McKenzie River Reflections

Delivering targeted news for Oregon's McKenzie River communities since 1978

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November 12, 2026
Volume 49, Issue 12



Sheriff's Reports

Caller reported a male had been pulled from the water but was unconscious

PAGE 3



Bugging you?

They aren't aggressive toward people, not even the spiders."

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LOCAL NEWS

Water Storage Network Expands to Improve Fire Protection

Additions will strengthen firefighting capabilities, with additional installations planned



A new water storage tank installed on the grounds of the McKenzie River Discovery Center is helping to increase McKenzie Fire and Rescue's ability to douse flames in the Leaburg area.

McKenzie Fire & Rescue is addressing one of the toughest problems rural firefighters face - having a dependable water supply readily available when fires break out - by expanding its network of emergency water storage tanks throughout the McKenzie River Valley.

The project, which began following the 2020 Holiday Farm Fire, includes strategically located water tanks ranging from 10,000 to 28,000 gallons.

In areas where hydrants are scarce and rivers, canals or other water sources may be difficult to reach, the tanks give firefighters immediate access to water. The latest additions to the district's expanding water supply system are two recently completed 15,000-gallon tanks: one along Deerhorn Road near milepost 4, and another at the McKenzie River Discovery Center.

Funding for the installations came through Planning, Infrastructure, and Economic Revitalization (PIER) funding, including $7.9 million designated for PIER projects in the Holiday Farm Fire recovery area.

The McKenzie Fire & Rescue water storage project was one of six projects selected for funding.

Urban fire departments generally have access to extensive municipal hydrant systems. McKenzie Valley firefighters, however, must frequently rely on rivers, canals, private water tanks and a limited number of hydrants.

In many locations, the nearest accessible water source may be miles from an emergency, and even when the McKenzie River is nearby, steep terrain, limited road access and crowded boat ramps can complicate efforts to draw water.

Additional challenges have come from the prolonged drawdown of the Eugene Water

Storage Network - P 11

Briefs...

CHORUS



The McKenzie Community Chorus will make its concert debut in December with two free holiday performancese.

The chorus will perform Friday, December 4, at 7:30 p.m. at McKenzie Bible Fellowship in Vida, followed by

Briefly - Page 2

WINTER JOBS



With winter approaching and ski season just weeks away, the Hoodoo Ski Area is looking to fill positions across all depart-

Briefly - Page 2

PARTY TIME



People are invited to celebrate the holiday season at the O'Brien Memorial Library in Blue Rive on Sunday, December 6, at 2 pm. The day will kick off with a special

Briefly - Page 2

Five Years After Vanishing, Questions Remain in Upriver Case

DNA testing confirmed remains belong to Shane Sprenger, but questions surrounding his disappearance remain unanswered



Shane Sprenger

BLUE RIVER: Five years after Shane Sprenger disappeared under suspicious circumstances near Blue River Reservoir, Lane County Sheriff's Office detectives continue investigating the case, hoping to determine what happened to the 47-year-old local contractor.

In a recent update, the Sheriff's Office confirmed that the investigation remains active, although DNA testing has established that human remains recovered from two locations in the McKenzie River drainage belong to Sprenger.

Sprenger disappeared on November 2, 2021, after leaving a job site in McKenzie Bridge, where he had been working as a contractor. His tools were reportedly left plugged in when he departed for lunch, but he never returned.

A few days later, his silver 2009 GMC Sierra pickup was discovered abandoned along U.S. Forest Service Road 15 near Blue River Reservoir. Cellphone data placed him in the area before his phone was switched off.

The disappearance prompted an extensive search involving Lane County Sheriff's deputies, Search & Rescue volunteers, K-9 teams, family members and friends. Searchers combed the reservoir area, surrounding forest roads and hillsides near the former Lazy Days Mobile Home Park, but found no trace of Sprenger.

The first significant development came in June 2023, when partial human remains were dis-

Questions Remain - P 10

McKenzie River Discovery Center Joins Holiday Ornament Hunt

December 5 celebration expands into valley-wide holiday festivities with local businesses, food vendors, music and community activities

LEABURG: A popular Willamette Valley holiday tradition will come to the McKenzie River Discovery Center this December. The center is partnering with the Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA) to host the first annual Ornaments for All Abilities event on Saturday, December 5.

Scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Discovery Center in Leaburg, organizers say the event will offer an inclusive holiday experience for families and visitors of all abilities. Handcrafted ornaments will be hidden along accessible trails, next to local vendors, entertainment and seasonal activities.

Organized in recognition of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the event expands WVVA's annual Ornament Hunt by making the tradition more available to people who may face mobility or other challenges when exploring outdoor recreation areas.

Adding the McKenzie River Discovery Center also brings the regional holiday celebration into the Valley, providing another opportunity to introduce visitors to the area's attractions, historic buildings and local businesses. While participating in holiday festivities, visitors to the Discovery Center will be able to explore the grounds and historic structures. Activities will include an on site Santa, holiday treats, food vendors and a musical performance by an

Ornament Hunt - Page 12



This year's locally-made design celebrates exploring new places and the beauty of the Willamette Valley, with a classic VW bus, plus a fresh-cut Christmas tree in a wintry scene, and snow-capped Mt. Hood in the background.

Guest Opinion

Protecting youth from social media risks can't stop with Meta

Safety gaps will remain if Snapchat, TikTok and YouTube, among the platforms teens use most, operate under weaker standards.

By Beth Unverzagt

For years, Oregon families, educators and youth-serving organizations have wrestled with a difficult question: How do we help young people benefit from technology without allowing it to crowd out sleep, learning, relationships, physical activity and the real-world experiences children need to thrive?

The recent multistate settlement with Meta gives Oregon new tools for answering that question and perhaps a watershed opportunity to work with our leaders, especially the attorney general and governor, to continue to push for online youth protections and rethink how we invest in the programs that help young people grow.

Oregon was among the states that sued Meta, alleging Facebook and Instagram were designed to keep young people engaged without adequately protecting their mental and physical well-being. The settlement requires major changes for young users, including time limits, nighttime access blocks, school-hour notification restrictions, stronger age verification and parental controls, and safeguards around harmful content.

