

Lebanon High School in the running for \$1 million prize

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

Lebanon Warriors and fans beyond city borders are rallying together to help push Lebanon High School into the end zone for a trophy made up of \$1 million in homefield upgrades and other prizes.

It was announced on Sept. 25 that the high school is among 25 nationwide semi-finalists in the running for a grand prize of homefield and weight room upgrades, and it is the only Oregon school up for the win.

T-Mobile launched its Friday Night 5G Lights Competition in mid-July and awarded school district applicants with \$5,000 prizes every week until mid-September. LHS did not win a \$5,000 prize, but the student body learned their school made it into the semi-finalist round, which comes with a \$25,000 prize.

T-Mobile hosted the school's Oct. 3 game against the Bend Lava Bears at Heath Stadium, where attendees were handed pink T-shirts and other swag, leading to a sea of pink at the



Photo by Sarah Brown

School district, high school staff, students and T-Mobile representatives cheer as a \$25,000 check is handed over during the halftime game on Oct. 3.

game (Lebanon won 54-35). During halftime, the \$25,000 check was handed over by T-Mobile representatives.

The \$1 million grand prize winner will be the school with the most votes, so the Lebanon Community School Dis-

trict is asking its community to show their support by entering their vote daily through Oct. 24. Instructions on how to do that are at the end of this story.

Since voting kicked off on Sept. 25, LHS has held steady

in second place behind Dierks High School, a rural Arkansas school that has been dominating the field.

The winner, to be announced Oct. 30, will receive

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City Council hears solar power options to reduce city's electric bill

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

During the past several months, City of Lebanon staff have been researching the feasibility of building solar panels to alleviate rising electric costs to the city's bill.

During a work session with City Council on the matter on Sept. 24, the council heard a variety of options they may want to consider.

According to Community Development Director Kelly Hart, the city pays \$907,000 in electricity costs a year through Pacific Power. Additionally, in the past four years, Pacific Power rates have increased by more than 50%.

"Almost a million dollars annually is a big chunk of change to pay for electricity costs, and a 57% rate increase

See Solar, Page 11



Photo courtesy of Ken Bolf

Kelly Reetz cooks up a batch of peanut brittle in this 2009 photo.

A sticky situation: Locals seek community's help for Lebanon candy maker's facility woes

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

When the roof over Victorian Chocolate's candy shop collapsed, it left not only a hole in the ceiling, but also a hole in the community. Now his customers are asking for the community's help to

patch it up.

Production at Lebanon's own confectionary shop came to a grinding halt last May when the roof gave way during a rather large rain-storm.

Owner Kelly Reetz had been cooking in the building all

day, but he wasn't there when the accident happened.

"It happened overnight, which was very fortuitous," he said. "The collapse was right over where my cookers were."

Victorian Chocolate is

See Candy Maker, Page 9

INSIDE



MASTER GARDENERS CELEBRATE TOMATOES PAGE 8



LOCAL SCOUT RESTORES NATURE PATH AT HAMILTON CREEK PAGE 11



MIDDLE-SCHOOLERS PITCH IN THEIR IDEAS FOR HEATH STADIUM PAGE 16



Chief: Simultaneous fires illustrate LFD staffing challenges

A pair of fires in the early evening of Sept. 21 demonstrate problems that Lebanon Fire District faces with limited staffing, Chief Joe Rodondi said in a statement issued following the incidents.

Calls reporting the first fire, at 5:36 p.m. in the 400 block of Morton Street, followed two minutes later by another in the 3400 block of Bald Eagle Drive, forced the district to call in reinforcements from other agencies, LFD said.

The battalion chief arriving at Morton Street found a single-family dwelling with heavy fire to the detached garage and impinging on a fence and second structure. Neighbors and one of Leb-

anon's volunteer firefighters tried to control the fire with a garden hose.

As the incident commander walked up to the building to continue the survey, he was informed by bystanders of someone still in the residence. The first due engine was just arriving after diverting from a different 911 medical call that happened minutes before the fire was reported.

Crews got dressed and were making their way to the front door when the lone occupant walked out without injury, LFD said.

Firefighters then changed gear from rescue-mode to attacking the blaze as LFD's BLS medic unit arrived and began performing a com-

plete search of the building.

As crews battled the blaze, a ladder truck from Lebanon arrived with off-duty firefighters and a volunteer firefighter, and were assigned to the neighboring residence that had fire impinging on it, melting the siding.

Those firefighters had to force open the locked door with tools to make access and search the house for any occupants or fire extension.

While the Morton Street blaze was unfolding, the incident commander on Bald Eagle arrived to find a garage fire that had already spread into the attic and destroyed two vehicles. By the time four firefighters reached the scene in a truck diverted from Morton Street, the garage roof on Bald Eagle had collapsed and flames were spreading into the home. For nearly 10 minutes, that single four-person crew was the only unit battling the fire until reinforcements arrived.

The incident commander called for a second alarm immediately upon arrival on Bald Eagle, requesting additional resources from Lebanon's neighboring departments due to the simul-



Photos provided by LFD

Firefighters finish mopping up at a house fire on Morton Street.

DEATH NOTICES

Dale Eugene Brown, 72, formerly of Lebanon, passed away Sept. 16, 2025, after a battle with colon cancer.

No services have been announced.

Weddle Funeral Service is handling the arrangements.

Ned Gilman Brown, 78, of Lebanon, passed away at his home on Sept. 25, 2025, surrounded by his beloved wife and children.

A celebration of life will be planned for next summer at his favorite park. Details to come later.

Tommy Dale Daniels, 78, of Lebanon, passed away at his home, on Sept. 18, 2025, after a 2-year battle with cancer.

No services have been announced.

Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Janice James, 76, of Lebanon, passed away on Sept. 21, 2025.

No services have been announced.

Weddle Funeral Service is handling the arrangements.

Dianne Ruth Larsen, 75, of Lebanon, passed away Aug. 29, 2025.

Sweet Home Funeral Chapel handled the arrangements.

Oren Dale Pracht, 94, of Lebanon, passed away at home with his wife by his side.

No services have been announced.

Huston-Jost Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Ricardo Ramirez Vargas, 63, recently of Lebanon, passed away Oct. 3, 2025.

No services have been announced.

Weddle Funeral Service is handling the arrangements.

taneous fires.

Support arrived from Sweet Home, Scio, Brownsville, Tangent, Halsey, and Harrisburg fire agencies. Lebanon Police, PP&L, and NW Natural also assisted. Despite the scale of the incidents, no injuries were reported, and both fires remain under investigation by the Lebanon Fire Investigation Team.

At the time of these calls, Lebanon Fire District had only 10 career firefighters on duty to protect the entire

community, LFD reported. When the Morton Street fire was dispatched, one ambulance was already on a medical emergency, leaving only eight firefighters immediately available.

Within minutes, those limited crews were split between two working fires. At Morton Street, just two firefighters were able to begin fire attack and potential rescue operations, while at Bald Eagle Drive, four firefighters faced a fully involved garage

See Fires, Page 15



Photo provided by LFD

An aerial view shows the extent of land burned in a field fire.

Fire burns two acres on KGAL Drive

Lebanon Fire District was dispatched to a first-alarm fire in the 36000 block of KGAL Drive at approximately 4:48 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 28.

On arrival, the first engine encountered a slow moving, two acre fire in a harvested field with several vehicles at risk.

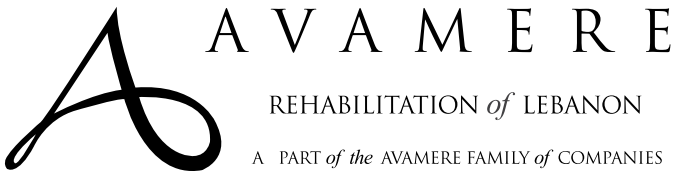
Flames near the cars were attacked, which prevented

damage and stopped the fire from spreading toward an abandoned barn. Working with a farmer's water truck, crews knocked down the fire and established control lines. They put in a thick wet line around the burn area to secure the perimeter, and secured areas near a burn pile.

The fire was contained to 2.4 acres without damage to


vehicles or nearby structures. Crews remained on scene for about an hour to ensure the fire was fully extinguished.

The Linn County Fire Defense Board has extended the countywide burn ban until Oct. 15. Backyard burning is not permitted during this time. Once the ban is lifted, call the Linn County Burn Line at 541-451-1904 for daily restrictions.



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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. Addresses provided generally denote the location of the incident or arrest, occasionally indicating the origin of the call. Incident details, which may not always be available from agencies in time for publication in our weekly paper edition, are often updated online at lebanonlocalnews.com as information becomes available. Also, due to space limitations in our paper editions, content may be restricted to the most recent information, and a more extensive version of the Public Safety Report will be available at lebanonlocalnews.com.

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); 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).

Oct. 8

3:14 a.m. - Mateas Williams, 22, of Lebanon, cited for speeding, 85/55.

7:35 a.m. - Steven David Willert, 59, taken into custody on Oregon State Parole Board warrant.

9:19 a.m. - Caller reported someone attempted to light a fire, 800 block S Main St. Officer found several cardboard boxes and a rubber mat damaged from apparent fire.

10:24 a.m. - James McCoy, 23, of Lebanon, cited for trespass, third-degree theft, 37600 block Middle Ridge Dr. Cited and released. Report taken.

11:13 a.m. - Caller reported barefoot subject walking backward on the fog line, waving, flailing, appears to be under the influence, 500 block Cascade Dr.

11:47 a.m. - Todd B. Swanson, 21, cited for failure to maintain lane, 1100 block

Park St.

1:40 p.m. - Road work flagger reported subject throwing dog poop at him with a shovel, 1400 block S 2nd St. Subject admitted to tossing poop into flower beds and being frustrated with caller being on her property.

4:33 p.m. - Caller reported theft of porch chair, 3200 block Oak Terrace Dr. Loss valued at \$300.

5:52 p.m. - Female who intentionally overdosed on medications transported by medics to hospital. 35200 block Richardson Gap Rd. Report taken.

6:11 p.m. - Christopher Walter, 45, of Lebanon, arrested on multiple outstanding warrants, contempt of court. 31100 block Kay St. Lodged in Linn County Jail. Report taken.

8:12 p.m. - Angela M. Ricker, 45, cited for driving while suspended and AMC warrant for

contempt of court.

9:06 p.m. - Kasey Elizabeth Carpenter, 35, cited for driving while suspended and no insurance, Market St./S Santiam Hwy.

10:18 p.m. - Whitney Reen Montgomery, 39 cited for driving while suspended and LMC warrant for probation violation.

11:07 p.m. - Caller reported theft of bike while he was helping someone with their car, 400 block Tangent St. Christian James Coleman, 26, taken into custody on LMC warrant for probation violation and LCCC warrant for probation violation.

Oct. 7

2:31 a.m. - Caller reported her ex trespassing on her property, 37200 block James Place. Male trespassed from the property and will be arrested if he returns.

2:33 a.m. - Mitchell Gene Melbye, 45, cited on LMC warrant for rubbish and LCJC warrant for trespassing.

8:45 a.m. - Logan Rosenbaum, 19, of Lebanon, cited for criminal trespass while in possession of a firearm, 42200 block McDowell Creek Dr. Report taken.

