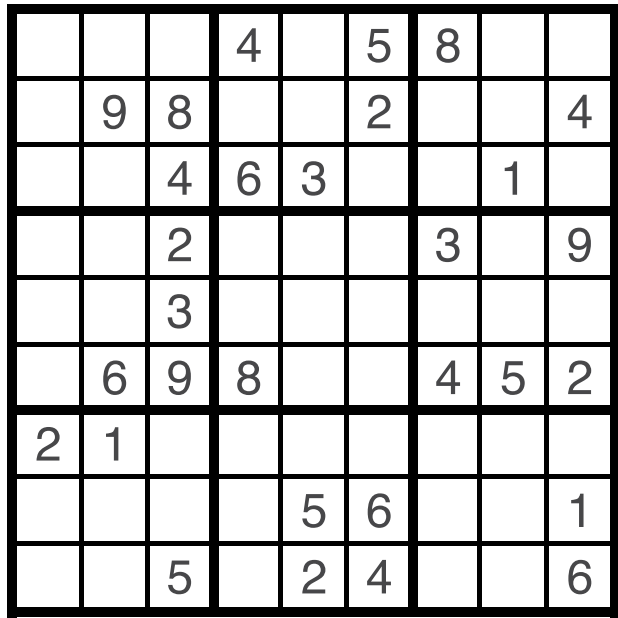
52. Partiality

53. "Luther" actor Idris

54. UNLV's "Runnin' ___"

58. Criticize

SUDOKU



Level: Beginner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

It's easy to gloss over the heart that went into Lebanon bringing a hospital to its town in the 1950's. Many of those who donated have long since passed away. The Life Magazine article that featured the story, though, still hangs just inside the main entrance. My dad was only one of those who donated. I remember, although I was not even 8 years old yet. My dad had an eighth grade education, worked for Floyd Graham, helping to build area highways. We didn't have quite enough money to make grocery shopping an easier event. We ALWAYS lived with a very tight budget. Dad explained that the hospital (and this town) needed his donation and we could pull the belts tighter. We did. So did hundreds of other families. Our family was proud to help and I've been proud that we did ever since.

I was born at the other Lebanon hospital, the one that was called the "old library." My younger brother and sisters were born in the NEW hospital. As an adult, I've lived in other states, other communities, but after my first son was born in Colorado, my younger two children were born in Lebanon, although the hospital was no longer so new.

I met my best friend, Rosalee Weischedel, there. She was the delivery nurse when my second son was born, later head nurse. It's not because she's my friend that I write, it's because through her and other staff, I have personally seen and learned of the work ethic maintained at Lebanon Hospital all these years! We have doctors and nurses who have led lives dedicated to quality, accessible maternity care.

We also have an incredibly strong and dedicated hospital auxiliary.

In this age where we appear to argue about just about anything in our world, the sign still stands, "Lebanon, the city that friendliness built."

Well, we've done a whole lot more than be friendly. We've

welcomed the first brand new medical school west of the Mississippi to our town. We ARE the ONLY community that has community volunteers lined up, ready to GIVE the white coat and doctor bag to the students. We don't expect them to buy their own. They're our welcome new folks and we're so proud to have them. WUHS, Western University of Health Sciences, has already graduated 100's of Osteopathic Doctors into the field of medicine. Further, the administration urges their graduating students to serve rural areas on the west coast. Chapter V, PEO of Lebanon bakes hundreds of dozens of cookies each spring and delivers them to the medical school student doctors. It's fun to see them load up their plates to take them back to their study desks!

Maybe WUHS heard about all that LBCC has been doing for so many years, featuring health science education and producing new nurses, phlebotomists and radiologists.

It's not emotionalism that causes me to say, Don't mess with the heart that created all this in Lebanon. Don't take away what Linn County has worked successfully and hard for many decades to achieve. We need continued access to the quality maternity care at Samaritan Lebanon Hospital. It's critically important to the health of families in Lebanon, Sweet Home, Foster and Cascadia.

Barbara Schafer
schafeb2020@gmail.com
541-401-3435

Words to Community from Samaritan CEO Marty Cahill

An Open Letter to Our Colleagues, Leaders and Community:

As I wrap up my first week as CEO of Samaritan Health Services, I want to take a moment to speak directly and plainly. There's been a lot of talk this week — some of it based on incomplete information. So let me be clear about what's happening, why it matters and how we're moving forward.

Health care in Oregon is in a tough spot. According to the Hospital Association of Oregon, half the health systems in our state are operating at a loss. That's not sustainable. Reimbursement from government payers is shrinking, even as more people rely on those programs. At the same time, the health challenges our patients face are more complex than ever.

Costs are rising — driven by inflation, staffing shortages and new regulations. It's a simple but brutal equation: expenses are up, and revenue is down.

All across our industry, we're being asked to do more with less — see more patients, provide more services, stretch farther. And while those of us in health care will always do our best to serve, no system or caregiver can keep stretching indefinitely without strain.

Samaritan is not immune. We've stepped up time and again to meet growing needs — expanding access, adding services, recruiting specialists and stepping in when other community providers have needed support. And we've been open about the financial pressure we're under.

But what hasn't changed is why we're here: to serve. As a nonprofit rooted in this region for more than a century, our mission is simple and unwavering: Building healthier communities together.

That work continues — and in many ways, it's just beginning. Across our system, teams of clinicians and leaders are asking hard questions and thinking boldly about what a strong, sustainable Samaritan should look like in the future. This isn't about quick fixes or sudden changes. No decisions have been made, and no changes to services are being implemented. In addition, no timeframe has been set to develop a plan or implement changes. The ideas we're exploring still need to be tested, shared, improved and aligned with what our community needs — not just this summer, but for the long term.

This is a pivotal moment. Health care is changing. If we want Samaritan to be here for the next 100 years, we must adapt. And we can't do that alone.

To our legislators: We need your partnership to ensure fair reimbursement and investment in the systems that keep our communities healthy.

To the media: Help us tell the full and accurate story of

See Letters, Page 5

The New Era

LEBANON LOCAL

A LOCALLY OWNED NEWSPAPER

LEBANONLOCALNEWS.COM

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PUBLIC SAFETY

From page 3

struck and driver's side rear corner damaged. Caller said it could have been a trailer and the driver may have not been aware that they had stuck a parked vehicle.

4:09 p.m. - Caller reported garbage can stolen from 1300 block Park St. Described as having green tape on handles.

4:24 p.m. - David James Hessler, 49, cited for failure to carry proof of insurance, improper display, Williams/Rose street.

4:42 p.m. - Derrick John Rippy, 42, cited for driving while suspended, driving uninsured, failure to use seat-belt, Park/Vine streets. Vehicle towed.

5:43 pm.. - Hit and run reported in area of Park/Elmore streets. According to LPD, Honda driven by Kennedy Duran Gonzales, 29, struck a 1987 GMC S10 pickup operated by Jeffery Shawn Sigmund, 52, then left scene, heading southbound. Honda was spotted later and Gonzales was cited for hit and run, driving uninsured and driving while suspended.

9:06 p.m. - Burglary reported in 200 block N. 2nd St. Kennedy Duran Gonzales, 29, arrested following investigation, lodged at Linn County Jail for burglary II and theft III.

9:10 p.m. - Non-injury crash reported in area of Rock Hill Dr./Sand Ridge Rd. Further details unavailable at press time.

June 10

12:35 a.m. - Angela Mowdy, 53, of Sweet Home, cited for driving while suspended, Santiam Hwy./Christopher Way.

3:08 a.m. - Dillon Patrick Johnson, 37, of Lebanon, arrested for outstanding warrant, Grant St./Berlin Rd. Transported to Linn County Jail. Report taken.

LETTERS

From page 4

what health care in Oregon is really facing.

To our community: Stand with us. Your support allows us to keep showing up when you need us most.

And to our employees: You are the heart of Samaritan. We are committed to supporting you, so you can keep doing the work you were called to do.

Building healthier communities is not a slogan — it's a shared responsibility. Let's move forward together.

With appreciation,
Marty Cahill
President and CEO
Samaritan Health Services

1:15 p.m. - Jack Edward Counts II, 36, arrested on LCCC warrant, SHMC warrant. S. Antiam Hwy.

1:23 p.m. - Jordan Polanco, 32, cited for driving uninsured, 2200 block Santiam Hwy.

1:58 p.m. - Police and medics responded to 100 block 5th St. where male, 32, had suffered overdose. Transported by medics to Samaritan Lebanon Community Hospital.

3:51 p.m. - Paulina Louise Page, 61, cited for no valid operator's license, 2200 block S. Santiam Hwy.

4:19 p.m. - Micah Sanchez, of Lebanon, cited for unspecified traffic violations in 31100 block Berlin Rd.