Attorney General Dan Rayfield deserves recognition for Oregon's role in securing this agreement, which will direct $125 million to Oregon over 10 years. But the work cannot stop with Facebook and Instagram.

Safety gaps will remain if Snapchat, TikTok and YouTube, among the platforms teens use most, operate under weaker standards. Rayfield could protect young people and unlock roughly $54 million more for Oregon by continuing to push for comparable agreements across major platforms.

The settlement also recognizes that addressing harms to young people cannot happen by only addressing screens. It identifies afterschool and summer programs, youth mental-health and crisis services, outdoor activities, digital-wellness education and other youth-focused efforts among potential uses for settlement resources.

For those of us who have spent our careers in expanded learning, we see this as a once-in-a-generation opportunity. We can use these resources not simply to respond to harm, but to build a stronger framework for youth development in Oregon, connecting early learning, school-age care, afterschool and summer programs to better prepare children for academic success and healthy lives. Building that

Continued On Page 11





McKenzie Varsity Sports Schedule This Week

The McKenzie Varsity Sports season has concluded. There are no scheduled contests this week.

Triangle Lake and Eddyville Charter Ousted From State 6-Man Football Playoffs

Triangle Lake and Eddyville Charter, the Special District 2 Regular Season Champion and the second-place team, respectively, were both sent packing in OSAA Round 1 playoff games. The 8th ranked Lakers were trounced, 51-26, at home in Triangle Lake by the 9th ranked Dayville/Monument/Long Creek Tigers. The Special District 1, fourth place, Tigers, 4-3,6-2 overall, had earned an at large bid due to their final season ranking and the East-side visitors made the most of their opportunity.

It will remain to be seen how much the Tigers continue to enjoy their visits to Western Oregon as they now travel to Elkton (Special District 3), the State's top-ranked team, for a Quarterfinal game on Saturday, November 14. Kickoff is slated for 1:00 pm.

Eddyville Charter, on the other hand, took the road South to Days Creek for their Round 1 playoff game. The 10th ranked Eagles found themselves on the down-side of a 40-13-point rout, which the 7th ranked Wolves will claim, was the plan all along.

Days Creek, the regular season third place team out of the Special District 3 (McKenzie finished 6th in the SD 3) moves on to challenge Griswold, the State's 2nd ranked team, representing the Special District 1.

Three Special District 3 teams will see action in Quarterfinal games on November 14. The above-mentioned game at Elkton, 5th ranked Crow traveling to 4th ranked Ione/Arlington and 6th ranked North Lake landing down South and East at 3rd ranked Jordan Valley. The Jordan Valley Mustangs tied for the Special District 1 Regular Season League Championship with Griz-

Continued On Page 13

Briefs...

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CHORUS

a second concert Sunday, Dec. 6, at 2:30 p.m. at McKenzie Valley Presbyterian Church in Walterville. Admission to both performances is free, although donations are welcome.

The ensemble welcomes singers ages 13 to 99, with no auditions required.

The chorus emphasizes musical enjoyment, friendship and community involvement, providing an opportunity for residents to connect with their neighbors while sharing the gift of music.

The December performances will mark an important milestone for the group as it takes the stage for the first time, offering the community an opportunity to celebrate the holiday season through song.

For more information about the concerts or joining the chorus, visit www.mckenziechorus.org.

WINTER JOBS

ments during a job fair Saturday, Nov. 14, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The hiring effort comes as the ski area prepares for the upcoming winter recreation season, creating seasonal employment opportunities for area residents, including young people entering the workforce. Most positions require no previous experience, and applicants must be at least 16 years old.

Hoodoo offers a family-oriented work environment and recreational benefits, including an employee season pass for $20 that provides unlimited skiing and snowboarding.

Among the available positions are part-time ski and snowboard instructors, primarily needed on weekends and holidays.

Additional employment information is available at hoodoo.com.

PARTY TIME

Story Time Book Sing featuring Dennis McGregor and Beth Wood, along with the picture book You Stole My Name. After the book sing, stick around and join the library's Christmas Party!

Dennis McGregor has been creating art for over thirty years. He's well-known for his posters and children's books as well as his music. He's played and recorded his original songs with the Blue D'arts and The Spoilers at Sisters Folk Festival and other regional venues.

Beth Wood is an award-winning songwriter, poet, and joyful singer who has released sixteen albums, four books of poetry, and a collection of funny stories from the road. Beth's poetry book Ladder To The Light is the winner of the 2019 Oregon Book Awards People's Choice Award.

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Local Independent Online News

For Oregon Rural Journalism

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Weather Report

READINGS TAKEN AT THE US ARMY CORPS COUGAR DAM

Date	High	Low	Rain	Releases
11/3	60	36	0	551 cfs
11/4	57	48	0.13	439 cfs
11/5	57	49	0.02	551 cfs
11/6	61	43	0	0 539 cfs
11/7	61	48	0	526 cfs
11/8	54	47	0.47	526 cfs
11/9	53	45	0.37	526 cfs

READINGS TAKEN AT EWEB LEABURG POWERHOUSE

Date	High	Low	Rain	Riverflow
11/3	54	36	0	1,960 cfs
11/4	55	35	0	1,920 cfs
11/5	60	39	0.15	1,940 cfs
11/6	62	42	0	1,920 cfs
11/7	60	43	0.03	1,980 cfs
11/8	61	42	0.42	2,000 cfs
11/9	59	46	0.02	2,000 cfs

Weather Forecast

Friday 11/13

McKenzie Valley
Rain
80% chance precip
High: 45 Low: 54

Santiam Pass
Showers
20% chance precip
High: 55 Low: 36

Saturday 11/14

McKenzie Valley
AM Showers
70% chance precip
High: 52 Low: 37

Santiam Pass
Partly Cloudy
10% chance precip
High: 58 Low: 41

Sunday 11/15

McKenzie Valley
Showers
70% chance precip
High: 52 Low: 39

Santiam Pass
Showers
50% chance precip
High: 48 Low: 32

SHERIFF'S REPORT

Lane County Sheriff's Office

Oct. 26: 11:10 a.m: Suspicious Conditions - 39100 blk, Hileman Rd. Caller reported issues of people coming onto caller's property and removing structures. Caller had difficulty providing details such as description and timelines. Caller presented like was having a mental health episode. caller was sent a Citizen Self Report.