9:16 a.m. - Caller reported subject in a tree with a guitar at 44 North Credit Union. Subject thought bank was closed on Sundays; he was informed it was a Tuesday.

12:13 p.m. - Jesse Temple, 18, cited for failure to carry

proof of insurance, 000 block E Airport Rd.

1:42 p.m. - James Jenks, 29, cited for driving while suspended, 1100 block S Main St.

4:24 p.m. - Alfredo Mendoza-Garcia, 30, cited for driving without a license and no insurance, Walker Rd./S 12th St.

6:02 p.m. - Theft reported at convenience store, 100 block Central Ave.

Oct. 6

2:28 p.m. - Possible fraud reported in 36800 block Rock Hill Dr. Report taken.

7:22 a.m. - Officers respond to reports of female breaking a window, disturbance at another house, female with machete, and fire, 100 block S Williams St. Tunisha Coleman, 43, detained, charged with arson I and reckless endangerment.

8:15 a.m. - Caller reported fraudulent \$20 bills found at Lebanon Market.

1:09 p.m. - Police speak to parents of juveniles after seeing video of the vandalizing pre-K play structure at Pioneer Elementary.

3:01 p.m. - Caller reported fraudulent activity after receiving virtual online-deposit-only check from someone they met on Tik Tok.

4:00 p.m. - Kelvin Atteberry cited on LMC warrant for probation violation - driving while suspended

6:16 p.m. - Caller reported theft of tools from truck while shopping at O'Reilly Auto

Parts. Loss valued at \$1,400. Video surveillance of theft turned over to police.

7:13 p.m. - Caller reported yelling at a house, 500 block W Rose St. Resident said daughter was throwing a fit because they took away her phone.

8:37 p.m. - Nathaniel Lee Maddox, 26, cited for driving while suspended, S 7th St./Walker Rd.

9:46 p.m. - Caller reported theft of child's air pods while at Seven Oak School.

Oct. 5

1:45 a.m. - Deputy provided traffic control as vehicle was removed from ditch in area of Denny School Rd./Oak St.

3:03 a.m. - Dangelo Ramon Loggin, 34, cited for driving while suspended, 000 block E Airport Rd.

1:10 p.m. - Caller reported theft of bike from 200 block Gilbert St. Value \$200. Investigation ongoing. Report taken.

3:59 p.m. - Caller reported receiving scam call in which threats were made, 30600 block Westview Dr.

7:23 p.m. - Albert L. Mitchell, 69, cited for driving uninsured, Franklin/Milton Sts.

8:02 p.m. - Gabriel Bruce Buckner, 27, cited for driving while suspended and driving uninsured, S 5th/E Sts.

9:23 p.m. - Carmen Alvaro Flores-Juarez, 36 cited for driving uninsured, E Carolina/Park Sts.

See Public Safety, Page 4

CIRCUIT COURT

Warrants are out on the following individuals: Omar Edgar Arroyo, Kiah Brooke Bearden-Coxen, Jonathan Edward Betar, Christina Marie Cash, Austin Shane Conner, Steven Michael Cooley, Selina Renee Ford-Blackburn, Steven Edward Grimm, Aaron Thomas Halvorson, Robert Edwin Hoskinson, Devin Michael Houseman, Bruce Clifton Kelly, Faron Walter Kennedy, Alan Kenneth Kilmer, Caden Jason Scotty King, Brent Jay Klient, Andrew Donald LeGore, Mikel Vincent Lizama, Christopher James Lloyd, Mainor Misael Lucas-Velasquez, John Andrew Mance, Heather Dawn Meeks, Matthew Kincaid Nelson, 25CR50614Daniel Ryan Salo, Rosemary O. Saviour, Donald Shane Simmons, Brandi Lynn Trelstad, Harley Dixie Dean Tinker Vader, Joshua Webb, Darnell T. Wells, Jessica Ashley Wynne

Jeramy Wesley Babb, 51, charged Oct. 6 with two counts of failure to report as a sex offender.

Juan Felipe Barajas-Ledezma, 26, placed in diver-

sion program after pleading no contest to DUII (controlled substances) and reckless driving.

Russell Andrew Barber, 45, charged Oct. 3 with DV assault IV and criminal mistreatment I.

Deanna Marie Brown, 40, charged Sept. 30 with identity theft.

Tunisha Ann Coleman, 43, charged Oct. 7 with arson I, criminal mischief II and two counts of recklessly endangering another person. Bail set at \$25,000.

August Brent Collins Jr., 47, charged Oct. 6 with two counts of stalking.

Matthew Timothy Cook, 31, charged Sept. 25 with fleeing or attempting to elude, reckless driving and FTA.

Charges against **Jack Edward Counts II, 36,** of unauthorized use of a vehicle, offensive littering and disorderly conduct II were dismissed with prejudice.

Ethaniel E. Delk, 21, charged Sept. 24 with DUII (liquor).

Robert Grant Hodson, 30, sentenced Sept. 22 to 100

mos. with the Oregon Dept. of Corrections and 20 years post-prison supervision after pleading no contest to sodomy I. Two counts of rape I and two additional counts of sodomy I were dismissed.

Cody William Kledzinski, 28, placed in diversion program after pleading guilty to DUII (liquor).

Fritz Henry Lutje, 48, sentenced Oct. 8 to 30 days jail, 36 mos. supervised probation and a \$200 fine after pleading guilty to online sexual corruption of a child II. A luring a minor charge was dismissed.

Jesse James Marquez, 29, charged Oct. 6 with burglary II, two counts of criminal mischief II, disorderly conduct II, unlawful entry into motor vehicle, resisting arrest, assaulting a public safety officer, aggravated harassment and attempted assault II.

Brian Kyle Perry, 39, charged Sept. 22 with DUII (liquor).

Melinda Sue Rickard, 53, placed in diversion program after pleading no contest to DUII (liquor) with a .05% BAC. **Michael Anthony Rivers,**

33, sentenced Sept. 19 to 60 days jail and 36 mos. supervised probation after pleading guilty to attempt to commit a Class B felony - sexual abuse I. A coercion charge was dismissed.

Shingy Robert Shineachi, 18, sentenced Oct. 3 to eight days jail, 18 mos. bench probation and \$7,000 restitution after pleading no contest to unauthorized use of a vehicle and FTA.

David John Slack, 42, charged Sept. 25 with kidnapping I, two counts of DV strangulation, DV assault IV, and two counts of criminal mischief II.

Cody Alexander Tilson, 32, sentenced Sept. 23 to 13 mos. with the Oregon Dept. of Corrections, three years post-prison supervision and a \$200 fine after pleading no contest to encouraging child sexual abuse I. A second count of the same charge was dismissed.

Treyontae Eugene Trask, 21, charged Sept. 25 with luring a minor and sexual abuse III. Bail set at \$5,000.

Troy Steven Williamson, 24, sentenced Oct. 6 to 70

mos. with the Oregon Dept. of Corrections and three years post-prison supervision after pleading no contest to robbery II. Charges of theft III and assault IV were dismissed.

Crossword KEY

Puzzle on page 4

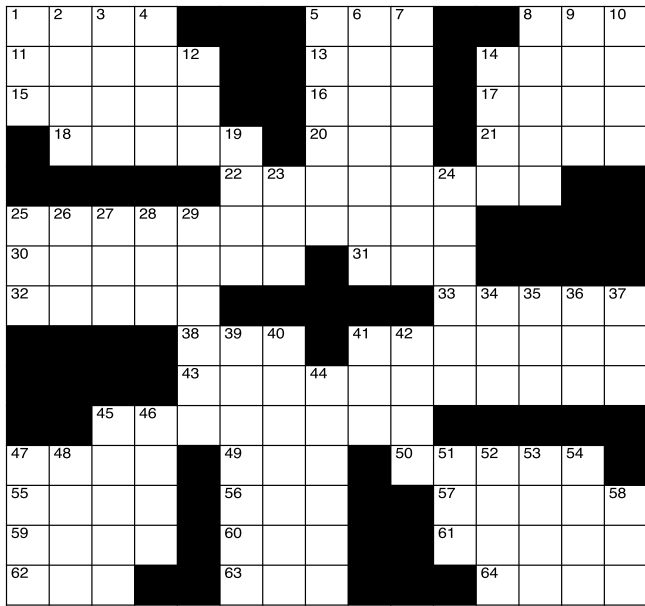
A	R	A	B		C	P	A		A	S	H					
L	O	G	I	A		A	R	T	O	B	E	Y				
A	C	H	E	D		N	A	E	T	E	R	M				
A	A	R	O	N		N	I	L	S	T	A	N				
						E	M	E	R	I	T	U	S			
D	A	V	E	C	O	U	L	I	E	R						
E	L	E	G	A	N	T		E	R	A						
C	L	E	O	N				V	E	G	A	N				
						A	P	T	T	R	E	M	O	L	O	
						R	E	U	P	H	O	L	S	T	E	R
						O	D	Y	S	S	E	Y	S			
A	L	A	E		E	S	P		S	A	B	E	R			
T	A	K	A		T	O	P		A	I	L	E	D			
T	I	E	D		A	C	E		R	A	B	B	I			
U	R	N			S	K	R		S	A	S	S				

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



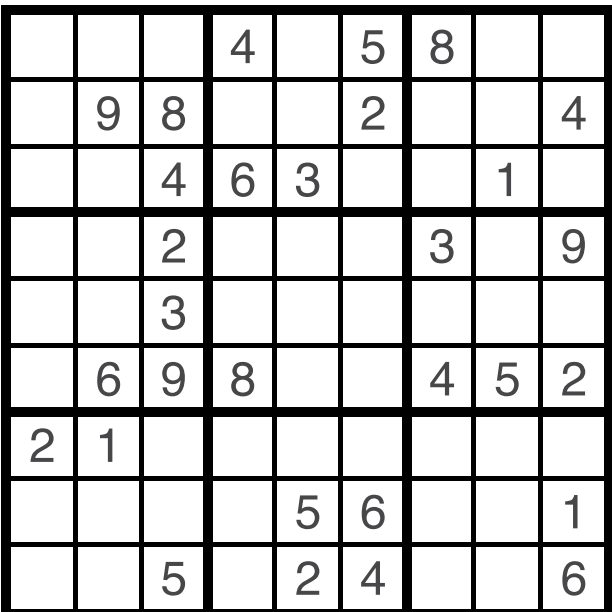
CLUES ACROSS

- 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. Assist
- 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

Phase one for Cheadle Lake Park to begin soon

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

Improvements to Cheadle Lake Park are expected to begin in early November, it was announced during the City Council meeting on Oct. 8.

This past July, the City Council awarded a CM/GC contract to Knife River Corporation - Northwest for park improvements at Cheadle Lake Park. The full redesign of the park includes restrooms, walkways, improved parking and ADA features, with an added vision to build a large stage.

The contract was for a pre-construction phase, and it soon became apparent the cost to build the stage would go beyond the city's budget. City Manager Ron Whitlatch said the city only has about \$5.2 million to spend on this project. Those funds came from two grants development funds.

In order to continue the project forward and begin construction this fall, the city carved out phases to the project - a strategy designed to make sure the city stays within the appropriated funding by going through Guarantees

Maximum Price Amendments.