4:20 p.m. - Brenna Rae Candler, 44, cited on LMC warrant, Park/Oak streets. Officer had checked on people under bridge.

6:28 p.m. - Criminal mischief reported in 39300 block Gross St. Male trespassed from property. Investigation continuing. Report taken.

June 9

10:11 a.m. - Caller reported Sonos home theater speaker worth approximately \$250 stolen two days earlier by male wearing tan-colored bottoms, green top, dark ball cap and face covering from 2000 block Franklin St. Package had been left on porch. Investigation continuing.

10:59 a.m. - Table found on road in 38600 block Mt. Hope Dr. No owner information evident, so it was lodged at Linn County Sheriff's Office for safekeeping.

11:21 a.m. - Caller reported juveniles possibly smoking and drinking on church property, 580 F St. Officer responded and juveniles agreed to move along.

11:34 a.m. - Keely Gomez, 20, of Lebanon, arrested for criminal trespass I. 000 block N. 2nd St. Lodged at Linn County Jail.

Dear Editor,

I recently moved here from Brookings, Oregon, and you explained the two newspapers that comprise Lebanon and Sweet Home and when they came out.

I enjoy photographing just about anything that catches my eye and going to cemeteries is one of my favorite places to visit, believe it or not!

I came upon this one headstone at the IOOF recently and it gave me pause, more than pause as I read it. I even have a title for it -

"Third Time's a Charm" which of course speaks of a possible future and this headstone, as you can tell, knew nothing of WW2 or a possible WW3. It is poignant and turning it into black and

white gives it more impact. If you think this would be appropriate for your readers now or save it for a rainy day (hah!) or a holiday of some sort, do it. Use the photo as you like.

12:05 p.m. - Victim bitten by dogs, Blueberry Hill Rd./Stoltz Hill Rd. Owner could not be identified. Case open. Report taken.

12:44 p.m. - Caller reported lost wedding ring in area of 4000 block Weirich Dr. Described as two-tone gold wedding ring and band with round diamond, two halo of diamonds around it. Looks like crown when viewed from side. Valued at \$2,000.

9:22 p.m. - Suicide attempt reported in 700 block Morton St. Male, 37, believed to have intentionally overdosed on blood pressure medication. Medics transported him to Samaritan Lebanon Community Hospital.

11:52 p.m. - Bryan Watts, 50, of Lebanon, arrested for driving while suspended, and for unspecified warrants. 2600 block S. Santiam Hwy. Report taken.

June 8

2:24 a.m. - Crash reported in 39300 block Lcomb Dr. Cause: Calf in road. Report taken.

2:34 a.m. - Child reported his dad was hurting his grandma, 700 block Morton St. Officer determined nothing physical took place; just loud yelling.

7:17 a.m. - Caller reported subject passed out in driver's seat, engine idling, Williams/Wheeler sts. Subject was too tired to drive home to Corvallis.

7:38 a.m. - Phillip Leon Lucas, 67, cited on LMC warrant for probation violation.

7:54 a.m. - Caller reported hit and run on parked car, 700 block E Oak St.

9:57 a.m. - Larry Eugene Winkler, 39, cited for driving while suspended and driving uninsured, 1200 block S Williams St.

11:20 a.m. - Ricky James, 53, of Lebanon, arrested on LCSO warrant, cited and released on LMC warrant, 34100 block Santiam Hwy. Report taken.



Marie Neder
Lebanon

2:07 p.m. - Kelvin Edwin Attebery, 36, cited for driving while suspended, 200 block W Oak St.

6:39 p.m. - Kelvin Edwin Attebery, 36, cited for driving while suspended, S 9th/Academy Sts. Car was impounded.

8:22 p.m. - Armando Garcia Suarez, 34, of Lebanon, arrested for DUII after OSP officer stopped Suarez's vehicle near intersection of Hwy. 34 and Denny School Rd. According to OSP, Suarez agreed to perform sobriety field tests and was arrested. He was transported to Albany Police Department where, according to OSP, he blew a BAC of .08%. He was cited and released. A family member retrieved two juveniles, 8 and 11, who were in the vehicle.

9:08 p.m. - Caden Smith, 23, of Lebanon, cited for failure to obey traffic control device, driving uninsured, 500 block S. Main St.

11:11 p.m. - Caller reported prowler in 2000 block Cascade Dr. Surveillance footage, however, indicated it was kids performing "a little ding dong dash" activities, according to LCSO.

June 7

12:09 a.m. - Caller reported break-in at Habitat for Humanity ReStore. Joshua James Webb, 47, detained. Report taken for burglary II, theft III, criminal mischief II, possession of weapon by felon, and possession of burglary tools.

12:16 a.m. - Joshua James Webb, 47, cited on AMC warrant for contempt of court.

12:31 a.m. - Caller reported noises of breaking glass, and dragging chains and metal at Cheadle Lake.

3:16 a.m. - Caller reported customer in Taco Bell drive-thru had open beer in his lap and he was nodding off.

10:33 a.m. - Caller reported concerns that someone had spread something into her trailer, possibly a poison. LCSO responded and determined that caller had used solvent-based adhesives, fumes from which had been trapped in the trailer, causing the issues. 29200 block Santiam Hwy.

12:20 p.m. - Lori Burton, 64, of Lebanon, cited for speeding, 78/55, 30200 block Santiam Hwy.

12:37 p.m. - Jate Rademaker, 45, of Portland, cited for speeding, 75/55, Santiam Hwy./Cascade Dr.

1:41 p.m. - Deputies extinguished Dumpster fire, 2400 block S. 2nd St.

1:56 p.m. - Caller reported theft of generator from beneath camper at the Senior Center. Loss valued at \$430.

3:42 p.m. - Lacey Jane Gerig, 23, cited for driving uninsured, failure to install IID, and illegal display of plates, 100 block N Main St.

3:45 p.m. - Tryston Sassaman, 18, of Lebanon, cited for careless driving following crash in area of River Dr./River View St. Report taken.

4:18 p.m. - Lindsay Ann Fortune, 40, cited for driving uninsured, 1700 block S Main St.

4:32 p.m. - Lesa Cathcart, 62, of Lebanon, arrested for criminal trespass, contempt of court, 31200 block 1st St. Report taken.

5:57 p.m. - Fight reported in Waterloo Park. LCSO responded. No one wanted to press charges and all agreed to go home. 31200 block 1st St.

8:01 p.m. - Tina Marie Gibbs, 43, cited for driving while suspended, driving uninsured and LMC warrant for probation violation, 1700

See Public Safety, Page 12

Lebanon's New Neighbor Program

Lebanon is welcoming new residents to town by extending hospitality from our local merchants as well as maps and guides to help them settle in Our Town!

And it's FREE!

If you or someone you know is new to Lebanon and would like a

New Neighbor Packet

Stop by the Lebanon Chamber of Commerce
Monday-Saturday
1040 S. Park St., Lebanon



National Roadshow samples J&C BBQ

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

While downtown parking spots were closed off for the upcoming Strawberry Festival Junior Parade on Friday, June 6, one spot was specially reserved for visitors that weren't in town for the annual event.

Instead, America's Best Restaurant film crew parked its van in front of J&C BBQ & Catering at 525 S Main St. to record an episode of its national show.

As community residents were beginning to claim seats on Main Street's corridor for a parade that would happen five hours later, J&C BBQ owners Joe and Christina Poteet were offering a chair to Show Host Amanda Valentine and her crew.

The national media company travels across the United States highlighting good food and sharing stories of local, independently-owned restaurants as part of its "ABR Roadshow" broadcasted on multiple digital platforms.

Oftentimes they select restaurants based on nominations and reviews, but ABR Communications Specialist Suzanne Hale said J&C was selected by producers because the restaurant "caught their attention" and they reached out to see if the Poteets would be interested in being featured on the show.

"They have such an amazing story, particularly regarding their competition wins, and we knew their food was



Photo by Sarah Brown

From left, J&C owner Christy Poteet poses for a photo with ABR Roadshow host Amanda Valentine and producer Ashley Dawn.

just off-the-charts good," she said.

Valentine travelled from Cincinnati to try J&C's barbecue offerings. It's a job, she said, that suits her because she gets to try new foods, see different towns and hear different stories of family-operated restaurants.

"You get to see how they bring their whole family in and how they all work together," Valentine said. "You think how with a lot of people in their jobs, their job takes them away from their family, but in a lot of scenarios with restaurants, how it brings their family together. I

think that's really special and it comes across when you're eating everybody's food. It's almost like coming to someone's house and their family is making your dinner."