7:36 p.m: Harassment – Marcola Rd. Caller reported ongoing issues with neighbor harassing caller's father. Caller was provided a CSR.

Oct. 27: 1:06 p.m: Harassment - 55500 blk, McK. River Dr. Caller reported she lives in an RV at the location, and the property owner has been harassing the caller. Caller believed the landlord tampered with the caller's vehicle because of mechanical issues. Call was cleared no crime.

6:28 p.m: Dispute - 39000 blk, Wendling Rd. Caller reported a verbal dispute, with caller's dad acting aggressively toward caller and caller's mother. Caller's dad left the location. caller's mother explained they were getting divorced. Call was cleared with a welfare check.

Nov. 2: 11:58 a.m: Reckless Driving – Camp Creek Rd.

3:07 p.m: Motor Vehicle Accident, Injury - 35200 blk, McK.View Dr.

4:13 p.m: Unlawful Use of Vehicle - McKenzie Bridge area.

Nov. 3: 1:22 a.m: Disturbance Dispute - 38500 blk, McK. Hwy.

7:54 a.m: Dead Animal - 40100 blk, Deerhorn Rd.

8:04 a.m: Fraud - 37900 blk, Camp Creek Rd.

2:15 p.m: Information - 55400 blk, McKenzie River Dr.

2:54 p.m: Towed Vehicle - 55800 blk, McK. Hwy.

Nov. 4: 4:10 p.m: Welfare Check - 90600 blk, Marcola Rd.

10:01 p.m: Incomplete 911 Call - Canal Ln.

Nov. 5: 1:20 a.m: welfare check – Marcola Rd.

10:49 a.m: Civil Service - 51100 blk, McK. Hwy.

11:00 a.m: Civil Service - 49700 blk, McK. Hwy.

11:15 a.m: Civil Service - 91000 blk, Angels Flight Rd.

11:15 a.m: Drowning - LCSO received reports of a possible drowning at the Terwilliger Hot Springs. Caller reported a male had been pulled from the water but was unconscious and not breathing. Bystanders attempted CPR and lifesaving efforts as deputies and fire personnel responded to the location. Fire personnel pronounced the male deceased at 11:52 am. LCSO deputies conducted an investigation and notified the Lane County Medical Examiner's Office. Lane County Sheriff Search & Rescue personnel were called to assist with the recovery based on the remote location

MCKENZIE FIRE & RESCUE

Nov. 2: 7:07: 42800 blk, McK. Hwy. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, 1 Transported. 20:04: 36700 blk, Camp Creek Rd. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, 1 Transported.

Nov. 3: 12:27: 38000 blk, McK. Hwy. MVA. Non-Injury, Non-Blocking.

1:35: 38400 blk, McK. Hwy. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, 1 Transported.

7:29: 38100 blk, Camp Creek Rd. Mistaken Alarm False Alarm.

8:14: 38100 blk, Camp Creek Rd. Mistaken Alarm False Alarm.

Nov. 4: 7:29: 45900 blk, Goodpasture Rd. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, Refusal Obtained.

9:05: 51700 blk, Dexter St. Mutual Aid Patient Assessed, 1 Transported.

Nov.5: 0:14: McK. Hwy. / Thurston Rd. Medical, General. Disregarded On Scene by ESF.

10:44: 35500 blk, Camp Creek Rd. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, 1 Transported.

20:53: 44800 blk, Leaburg Dam Rd. Medical, General. Lift Assist Only.

Nov. 6: 0:21: 45000 blk, McK. Hwy. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, 1 Transported. 20:09: 39200 blk, Camp Creek Rd. Sp 3 Medical ,General Patient Assessed, 1 Transported.

21:45: 38800 blk, Blk Upper Camp Creek Rd. Brush Fire Controlled Slash Burn.

UPPER MCKENZIE FIRE & RESCUE

Nov. 3: 11:15: Medical – 88000 block, Aufderheide Dr. Breathing trouble.

Nov. 4: 09:02: Medical – 51000 blk, Dexter St. Female, Conscious, Breathing.

Nov. 6: 12:40: Brush Fire – McK. River Dr./Mill Creek Rd. Caller reports seeing a brush fire along the water's edge.

15:58: Check Smoke - McK. Hwy./Aufderheide Dr. Caller is seeing a column of smoke in the area - possibly from a burn pile or some brush.

Nov. 7: 20:16: Motor Vehicle Accident, Unknown Injury – 49000 blk, McK. Hwy. Other vehicle hit deer, deer then hit caller's vehicle.

Nov. 8: 07:51: Medical - 51000 block, Blue River Dr. Female patient.

Nov. 9: 03:13: Medical - 55000 blk, McK. River Dr. Male, Conscious, Breathing.

The Upper McK. Fire District's board of directors will hold its monthly meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday, November 16, at the Blue River Fire Station 2, 51730 Echo St. in Blue River.











For Oregon pioneer family, highway robbers were lifesavers

Two armed men who apparently came to rob travelers helped pull them over the pass instead after discovering there were six children in the wagon

By Finn J.D. John

There's a reason McKenzie Pass — Highway 242 over the cascades, from Springfield to Sisters — is closed in wintertime. The pass can be a dangerous place after the snow starts to fly, which can happen any time after around Labor Day.

A century ago, though, the weather was only one of the dangers travelers on the pass faced. Highway robbers were another. These operators patrolled the pass looking for travelers who had gotten stranded by the sudden blizzards and frozen to death.

Sometimes, when they encountered travelers who hadn't gotten around to dying yet, they helped the process along with their six-shooters. And then, of course, they helped themselves to the now-ownerless horses, along with whatever loot they could pack, before shoving the wagons off the roadbank and into the canyon below.

This was exactly the treatment George Harvey Dyer expected to receive in the fall of 1897.