Phase one, or "GMP Amendment No. 1," at \$1.2 million, includes widening Weirich Drive, constructing a multi-use path along the frontage of Weirich Drive, installing utility stub-outs to the park, and final paving of Weirich Drive.

Phase two (GMP Amendment No. 2) includes parking lot paving, ADA path construction throughout the park, restroom installation, utility installation, and access road construction to the future stage area.

The council approved Amendment No. 1, and the second amendment will be brought before the council in a couple of months.

In other business, the council:

- Heard from Julie Jackson, of Republic Services, who presented the company's annual ask to raise service rates based on the Consumer Price Index, disposal and fuel costs. The council approved a resolution allowing Republic Services to raise rates by 2.4%, which amounts to an increase of .64 to \$1.04 per month. Jackson also informed the council

that the four recycling events held in east Linn County only serve about five customers, so the company would like to consolidate them down to two events.

- Approved a resolution adopting the 2025 Linn County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.

- Approved an ordinance amending Lebanon's municipal code regarding public contracts. More specifically, the change eliminates fixed dollar amounts that define purchasing limits and replaces it with dollar amounts set in Oregon Legislature's ORS.

- Authorized a transfer of appropriations for the 2024-2025 budget to cover expenditures related to collective bargaining agreements, benefit changes and other unanticipated expenditures.

Authorized a transfer of appropriations as the Urban Renewal Agency Committee to cover expenditures for personnel time working on infrastructure and traffic projects, and materials and services related to URD boundary lines and new furniture at the Lebanon Senior Center.

PUBLIC SAFETY

From page 3

10:10 p.m. - Kristy Lynn Burns, 48, cited for driving while suspended, IID violation and LMC warrant for probation violation.

Oct. 4

5:45 a.m. - Truck crashed into median on railroad tracks, Hiatt/E A Sts. David J. Padilla, 18, taken into custody and transported to Justice Center.

4:48 p.m. - Caller reported juveniles threw shopping cart into canal, 600 block Mountain River Dr.

5:34 p.m. - Caller reported theft of energy drinks and deli items from Safeway.

7:43 p.m. - Caller reported intoxicated subject with guitar undressing in alley downtown, 600 block S Main St. He told callers he was security and they needed to leave. Then said he was a gangster and he would fight them.

Then did wall push ups. One caller pepper-sprayed the subject. Nicholas T. Wells, 33, trespassed for life.

8:12 p.m. - Shania Little Sims, 27, cited on AMC warrant for contempt of court, Benton County Circuit Court warrant for FTA on original charge of delivery of methamphetamine, and LMC warrant for FTA.

Oct. 3

7:13 p.m. - Firearms and firearms accessories seized for safekeeping, 000 block N. 2nd St. The items were left in the possession of the caller after a breakup and caller did not get hold of the owner. Report taken.

8:25 p.m. - Nathaniel James, 38, of Lebanon, arrested for harassment following report of disturbance in 30500 block Hazen Lane. According to LCSO, victim was pushed to the ground during the disturbance in which alcohol was a

factor. Lodged in Linn County Jail. Report taken.

11:14 p.m. - Thomas Harrington, 49, of Lebanon, cited for driving uninsured, failing to register vehicle, 30700 block Santiam Hwy.

Oct. 2

11:01 a.m. - Report of historical sexual abuse to child made to LCSO. 200 block Alder St. Investigation ongoing. Report taken.

11:05 a.m. - Savannah Day-Hanslovan, of Tangent, cited for LMC warrant for failure to appear in driving without license case, Waterloo Park, 31200 block 1st St., Waterloo.

8:33 p.m. - Keely Gomez, 20, of Lebanon, arrested on several outstanding warrants, 400 block Russell St. Report taken.

9:09 p.m. - Tanya Idencio, 50, of Lebanon, cited for outstanding warrants, 2200 block S. Santiam Hwy. Report taken.

Oct. 1

3:10 a.m. - Todd Greiner, 59, of Lebanon, cited for driving uninsured, driving without a license, 000 block Walker Rd.

8:09 a.m. - Crash reported in area of Bond Rd./Snow Peak Dr. According to LCSO, Vanai Prashasouk, 30, of Albany was driving a company van when he moved over to the side of the road to avoid a person riding an E-bike, who appeared to be swerving into the road. The van's tires went into the soft shoulder, causing the

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Holidays in the Park plans light show for Ralston

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

The wintery holiday season is going to be a little bit brighter this year as the community's volunteer angels have something new coming to light.

Holidays in the Park brings Christmas lights to Ralston Park and a parade through downtown every year, going "live" throughout the month of December. The event is fully run by a small group of volunteers - mainly Dala's Blue Angels, who work from October through January to coordinate, set up, maintain and tear down the lights.

"We do this for the community; we don't get paid a penny for this," said Dala Johnson, who's been spearheading the event for years. "Holidays in the Park, it has been my gift for 20-some years now."

This year they have large plans to add special entertainment to the show, specifically situated in that oddball square corner of grass on Maple Street.

"We've always been trying to

figure out what we can do with that corner to bring it to life," Johnson said.

Dave Madrus came up with the winning idea: a "mega" LED animated Christmas "tree." Two, in fact. So far, Holidays in the Park has purchased a 22-foot tree, and they are trying to raise the rest of the funds to purchase a larger, 39-foot tree.

For those familiar with former mayor Paul Aziz's annual Christmas light show on Sherman Street, they'll have a better idea of what to expect with these two mega trees. It's Aziz, in fact, who will help design the mega tree light show, which can be listened to on radio.

Spectators will be able to watch the two lighted trees and, presumably (maybe in the future), other decorations animate with a large spectrum of light designs.

"It's just gonna be a spectacular 'wow' this year," Johnson said about this season's event.

Although this is a volunteer-run event, the city will have to install cement pads to

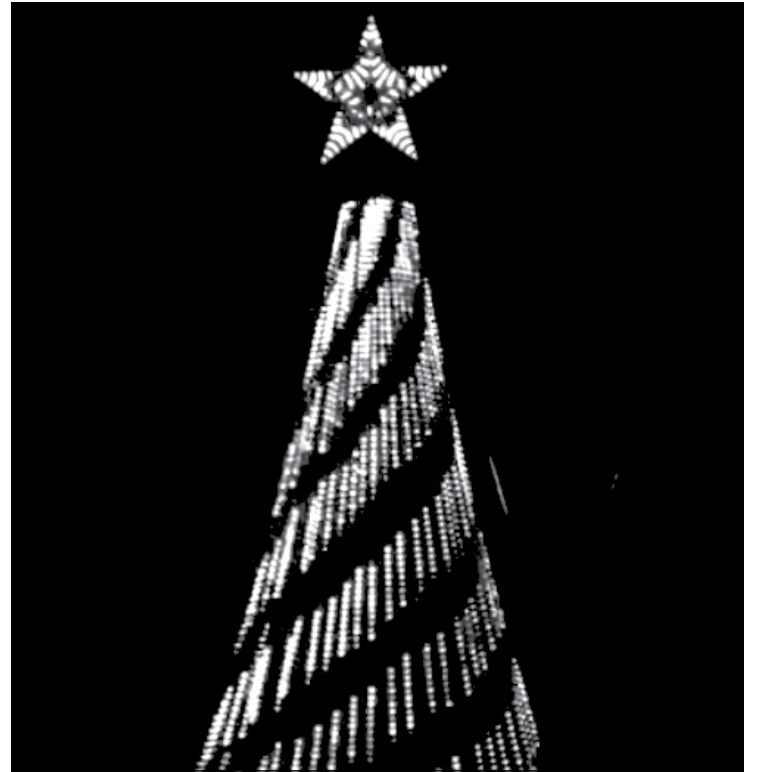
help secure the trees, which will only be on display during the holiday season. According to Johnson, the city is considering how to utilize the space when the trees aren't up.

As the Christmas season gets nearer, Johnson said they are still about \$4,000 shy of the funds needed for the larger tree. They already paid \$5,600 for the smaller tree, but the larger one costs \$15,000. Regardless, Holidays in the Park is going to make the two trees happen this year, "one way or another," Johnson said.

Funds for the trees are coming from business and individual sponsors.

"I do it because I love my community and I never had that growing up," Johnson said about the annual event. "I love seeing the look on kids' faces and adults' faces when they see those lights come on. It's heartwarming for me."

She believes the new trees will be a "really cool" addition to the community. After that, her next big goal is to get the



This lighted mega Christmas tree hints at what the Holidays in the Park crew envisions for Lebanon's Christmas season.

big tree at Academy Square lit for Christmas.

"(Holidays in the Park) is something we've been work-

ing for for years, and each year we try to improve something," Johnson said. "We want to have lasting memories for people."

Champion Mill property presents hurdles, potential for development

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

During a work session held prior to the regular City Council meeting on Sept. 10, city staff presented information about the former Champion Mill property and the potential for how it might be redeveloped.

Historically, the 49.76-acre site located northeast adjacent to Cheadle Lake was the site for a plywood mill, battery separator plant and paper company operated on the site, which exposed the land to potential contamination. About five acres west of the site, which was also part of the mill, is owned by a separate private party.

The property currently contains old concrete foundations and a water tower, as well as some wetlands.

According to Community Development Director Kelly Hart, the city is working with the property owner to develop analyses of the site. The city has used multiple grants for environmental assessments, planning and other analyses, which are still in progress. There are three levels of clean-up standards for testing according to what the property will be used for, with "residential" having the most stringent standards.

"We are doing all of our assessments to the highest standard because we're assuming

that there's going to be a mixed use of the site," Hart said.

Some of the test results identified formaldehyde, PAHs, metals, ORO, dioxins and furans, and PCP. No ground water issues were identified. Upcoming phases of the assessment include identifying how to clean up the various contaminations.

Hart noted current safety hazards on the site (fires, exposed rebar, vandalism); costs to the city and fire district for fires, crimes and cleanups; and the subpar property tax generated on the undeveloped land.

"It is also on Cheadle Lake, which is our crown jewel, our pride and joy right next to Cheadle Lake Park, so this is a great opportunity to be able to turn this into something great," she said.

Studies, funded by grants, are underway to determine traffic and market feasibility.

"We are doing these studies to sort of help put together the

guardrails to sort of identify this is what the property can bear," Hart said.

In other business, councilors:

- Heard the annual report from the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, presented by Ryan Vogt;
- Heard an update from the Lebanon Museum Foundation, presented by Paul Aziz;
- Heard an update from the Lebanon Downtown Association, presented by Shellie Jackola;
- Approved zoning and property line adjustments for a proposed car wash to be developed near Crocker's Cars;
- Declared the Santiam Travel Station as city-owned surplus;
- City Manager Ron Whitlatch informed the council the Lebanon Museum expressed interest in taking ownership of the totem pole, which has fallen into disrepair and is being stored in a warehouse.
- During a City Council



The Champion Mill property

meeting and work session held Aug. 27, the council:

- Authorized a road transfer agreement formalizing the city's jurisdictional boundaries where redevelopment on Wasom and Kees streets has been occurring.
- Approved an amendment to city code that will allow the city different ways it can go about selling surplus property.

Current code only allows for competitive bidding.