That's exactly the kind of atmosphere the Poteets aim to provide. While Joe and Christina focus on cooking flavorful meats, their daughter Kaitlyn Poteet manages the kitchen and daughter Brittany Poteet bakes the desserts.

The family's goal is to make J&C BBQ a destination restaurant, drawing in folks from a 50-plus-mile radius to experience a home cooked meal. People who travel from long

distances to eat at a restaurant are looking for an experience, Christina said.

"We're creating an environment. We're creating an experience. We're creating relationships. That's where we're going," she said. "If we can bring people in, they're coming in to escape the stress of home. They're coming in to escape the stress of family. They're coming in to escape the stress of work. They get to come in here for a moment and be a part of our family, and that's kind of the goal, to refocus how we treat our customers and make sure they're appreciated."

J&C BBQ was born out of the Poteets' desire to change course in their life.

Prior to operating a restaurant and catering business – as well as winning hundreds of barbecue competitions – Joe worked at a paper mill. Christina worked as a paramedic, but was eventually detoured from the job due to an injury. As Christina set her sights on returning to school, Joe began realizing he was "living to work versus working to live," she said. Together, their paths converged into an idea to go into the food business.

The pair started in 2016 out of a food trailer in Sweet Home and, a few years later, moved into a brick and mortar location in Lebanon's Main Street downtown. In 2022, the restaurant moved to the other end of Main Street by taking

over Bigfoot Grille in something of a combined restaurant offering both a hamburger and a barbecue grill menu.

Since taking on this new path together, the pair entered into the growing subculture of food competitions. They have been entering barbecue competitions across the country and using the experiences to perfect their local menu since 2017. The Poteets compete an average of eight times a year, but this year they've already participated in 10 competitions and expect to have done about 15 by the end of 2025, Christina said.

With a recent rebranding of their business – essentially removing Bigfoot Grille because, according to Christina, it was causing confusion among customers – the family is trying to "get back to their roots."

The family spends so much time at the restaurant, in fact, that they see their job as feeding customers the same quality of homemade food they would feed themselves, she said.

"We want to be proud of what we serve," she said. "I want people to come in and eat, like, a home-cooked meal."

And that's exactly what they offered Valentine for the roadshow, which will feature some of J&C's best menu items, including Texas Twinkies, ribs with coleslaw and pit beans, and brisket with potato salad,

See Roadshow, Page 16

Grant funding provides support for African-American students

A coalition of educational and community organizations launched the Black Excellence Initiative, a three-year project to support middle and high school students throughout Linn and Benton counties.

Funded by the Oregon Department of Education's Student Success Plan grant, the initiative creates stronger systems for academic success, cultural belonging and community connection. Ac-

cording to Lebanon Community School District Director of Communications Michelle Steinhebel, LCSD received about \$25,000 of the funding for training in bias response protocol and student attendance at a leadership conference.

During the first year of the grant cycle, LCSD administrators received three training sessions with Jason Dorsette, Linn Benton NAACP's principal investigator for the

grant, and Kelsey Nava-Costales, executive director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Greater Albany Public Schools, with more training expected to resume in August.

Additionally, 52 Lebanon students from grades 6-12 attended the African American Youth Leadership Conference at Oregon State University this past April. The conference aimed to inspire and empower middle and high school students of African American heritage.

"This project represents a significant commitment to ensuring all students have every opportunity to thrive academically throughout our Mid-Willamette Valley region while maintaining strong connections to their rich heritage," Dorsette said in a press release. "By bringing together schools, families and community organizations, we're creating a network of support

that addresses both academic excellence and belonging."

The initiative focuses on five key areas:

Culturally sustaining education that delivers programming rooted in black history and identity.

Targeted mentorship and tutoring that matches students with mentors to promote growth and leadership.

Community and family engagement that strengthens connections between schools, families and community-based organizations.

Student voice and leadership supporting student clubs and youth-led academic and cultural excursions.

Belonging, success and engagement fostering better academic outcomes through culturally responsive practices.

"Our collaboration with the senior administration team at Lebanon Community School District has facilitated sig-

nificant professional development and organizational growth," Dorsette told Lebanon Local. "We anticipate continued productive partnership as we advance into the second year of implementation for the Oregon Department of Education Student Success grant. This funding opportunity has provided substantial educational resources and support to educators, students and families within this rural community of the Mid-Willamette Valley, contributing meaningfully to enhanced educational outcomes and community engagement."

Consortium partners include Linn Benton NAACP, African American Youth Leadership Coalition, Kin-Cultivate, Corvallis School District, Greater Albany Public Schools, Lebanon Community School District and Philomath.



School Board honors departees, reviews achievements, plans

By Chelly Bouferrache
For Lebanon Local

The Lebanon School Board meeting on Thursday, June 12, discussed the results of mini-grants awarded to teachers through Lebanon Schools Foundation, outlined summer facilities projects, and bid farewell to outgoing board members while recognizing graduating seniors and a successful wellness fair.

Teacher Mini-Grants

The Lebanon Schools Foundation awarded \$500 mini-grants to teachers and staff to enhance classroom experiences, with recipients submitting slides of their projects to the board.

"It's competitive," said Edda King, director of the foundation, which is largely funded through voluntary payroll deductions by school staff. "We have a group of us who get together and go over the applications. It's pretty fun!"

Notable projects included:

- Jessie Questschke, a sixth-grade science teacher at Hamilton Creek, who purchased a Lego robotics kit for students to build and code.
- Ryan McWayne, a fifth-grade teacher at Cascades and Battle of the Books coach, acquired book sets for his class.
- Susie Phillips, at the Brick House transition program for students with disabilities ages



Photos by Chelly Bouferrache

School Board member Aubree Molina, who is stepping down, checks out one of two engraved Bulova clocks presented to her and Board Chair Tom Oliver for their service on the School Board.

18-21, bought a greenhouse to support vocational skills through working with plants and their plant sale.

- Amanda Gaskey, a preschool teacher at Cascades, invested in age-appropriate bikes to promote gross motor skills and bicycle safety.

- At the high school, Jodi Howell, an AVID teacher, funded materials for awards for the AVID Student of the Month program.

- High school art teacher Luis DeLuna purchased cel animation materials to teach Disney-style animation to his art class students. His slides featured several pieces of student artwork created with the

materials purchased.

- Michael Swindle at Seven Oak Middle School bought ChompSaws for safe cardboard cutting for projects in his classes.

- Ashley DaSilva at Seven Oak Middle School acquired science-themed graphic novels to promote science literacy.

- Emily Latimer at Seven Oak funded a school-wide art show featuring 300 student submissions.

- Jesica Gadue, a music teacher at Hamilton Creek and Lcomb, obtained literacy promotion materials for her music rooms at those schools.

- Additionally, \$1,875 is going to Seven Oak middle school



Supt. Jennifer Meckley, left, and Board Chair Tom Oliver sit below a display of student artwork using cel animation materials purchased by Lebanon High School art teacher Luis DeLuna with a Lebanon Schools Foundation mini-grant.

band students attending a band camp in Albany, bolstered by donations from an anonymous donor and a Hall of Fame member.

The Gene and Jeanette Hartl Fund also helped with the mini-grants to cover exam fees for pharmacy tech and CNA certifications, aiding nine students in CNA career education, and an EMR class led by teacher Leah Rainey.

Summer Work, Budget OK'd

Facilities manager William Lewis detailed summer projects going beyond planned routine maintenance, including a bus lift installation, ac-

cess control and paving improvements, LHS bleacher replacement, and some limited classroom remodels.

Other initiatives include roof repairs at Hamilton Creek, a water tank flush, a boys' bathroom repair at Lebanon High School, exterior and interior painting, and playground installations at Green Acres and Cascades Pre-K. Reader boards will be installed at Seven Oak, Riverview, and Hamilton Creek, and the Kitcheria project will conclude with an electric rolling door.

See School Board, Page 15

Water rights denied; Sodaville reassesses its options, pivots

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

After hearing its application for new water rights was found "unfavorable," the Sodaville City Council determined all was not lost because one stumbling block could ultimately be their saving cornerstone.

During its May 22 meeting, the council learned there's likely little hope the city could obtain additional water rights, but a planned "Well 6" on Jackman family property may be able to draw water from the same water rights the city holds for Well 5.

City Administrator/Recorder Molly McGuire reported the city's application for water rights for Well 6 was essentially denied because there wouldn't be enough water to sustain the city's usage, and OWRD (Oregon Water Resources Department) believes Well 6 would be drawing from the same aquifer as Well 5.

The water rights application was placed on administrative hold, allowing the city to determine its next step. The city will also rewrite the

application making it possible for the city to use a \$360,000 grant fund to pay for water hauling, in the case that it cannot be used to build Well 6. According to McGuire, that money could fund up to three years worth of water hauling.