OSU Archives

NASA workers and an unknown astronaut conduct tests on a space suit in 1968, in the lava beds near McKenzie Pass in Central Oregon.

And although it's not clear why he didn't, it's at least a good possibility that he was saved by his six children.

Dyer was a Civil War veteran, a Southerner who had been forced to fight for the North after he was captured — or so the story goes. Whatever the real story was, his service in the Union army made him unpopular at home in Arkansas after the war, so he emigrated to Oregon and settled near Woodburn.

But in the late 1890s his wife died, leaving him with six children — three boys and three girls, none of them over 10 years old — and he found out about an opportunity for work in the town of Burns. Dyer packed the kids in his wagon and set out.

He headed south to Springfield, taking advantage of the Willamette Valley's relatively excellent roads, and took the McKenzie Pass route toward Bend and eventually Burns. This almost turned out to be a fatal mistake. It was late in the year — early autumn, in fact. And if you've ever been over the pass in the spring or the fall, you know how striking and sudden the change of climate is there. While people are still swimming in lakes and frolicking on beaches below, snow is piling up around the Dee Wright Observatory.

As Dyer got near the summit of the pass, his luck ran out. A blizzard settled in on him. Snow blew, drifted in the wagon road. His horses were floundering in it. The wagon was sliding behind them, dead weight, like a sled with no runners. It didn't look as if they'd make it. This must have been a soul-crushing realization for Dyer, because he was within a stone's throw of the summit of the pass. If he could just make it to the summit, gravity would give the horses enough help to move the wagon down the other side ... but heave and thrash as they might, the big animals simply couldn't do it.

That's when the highwaymen showed up. Three of them on horseback, bristling with weapons.

As Dyer's great-grandson tells the story, the old man — pretending not to know what they were up to — looked them straight in the eye and asked for their help pulling the wagon over the pass. And, after a long and chilling silence, they tied their lariats to the wagon and helped drag it to the top.

Why would hardened criminals do that? Well, it seems likely that the prospect of murdering a wagon-load of toddlers and elementary-school-age children was more than they were willing to undertake. Or maybe they were just feeling unusually merciful that day. Who knows?

In any case, had it not been for the arrival of those three bandits, the entire Dyer family would have frozen to death a few yards short of the pass. Thanks to the robbers, they were able to make it to Burns, where Dyer was able to take advantage of the opportunity he'd heard about and go into business — as a casket builder.

(Sources: Dyer, Ed. "Dangerous Encounter," Little-Known Tales from Oregon History. Bend: Sun Publishing (Cascades East Magazine), 1988.)

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



David Hunter

Two cyclists make the summit at McKenzie Pass, on Highway 242, in the summer of 2005.



By Slim Randles

Climbing mountains just doesn't make any sense at all. Not to a smart person, an-yway. In the first place, mountain climbers don't just do it for the view you get once you reach the summit. If that were the case, they'd just charter a plane and fly around up there, looking down on the rest of us just so they could feel superi-or.

No, if you are to be a real mountain climber, you have to try for a First. What's a First? A First is the first time a particular mountain is climbed a particular way. Otherwise, you're just out for a hike and plan to get tired.

A friend of mine once climbed a famous mountain by being the first person to drive a dog team to the summit. This was, naturally, a First. Another pal of mine once climbed the same mountain in winter. Another First. One woman climbed the mountain when she was 60 years old. This was a First, because every other woman her age knew better than to do a dumb thing like that.

Some famous peaks have comparatively easy trails leading to the summit. I once rode a horse to the summit of Mt. Whitney in California, which used to be the highest mountain in the U.S. before we let Alaska join the club. That's an easy trail. So how can you do a First on an oft-climbed mountain? Let us now count the ways:

a. Climb it after dark.
b. Climb it blindfolded.
c. Climb it straight up a cliff.
d. Climb it backwards.
e. Climb it only after your 90th birthday.
f. Climb it while carrying a week's worth of washing on your head.
g. Climb it with a snake in each

Continued On Page 9

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OSU Gardening Tips

Oregon State University

Insects and spiders seek shelter



Brown marmorated stink bug

As cooler weather arrives, insects and spiders begin searching for warm, protected places to spend the winter — and homes often provide the perfect refuge.

"Just like us, they're coming inside to get warm," said Brooke Edmunds, horticulturist with the Oregon State University Extension Service. "They're not feeding on homes or humans. Most are minding their own business. They aren't aggressive toward people, not even the spiders."

Boxelder bugs can gather by the thousands on the south- and west-facing walls of houses and outbuildings, while spiders roaming in search of mates may alarm homeowners. Of the 700 to 800 species of spiders in Oregon, only the black widow poses a serious risk to people. Black widows are more common in Southern Oregon and east of the Cascades than in the Willamette Valley, according to Gail Langellotto, OSU professor of horticulture.

Research shows that hobo spiders are not venomous, though bites may cause mild irritation. The brown recluse, a venomous species often feared, does not live in Oregon.

Other insects frequently spotted indoors include:

• Brown marmorated stink bugs, shield-shaped pests that feed on crops and ornamentals.

• Mediterranean seed bugs, tan insects with black triangular and diamond-shaped markings, which feed on grass and weed seeds.

• Springtails, tiny soil dwellers that jump several inches using a tail-like mechanism. They thrive in damp environments and may appear in sinks, drains, basements and crawl spaces but soon die without moisture.

Prevention tips

To help keep pests outside, Edmunds recommends sealing cracks and gaps around doors and windows, repairing screens and removing debris or leaf litter near foundations. If insects do enter, vacuum them up and dispose of the bag or contents in a bucket of soapy water.

"Insects get through spaces so small you don't even think about them," Edmunds said. "You want to keep as many out as possible and then vacuum up the rest."

There's no need to vacuum spiders, which are beneficial in gardens and can be gently moved back outdoors.

Insecticide sprays are generally not recommended. They are often no more effective than vacuuming, and repeated applications may be needed. At best, pesticides provide only temporary relief. For serious infestations, pyrethroid treatments around building foundations may be used, but applications should be made by a licensed professional.