- Held a work session with a presentation by Sean Tate, of Tate Public Affairs, who handles legislative affairs on behalf of the city. He took a survey of the council to better understand legislative issues they want to focus on.
- Accepted the 2024 FY financial reports for the city and

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State assessments, more, delivered at School Board meeting

Lebanon School Board members heard reports on school progress and testing results at their monthly meeting Thursday, Oct. 9, in the Lebanon Library Conference Room.

Supt. Jennifer Meckley reported that state assessment tests results for the district were released the previous week.

According to the report, in Lebanon, 40.5% of students in all grades tested at or above grade level in English, 16.1% in math, and 22.8% did so in science. Lebanon's districtwide most recent scores represent either small decreases or are relatively unchanged over the past three years.

Overall, 39.1% of students in Lebanon schools tested at a proficiency level in English Language Arts in 2023-24, continuing a steady decline from 2017-18 when English proficiency was 49.5%. Seventh-graders scored the highest in English, at 46.1% proficiency.

Lebanon's district numbers include Sand Ridge Charter School.

District third-graders outperformed the state average for proficiency in English and

math, as well as the number of students who tested at or above the standards for their grade. District fourth-graders also did so in math.

Meckley said the district "really focused" on participation last year, encouraging students and their parents to do the testing.

We had, overall, pretty good participation in the test – some areas of really big celebrations and growth, and some areas that we're working on," she said.

Lebanon High School, in which only juniors were tested, had a 97.8% participation rate to lead the district in that area, and Hamilton Creek School was the highest among grade schools with 97.3% as a school, but all the district schools had at least a 90% participation rate, according to state data. Meckley noted that

Cascades School improved from 30.6% of students in English and 28.8% in math meeting or exceeding state benchmarks for their grade in 2023-24 to 40.0% in English and 38.7% in math, a 10% increase for both.

"There's been a lot of growth at Cascades," Meckley said. "Significant success



Photo by Scott Swanson

Lebanon School Board Chair Nichole Piland, center right, narrates a motivational video for Communications Director Michelle Steinhebel, right, aimed at encouraging the community to support the district's efforts to win the the T-Mobile Friday Night Lights contest that would provide \$1 million in stadium upgrades for Heath Stadium. From left are student representatives Addy Pickles, Cade Weber, and Board Members Lorlee Engler, Clyde Rood and Melissa Baurer.

there, which is great."

Test results are used to set goals for each school, she told board members, adding that the district also subjects students to "formative assessments" three times a year to get a more immediate picture of where students

are at and project their performance on the state tests. The district divides student achievement into five levels in math and four in English for elementary students to track how they are progressing.

The state test, she said, "is

a once-a-year test. It doesn't really give teachers data that helps day-to-day."

"Teachers need data every day," she said.

Meckley said she meets with administrators to dis-

See School Board, Page 13

HIGH SCHOOL

From page 1

\$1 million toward a homefield upgrade, consultation with a stadium expert, a weight room upgrade by Gronk Fitness, a tailgate party unveiling, and a trip for 16 school representatives to the SEC Championship game in Atlanta.

According to LCSD Director of Communications Michelle Steinhebel, much of the \$25,000 prize money will be set aside for improvements to the Heath Stadium facility.

Heath Stadium's 68-year-old grandstand was shut down from use earlier this year when an evaluation revealed "significant" deterioration and safety risks. William Lewis, the LCSD's chief operations officer, said the district is considering two options for replacement: a 9,800 square foot covered grandstand seating 1,700 persons at a cost of \$2,550,00, and a 12,600 square foot grandstand seating 2,100 persons costing \$3,220,000. Either would include a press box, but do not include restrooms or a concession stand.

If the school wins the \$1 million prize, that too will be set aside for Heath Stadium, which is used not only for football games, but also students and families who par-



Photo by Sarah Brown

Pink magenta confetti flies through the air as school and staff celebrate the high school's entry as a finalist in the T-Mobile Friday Nights 5G Lights competition.

ticipate in soccer, track, cheer and dance, band, JROTC, middle school and community teams (Pop Warner, Mid-Valley Rebels, etc.) and, of course, graduation ceremonies.

According to T-Mobile staff who made the announcement at the Sept. 25 pep rally, there were more than 2,000 entries. Of the 30 schools in Oregon that entered the contest this year, LHS is the only one in the state to make it this far.

According to a press release, T-Mobile's Friday Night 5G

Lights program is aimed toward "celebrating the power of high school football to bring communities together." Part of the contest involved sharing that community Warrior spirit by posting photos on social media.

To cast a vote for LHS to win the \$1 million prize, visit T-mobile.com/brand/friday-night-5g-lights/h and enter your email address. The community can return every day during the time period to cast another vote -- the more daily

votes, the higher the chance of winning.

For more information, visit T-mobile.com/brand/friday-night-5g-lights.

The other schools in the semifinalist round are:

Dexter Regional High School – Dexter, ME
Dierks High School – Dierks, AR
Escambia High School – Pensacola, FL
Exeter Union High School – Exeter, CA

Harrisonville High School – Harrisonville, MO

La Quinta High School – La Quinta, CA

Lakeland High School – Rathdrum, ID

Lebanon High School – Lebanon, OR

Loveland High School – Loveland, CO

Madison County High School – Madison, VA

Mishawaka High School – Mishawaka, IN

National Trail High School – New Paris, OH

New Auburn High School – New Auburn, WI

Newton High School – Newton, IA

Plattsmouth High School – Plattsmouth, NE

Pleasant Valley High School – Brodheadsville, PA

Princeville High School – Princeville, IL

River Oaks High School – Monroe, LA

Rosewood High School – Goldsboro, NC

Royalton High School – Royalton, MN

South Kitsap High School – Port Orchard, WA

Springwood School – Lanett, AL

Stockdale High School – Stockdale, TX

Sunray High School – Sunray, TX

Windham High School – Windham, NH

2025 Hall of Fame Inductees announced

Four Lebanon High School alumni have been selected as this year's inductees into the Bud and Dorothy Page Lebanon High School Alumni Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame recognizes LHS graduates who have made significant achievements in the fields of arts and entertainment, science and

medicine, business, humanitarian service and athletics.

It is intended to promote Lebanon pride, inspire students by highlighting the successes of those who've gone before them, and raise scholarships for the Bud Page Leadership Award.

This year's inductees are Carol Herron, Ben Masog,

Milt Moran and Dan Speasl. Read more about these inductees in the September and October issues of Lebanon Local.

This year's induction ceremony will be held Oct. 25 at the Boulder Falls Event Center. Tickets can be purchased at RKI Insurance, 1175 S. Main St.



Benjamin Masog
Class of 1992
Military Service

U.S. Navy Commander (Ret.) Ben Masog, Class of 1992, has been selected for induction into the Bud and Dorothy Page Lebanon High School Hall of Fame for his outstanding military achievements.

Following graduation from LHS, Masog attended Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Fla., earning a bachelor's degree in aeronautical science with a minor in meteorology, as well as certification as a commercial pilot. From there he enrolled in Navy

Officer Candidate School at Pensacola, Fla., graduating with honors in 1997.

Masog achieved recognition for excellence at every level of Navy pilot training. As an aircraft carrier pilot, he earned the best grades among all Prowler pilots and the overall best landing grades during initial Carrier Qualification.

He would go on to earn the title "Top Nugget" for achieving the highest landing grades among all first cruise pilots on the USS George Washington, and be named Squadron Landing Signal Officer (LSO), with responsibility for grading, evaluating and assisting pilots while landing on the aircraft carrier.

One of the highlights of Masog's military career was graduating from the Navy Fighter Weapons School Adversary Course (TOPGUN). Selection for this program is very competitive with only 1% of all active Navy pilots chosen each year. The TOPGUN program teaches advanced aerial combat flying skills and cutting-edge tactics. Masog was further singled out as one of

a small group hand chosen to train to be adversary/aggressor pilots who lead each flight event and provide instruction for the other fighter pilots in the class.

At his graduation flight, Masog was selected to be the lead pilot, a position traditionally awarded to the top performing adversary pilot.

In addition, Commander Masog also graduated from Electronic Attack Weapons School (PTI), mastering weapons and tactics utilizing computer and electronic technology, much of which is highly classified.

As a U.S. Navy pilot, Masog has flown more than 60 career combat missions over hostile territory while sustaining enemy fire, including numerous missions in defense of classified spy/surveillance planes.

Following retirement from the Navy in 2017, Masog now flies as a domestic and international pilot for FedEx, based out of Memphis, Tenn., where he lives with his wife Kate and son Nate.



Carol Herron
Class of 1963
Humanitarian Service

Carol Herron, Class of 1963, has been selected for induction into the Bud and Dorothy Page Lebanon High School Hall of Fame for humanitarian service based on her extensive volunteerism and leadership working with fragile and underserved populations in the Northwest.

Herron studied at Oregon State University, earning a bachelor of science degree in home economics education in 1967, and a master of science in home management (hous-

ing) in 1972. While her career encompassed a variety of positions, it all centered around helping families improve their situations.

Particularly notable was her work in Portland with newly-arrived Southeast Asian immigrants, teaching vital skills to help them transition to life in a new and very different culture.

Herron served in many professional and community leadership positions over the years, beginning as a Girl Scout leader in the 1960s, serving as president of the Oregon Consumer League in the 1970s, several leadership positions (including president) of the Oregon Home Economics Association, and serving on the Portland Public Schools Home Economics Education Advisory Committee.

Before the plight of the unhoused became newsworthy, Herron served as a founding member of the steering committee and chair for St. Anthony's Severe Weather Shelter for unhoused individuals (2007-20) at St. Anthony Church in Tigard.

She continued this work as

a severe weather shelter coordinator at St. Vincent de Paul and St. Anthony Parish, and as a founding member of Just Compassion of East Washington County, which offers adults respite from the weather, nutritious meals and other vital resources. Herron helped establish two resource centers, as well as assist in forming and managing the Beaverton Severe Weather Shelter (2008-2021). Additionally, she served on the Washington County Homeless Plan Advisory Committee (2015-2022).

Herron has been recognized for her leadership both in her career and her volunteer work, including Home Economist of the Year (1989), Oregon Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Community Service Award (2000), and the City of Tigard Shining Star of the Year (2014).

In 2021, Herron founded the Herron Family Scholarship for Linn County graduates and GED recipients (with preference given to LHS graduates) focusing on students who have overcome adversity.

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Master Gardeners celebrate tomatoes

By Cindi Hamar
For Lebanon Local

Attendees at the annual Tomato Fest were greeted by two young ladies dressed as tomatoes, and the air was filled with the aroma of tomato delicacies.

A line of participants could be seen waiting to experience the fresh-cut tomato samples of at least 75 different types of tomatoes.

The fourth annual Tomato Fest, hosted by Linn County Master Gardeners Association, was held Sept. 27 at the Lebanon Senior Center. This year's event had more than 70 volunteers and approximately 30 vendors. The estimated attendance was more than 650.

"Last year we had over 1,000 attendees, unlike the first year with only a crowd of 100 attendees," said Sheryl Casteen, who oversaw the event.

Casteen said the event started back when the Lebanon Community School District wanted to host garden classes for students as a motivational source to grow food. As a Master Gardener, she accepted the assignment.

"It continued to grow and soon I was giving classes for all ages that lasted approximately six weeks, ending in May. The Tomato Fest is a way to swap seeds and let others know about how many varieties of tomatoes there are and all the resources available to help people wanting to learn more."