At the meeting, the council was faced with determining what next steps they should take.

Sodaville could fund testing to try to prove that Well 6 was on a different aquifer. Or they could try for water rights on a different well, located halfway to Lebanon. Both options would be timely and costly.

Mayor Brian Lewis said that, regardless, new rules from the state regarding water rights are reportedly making it pretty much impossible for anyone to obtain water rights now, so there's little guarantee Sodaville could prove successful in its endeavor. If the city ends the current application for new water rights, it would be near impossible to file again.

Another option – the one councilors decided was their best bet – is to request an amendment on its rights for

Well 5, making it possible to draw water on Well 6 from Well 5's permit since they're both apparently drawing from the same aquifer.

Lewis said it works like this: The city is only allowed to draw a certain quantity of water from Well 5, which is currently not functioning. Upon approval by OWRD, the city could build Well 6 with the grant funds to draw from water rights the city already has. If Sodaville fixes Well 5 in the future, it could alternate between the two wells as long as they don't go over the allowable quantity, which is "more than enough."

"If we could get Well 6 hooked up and we can save two months worth of water hauling, it'll be worth it," Lewis said.

Councilors approved a motion to pursue the Well 6 project using water rights from Well 5. Councilor Joseph Parsons abstained from voting on the matter, saying he's been against a Well 6 project from the beginning because the city hasn't even had a conversation with the Jackman family about what it will cost

to use their well.

Lewis reminded the council that if everything goes downhill, McGuire is still working on a plan to be able to use the grant funds for a few years' worth of water hauling costs.

In other business:

McGuire reported the city's modified SIPP (Sustainable Infrastructure Planning Projects) application for \$50,000 has been approved. The money will be used to update the city's water system master plan.

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Memories, daily tasks, community unite ELCA Class of 2025

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

East Linn Christian Academy's Class of 2025 celebrated their last day at the campus when the school graduated 26 students on June 7.

Seniors Blake Knurowski and Parker Adams recited "Remember Whens," calling forth memories from the class' time at ELCA. They recalled the funny moments, the scary moments and all the little events that made their time at the school memorable – camping overnight on campus, duct taping a student to the wall, using voice changers during online class, racking up 71 tardies in one school year, teachers taking students to the hospital or picking students up when their car broke down during lunch period, sports and field trips, and more.

Valedictorian Gabe Schlabbach expressed his gratitude for the memories he made during his time at ELCA, and for the opportunity to attend there. During his education, he was surrounded by mentors and friends, and he saw growth in both himself and his peers, he said.

"I believe that East Linn has a very unique sense of community and intimacy among peers that is hard to find elsewhere," he said. "...It is a community that invests beyond the academic. It invests in the growth of its students in a plethora of both spiritual and personal ways."

As they go forth into the world on their own, Schlabbach said, he encouraged his fellow graduates to continue



Photo by Sarah Brown

ELCA's Class of 2025 prays together before their graduation ceremony begins.

their pursuit of and growth in Christ.

Dean of Students Allie James recited the "Roll Call," an introduction of the class when each of them began at the school. Chaplain Jonathan Bartlow presented the invocation and gifting of Bibles. Teacher Elliott Dixon gave the benediction.

It was English teacher Jennifer Davis who was chosen by the class to give the commencement speech. She commended them for the seemingly mundane daily tasks that could be considered "good works," daily works that she, herself, was blessed by from them for the past four years as she taught and got to know them.

It's the repetitive tasks, the "daily grind," she said, that can take a person to their successes – the "big things." Daily things can also provide peace and mercy to others, or simply carry them through the hard times.

"There's beauty in the little things we do," Davis said.

"The day-to-day good work we do to live life can be beautiful work."

The mundane can be a beautiful act of worship, she said. Have gratitude for the chores – the vacuuming, because you have a home to vacuum; the cleaning of dishes, because you had your fill that day; the laundry, because you worked all week in them.

"And for goodness' sake, heavens to Betsy, make your bed," Davis said.

After receiving their diplomas, each student presented a rose to their family, and Technology Director Jen Dix played a slide show of the graduates. The recessional gave students a chance to exit with pops of confetti, high-fives, chugging soda, playful hand shakes and poses, or even leap frogging down the aisle.

"The road you are about to begin will be your greatest adventure, for it is the adventure of life," Dixon said



Photo by Sarah Brown

Graduating seniors close out the ceremony with a bang...of confetti. See more photos at lebanonlocalnews.com



Photo by Sarah Brown

Valedictorian Gabe Schlabbach gives thanks for the sense of community provided at East Linn Christian Academy.

in her benediction. "May the Lord guide your steps. May you walk as he walked. As you embark on your next adventure, whatever it is and wherever you go, may Yawheh Shalom bring you peace."



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CLASS OF 2025

From page 1

not be sidetracked by those who judge them – a lesson she learned throughout high school.

“There is no reason to be afraid,” Barnes said. “You can face this. Everything you lose is a step you take.”

Both Welstad and Barnes called the class to make graduation a valuable memory as they embark on a new chapter. Valedictorian Gracie Hansen also reminded the Class of 2025 that graduation was just the end of one chapter, and they were about to enter the rest of their book.

“As we take on the world, let’s remember to try new things, explore opportunities and remember to call our parents once in a while,” Hansen said.

Valedictorian Eric Natterer said that great memories are created from not being afraid to try, and most regrets revolve around the things never tried.

“Within each and every failure is an opportunity, the opportunity to try again. We can’t always control the outcome, but we can always control our effort,” he said. “Even in failure we gain something: the strength to keep going and the confidence to stop caring what others think.”

Valedictorian Nora Horne reflected on her experiences through high school, learning to be herself and not be embarrassed to try new things. She reminded the class they are about to enter the world where there will be guaranteed mistakes and failures.

“Let’s go forth, fail together and find new things to bring



Photo by Sarah Brown

Valedictorian Eric Natterer encourages his classmates to try new things. See more photos at lebanonlocalnews.com

us joy,” Horne said.

And it was Valedictorian Emily Gerig who told the class that everything happens for a reason, that struggling is part of living, that not everything can be controlled. Take chances, she said. Don’t have regrets.

Gerig said she learned to weather the curve balls thrown her way and not give up.

“Nobody said it would be easy; they just promised it would be worth it,” she said. “Keep pushing, even when it feels like the world is happening to you, but don’t forget that you are also happening to the world.”

A curve ball inflicted upon school district staff and guests at graduation came in the form of limited seating, but out of that came a perfectly executed ceremony

under the banner of “the absolute best graduation weather ever,” Swanson said.

Due to recent concerns about the safety of Heath Stadium’s grandstand, the tiered seating was off limits for graduation, forcing the school district to alter its usual arrangement for visiting friends and family. As such, Heath Stadium was used as a backdrop for the ceremony, with the graduating class situated in the middle of the football field, flanked on either side by guests.

Swanson and Supt. Jennifer Meckley lauded the Class of 2025, with Swanson making note of the class’ particular achievements in sports, JROTC, FFA, certifications earned, scholarships and degrees received, cheer and dance, and band, choir and



Photo by Sarah Brown

Principal Craig Swanson congratulates a student as he approaches to accept his diploma.

theater.

“The journey you have taken to reach this day hasn’t always been easy, but through hard work, persistence and courage, you made it,” Meckley said. “You

weathered challenges, but also have seized opportunities, and in doing so, you’ve shown the strength, heart and resilience that define what it means to be a Lebanon Warrior.”

CONGRATS!

2025 *Class of*

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Market move provides more parking, more vendors

By Chelly Bouferrache
For Lebanon Local

After 13 years at its former location at Grant and Main streets, the Lebanon Downtown Farmer's Market has shifted to a new site at the corner of Park and Oak, 971 S. Park St., next to Ralston Park.

The city of Lebanon donated the space to accommodate the market's growth and improve the experience for vendors and visitors following concerns from some downtown businesses about parking availability during market hours. However, other Main Street businesses enjoyed the market's presence and favored keeping it in its original location.

The market operates Thursdays from 2 to 6 p.m., running from May 15 to Oct. 16. The new location offers more parking, a larger set-up area and better visibility, allowing for additional vendors this year. Visitors to the market can find an array of



Photos by Sarah Brown

Families line up to make purchases at the Lebanon Farmers Market.

goods, including organic produce, fruits, vegetables, honey, sourdough baked goods, flowering plants, plant starts, tamales, goat milk soap, and fresh and smoked fish, and occasionally live music enhancing the atmosphere. In addition to cash and debit cards, payment options include WIC, SNAP and Farm Direct checks, with the "Double Up Food Bucks" program

that doubles SNAP benefits.. Farmer's Market Manager Belinda Bayne highlighted the benefits, noting, "We got good feedback about parking, we have more room and a few more vendors than we had last year, and room for a few more." Attendance has climbed in the first three weeks, and some vendors noticed the difference. Market vendor



Live music at the Lebanon Farmers Market sets the tone.