Want to learn more about this topic? Explore more resources from OSU Extension: *Healthy*

Quote of the Week

"There never was a good war or a bad peace."
Benjamin Franklin

Country Kitchen

Recipes • Traditions • Memories • Seasonal Living *By Mary Emma Allen*

THE JOY OF BIRDS

Early in the morning, as it's becoming daylight, the birds be-gin chirping and singing outside my bedroom window. The most common seems to be the blue jay this time of year. In spring and summer there are many others. When I lived where we could have bird feeders, without danger from bears, there were others joining the chorus. However, hopefully these fellows soon will be sleeping in their winter homes.

My nephew, who lives in southern Oregon, seems to see many more birds than we do in NH throughout the year and writes me about those he watches.

Bird Watching on the Farm

Watching birds in all seasons was a pleasure my mom introduced to my sister, brothers and me as children on the farm. She called our attention to the birds as they built nests, raised their young, gathered around the feeders and sang cheery songs.

I still have the picture of a bobo-link she drew for an art class when she attended teacher's college in 1932. Mother owned several bird books, which she kept handy to identify new species and seek information about the various birds. From her I learned to appreciate and enjoy the birds living around our farm home and discover those in other parts of the country wherever Jim and I have lived and traveled.

I recall Mother's joy in purchasing a bird book with illustrations by John James Audubon. She admitted she may have paid more than she should but it was something of beauty in her life. I remember her pleasure as she turned the pages and called our attention to the birds. I still can picture her as she browsed through the pages.

She related how her elderly grandmother watched the birds from her kitchen window and sang to them.

BUSY DAY MEATBALLS can be made ahead, as my daughter does, and put into spaghetti sauce and other dishes.

Combine 1 pound ground beef, 1 slightly beaten egg, 1/4 cup breadcrumbs, 1/2 teaspoon salt, dash pepper. Shape into 1-inch balls.

Mix together well, 1 cup catsup, 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce, 2 tablespoons brown sugar, 2 tablespoons vinegar, 1/4 teaspoon salt, dash pepper. Pour over meatballs in a glass baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour or until meatballs are done. Baste once or twice while baking. Do not brown the meatballs first.

(c) Mary Emma Allen

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



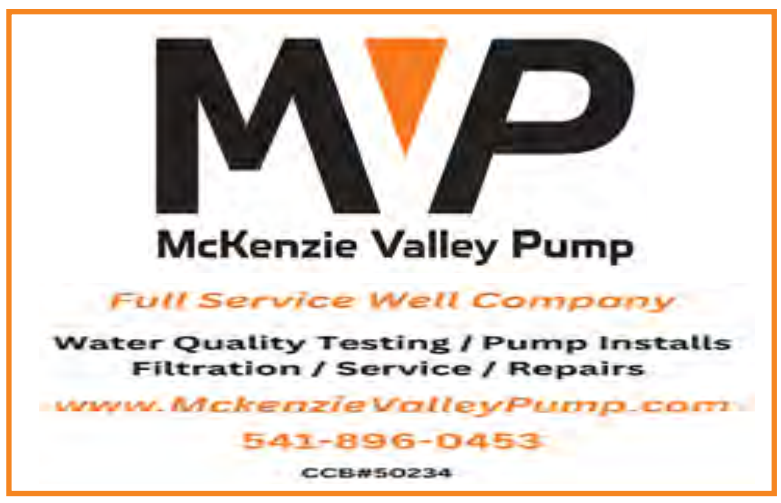


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Turning Community Stories Into Lasting Reflections

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Every voice matters and can inspire real change

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Local events & meetings

HAVE AN EVENT TO SHARE? Submit details at tinyurl.com/3j38kkxz

November 12
Vida McKenzie
Community Center Board
4:30 - 5:30 pm



The Vida McKenzie Community Center board will meet from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. at 90377 Thomson Lane in Vida.

November 12
Second Friday Art Walk
4 - 7:30 pm

2nd Friday Art Walk at 500 Main Street - Emerald Art Center in downtown Springfield.

November 12
McKenzie
Watershed Council
5 - 6:30 pm

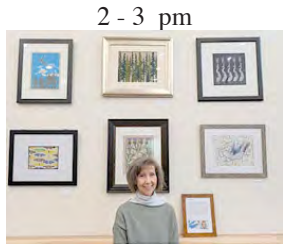
The McKenzie Watershed Council will meet on the second Thursday of the month from 5 to 6:30 p.m., location varies, please contact Chase Antonovich, McKenzie Watershed Council Operations Manager, (458-201- 8150) chase@mckenziewc.org

November 13
Walterville Elementary
Fall Fair
5:30 - 7:30 pm



Free Admission at 40589 McKenzie Hwy. Food Trucks - Cotton Candy, Fizzy Fern, King Whippy, Calle Steelo, & Corn Dog Company. Carnival Games - Putt Putt, Duck Pond, Ping Pong Toss, Plinko, Wheel of Fortune & More. Adventure Children's Museum. Magician David Grinder. Chino the Alpaca. Thurston Cheer. Dessert Walk, Prize Store.

November 14
Art Talk With
Joanne Walch
2 - 3 pm



Join people at O'Brien Memorial Library, 51771 Blue River Drive, for Joanne Walch's Art Talk. She was raised in the scenic McKenzie River area, Joanne draws inspiration from the natural beauty and rich history of the region. Her exhibit showcases vintage stencil designs dating from the 1890s through the 1930s. Her work has been featured in numerous art shows and sold nationwide, with a long-standing engagement at The Artist's Gallery in Sunriver.

November 15
Thankful Potluck
Noon - 3 pm



Join the Upper McKenzie Community Center for an afternoon of good food, great company, and community! UMCC will provide the ham and turkey. Everyone is invited to bring a side dish or dessert to share and come together, share a meal, catch up with neighbors, and celebrate all the things that make our community special. Everyone is welcome!

November 16
McKenzie Fire District Board
Noon- 1 pm

McKenzie Fire District Board meeting. Leaburg Training Center, 42870 McKenzie Hwy. 541-896-3311.