The Tomato Fest had fresh produce available for the taking. There was also a table swap of free seeds, allowing attendees to thumb through the available index of herbs, flowers and vegetable seeds available from the hundreds



Photo by Cindi Hamar

Attendees at the 2025 Tomatofest line up to sample more than 75 different types of tomatoes. See more photos at Lebanonlocalnews.com.

of seeds donated for the event.

Additionally, there were three tomato soups simmering in crock pots for attendees to try – creamy tomato garlic, tomato orange bisque and Tuscan tomato white bean soup, all free to be sampled.

To name but a few of the additional samples at vendors tables, there were: tomato bacon jam at a booth manned by Darlene Chambers; hazelnut shortbread cookies by Corylus Farms, where Robert Waterhouse sold his hazelnut oil; seasonings by Stan Lewis' Hillbilly Pops; and then a popular table with various fresh salsas.

Jean Chapin Gardens, president of Master Gardeners, handed out information on future workshops he will personally be giving: Spring Blooms on Oct. 11 and Oct. 25; Winter Blooms on Nov. 1 and Nov. 8; and Pumpkin

Floral Centerpiece on Nov. 24-25. Interested people can register by emailing Chapin at Jean@JeanChapinGardens.com.

Author Linda Ziedrich manned a table with her four books, "The Joy of Jams, Jellies and other Preserves," "The Joy of Pickling," "First Fruits" and "The Curious Kitchen Gardener."

Linn County OSU Extension Service Master Gardeners Patty Basey and Pam Derrickson were available for questions. They also handed out information on classes about cleaning mason bee cocoons, canning salsa and tomatoes, and drying and freeing fruits and vegetables.

Each attendee at the Tomato Fest received a raffle ticket, and more than 30 gifts were given out.

For future information on the Tomato Fest, contact Casteen at 541-401-7677,



Lebanon Fire Safety Expo

Lillian Rankin, 5, gets a little help as she tries on child-sized firefighter gear. Lebanon Fire District held its annual Fire Safety Expo on Oct. 4, giving the community an opportunity to explore hands-on activities, gain helpful information, watch live demonstrations, meet local firefighters and tour the station. Firefighter Justin McCubbins helps Olyver Carter, 4, with a fire hose activity.

Photos by Sarah Brown



PUBLIC SAFETY

From page 4

back of the van to slide and hit a tree. Non Injury, and the van was drivable. More than \$2,500 damage.

11:00 a.m. - Theft reported in 1800 block Carroll St. Lightbulb missing. Video showed shadowy figure removing bulb from outdoor light fixture four days prior. Value \$2.

2:13 p.m. - Child neglect and various other domestic issues reported in 33800 block Tallman Rd. Report taken.

3:10 pm. - Crash reported in area of Denny School Rd./ Hwy. 34. According to LCSO, Elijah Brown, 31, of Lebanon was exiting Hwy. 34 onto Denny School in a Honda Accord and failed to brake sufficiently for slow traffic ahead. He ran into the back of a Jeep Wrangler driven by Daniel Venard, 48, of Corvallis. No injuries reported, minor damage to both vehicles. Deputy assisted with exchange of information.

10:40 p.m. - Zachary John-

son, 32, of Lebanon, cited and released on warrant, 300 block Russell St. Report taken.

Sept. 30

9:12 a.m. - Deputy trespassed female from cemetery property, 37200 block Cemetery Rd. According to LCSO, there was a verbal disturbance in which the female was yelling at staff "uncontrollably" before being trespassed.

1:51 p.m. - Scam attempt reported in 39000 block Golden Valley Dr.

3:19 p.m. - Sex offense investigation in 38000 block Middle Ridge Dr. Report taken.

5:44 p.m. - LCSO conducted death investigation in 000 block Oak Creek Way. Report taken.

6:20 p.m. - Deputies responded to single-vehicle roll-over crash in area of River/Perkins drives. Juvenile male transported to Samaritan Lebanon Community Hospital, with apparent minor injuries. Report taken.

10:24 p.m. - Deputies in-

See Public Safety, Page 14

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CANDY MAKER

From page 1

housed in a building built in the 1930s and added onto in the 1980s. The front part, a brick building, was originally used as a barbershop and rental space operated by Fred Musgrave. The back part of the building, a cinderblock addition, was built in the 1980s.

It was the roof in the very back that collapsed

Reetz had been creating and selling his chocolates there since 1988. Prior to that, he operated Kyla's Kaleidoscope in the Lebanon Plaza, where he and his wife, Kyla Hague, sold gifts, cards and candies.

Reetz later met a retired candymaker who gave him lessons in the sweets craft and "got me interested in it," he said.

In 1986, Reetz purchased Ed Curry's Candies in Portland, moved all the equipment to Lebanon, and began expanding his skill with lessons from the popular candymaker.

"(They) helped me get it all set up and going, and mentored me for a while," Reetz said.

Reetz sold his first chocolates at the Kaleidoscope store until they moved into the current location at 929 Grove Street in 1988.

"That was right about the time things were getting really bad here in town," Reetz said, referring to the economy. "That was after the spotted owl."

Initially, selling his chocolates via retail started slow, so Reetz moved to a wholesale model, selling corporate gift baskets and other goodies for large accounts across the nation.

Today, Victorian Chocolate confections are sold straight



Photo by Sarah Brown

Kelly Reetz points to rotting beams in the ceiling of the front part of the building, which is more than 90 years old.

from Reetz's little storefront facing Ralston Park, and he gets visitors from out of town who stop in for their favorites.

"I'm a full line candy maker, from peanut brittles, fudge, marshmallow, divinity, then all of the different kinds of chocolates, caramels, creams, truffles," he said.

One of his best sellers is the salted caramels.

"If I run out of those, people are not happy," he said.

Among his other more popular items are "dragon claws" - Reetz's version of turtles made with nuts, caramel and chocolate. Also licorice caramels and licorice peanut brittle, "which is an unusual thing, and I've got people that come in especially for that."

According to Reetz, Victorian Chocolate's popularity has grown year over year. A particular highlight was when Reetz served fresh chocolate-covered fruits to guests at Johnny Cash's son's wedding in Corvallis. Cash himself said he liked the raspberry ones. More recently, during this past Valentine's day, peo-

ple waited outside to get their hands on his treats.

"We couldn't bag the candy fast enough for people," employee Chris Williamson said.

The May storm abruptly stopped all of that, though, and customers noticed.

The storm, it turns out, revealed an added problem.

When roofers took a look at the entire building, they found it was nearly "disintegrated," with "massive dry rot" and other parts where the internal structure in the ceiling had collapsed. A large beam mounted across the walls had taken on nearly 100 years of

slow water leaks, causing rot and rust.

An engineering firm told Reetz a new wall will need to be built inside the old wall, in addition to a new roof. The cost for all repairs is expected to be \$100,000, maybe more.

With Reetz's blessing, customer Shannon Foster started a GoFundMe fundraiser, stating, "Let's show Kelly the same kindness and support he's shown us for nearly four decades. Together we can lift Kelly up and bring the magic of the Victorian Chocolate Company back to life."

Another fan, Barb Scha-

fer, issued a call to action for Victorian Chocolate on Facebook, and reported that the local 40&8 Veterans Club donated \$5,000 and a promise to match the next \$5,000 in gifts.

"This chocolate factory is one of those rare places where we see the chocolatier and his small staff working daily, year after year," Schafer said.

While customers try to find ways to get the community involved and help, Reetz is busy clearing out the building. He said he is unable to continue operating the business out of his home, but is looking for potential options at local restaurants.

Reetz said operating a candy store (and satisfying sweet teeth across the nation) for nearly four decades has been a great experience.

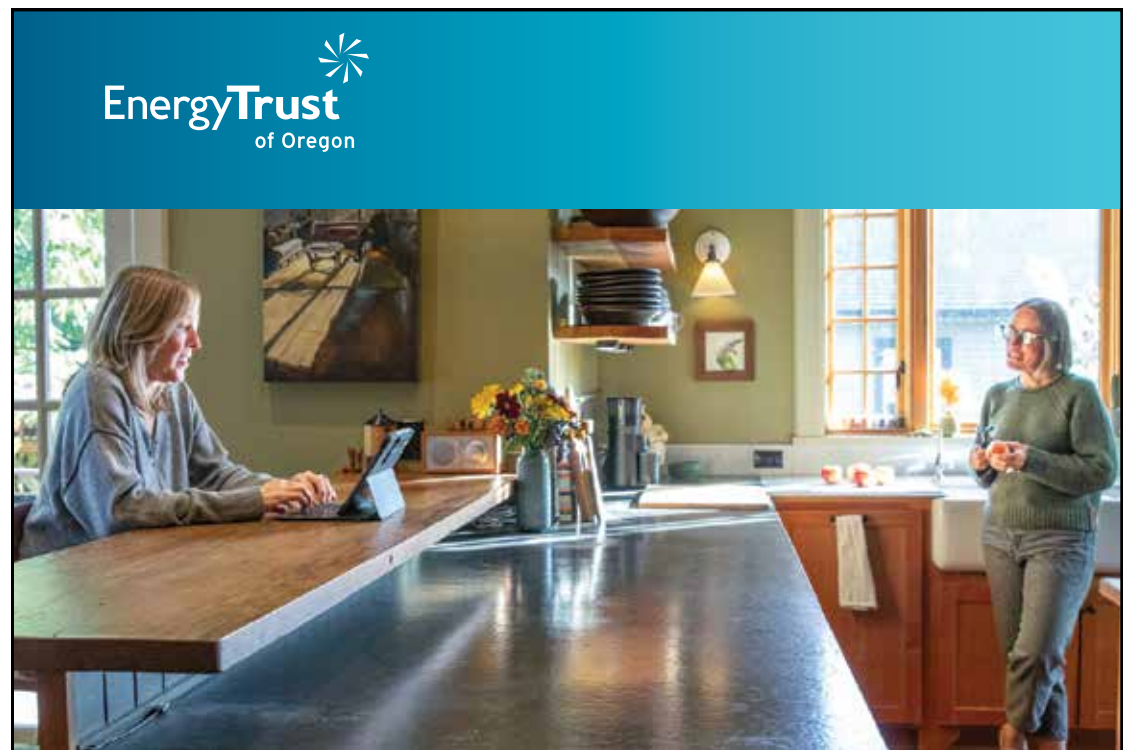
"I get joy from seeing the customers happy," he said.

When Williamson told her employer about a beginning effort to help repair the building, Reetz's comment reflected his humble and friendly personality.

"I knew I had lots of customers. I didn't know I had so many friends," he said.

Barb Schafer contributed to this story

The fundraiser can be found at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/victorian-chocolate-company-needs-our-help>







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Image provided by City of Lebanon

A 3-D rendering of what the new car wash near Crocker's Cars might look like.

Anticipated Dairy Queen replaced by car wash

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

The Planning Commission on Aug. 20 approved zoning and property line adjustments for a proposed car wash to be developed where a formerly proposed Dairy Queen was expected to go.

A developer asked the city to change the comprehensive and zoning map designations from mixed use to commercial, adjust property lines to consolidate two lots at the location, and grant a conditional use permit to construct and operate a car wash facility between Walgreens and Crocker's Cars.