Tammie Frangente, of Sweet Home Chestnut Farms, observed, "We have more space, we have all the green, I feel like we have actually more people than usual for the first two weeks of the market." The move addressed parking concerns while providing room for growth. With plans to expand further by adding

a few more vendors, the market continues to serve as a hub for Lebanon, connecting local farmers, food artisans and locals. For more details and a full vendor list, visit LebanonDowntownFarmersMarket.com, or visit their Facebook page "Lebanon Downtown Farmers Market."

Samaritan, Santiam Hospital cease affiliation pursuit

After a year of due diligence and operational exploration, Samaritan Health Services and Santiam Hospital and Clinics announced their mutual decision to cease pursuit of formal affiliation. In a press release, the nonprofits stated they remain committed to their missions of service within the region and will continue to look for ways to collaborate that might benefit the health and well-being of the community from the mid-Willamette Valley through the central

Oregon coast regions. Patient care, they said, should not be impacted by this decision. Samaritan Health Services and Santiam Hospital and Clinics a year ago signed a definitive agreement and are seeking approval from the Oregon Health Authority to affiliate in early summer of 2025. The two organizations signed a nonbinding letter of intent in late May of 2024 "to allow the parties to further evaluate the affiliation with the anticipated outcome of Santiam Hospital and Clinics

becoming part of Samaritan Health Services," Samaritan stated in a news release. The idea was that as nonprofit, community-based health systems with similar missions, visions, values, and cultures, \ joining together through affiliation would strengthen both organizations through increased access to services, improving health equity and enhancing services provided to communities throughout the mid-Willamette Valley and central Oregon coast regions, Samaritan

said. Samaritan Health Services is a nonprofit regional health system that brings together five community hospitals, more than 100 physician clinics and multiple health insurance plans to serve more than 290,000 residents in Oregon's Benton, Lincoln and Linn counties. Samaritan employs more than 5,000 workers, including 620 clinicians, and is governed by a volunteer board, which includes community members, physicians and hospital

leaders. Santiam Hospital and Clinics is a nonprofit health care organization, governed by a volunteer board of directors. Santiam Hospital and Clinics is an independent, acute-care hospital in Stayton, operating 12 clinics serving the Santiam Canyon in Marion and Linn counties. Santiam Hospital & Clinics serves more than 40,000 residents and employs more than 600 staff, including 70 medical staff focused on community-based care.

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FESTIVAL

From page 1

themes seen in the parades were Rubik's Cube, mix tapes, and vibrant colors and fashion.

But beyond the obvious elements of amusement were other organizations who summoned the spirit of fun by offering the beauty of flowers, the creativity of quilts, the joy of dance, the pleasure of food, the benefits of exercise, the thrill of the race and the transformative nature of worship.

Clubs, nonprofits, schools, businesses and churches contributed to the city-wide celebration of strawberry harvest, community festivities and, like, totally tubular activities.

The festivities, held June 5-8, began on Thursday with All Heroes Day, honoring those who served in the military, and as first responders and linemen.

During the coronation ceremony, the Strawberry Court gave a nod to Cindy Lauper's hit song "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun" with an inspired dance. After introductions, the court voted Hannah Savedra as Miss Congeniality, and judges selected Savedra as Strawberry Festival Queen.

While some Strawberry Festivals are coated in rain, others can be bathed in heat – and this year was a hot one. Regardless of the climate, though, the parades are always well attended and this year was no different.

ENTEK's float swept up many of the parade trophies, walking away with Grand Marshall, Queen's Choice and Sweepstakes from the Grand Parade. At the Lebanon Garden Club's Standard Flower Show, the Strawberry Court pinned ribbons on their favorite horticultural samples.

Queen Savedra chose Aurora Combs' design in the "Rubik's Cube" category. The four princess ribbons went to Laurie Linn's zamioculcas zamiifolia, Kristy Hacker's "Honey Bee Truck" dish garden, Linn's design in the "Splash Dance" category, and Amanda Ernst's design in the "Wild Thing" category.

Linn also won People's Choice for her quilt display, a collection of star blocks in blue and white, with starburst-like quilting done by hand.

On Saturday, the Lebanon Optimists club hosted its annual breakfast fundraiser, serving up pancakes, eggs and ham with a side of early morning cheer at the Linn Lanes Bowling parking lot. While breakfast service wrapped up, East Linn Christian Academy's annual

1 mile/5K run/walk kicked off at the north end of downtown.

First place winners were: Jameson Graham, 13, one-mile run overall, 6:27.70; C. Gambardella, 10, one-mile girls under 12, 6:33.91; W. Smith, 10, one-mile boys under 12, 6:38.14; Cameron Peshon, 28, 5K (M 26-35, men's overall and overall winner), 15:58.79; Forrest Cooley, 22, 5K (M 18-25), 16:17.09; Noah Charves, 17, 5K (M 14-17), 16:54.65; Daisy Lalonde, 18, 5K (F 18-25 and women's overall), 17:49.64; Adam Hearn, 39, 5K (M 36-45), 18:57.11; Emma Whitton, 15, 5K (F14-17), 20:24.96; Joe Kennedy, 47, 5K (M 46-55), 20:28.96; Celie Mans, 26, 5K (F 26-35), 20:53.04; Tiwana Feuerbacher, 39, 5K (F 36-45), 21:50.43; A. Day, 10, 5K (F 1-13), 23:30.49; F. Smith, 9, 5K (M 1-13), 23:37.17; Nicole Von Germeten, 53, 5K (F 46-55), 24:45.12; Linda Bruslind, 57, 5K (F 56-65), 26:19.51; James Klein, 71, 5K (M 66-99), 26:50.32; Scott Bruslind, 65, 5K (M 56-65), 29:47.36; and Paulette McCoy, 71, 5K (F 66-99), 49:39.83.

One of the festival's newer amusements for children – Family Land – provided a child-sized circus, live entertainment, help-yourself play things, a climbing wall, a mechanical bull, bumper boats and several ways to play with water.

It was the Lebanon Square Circlers who ushered in an evening of dancing as the sun began to set. The 73rd Strawberry Festival Dance & Campout hosted cuer Sandra Pinion and caller Darrell Kalmbach.

Willamette Speedway ended Saturday's schedule of festival happenings with its annual Strawberry Cup rac-



Students from Riverview Elementary greet crowds with waves and bubbles as they walk in the Junior Parade. See more photos at lebanonlocalnews.com

es. Taking home trophies that night were Joey Tanner (Late Model), Dakota Godard (Street Stock), Brian Winkler (Limited Late Model) and Ryan Trask (Hornet).

And of course there is the strawberry shortcake, the largest highlight of the annual festival. The Strawberry Court handed slices to visitors for several hours and, on Sunday, the last of the cake was pulled for a strawberry shortcake eating contest. Kids as young as 3 attempted their first speed feed for a chance at a prize, teens sized each other up by claiming they've been practicing for this their entire lives, and adults waited in line for a chance to stuff their faces. Transform Lebanon kicked off the last day's festivities with worship service.

As the Strawberry Festival Association continues to build Lebanon's century-old celebration with added entertainment and statewide reach, it has always been and always will be a community event powered by local volunteers, dedicated organizations and berry passion.



Hannah Savedra, center, smiles up at 2024 Strawberry Queen Addison Cable as the former Strawberry Court helps don Savedra's with her royal garb.



Princess Kylee Thurman, at right, hands strawberry shortcake to visitors at Cheadle Lake Park.



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Wellness fair continues to provide resources for strength

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

What was intended to be a one- or two-off thing has become an annual event after vendors asked to keep returning.

The Sources of Strength Wellness Fair, organized through Lebanon Community School District's Welcome Center in partnership with several other organizations, held its fourth annual event on May 28 at Pioneer Elementary School.

Churches, nonprofits and health facilities manned booths to provide information, while food vendors offered hot dogs, hamburgers and ice cream. A handful of outdoor games were available for children to play with, and the Scalawags Robotic Team used their shirt cannon to shoot T-shirts for a crowd of kids.

Some kids got their faces painted and others walked



Photo by Sarah Brown
Volunteers for the Wellness Fair sit at their booth where they hand out information and prizes.

around wearing balloon hats. Music and bubbles floated through the air, and Northwest Skateland showcased their business venture with a mobile roller rink.

According to Jill Miller, community liaison at the dis-

trict's Welcome Center, this year's event was the biggest one they've had so far, with more than 70 vendors participating, as well as food, entertainment and prizes.