November 16
Upper McKenzie Fire District Board
7 - 8 pm

The Upper McKenzie Fire District Board of Directors monthly meeting. At the Blue River Fire Station 2, 51730 Echo St. in Blue River. 541-822-3479

November 17
Lane County
Board of Commissioners
9 am



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

November 16 - 20
Boat Ramp Closed
Noon - 3 pm

The Helfrich boat ramp and parking lot at the Vida McKenzie Community Center, 90377 Thomson Ln, Vida, will be closed for scheduled tree work.

The temporary closure is necessary to provide crews with safe access to the work area. Boaters, fishing guides and other river users should plan ahead and use alternative access points during the closure.

November 17
Walterville Grange
Noon - 3 pm

The Grange's second monthly meeting is on the third Tuesday of each month. It starts at 7:30 PM that night and includes a nice dessert at 39259 Camp Creek Rd.

November 18
McKenzie School Board
5:30 - 6:30 pm pm

The McKenzie School District Board will meet in the Administration building, 51187 Blue River Dr. The meeting will be livestreamed viewing available at tinyurl.com/3xmv9djj

Submit Public Comment to public.comment@mckenziesd.org all comments submitted before noon will be presented to the Board for review and submission to the meeting minutes

November 18
BR Water District
Special Meeting
6 - 7:30 pm



The Blue River Water District Special Board meeting will be meeting at the O'Brien Memorial Library at 6:00 PM Public is welcome to attend in person or virtually via call in.

November 19
McKenzie Food Pantry
11 am - 1 pm

At the McKenzie Bridge Christian Church, 56334 McKenzie Hwy, McKenzie Bridge.

Free groceries are provided in accordance with Oregon Food Bank and Food For Lane County guidelines for food distribution to those in need. 11 am - 1 pm, every 2nd & 4th Tuesdays

November 19
Chamber of Commerce
Board Meeting
4:30 pm

The McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce is a business organization of volunteers that provides members with key opportunities for visibility, marketing, support, and recognition. The board normally meets via Zoom. For more information contact: info@mckenziechamber.com

November 20 & 21
Thurston Holiday Fair
Noon - 6 pm



Come down and start your holiday shopping early at 6364 Main St, Springfield. There will be a wide range of vendors. From baked goods to rock sculptures. And Live music on Saturday. (541) 726-5556

WEEKLY MEETINGS

TUESDAY

VMCC - 11 am
Doors open at the Vida McKenzie Community Center, 90377 Thomson Lane

Little Poker League 6 - 8 pm
Vida McKenzie Community Center

WEDNESDAY

Upper McKenzie Community Center - 7 - 8 pm
Go-Gi Brazilian Ju-Jitsu at the UMCC, 54745 McK River Drive

Watershed Wednesday - 9 - 11:30 am
Coburg
Join the McKenzie River Trust every Wednesday

WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY

AA Meetings
Wednesdays at 6 pm and Sundays at 5 pm at the McKenzie Valley Presbyterian Church, plus Thursdays at the clinic onb Dexter St, Blue River

THURSDAY

MMRS Net - 6 pm
The McKenzie Valley Neighborhood Radio Group meets at 6 pm on 462.6750 MHZ, Tone 100.0 Hz (often Radio Memory Channel 28) on the Deathball Repeater

FRIDAY

Yoga in Leaburg - 8:30 am
Friday Yoga at the Firehouse is back! 42870 McK. Hwy., Leaburg

SAIL Exercise Program - 10 - 11 am
Vida McKenzie Community Center, 90377 Thomson Lane. Instructor-led exerciss to boost strength, independence and confidence. All ages and abilities welcome.

SATURDAY

A Dime At A Time
Morning sorting sessios from 10 am - noon. Donations can be dropped off at the Leaburg Store.

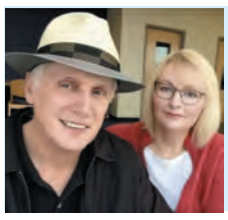
An Invitation to Worship

Living Water Family Fellowship
Pastor - Doug Fairrington
52353 McKenzie Hwy - Milepost 42
541-822-3820
Gathering Sundays at 10:00 AM,
Children's ministry also.
Come early for a meet and greet continental breakfast and coffee at 9:30 AM.
Thursdays, 6:00 PM, Celebrate Recovery (12 Step Program)

McKenzie Bible Fellowship
45061 McKenzie Hwy – Vida, Oregon
Sunday Worship – 10:00 a.m.
Youth Ministries
KidsFest Family Activities
Small Group Fellowships
Men's & Women's Bible Studies
Call 896-3829 for information
www.mckenziebible.com

Catholic Church
St. Benedict Lodge Chapel
1/2 mile off Hwy. 126 on
North Bank Rd., McKenzie Bridge
Sat. Eve. 5:00pm
Sun. Morn. 9:30am;
web page: sblodge.opwest.org

McKenzie Valley Presbyterian Church
Please join us for worship Sundays at 10:30 am, in church on Hwy. 126 just east of Walterville. You may also make prayer requests, or request an emailed or earth-mailed bulletin -- phone or send email to Nancy Ashley, nancy.w.ashley@gmail.com, 541-914-1986. We would love to meet you!
Milepost 13 McKenzie Hwy. (541) 747-2604



Direct Answers

By Wayne & Tamara Mitchell

Straight talk and real advice for everyday lofe.

Impulse Control



I made the terrible mistake of marrying a man because I bore his child. Shortly after the marriage I asked him to leave and filed for divorce. He left but purchased a house across the street. For over three years he has lived across the street and fought the divorce.

He has a warped view of reality. His memories of events are different from what happened, and all his problems in life are the fault of others. This is his mentality.

I allowed him to visit our son at my house, but he has taken advantage of my flexibility and begun to show up at will. That's a problem. Here's the other problem. I slept with him after our separation and a time or two since our divorce.

I am no longer interested, but he will stop by late at night on his way to work. I asked him not to do it anymore, but he doesn't respect my wishes. So I unplugged my doorbell. When I didn't answer, he beat on the door, then knocked on my bedroom window.

How can I get him to stop?