The commission reviewed the application before approving the requests during the

Aug. 20 meeting.

In 2021, a restaurateur received approval to build a Dairy Queen on a lot just southeast of Crocker's Cars, but later told Lebanon Local they were waiting for unanticipated rising costs of construction to go down. In 2023, a developer asked for land partitions and zoning changes to the remaining empty field between Crocker's and Walgreens, with plans to later construct a car wash next to Walgreens.

Instead, today, construction is under way next to Walgreens for a Tractor Supply store. Next to that will be what is to be called Thoroughbred Car Wash, exactly where Dairy Queen would have been.

Pool's program director fills executive role

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

The Lebanon Aquatic District Board of Directors filled the recently vacated executive director job during its Sept. 22 meeting.

The board reviewed and approved a job description for the executive director position, which was recently vacated by Lorlee Engler, then approved a motion, 4-1, to promote Jill Smith, aquatics program director, to the executive position on a year-to-year basis with an annual pay of \$78,200, plus benefits.

Board Member Julie Miller abstained from the job description vote and opposed the vote to promote Smith and her salary.

According to Board Member Darla Bulmer, Smith comes into the position with equivalent experience as the former director when Engler was promoted into the role in 2014.

"They have almost the same growth path, having both come up through lessons, Swim Club, water instruction," Bulmer said.

Smith started working at the Lebanon Aquatic District in 2006 - about the same time Engler started - when she began teaching adult exercise classes. She later took over the swimming lesson program and then took on office management responsibilities.

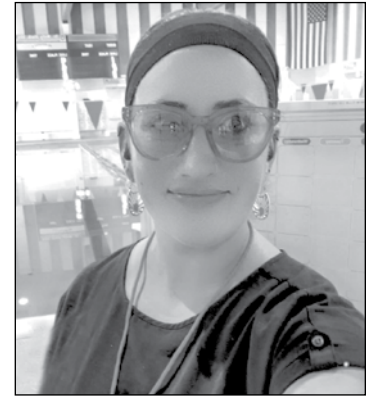
Prior to working at the pool, Smith worked administrative jobs for the Tigard School District.

Also during this meeting, Smith introduced the new head coach of the Lebanon Community Swim Club, Amber Eiquihua.

While Eiquihua was raising her three children as a stay-



Jill Smith



Amber Eiquihua

at-home mom, she often took them to the pool - an activity they all enjoyed, she said. About five years ago, she took a position at the pool as a lifeguard and began giving swim lessons. Eiquihua eventually added part-time work with the Lebanon Community School District as an instructional assistant.

"We are fully committed to the Swim Club and looking to grow it and turn it into an even better thing," Bulmer said.

In other business, the board:

- Nominated Bulmer as Chair, Kim Kendall as Vice Chair and Clerk, and Jereme Guenther as Secretary and Treasurer. Miller either abstained or opposed each motion.

- Tabled a resolution regarding the allocation of recently donated funds.

- Approved a motion to work with their lawyer on reviewing and updating the pool's policies. Miller abstained.

- Miller presented the board with information about the Ford Family Foundation.

- Smith reported the pool building recently received a fresh paint job with help from WesternU staff and students.

- Approved a motion for Guenther to make changes to the website; Guenther abstained.

- Heard a complaint from staff Rose Kress, who spoke about multiple meetings taking place between board members and Smith; board members outside of board meetings directing or suggesting to staff how to do their job; and getting reduced work hours.

- Robert Waterhouse told the board about Friends of Lebanon Pool, a newly formed nonprofit separate from the LAD. The organization will solicit donations and grants for the pool.

- Bulmer commented about plans to offer lifeguard training from an outside organization, which will include training staff to be, themselves, trainers.

- Board Member Elaine Wilder shared about plans to host a mural competition to be painted on the pool building.

- Wilder said medical college students are interested in working as lifeguards for the pool, but she believes the pay is subpar. Beginners are paid \$15.25/hour, and lead guards are paid \$17/hour. She would like to offer more competitive pay.

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Local Scout restores nature path upgrades at Hamilton Creek

By Satina Tolman
For Lebanon Local

When Zach Schlundt steps onto the overgrown trail behind Hamilton Creek School, he sees more than brush and blackberry vines.

He sees potential. A place for students to explore and a way to honor the people who helped him become who he is today.

For his Eagle Scout project, the 17-year-old Lebanon High School senior and Life Scout with Troop 99 restored the school's nature trail by clearing the path and building benches for students, staff and visitors to enjoy.

He and a group of volunteers pu finishing touches on the project Saturday, Oct. 11.

The school, located on Berlin Road, is a familiar place for the community and for Schlundt's Eagle mentor, Jeremy Brett, who attended Hamilton Creek as a child.

"Jeremy was really happy to go out there and see it again," Schlundt said.

Brett, who attended Hamilton from kindergarten through eighth grade, said,



Zach Schlundt

"It feels right to me to help him get this done. The trail is named after the principal who was there when I graduated, Richard Lehnart."

Schlundt, he said, is "a really good kid. I think he's chosen a good project and I'm excited to see it get done."

A member of the Scouting program since fourth grade, Schlundt earned his Arrow of Light Award in Cub Scouts before crossing into Boy Scouts in sixth grade. Today, he's just one step away from achieving his Eagle, the highest rank in

Scouting. According to the Boy Scouts of America website, only 7% of all Boy Scouts nationwide earn the recognition.

"It is something I have been striving to get and will definitely help me out in the future," he said. "It is a really big achievement because not many Scouts make it this far. It will definitely help me out with resumés in getting jobs too."

To complete his project, Schlundt raised \$1,000 to cover materials such as lumber, concrete and tools.

Schlundt, who also holds a black belt in taekwondo and is a commander in the Army JROTC program at LHS, is excited to add the rank of Eagle Scout to his resume.

The process of becoming an Eagle requires extensive planning, fundraising, hands-on labor and thorough documentation of each phase.

He credits much of his success to those who have supported him from the beginning, including his parents, Amy and Tom Schlundt, and his grandmother, Linda



Photo by Sarah Brown

Zach Schlundt leads a work party bearing a bench to its final location Saturday morning during the completion phase of his Eagle Scout project at Hamilton Creek School.

See Scout, Page 15

SOLAR

From page 1

over the last four years is a big set of increases," she said.

As such, considering solar electricity is an alternative idea to explore. They could choose a "net meter" or "behind the meter" option, which would provide power directly to the site the solar panel is on, or a power purchase agreement (PPA), which would essentially sell its produced electricity to Pacific Power - in return giving the city credit on its power bill.

"With these rate increases, solar is a possible solution," she said. "If we were to implement this, the use of solar would be a cost-stabilization. It would be a long-term opportunity for us to maintain a rate at a lower level, which would allow for us to have a stabilized budget option and reduce uncertainty in our budgeting process."

Hart presented the council with different solar powering options and site locations, which would create various utility offsets, costs and sizes to choose from. Possible locations for solar panels are at the wastewater treatment plant, water treatment plant, water intake system, and the Justice Center.

Hart provided a baseline for calculating size and cost. Currently, construction costs for a solar project is \$2.64 per watt. Hart used standard

solar panel sizes of 400 watt for her calculations. The solar project would be expected to last 30 to 40 years, and includes a 20 to 25 year warranty. Also, grants, tax credits and rebates are available for solar projects.

With that in mind, as an example, if the city built a PPA solar project at the wastewater treatment plant utilizing 28 acres, the 5.6 mega watt project would cost \$16.45 million. The city would have to pay \$10.73 million of the cost after receiving grant funds. This is the one option, she said, that would provide 100% of the city's needed power.

Since the city doesn't have \$10.73 million available, Hart identified three funding sources: C-PACE financing, a bond sale or loan option, and interfund city loans. On a 20-year loan, Hart figured annual payments would be \$845,000 a year, less than what the city is currently paying Pacific Power.

Other options could include building smaller, net meter solar projects that only provide power for specific sites. For example, solar panels could be installed at the water treatment plant to provide power only for the plant, which would cost the city \$1.8 million to install after grant funds are used.

Hart reminded the council there are other costs to consider, mainly maintenance and personnel costs.

Options before the council include: doing the consolidated project that would cover the entire city's electric bill; only install panels at specific sites to power only that site; or do a phased approach where the city tests the waters with one install and proceed later with other installs as more grants become available.

If the city went with a phased approach, other things to consider include inflation of construction costs and the risk of only being able to take advantage of a tax credit for one project.

Mayor Ken Jackola said his perception of the solar industry and understanding how it all works has been a constant cycle of change as they learned new things.

Jackola explained he initiated the conversation about solar panels when he was trying to think outside the box on how to maximize the value of city property while also offsetting city expenditures and "saving money wherever we can for the public."

City Manager Ron Whitlatch said he'd prefer to start on a smaller scale to first make sure solar panels are going to offset Pacific Power costs. Jackola agreed.

"It is a changing, emerging market," Jackola said. "And the bottom line is it's not our money. It's the public's money. You have to take that into consideration."

He does not want to go "full

boar" with the \$16 million project only to learn later it was a waste of funds, so he'd like to start with a small project to see how it works out before building out more.

"I believe it could bring benefit to the city. We just have to make sure we're picking the right solution," Jackola said.

The solar project will be discussed further during a Goal Setting session on Nov. 12.

To wrap up her presentation, Hart reviewed other capital projects the city is looking at, which include clean

up of the former Champion Mill property, upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant and reopening the municipal jail.

In other business, during a brief City Council meeting held prior to the work session, representatives from Benton Clean & Strong coalition (cleanstrongbenton.com) asked the council for the city's support of an expansion at the Coffin Butte landfill. The planned development pertains to the last parcel designated in 1997 as landfill.

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Local woman named TOPS weight loser of year

By Scott Swanson
Lebanon Local

The day Peggy Blair found out that she was Oregon's TOPS Queen brought mixed emotions.

Blair, a longtime Sweet Home resident, had recently moved to Lebanon, where she met weekly with local Take Off Pounds Sensibly members.

Her journey to losing approximately half her body weight started three years ago, when Blair was told she needed surgery.

But her doctor told Blair she had a bigger problem: her weight.

"I have always been overweight," Blair said. "When I was a child, my mother took me to the doctor about my weight. He told her that I would lose it when I was ready."

"Nobody knew that I would not be ready until I was in my 70s."

Blair had been working and was active at Sweet Home Emergency Ministries when, she said, her doctor told her she needed hernia surgery.

"But she told me she couldn't operate until I'd lost 25 pounds."

Blair had successfully lost weight before, through TOPS, a club that provides support and wellness education to members, who meet weekly in chapter meetings for weigh-ins and instruction in healthy eating, regular exercise, and wellness information.

Blair had dropped from 325 pounds to 170 while she worked professionally, first in Salem and then at Oregon

State University.

"I stopped attending when my weight went from 325 to 170 pounds," she said. "I gained most of it back."

Now retired, Blair decided she would rejoin TOPS to get her weight down.

"I set a goal for myself to never again have to lose weight to have a necessary medical procedure," she said. Also, she didn't want to have to have medical intervention to get herself to a healthy weight.

She said it took "a year or so" to get the weight off so she could have her operation, but then she decided to keep going.