"We thought maybe we'd just do it a year or two and

pass it off, (but now) it will be going after we retire," she said.

Miller and Sandi Cox, the school district's mental health coordinator, said the community embraced what they were doing, so they just kept going.

"We continue to do this because our vendors and all the people here love it so much and are willing to support it," Cox said.

Miller said it was due to sponsors that they were able to provide T-shirts, music, face painting, balloons, a photo booth, prizes, and food and ice cream for free.

The district's Welcome Center initiated the Wellness Fair four years ago while everyone was transitioning back to life after COVID, Cox said. It was a time when they realized many families probably needed help connecting with resources to help with

whatever they experienced during the pandemic.

"We just wanted to let them know that, hey, we actually do have a lot of resources in our community, so it was really just about connecting them with those resources," she said.

The fair centers around the Sources of Strength model, which focuses on building resiliency through eight factors: mental health, generosity, family support, mentors, physical health, spirituality, and healthy activities.

Every vendor at the event represents one of those eight factors, Cox said.

"It's really about helping people lean into their strengths and learn that they have things to be able to help themselves and, if they need help, there's a whole bunch of people here willing to help you along the way with that," she said.

MANSLAUGHTER

From page 1

tims and suppress the brush fire. One patient was airlifted to a nearby hospital with serious injuries. Power was restored to the area around 3 a.m.

An investigation by Linn County Sheriff's Office deputies determined that Marion Dennis Johnson, 69, of Albany, was driving a black Chevrolet Tahoe northbound on Bond Road when he approached the stop sign. Johnson's wife, Valda Lynn Johnson, 67, was a passenger in the vehicle.

When Johnson proceeded through the stop sign, his

vehicle was struck by a grey 2014 Dodge Ram pickup driven eastbound by Cole Russell Allen, 32, of Lebanon. Allen was the only occupant in the pickup.

Marion Johnson suffered life-threatening injuries and died at the scene. His wife sustained non-life-threatening, but serious, injuries and was transported to Good Samaritan Hospital in Corvallis by ambulance.

Witnesses reported Allen was driving at a high rate of speed moments before the crash. Deputies also found through their investigation that Allen was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crash. He sustained minor injuries.

Charges were filed that same day by the district attorney against Allen for the death of Marion Johnson. He is charged with first-degree manslaughter, third-degree assault, DUII (liquor), reckless driving, recklessly endangering another person and second-degree criminal mischief.

Allen had previously completed a diversion program in 2018 after pleading guilty to reckless driving and DUII with a .23% BAC.

Anyone with information on the crash or Allen's driving of the Dodge Ram pickup is encouraged to contact LCSO Detective Scott Tennant at (541) 967-3950.

PUBLIC SAFETY

From page 5

block S Main St.

10:21 p.m. - Crash reported in 38200 block River Dr. Further details unavailable at press time.

10:52 p.m. - Caller reported seeing cougar in area of 5th St./Vaughn Lane. Referred to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

11:16 p.m. - Jacob Allann Ralston-Gillette, 29, arrested for DUII, S 2nd/H Sts.

11:38 p.m. - Max Travis Flaska, 38, cited on LMC warrant for probation violation.

June 6

12:27 a.m. - Jordan Harris, 24, of Lebanon, cited for

driving without operator's license, driving uninsured. 37200 block Hwy. 226.

4:27 a.m. - Joshua Warren, 42, of Lebanon, cited for driving while suspended, driving uninsured, Berlin/Hidden Valley roads. Vehicle towed. Report taken.

9:58 a.m. - Tyler Wade Fincher, 26, cited for driving while suspended and failure to use seatbelt, 1700 block S 5th St.

10:21 a.m. - Ryan Scott Blackwell, 31, cited for speeding 35/20 school zone, Reeves Pkwy/N Santiam Hwy.

10:35 a.m. - Paeson Olivia Pimm, 23, cited for speeding 35/20 school zone, Mary/N 2nd Sts.

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Photo provided by Lebanon Fire District
Firefighters work at the scene of an explosion that left one person dead, two injured.

Explosion leads to one dead, two injured

Lebanon firefighters responded to multiple cars on fire in the 700 block of W Grant Street at 9:20 a.m. on Saturday, May 24.

The first unit to arrive was an Albany Fire Department medic unit that was moved up to Lebanon to help cover the district as multiple, simultaneous 911 calls were occurring in the city.

Firefighters on scene relayed to dispatch and incoming units that vehicles were fully engulfed and near a structure.

Lebanon fire crews arrived and began fighting the blaze when an explosion from inside a vehicle rocked the neighborhood, sending debris into nearby yards and streets. Firefighters continued to advance, extinguish-

ing the blaze and keeping the fire from entering the house.

A second engine arrived and went to work, checking the inside of the house for extension of fire and making sure all residents were out. While firefighters were battling the car fires, the remains of a local resident that had been living in one of the cars was discovered.

Firefighters had the incident under control in about 20 minutes, with all three cars extinguished while the incident commander contacted the Lebanon police about the victim. At that time, the street was shut down to process and investigate.

The Lebanon Fire Investigation Team assisted at the scene with members of the local law enforcement, and

two firefighters were evaluated at the local area hospital after sustaining minor injuries when the explosion occurred.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation and residents of the structure have been displaced until power can be restored to the home.

The Lebanon Fire District responded to the blaze with 17 personnel on one ladder truck, one engine, one fire/medic from Albany Fire, one fire/medic from Lebanon, one heavy rescue, two chief officers and a deputy fire marshal. Firefighters were assisted at the scene by Lebanon police and Pacific Power. Albany Fire provided an engine to help cover the district while the incident took place.

CIRCUIT COURT

From page 3

glary I, unauthorized use of a vehicle, criminal mischief II and unlawful possession of methamphetamine.

A charge against **Katrina Marie Routledge**, 51, of fugitive from justice was dismissed without prejudice.

Jeremy Scott Rowan, 43, sentenced May 23 to 29 mos. with the Oregon Dept. of Corrections (concurrent to other case sentences) and 36 mos. post-prison supervision after pleading no contest to encouraging child

sexual abuse I.

Andrew James Alva Salmon, 30, charged May 27 with DV assault IV and harassment. Bail set at \$5,000. He was sentenced June 5 to 36 mos. supervised probation and a \$100 fine after pleading no contest; the harassment charge was dismissed.

April Lee Springer, 42, charged May 14 with theft I.

Captain Yeauuh Sun, 28, charged May 30 with DUII (liquor), reckless driving and recklessly endangering another person.

Final May election local winners announced

By Scott Swanson
Lebanon Local

Linn County's Elections Office last week finalized its vote count for the May 20 election, ending a close race for the Lebanon School Board Seat 3.

A final total of 4,335 ballots were cast in the Lebanon precinct — just 16.79% of the city's registered voters. Vote totals were finalized June 11, according to County Clerk Marcie Richey.

In the election for Lebanon School Board contested seats, Lorlee Engler, Michael Martin and Nichole Piland were winners.

For the School Board Zone 2 seat, Engler finished with 52.65% of the votes (2,207). Jason Fair, also challenging for the seat, had 47.08% (1,974).

For Zone 3, Martin had 50.56% of the votes (2,077). Jackie Eberhart, also challenging for the seat, had 49.15% (2,019).

In Zone 5, incumbent Piland had 56.95% of the votes (2,314). Dominic Conti, challenging for the seat, had 42.78% (1,738).

In the election for the Position 4 seat in the Lebanon Aquatic District, Julie Miller finished with 61.20% (2,399). Ross Dewberry, also challenging for the seat, had 38.34% (1,503).

Darla Bulmer ran uncontested for Position 5.

Incumbents Matt Herb, Wyatt King and Rob Boren ran uncontested for their seats on the Lebanon Fire District Board of Directors. Herb was also unchallenged for the Position 3 seat on the North Lebanon Water Control District, as were Gary Hull (Position 5), Buzz Mitchell (Position 6), Brandon Herb (Position 8) and Leslie Powell (Position 9). No one ran for the Position 4 seat, but Kathleen Murray was the top vote-getter of 16 names listed on 23 write-in votes with four.

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REAL ESTATE SOLD

Following are Lebanon, Sweet Home, and Brownsville area real estate transactions recorded with the county during late May and June 2025. These are not properties for sale, and some transactions may represent a change in ownership within a family or corporation. Properties are listed by address, property/residence size and purchase price:

28908 Sheep Head Rd., Brownsville; 5189 sq.ft., One story with basement, four bedroom, three-bath built in 2005; 3.2 acres; \$775,000.