Crystal

Crystal, there is a difference between living in the moment and messing up tomorrow. Tomorrow you will be living in the mess you created today.

You understand the pattern, don't you? You had a child with someone you shouldn't have. Because you had a child, you married; because the marriage shouldn't have happened, you divorced. While "parting" you maintained sexual intimacy, and after the divorce you did it again.

Why would your ex-husband think you aren't available to him? You have powerfully reinforced his behavior again and again. As personal security expert Gavin de Becker observed, "Men who cannot let go choose women who cannot say no."

The only way to cut off intrusive behavior is to cut it off completely. But because of your past behavior, you created a problem not easily remedied. Counseling can get to the reason why you let this man into your life, and a domestic abuse agency can teach you how now to protect yourself.

Wayne & Tamara

Selling Herself Short

I'm divorced, a mother of two, barely scraping by. I have two men who want to marry me. One is successful, and I mean seven-figure successful. He is divorced with three kids, and he treats me like a queen. He is not a big personality type. Our conversations are a little difficult, and he is somewhat boring.

The other man is an old boyfriend, divorced, with kids. He is a paramedic, something he loves with a passion. He treats me well, but financially he would not be as secure. If I married him, I would probably be in the same situation, just scraping by.

But he makes me happy, and I feel loved. He loves me with passion. Should I put myself first, or go with the good man who can provide for me and my family?

Lyla

Lyla, over 75 years ago psychologist Abe Maslow proposed a theory of motivation based on our needs. Maslow's idea was that once we satisfy a lower need, a higher need will emerge which we will then want to gratify.

For example, once we satisfy physical needs like the need for food, we will want to satisfy safety needs like the need for shelter. When that is accomplished, our emotional needs will assert themselves. The most important of these emotional needs is our need for love.

Maslow's theory suggests, if you marry for money, you will soon find yourself craving what you don't have. Love. When that happens you will look elsewhere. That is a pattern we often see.

The hitch with marrying for money is that it puts dishonesty at the center of what should be your most cherished relationship. That would not be good for you and certainly not fair to your husband.

Wayne & Tamara

Riptide

For several years my best friend was Suzie, a woman I knew online. I was in my teens, and Suzie was about ten years older, married with two children. I looked up to her as a mother and sister figure, which was important to me because I don't get along with my real mother and sister.

Suzie told everyone I was her best friend, and I did likewise. I loved this woman beyond measure, and she helped me through some bad times in my adolescence. She said she loved and cared for me, too, and I had no reason to believe otherwise.

I went to visit Suzie at her home in the summer when I was 18. I was supposed to stay all summer, but she abruptly sent me home after a week. The excuse, which I later decided was a lie, was she had a sick relative she had to care for. But we parted with hugs, "I love you's," and "You are my best friend."

Two days after I got home Suzie emailed telling me never to speak to her again. That's all her email said—no explanation, just "never contact me again." At the same time she blocked me from all of her websites and removed all entries from her blog that mentioned me. She basically wrote me out of history.

I still have no idea why. We hadn't fought, and I can't think of anything I might have done to offend her, and believe me, I racked my brains. I was hurt, confused, and later angry. I thought I deserved an explanation, but no explanation was forthcoming. Eventually I moved on with my life, though when I thought about Suzie, I felt puzzled and sad.

A year later she emailed. She didn't specifically mention what happened but said she'd had mental health issues and marriage problems. She said she'd gotten psychiatric treatment and a divorce, was fine now, and wanted to be friends again. She apologized and wanted my forgiveness. I wasn't enthusiastic, but I wrote saying I still cared about her and would like to try a friendship again.

Suzie replied with a short note saying she was happy to hear it and would write tomorrow. She never did. I know she was still updating her websites, so it's not like she got run over by a bus. I was more confused than ever.

Two years after that, yesterday, Suzie sent me a request asking to become my social media friend! I absolutely adored this woman. I am sympathetic to her, as I suffer from depression and know how debilitating mental illness can be. But Suzie obviously has serious issues, and she hurt me very, very badly. Does she deserve a third chance, or do I tell her to leave me alone? I can't decide.

Caitlin

Caitlin, Joseph Campbell said, "The world is perfect. It's a mess. It has always been a mess. We are not going to change it. Our job is to straighten out our own lives." The question is not does Suzie deserve another chance, but rather, can you have a good life with people like Suzie in it?

You have some pleasant memories of her and a natural desire to help others. But there is always a risk to the lifeguard. A person has to be very strong not to be pulled under by those who are floundering in life. Suzie disturbs your emotional equilibrium and occupies an undeserved part of your mental landscape. Her inconstancy disrupts your well-being.

An old saying claims that the essentials for happiness in life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for. That is a wonderful definition of mental health. Focus on bringing those three into your life. Once you have them, you will feel nothing is lacking, and you will be able to cope with people like Suzie.

Wayne & Tamara

Wayne & Tamara are the authors of As the Child of an Alcoholic and Cheating in a Nutshell.

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FOR RENT

The beautiful Vida McKenzie Community Center, has everything you need for your event. Go to vidacommunitycenter.com for more info.

Tammy Pelton 951-970-0176

Funeral Home

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Personal

If you want to drink, that's your business. If you want to stop, that's ours. AA Group meets Wednesday 6:00pm-7:00pm and Sunday 5:00-6:00pm at the McKenzie Valley Presbyterian Church, 88393 Walterville Loop, a block from the Walterville Shopping Center. N/c-sub 5/15/-5/11/14

Piano Lessons

Now accepting piano students - Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced - all ages. Professional jazz pianist, classically trained with years of teaching experience. Located in Leaburg. Please call or text 408.391.3477 or email; kimberly@liquidsister.com. http://www.liquidsister.com SKP-8/16ruc

Pianists Wanted

McKenzie Valley Presbyterian Church aims to form a team of pianists with intermediate-advanced skills for accompanying worship services. $65 per service. To apply, call 541-747-2604 or email: marodstrom@yahoo.com.