Dr. Vanessa Papalazaros "was my incentive," Blair said. "Every now and then, when I was at the Lebanon hospital for bloodwork, she would come by and give me a pat on my shoulder."

"I give a lot of credit to the doctor. She uses me as an example."

Blair ended up losing 120.5 pounds and that earned her, this year, the 2024 TOPS Oregon Queen, meaning she lost more weight than any other female TOPS members in the entire state and reached their goal weight.

She said she mainly dieted, but "I did exercise for a while."

"I used one of those little walking machines that you see on TV now that you can adjust the tension on. It made my legs stronger so I could climb stairs. Walking is good exercise."

She said she often uses "periodic fasting," in which she eats twice a day with a



Photo courtesy of TOPS

Peggy Blair, before her weight loss, at 2012 Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce Awards presentation, and after, this year.

six- or seven-hour break, usually some sort of protein.

Blair said she was informed by an area TOPS coordinator that she was the No. 1 loser in the state.

"It was one of those days when it was the best day of my life but also the worst day of my life," she said, adding that she learned that day she was going to lose her driver's license because she had not scored high enough on a memory test. That was why she needed more specific public transportation than Sweet Home could of-

fer, which was her main reason for moving to Lebanon.

"Lebanon has a lot more transportation than Sweet Home," Blair said. "I made an adjustment to use public transportation. I ride with friends now and then, but I don't want to take advantage of my friends."

Although she had told friends "I wasn't going to move from Sweet Home, because 79 is too old to start over again, I turned around and did it and I'm glad that I did."

Now that she's got all that

weight off, Blair said she has a new challenge.

"As you lose weight, you lose appetite also," she said of her recent achievement. It's been hard to maintain weight. I've had to work at gaining weight, which is a real strange feeling for me."

She said weekly TOPS meetings provide "very good support."

"We weigh in and then we tell whether we have lost weight. We are a welcoming, caring group of friends. If someone has gained weight, we encourage them."

And, she said, the encouragement goes beyond that: "Some have family members who have medical problems that take a lot of their time and concern and their worry."

"We're there also to help support them emotionally through their hard times."

She has this advice for people struggling with their weight: "Don't become a hermit. Be with people. The TOPS group is a very good support group."

Also, she said, she set a long-term goal to lose weight, which she credits for her success, and which she recommends to others.

"I look at the mirror and think, 'You don't look bad for a formerly fat old woman,'" Blair said, chuckling. "I went to the (Department of Motor Vehicles) and asked for a new picture. I was afraid if I was pulled over, they wouldn't recognize me."

"I'm about half the person I used to be. A friend told me, 'No you're the same person. You're just half the size.'"

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SCHOOL BOARD

From page 6

cuss progress all the way down to individual students.

“Each of these schools has worked on goals for their schools and grade levels and specific students, using this data,” she said. 2

Other Compliance Reports

Meckley also provided a state-required report on the district’s compliance with nearly 60 state standards pertaining to student learning experience, “aligned and focused educational systems,” engagement with the community, safe and inclusive schools, and “committed and supportive staff.”

She said that the district is in compliance this year with every standard.

She also delivered an annual report on the district’s performance in spending Student Investment Account funds to accomplish goals established by the Student Success Act, passed by the Legislature in 2019 when it passed a statewide corporate activity tax on business sales.

The district spent \$2,647,189.28 in SIA funds between Jan. 1 and June 30 of this year, mostly for support for early literacy, mental health, Career and Technical Education and combating absenteeism.

Meckley cited the improvements in third-grade benchmarks on state testing as one of the successes of the district’s efforts.

She also said that the district has experienced challenges in meeting students’ mental and behavioral health needs, particularly in finding staffing.

“Access to mental health in Oregon is the lowest in the nation,” she said. “Access for

students is very challenging. Finding staffing for mental health is one of the biggest challenges that we have.”

She said the district also struggles with “chronic absenteeism,” “persistent staffing shortages in specialized positions, such as bilingual educators, instructional assistants and interventionists,” which hinders its ability to serve English learners and students experiencing poverty.

She said the district is “very proud” that it achieved a 47% goal of reading proficiency, thanks in part to early literacy initiatives, focused small-group reading and providing literacy assistants in early grades, along with other efforts.

She noted that the district’s percentage of regular attenders dropped from 60.85% to 59%, below its goal of increasing that percentage to 61.70%.

“Attendance is a challenge; since the pandemic it’s gotten worse,” Meckley said, noting that it’s a problem across the state “and, I assume, across the nation.”

“In Oregon we no longer have attendance officers – we used to have an attendance officer that worked with families and, if it became too chronic, there could be a fine, potentially, but more support than anything else.”

The district still tries to support families through its Welcome Center, she added, “and many, many, many other activities, systems and programs, but trying to get students to school continues to be a challenge.”

The attendance officer positions are not required, so they are not funded, she said, in response to Board Chair Nichole Piland.

Class Sizes

Meckley also presented a biannual report on class sizes, a requirement imposed by the district’s most recent contract with certified staff, which establishes class size caps for each grade and options for “solutions” when class sizes exceed those in the contract.

She reported that class sizes exceeding the contract limits currently include kindergarten classes at Cascades and Pioneer, a third-grade class at Green Acres, fourth-grade classes at Lacombe and Riverview, and fifth-, sixth- and eighth-grade classes at Lacombe.

Special education programs exceed contract numbers at Hamilton Creek, Pioneer, Riverview, Seven Oak Middle School and Lebanon High School.

Speech-language pathologists’ client lists exceed contract numbers at nearly every campus.

Title program teachers exceed contractual limits at Riverview; school counselors at Riverview, Seven Oak and the high school have student/counselor ratios above those in the contract, as do deans of student success at the middle school and high school.

Meckley said staff experiencing overloads can pick from a list of options including such things as classroom aides, extra prep time, extra comp time, and more in consultation with administrators.

Middle School Gym Seismic Project

The board also unanimously approved a \$43,408 contract for the Seismic Upgrade Project at Seven Oak Middle School Gym to GBC construction, out of a field of

four bidders to manage construction and serve as general contractor for the \$2.49 million grant-funded project.

William H. Lewis, chief operation officer, said the project would also include upgrades to the music room, locker rooms and custodial facilities located along the hallway behind the gym, which will be more easily accessed during the seismic work.

Lewis noted that GBC was the general contractor for the Seven Oak expansion project.

The contract pays for pre-construction services and links the general contractor and construction management functions, which improves efficiency, Lewis said, “bringing everybody to the table and starting estimating.”

“The nice thing about this is when you get the design professionals and the general contractor in the same room, we can really make inroads into making things more efficient.”

Typically, he said, the general contractor comes into the picture after the design is already done, adding that the facility to be addressed is 70 years old.

He said he would return in a month with clearer costs for the actual construction.

“We don’t know until we know. We don’t know until we open it up and, ‘Oh, guess what, there’s only one piece of rebar in every 5 feet.’”

He added that GCS has done 200 similar projects and has provided equipment for 3-D imaging “of every part of this project,” and will follow up with infrared imaging, and hazmat analysis.

“When you’re talking about seismic, you want to know

exactly what type of concrete was used in the walls,” Lewis said, “so we’ll be doing that as well as asbestos testing.”

In other action, board members:

- Unanimously approved the district’s cellphone policy.

- Heard a report from Meckley about a classroom project at Seven Oak in which CTE students designed their visions of a new Heath Stadium, which were created out of cardboard and constructed by a 3-D printer.

She and others noted that the community has rallied behind the effort to win the T-Mobile Friday Night Lights contest that will present the winner with \$1 million in stadium upgrades.

That support, she said, included the painting of the backside of the stadium in magenta hue by Fitzpatrick Painting, magenta lighting donated by Sunbelt Rentals and QR codes donated by Gateway Imprints handed out to the crowd (see page ### for more on the halftime presentation of \$25,000 on Oct. 3).

“We’ve come a long way since this contest kicked off on Sept. 25,” she said, adding that the effort had received nearly half a million votes in 14 days at the time of her presentation.

- Heard from Lewis that they would have work session to talk about facilities planning at 5 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 13, prior to the regular board meeting, that will include “a small presentation and a lot of Q&A.”

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REAL ESTATE SOLD

Following are Lebanon, Sweet Home, and Brownsville area real estate transactions recorded with the county during late July and August 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.

41601 Beaver Ln., Lebanon; additional details not listed; 2.51 acres; \$230,000.

2417 Harding St., Sweet Home; 1814 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two bathroom, built in 2009; 0.52 acres; \$525,000.

1252 Linden Ct., Sweet Home; additional details not listed; 0.25 acres; \$525,000.

1280 Ashwood Ct., Leb-

anon; 1471 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two bathroom, built in 1994; 0.18 acres; \$444,000.

760 Elmore St., Lebanon; 1276 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two bathroom, built in 1956; 0.23 acres; \$272,500.

31501 Stoltz Hill Rd., Lebanon; 1316 sq.ft., One story, two bedroom, two bathroom, built in 1950; 4.72 acres; \$655,500.

347 7th Ave., Sweet Home; 1275 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, one bathroom, built in 1950; 0.17 acres; \$331,700.

610 8th Ave., Sweet Home; 1056 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, one bathroom, built in 1968; 0.17 acres; \$335,500.

365 Main St., Lebanon; additional details not listed; 0.29 acres; \$410,000.

30651 Spring St., Lebanon; 1300 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, one bathroom, built in 1957; 0.6 acres; \$200,000.

647 7th Ave., Sweet Home; 1259 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, 1 1/2 bathroom, built in 1945; 0.18 acres; \$255,000.

2381 Mountain River Dr., Lebanon; 2925 sq.ft., Two story, three bedroom, 2 1/2 bathroom, built in 2007; 0.13 acres; \$477,000.

34198 Lacombe Rd., Lebanon; additional details not listed; 3.53 acres; \$845,750.

603 Kirk Ave., Brownsville; 1008 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, one bathroom, built in 1975; 0.31 acres; \$335,000.

1227 Walker Rd., Lebanon; 1330 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two bath-

room, built in 1994; 0.2 acres; \$425,000.

4003 Clark Mill Rd., Sweet Home; additional details not listed; sq.ft., 1 acre; \$389,000.

307 Putman St., Brownsville; 1884 sq.ft., Two story, three bedroom, two bathroom, built in 2005; 0.15 acres; \$440,000.

2605 Promise Way., Lebanon; additional details not listed; 0.3 acres; \$1,200,000.

2283 Cheadle Lake Ct., Lebanon; 1008 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two bathroom, built in 2023; 0.13 acres; \$385,000.

28484 Santiam Hwy., Sweet Home; 2029 sq.ft., One story with attic, four bedroom, two bathroom, built in 1940; 1.69 acres; \$540,350.

182 Joy St., Lebanon; 1318 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, two bathroom, built in 2016; 0.15 acres; \$405,000.

2195 Janna Ct., Lebanon; 1298 sq.ft., One story, three

bedroom, two bathroom, built in 2004; 0.16 acres; \$385,000.

2847 10th St., Lebanon; 1008 sq.ft., One story, three bedroom, one bathroom, built in 1979; 0.18 acres; \$172,000.