421 Depot Ave., Brownsville; 1654 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 2022; 0.12 acres; \$419,800.

2312 Main St., Sweet Home; additional details not listed; 0.23 acres; \$255,000.

2308 Robbins Way., Lebanon; 1629 sq.ft., Two story, three bedroom, 2 ½ bath built in 2017; 0.13 acres; \$450,000.

31958 Weldon Rd., Lebanon; 1884 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, three-bath built in 1976; 5 acres; \$699,000.

1650 Fir St., Sweet Home; 700 sq.ft., One story, two bedroom, one-bath built in 1946; 0.14 acres; \$265,000.

1895 Strawberry Ln., Lebanon; 1392 sq.ft., One story with attic, three bedroom, one-bath built in 1949; 0.4 acres; \$385,000.

1408 47th Ave., Sweet Home; 1313 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 2013; 0.18 acres; \$392,000.

142 Elmore St., Lebanon; additional details not listed; 5.59 acres; \$10,860,000.

779 Pebble St., Brownsville; 1007 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 2024; 0.11 acres; \$336,900.

42152 Cut Off Dr., Lebanon; additional details not listed; 5 acres; \$355,000.

28411 Liberty Rd., Sweet Home; 1944 sq.ft., One story with attic, three bedroom, 1 ½ bath built in 1950; 1.98 acres; \$335,000.

939 Cleveland St., Lebanon; 862 sq.ft., One story with attic, two bedroom, one-bath built in 1945; 0.21 acres; \$309,900.

827 Cherry Blossom Ln., Lebanon; 1294 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 1995; 0.17 acres; \$405,000.

74 Camellia Dr., Lebanon; 1498 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 2016; 0.14 acres; \$430,000.

1029 2nd Ave., Sweet Home; 1364 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, 1 ½ bath built in 1953; 0.22 acres; \$300,000.

115 Milton St., Lebanon; four bedroom, two-bath, 0.36 acres; \$752,000.

86 Grove St., Lebanon; 1760 sq.ft., One story w/attic and basement, four bedroom, one-bath built in 1930; 0.36 acres; \$315,000.

1205 4th Ave., Sweet Home; 1262 sq.ft., One story with attic, four bedroom, two-bath built in 1930; 0.14 acres; \$275,000.

835 Isabella St., Lebanon; 1152 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, 1 ½ bath built in 1971, 0.25 acres; \$368,000.

345 Jadon Dr., Lebanon; 2164 sq.ft., Two story, three bedroom, 2 ½ bath built in 2007, 0.14 acres; \$460,000.

38641 Knighten Ln., Lebanon; 2368 sq.ft., One story w/attic and basement, three bedroom, two-bath built in 2007, 1.32 acres; \$683,500.

391 Center St., Lebanon; 864 sq.ft., One story, two bedroom, one-bath built in 1940, 0.17 acres; \$287,500.

1021 Mountain View Rd., Sweet Home; 2392 sq.ft., Two story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 1900, 0.53 acres; \$415,000.

289 Walnut Ave., Brownsville; 2320 sq.ft., Two story with basement, two bedroom, 2 ½ bath built in 1999, 0.28 acres; \$540,000.

1024 14th Ave., Sweet Home; 1128 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 2000, 0.12 acres; \$335,000.

410 B St., Lebanon; 1166 sq.ft., One story, two bedroom, one-bath built in 1914, 0.19 acres; \$299,000.

3132 10th St., Lebanon;

1494 sq.ft., One story, four bedroom, two-bath built in 2007, 0.14 acres; \$439,000.

415 13th St., Lebanon; 1120 sq.ft., One story, two bedroom, one-bath built in 1945, 0.34 acres; \$355,000.

28716 Liberty Rd., Sweet Home; 1814 sq.ft., One story, two bedroom, one-bath built in 1954, 1.98 acres; \$200,000.

37314 Scott Dr., Lebanon; 2346 sq.ft., Two story, five bedroom, 3 ½ bath built in 1979, 2.92 acres; \$615,000.

1247 Clark Mill Rd., Sweet Home; 1330 sq.ft., One story, four bedroom, one-bath built in 1949, 2.02 acres; \$270,000.

1552 2nd St., Lebanon; 1392 sq.ft., One story with basement, three bedroom, two-bath built in 1915, 0.18 acres; \$379,000.

170 11th St., Lebanon; 1242 sq.ft., One story with attic, three bedroom, one-bath built in 1946, 0.18 acres; \$324,900.

555 Central Ave., Lebanon; 1782 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, 1 ½ bath built in 1947, 1 acres; \$365,000.

611 D St., Lebanon; 2124 sq.ft., One story, four bedroom, 2 ½ bath built in 1964, 0.29 acres; \$449,900.

34090 Olson Ln., Lebanon; 1596 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 1964, 0.64 acres; \$616,000.

1345 45th Ave., Sweet Home; additional details not listed; 0.14 acres; \$66,000.

377 Kirk Ave., Brownsville; 1416 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 1998, 0.11 acres; \$375,000.

980 Cleveland St., Lebanon; 736 sq.ft., One story, two bedroom, one-bath built in 1947, 0.21 acres; \$300,000.

5200 McCormack Ln., Lebanon; 734 sq.ft., One story, two bedroom, one-bath built in 1953, 0.4 acres; \$339,000.

28271 Harmony Rd., Sweet Home; 1257 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 1965, 0.84 acres; \$415,000.

611 3rd Ave., Sweet Home; 1148 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two-bath built in 1997, 0.15 acres; \$339,000.



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Remembering twins who shared life, death together

By John Dekhane
For Lebanon Local

In war, there are stories of heroism, sacrifice and loss, but few are as heartbreaking as the tale of Pvt. Calvin G. Jennings and Pvt. Alvin J. Jennings.

Twin brothers from Lebanon, Calvin and Alvin were more than just siblings – they were inseparable, bound by a love and devotion that transcended everything else. They were born together, lived together and, ultimately, died for their country within weeks of each other. Their story is one of undying brotherhood, a bond so deep that, even in death, they remained united.

Born on May 11, 1925, Calvin and Alvin were the beloved sons of James “Jim” and Katherine “Etta” Jennings. When the boys were six months old, the family moved to Lebanon where the twins spent their childhood in the close-knit community. Like most twins, they had an extraordinary connection, an unspoken understanding that only they could share. They attended Lebanon Union High School, where they were known for their kindness, humor and unwavering loyalty to one another. Everyone who met them could see that they

were more than just brothers – they were best friends, always side by side.

As they grew, so did their sense of responsibility. In 1943, at 18 years old, both Calvin and Alvin married young women named Margaret – Calvin to Margaret J. Fairbanks and Alvin to Margaret C. Smith. Their happiness, however, was short-lived. A few months after their weddings, they made the decision to enlist in the U.S. Army, determined to defend the country they loved. Their bond was as strong as ever, but for the first time in their lives, war would separate them.

Calvin and Alvin crossed the Atlantic to join the fight against tyranny. Calvin was assigned to the 137th Infantry Regiment, 35th Infantry Division, and found himself battling German forces in France. Meanwhile, Alvin joined the 361st Infantry Regiment, 91st Infantry Division, and was sent to Italy, fighting in the brutal Italian Campaign. Despite the distance between them, they never stopped writing to each other. Their letters were filled with reassurance, encouragement and hope. But on July 18, 1944, Calvin’s letters suddenly stopped. That was the day



Photo provided by John Dekhane

Pvts. Calvin and Alvin Jennings flank their father, James Jennings in this photo taken in the early 1940s.

he was killed in action near Saint-Lô, Normandy.

For weeks, Alvin clung to hope, telling himself Calvin was simply too busy to write. But when the dreaded news arrived, it was as if a part of him had died, too. His brother – his other half – was gone. Yet Alvin pressed on, throwing himself into battle with renewed determination, as if fighting for both of them. A few weeks later, on October 9, 1944, Alvin met the same tragic fate near Livergnano, Italy. The bond they shared in life had followed them into death.

Their parents were dev-

astated. No words could describe their grief. They had lost not one son, but two – their twin boys, gone forever. The weight of their sorrow followed them for the rest of their lives. Etta passed away on July 2, 1957, never fully recovering from the loss of her sons. Jim lived until April 2, 1968, carrying the pain of their deaths to his final days.

Today, the Jennings twins rest 700 miles from each other – Calvin at the Normandy American Cemetery in France, his grave overlooking the cliffs of Omaha Beach, surrounded by 9,387 fellow fallen soldiers, and Alvin at

the Florence American Cemetery in Italy, among 4,393 American heroes who never returned home. Though separated in life, they are now part of two of the most sacred grounds in the world, resting among brothers in arms.

Their story is not just one of war – it is a story of love, sacrifice and an unbreakable bond that even death could not sever. Lebanon must never forget its sons, Calvin and Alvin Jennings – two brothers who lived for each other, fought for their country and died thousands of miles away from home. Their names should be spoken with reverence, their sacrifice honored not just in cemeteries across the ocean, but in the hearts of those who cherish freedom. They were more than soldiers; they were two halves of a whole, bound together in life, in war and in death. We owe them more than remembrance – we owe them our voices to carry their story, our hearts to honor their sacrifice, and our promise that their names will never fade from history.

**John Dekhane writes tribute articles dedicated to World War II fallen heroes and submitted this piece for Lebanon Local readers.*

SCHOOL BOARD

From page 7

Board Chair Tom Oliver inquired about funding.

“Several of the larger projects are paid for by grants, but due to the diligent work of Steven Proski, a lot of these projects are included in the general fund budget,” Lewis said. “He has managed the school budget a little more efficiently.”

The board unanimously approved the 2025-26 budget, with Proski noting that finances remain on track. A high school-built home under contract is set to close next week at list price, breaking even after expenses.

Wellness Fair, Graduation

The Sources of Strength Wellness Fair, held at Pioneer School, connected over 300 members of the public with resources including health care, mental health, addiction services, housing, and parenting.

The free event featured over 70 vendors from Lebanon, Corvallis, and Sweet Home, offering hamburgers, a kid zone, ice cream, a DJ, swag bags, and T-shirts. Sponsors included Lebanon Community Pool, Linn County Public Health, and Boys and Girls Club, Lebanon Foursquare church, Chef Rick’s Global Kitchen and Cafe

Rock among others.

“We also want to recognize the high school’s JROTC that stole the show with setup, tear down, and traffic control,” said Supt. Jennifer Meckley.

Lebanon High School’s graduation celebrated 283 seniors, who participated in a cap-and-gown walk through elementary schools, greeted by cheering students who presented the seniors with handmade cards.

“This was the first year we did not have the stadium for graduation, and the team put in a tremendous amount of work to make it not only memorable but beautiful,” Meckley said, praising the facilities team who had to put together a new setup with the stadium being out of commission.

Board Transitions

The board approved Cade Webber and Addy Pickles as new student representatives to the board, unanimously.

Outgoing student board members Eric Natterer, Hannah Savedra, and Finley Vandiver were honored with Amazon gift cards.

“It’s been so fun being here, I have learned so much,” said Savedra, presenting school happenings for the last time, which included mentions of two high school wrestlers, senior heavyweight Isaac Jordan

and sophomore 175-pounder Grady Cox, heading to Greece, and of course, graduation.

Natterer added: “I want to thank you all for this opportunity. I have learned a lot. I think now I kind of want to go into education.”

Oliver and Board Member Aubree Molina, both stepping down, received gifts of plants and engraved Bulova clocks.

“To honor your time you served, we gave each a clock with some engraving and dates of service there,” Meckley said. “We do really appreciate the time you put in to serve our students and district.”

Oliver reflected: “Thank you, it’s been a lot of fun over the last eight years. It’s been a privilege to serve and to witness a lot of great growth in our district. We have a fantastic leadership team, and I am excited for what the future holds.”

Board member Nichole Piland thanked the student representatives, saying, “Thank you to Eric, Hannah, and Finley, who is not here. It’s been pretty exciting to watch something so new to us unfold, and I think you have set the bar.”

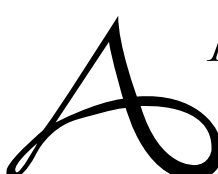
Board Member Clyde Rood also thanked Oliver and Molina.

Additional Updates

The board renewed the facil-

ity advisory committee and the HR report noted strong staff retention, with only four of 14 positions left to hire for 2025-26, down from 27 last year. “Looking back over past history, this is the lowest amount we have ever had to hire,” said HR representative Kim Groubeck. “This goes to show our retention rate is growing.”

A new Success and Belonging Committee, an equity committee mandated by Senate Bill 732, has 15 staff and family members apply, with more recruitment planned for August. “My anticipation is there will be a core group and subcommittees,” Meckley said, highlighting focus areas like disability rights and race.




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Inaugural Willamette Valley Powwow draws crowd to Lebanon

By Chelly Bouferrache
For Lebanon Local

Lebanon's first Willamette Valley Powwow, a lively celebration of Native American culture, drew a considerable and enthusiastic crowd to the Boulder Falls Event Center on May 31.

Organized by the Native American Education Program of the Lebanon Community School District, the event brought together dancers, drummers, elders and families from tribes across the region.

Attendees from around the state filled the venue, wearing traditional regalia, playing Native drums and sharing cultural pride through song, dance, food and art.

"This powwow was a dream come true for our Native community here in Lebanon," said Laurie Regalado, powwow coordinator and district Native

American education facilitator.

"We hoped for a good turnout, but we were absolutely blown away by the support. It shows how much this community values and wants to experience Native culture."

The event featured performances by the host drum, Dustin Harmon of Bad Soul, and the honor drum, Turquoise Pride, led by James Thinn. The emcee was Bob Tom and the arena director, who controls the protocols on the floor, was Kieran Hill.

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Color Guard and the Native American Cultural Association from Flagstaff added ceremonial honor, while day drums like Healing Spirit and Aztec dancers from Maya also entertained the audience.

The powwow also honored

graduating Native seniors from Lebanon High School – Kimora Martinez, Grayson Farr and Carlo Villafana Garcia.

More than 50 vendors were present at the inaugural event, offering food, beads, Native American jewelry, ribbon skirts and art, showcasing local craftsmanship and cuisine.

Regalado indicated the strong attendance fostered a deep sense of unity.

"The unity, pride and joy felt throughout the day will stay with us always," she said.

Regalado thanked sponsors like the Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Fund, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and local businesses, along with the Lebanon school district and numerous volunteers.

The success of the event



Photo by Chelly Bouferrache
Tribal members visit together while gathered around a drum. See more photos at lebanonlocalnews.com.

has organizers hoping to plan a larger powwow for 2026.

"We've already outgrown our venue," Regalado said. "We dreamed of this becoming a two- to three-day event in a larger space, and after Saturday (May 31), it's clear that dream is within reach."

For more information, contact Regalado at laurie.regalado@lebanon.k12.or.us.

ROADSHOW

From page 6

cornbread and the Smoked Jalapeno Bacon Mac N Cheese. Brittany also offered a specialty dessert for the show – and a nod to Lebanon's Strawberry Festival – a giant strawberry sweet roll.

Valentine got to sample it all.

"It was amazing," Valentine said. "For me, personally, it was the best brisket I've ever had."

But, she said, if she had to choose between the brisket and ribs, it was the ribs that had a "slight edge."

"It had a crispness on the outside," she said. "The brisket was great, but I feel like having the real crunch along with the juiciness was kind of what set (the ribs) ahead."

Valentine also raved about the potato salad, jalapeno bacon mac and cheese, and honey butter.

While filming took place, locals and friends from hours away stopped in for lunch and to show support for the Poteets.

Show Producer Ashley Dawn said it's not uncommon for a restaurant's "super fans" to come a long distance to support good food and family business.

The film crew talked with Kaitlyn in the kitchen as she cooked up one of the featured menu items, then later sat down with Joe and Christina to learn about the family's journey through the world of barbecued food, operating a food business and winning competitions across the country.

Recent awards include multiple first-place ribeye

steaks with the Steak Cookoff Association and numerous Top 10 awards in the Kansas City Barbecue Society, Pacific Northwest Barbecue Association, Steak Cookoff Association and the Outlaw BBQ Association.

It's not all about barbecue for the family, though. J&C is making plans to expand its next door location into a bakery (what they term "cakery and confections") in order to showcase Brittany's skills while also offering the community something it wants. Expected to open by summer's end, the addition will be called Simply Crumbs.

Also, Joe currently has three rubs out in the market, and he plans to grow that foothold more through trade shows.

Christina said the experience with America's Best Roadshow was "amazing," and the film team made her feel comfortable throughout the process. She particularly enjoyed watching her "introvert" daughter, Kaitlyn, "come out of her bubble" while showing the host what she does in the kitchen.

The production team will need a couple of months to edit the show before it can be premiered on the restaurant's Facebook page, ABR's Facebook page, ABR's YouTube channel, and ABR's website (americasbestrestaurants.com). J&C BBQ's Facebook page will announce when the show will premiere.

"The whole experience itself was a positive one," Christina said.



Photo by Sarah Brown
Roadshow host Amanda Valentine, third from left, shows the camera a plate of ribs served at J&C BBQ while restaurant owners Joe and Christy Poteet, at left, conduct an on-camera interview. At right is cameraman Nick Mammone.

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