4440 Knotty Pine Ct., Sweet Home; additional details not listed; 0.27 acres; \$378,945.

43176 North River Dr., Sweet Home; 624 sq.ft., One story, One bedroom, one bathroom, built in 1946; 0.49 acres; \$200,000.

1043 Northside Rd., Sweet Home; 1160 sq.ft., One story, One bedroom, two bathroom, built in 1939; 1.66 acres; \$455,000.

36062 Providence School Rd., Lebanon; 1620 sq.ft., three bedroom, two bathroom, built in 2001; 42.5 acres; \$1,440,000.

109 Nandina St., Sweet Home; 1356 sq.ft., One story, two bedroom, one bathroom, built in 1951; 0.17 acres; \$250,000.



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PUBLIC SAFETY

From page 8

investigated report of assault in 33200 block N. Santiam Hwy. Investigation ongoing. Report taken.

Sept. 29

5:10 a.m. - Kimberley Gomez, 57, of Lebanon, cited for warrant, 100 block Vaughan Lane. Cited and released. Report taken.

8:43 p.m. - Vincent Holt, 54, and Tina Holt, 56, both of Lebanon, arrested on warrants, 30200 block Horseshoe Loop. Report taken.

Sept. 28

5:16 a.m. - Hunter Hamilton, 32, of Albany, cited for warrant, 2400 block S. Santiam Hwy. Report taken.

7:18 a.m. - Parked trailer that was creating traffic hazard towed from area of Middle Ridge/Elizabeth drives. Report taken.

5:10 p.m. - Kimberley Gomez, 57, of Lebanon, cited for warrant, 100 block Vaughan Lane. Cited and released. Report taken.

Sept. 27

7:18 a.m. - Caller reported road-struck cougar. Deputy and OSP trooper checked area, located a fox, which they removed from roadway. Berlin Rd./Plagman Dr.

1:20 p.m. - Alexander Abshire, 30, of Lebanon, arrested on outstanding warrants, 2300 block May Lane. Report taken.

2:47 p.m. - Daniel McKnight, 59, of Corvallis, arrested for harassment, menacing, criminal trespass II following report of disturbance in 1800 block S. 9th St. Lodged in Linn County Jail. According to LCSO, this was a disturbance

in which McKnight allegedly entered a property and got into a physical altercation with the victim. Report taken.

9:58 p.m. - John Hermans, 28, of Lebanon, cited for driving uninsured, 2300 block S. Main Rd. Report taken.

Sept. 26

12:31 p.m. - Matthew Martinez, 20, of Sweet Home, cited for speeding, 65/45, River/Palmyre drives.

3:31 p.m. - Serenity Arceneaux, 22, of Lebanon, cited for driving uninsured, failure to wear seatbelt, failure to have young daughter wear seatbelt, and driving while suspended, 5300 block Santiam Hwy.

4:21 p.m. - Amarylla Davis-Burrell, 49, of Lebanon, cited on Benton County warrant, 36600 block Airport Rd. Cited and released. Report taken.

4:58 p.m. - Aenoy Sengphong, 40, of Lebanon, cited for failure to obey traffic control device and unsignalled turn, Rock Hill Dr./Brownsville Rd.

8:08 p.m. - Possible burglary reported in 1000 block Nelson Ave. Investigation ongoing. Report taken.

8:59 p.m. - Timothy Byus, 59, of Lebanon, arrested for domestic assault IV, tampering with physical evidence, 34400 block Meridian Rd. According to LCSO, the incident began when Byus allegedly started grabbing the trail of a mouse that was being eaten by the victim's pet snake, which led to a verbal argument that turned physical, resulting in the arrest. Lodged at Linn County Jail. Report

See Public Safety, Page 15

FIRES

From page 2

fire alone until help could arrive.

To put this in perspective, NFPA 1710 – the national standard for career fire departments – requires a minimum of four firefighters on each engine or truck company, and at least 15 firefighters on the initial alarm for a low-hazard structure fire. Staffing requirements increase further for higher-risk or larger incidents. These standards exist to ensure that essential tasks like search and rescue, hose line advancement, ventilation, and fire suppression can be performed safely and effectively.

For a typical single-family house fire under NFPA 1710, staffing would normally include around 15 firefight-

ers plus a battalion chief. A battalion chief would serve as the incident commander, overseeing the entire fire-fighting operation.

One engine company would be assigned to fire attack, with a lieutenant and firefighter advancing a hose line inside while the engineer remained outside to operate the pump. A second engine company would provide a backup hose line, again with a lieutenant and firefighter on the line and an engineer at the pump panel.

A truck company would typically handle rescue and ventilation, staffed with a lieutenant, an engineer, and a firefighter. In addition, two medic units would be assigned to provide support. One medic crew would function as the Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC), dedicated to firefighter rescue in case

of an emergency. The other medic crew would be placed on standby, rotating with crews working inside the structure to provide relief.

Altogether, this structure provides the recommended 15 firefighters and one Battalion Chief, which matches the NFPA 1710 minimum for a low-hazard structure fire.

In contrast, at the Morton Street fire, Lebanon Fire District began with just two firefighters and a Battalion Chief. One of those firefighters had to remain outside to run the pump, leaving only two firefighters available to attempt a fire attack or rescue until reinforcements arrived minutes later.

“Every second matters in a fire,” Rodondi said.

“On (Sept. 21), our firefighters did everything they could with the resources available. Thanks to the ded-



Photos provided by LFD

Siding melts off a house from extreme heat of a fire on a house on Bald Eagle Drive.

ication of our career staff, volunteers, off-duty personnel, and mutual-aid partners, no lives were lost. But this incident shows the reality: with limited staffing, our

crews are being asked to do the work of double or triple their size, and that puts both the public and firefighters at greater risk.”



Photo by Sarah Brown

Zach Schlundt, left, directs the installation of a bench along the trail Saturday, Oct. 11. See more photos at Lebanonlocalnews.com.

SCOUT

From page 11

Thompson.

“Definitely my parents, because they have basically helped me through my entire life. Also, my grandma, ‘cause she always helps wherever and whenever she can.”

Zach Schlundt also made a point to honor his late grandfather, Jim Thompson, who died in 2020.

“I know my grandpa would definitely be proud of me for getting this far,” he said.

Amy echoed that sentiment, saying, “His grandpa was his biggest fan.”

Zach expressed deep gratitude for those who have guided him in Scouting over the years, including former Scout leader Jeff Walters, “who definitely helped me through my first years of Scouting,” and current leaders Brett, JulieAnn Arnott and Robert Houser.

“They are definitely a big help,” he said.

Amy, who has supported Zach throughout his Scouting

journey, believes in the power of the program.

“Scouts is a really great organization,” she said. “It is re-

ally good for kids of all ages. It helps build confidence and teaches leadership skills.”

PUBLIC SAFETY

From page 8

taken.

9:45 p.m. - Brandon Foss, 25, of Lebanon, cited for speeding, driving while suspended and driving without insurance, 33700 block Santiam Hwy. Report taken.

11:00 p.m. - Alejandro Naranjo, 39, of Albany, cited for speeding, 62/40, Santiam Hwy./KGAL Dr.

Sept. 25

10:32 a.m. - August Collins, 47, cited for driving while suspended and no insurance, 000 block N Santiam Hwy.

10:42 a.m. - Caller reported lawn mower moved on his property. Asked to have incident documented. 39300 block Plagman Dr.

11:04 a.m. - Johnny Snyder, 48, cited for speeding 34/20 school zone, N 5th/W Olive Sts.

11:46 a.m. - Patricia Ann

Pearsall, 65, cited for improper display and driving uninsured, 1400 block S Main St.

12:04 p.m. - Brennan Cardenas, 19, cited for cell phone use while driving, S Main/E Elmore Sts.

1:06 p.m. - Merlin Theron Hatch Jr., 58, cited on LCCC warrant for FTA on original charge of unlawful use of a weapon.

2:30 p.m. - Zachary Dunlap, 37, cited for failure to carry proof of insurance, Morton/N 8th Sts.

3:14 p.m. - Joseph Lee Shores, 53, cited on Benton County Circuit Court warrant for giving false information.

3:43 p.m. - Jessica Troy, 33, cited for no valid license, failure to carry proof of insurance and failure to use seatbelt, 000 block E Airport Rd.

See more and updated Public Safety log reports at lebanonlocalnews.com.



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Middle schoolers pitch their ideas for Heath Stadium redesign

By Sarah Brown
Lebanon Local

Two classrooms at Seven Oak Middle School were abuzz with activity, creating a not-too-loud environment as students discussed their projects with each other and walked around the room trying to make their vision into something tangible.

In one room, kids were shaping cardboard with chop-saws and hot gluing popsicle sticks together. In the other room, students were gathering around laptops and talking to adult visitors who had come to witness the event.

These were CTE (career and technical education) students engaged in an activity their teachers – Michael Swindle and Doug Knuth – put before them: reimagine and redesign Lebanon High School’s Heath Stadium.

The timing for the project was not by chance. In fact, it came a little too quickly for Swindle, but, as he said, “I told them opportunity is knocking on our door and so we are answering and doing what we can to help with the high school’s cause.”

He was referring to the nationwide contest LHS currently finds themselves in the midst of – the T-Mobile Friday Night 5G



Photos by Sarah Brown

Board member Mike Martin, center, talks to students about their project. See more photos at Lebanonlocalnews.com.

Lights competition that would reap a \$1 million homefield upgrade to the winner at the end of October.

The Lebanon Community School District Board of Directors and district staff visited the classes early on to see the classroom project kick off.

In the first week of their project, the students in Swindle’s class were set free in the classroom to draw, cut and glue their ideas into a tangible piece of work. Some were tasked to figure out the budget, and others went around the room asking survey questions.

Logan Nichols was one of those survey-takers, asking questions like, “In the VIP area, would you or would you not

like a small table built into the seats?” or “I usually see, like, screens in big stadiums for viewing easily. If there were to be a screen, how big of a screen would you want it?”

Answering questions about what changes she’d like to see, Supt. Jennifer Meckley told Logan she’d like comfortable seats, covering, good views and better bathrooms, then added an idea for a concession stand underneath the covering.

While the design is up to the students’ imagination, they are required to include the football field and track, Heath Stadium sign, and LHS school colors. They are also tasked with involving the community somehow.



Atlas Newman, Kaiden Bagus and Logan Nichols discuss their initial design ideas. Below is their cardboard model.

“A huge part of this project is getting community feedback,” Swindle said.

The idea, he explained, is to get community feedback, maybe some sort of “Shark Tank” voting or event, on the finished designs, if possible.

Meanwhile, the students did solicit some of the early feedback from adults and implemented them into their models.

In Knuth’s class, his students were broken into two different groups: builders and influencers.

The builders designed 3D models through a computer program that would later be created with 3D printing.

The influencers focused on stories gleaned about the role the stadium played in peoples’

lives. They also designed call to action fliers with QR codes to encourage people around town to vote in the Friday Night 5G Lights contest.

Knuth wanted his students to gain design and computer modeling experience, but he also wanted to focus on the diversity of careers found in this type of project. To help with this goal, Swindle and Knuth invited contractors from Hoffman Construction (responsible for redesigning Hayward Field and Reser Stadium) to talk to the students about the kind of jobs available in stadium construction.

“We’ve got some really cool opportunities to help teach these kids about careers,” Knuth said.

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