Quilters/Needle Crafters

The Leaburg Sew & So's are meeting most Friday afternoons at the McKenzie Fire and Rescue Training Center. Please call Sara at (541) 896-3059 for more information.S=JS-2/25/10ruc

Services

Natures Friend Beautifying Co. Property/rental cleanup, restoration, tree work, blackberry & ivy destruction, pressure washing, Int/ext. painting, furniture refurbishing. Free appliance removal. Call Scottish 541-913-8477. SB=JAB-2/27-3/20/14

Got a hole in your wall? Give me a call! The Wall Doctor - Serving the McKenzie River area. 541-735-2317. p-s15-n3

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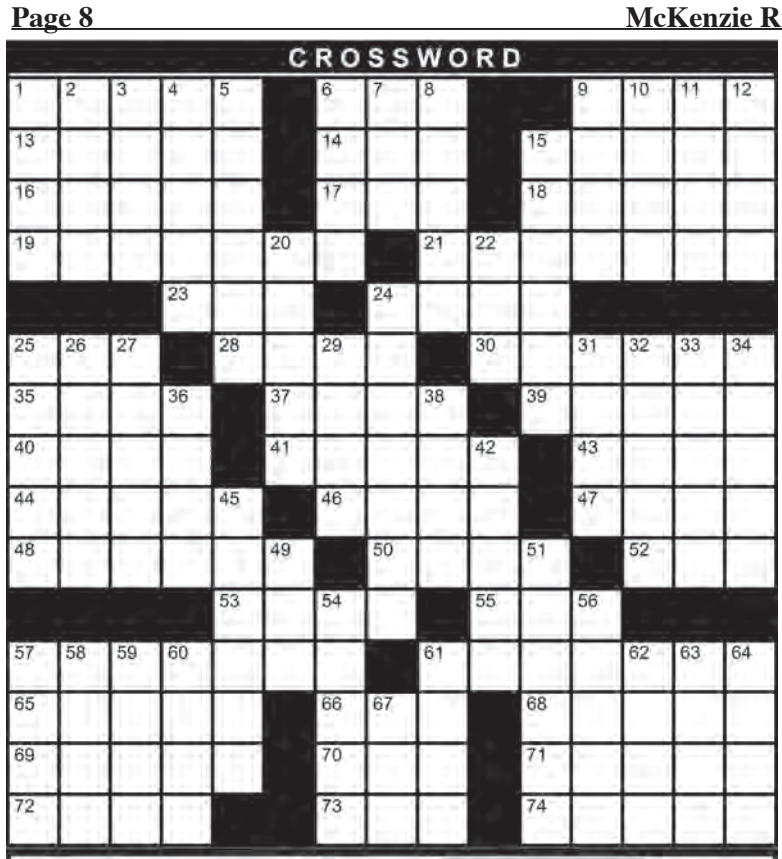
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rivref2@gmail.com

CROSSWORD





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HOLIDAY MOVIES

ACROSS

1. "As the World Turns" and such
6. Hundredweight, acr.
9. Notable achievement
13. Keep a threat ____ ____, or away
14. Across, in verse
15. Jiggly dessert
16. Opposite of bow
17. Sch. grp.
18. Kidman's ex
19. *HomeExchange story, with The
21. *Rudolph's father
23. *Kevin to Buzz in "Home Alone"
24. "Dickens!"
25. Quantity, acr.
28. *"Candy ____ Lane" starring Eddie Murphy
30. Opposite of anaerobe
35. Russian mountain range
37. Coxae, sing.
39. Tori, sing.
40. Goals
41. Famous Mac & Cheese manufacturer
43. One of auto pioneers
44. Letter-shaped girder
46. Home to Taj Mahal
47. A la _____, with ice cream
48. Relating to teeth
50. "My bad"
52. Eucharist vessel
53. Multicolored horse
55. NHL court
57. *Bailey of Bedford Falls
60. *Mount ____, Grinch's home
64. Supercharger
65. Ewe's mate
67. Alice Halsey on "Little House on the Prairie"
68. Ammo in a quiver, sing.
69. Knot-tying vow (2 words)
70. Sensory threshold, in psychology
71. Artist's inspiration
72. Bajillion years
73. Guns N' Roses lead guitarist

DOWN

1. "Away to the window I flew like a flash, ... and threw up the ____"
2. "Beetle Bailey" pooch
3. Cain's brother
4. *The McCallisters' travel destination
5. Trustee
6. Printer button
7. *Harry and Marv, a.k.a. the ____ Bandits
8. Pro move
9. Shade-loving plant
10. Hamburg river
11. Winglike
12. Freight weight
15. Official work trip
20. Taken where?
22. South American tuber
24. Six-sided polygon
25. *Cousin Eddie actor
26. Human social group
27. Mandarin's headquarters
29. *Luther Krank's wife
31. Living space
32. Lowest deck
33. *Will Ferrell's famous holiday role
34. English county
36. Future J.D.'s hurdle
38. Like Bob Ross' do
42. Short-trunked ungulate
45. Bone filler
49. Yule treat
51. Type of racing boat, pl.
54. Nest for an eagle
56. Not your grandmother's mail?
57. Spiritual leader
58. Makes a mistake
59. Double reed woodwind
60. Slangy "Follow me!"
61. Cat on a shoe
62. Wraths
63. Hyperbolic tangent
64. _____ o' shanter
66. Fuss, to Shakespeare

Solution on Page 9

SUDOKU



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

© StatePoint Media

Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

Solution on Page 9

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

Click here or go to: tinyurl.com/yeye92hx

Events from Nov 12th

Submit Event

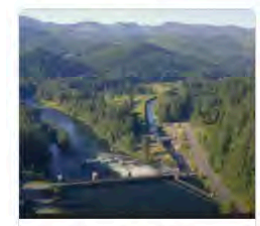


Thu Nov 12th 4:30pm - Sun 15th 5:30pm
Vida McKenzie Community Center Board Meeting

Thu Nov 12th 5:00pm - 6:30pm
McKenzie Watershed Council
The McKenzie Watershed Council's mission is to foster better stewardship of the McKenzie River watershed resources,...



Thu Nov 12th 6:00pm - 6:30pm
McKenzie Valley Neighbors Radio Group
GMRS net tonight (Thursday) "See" you on the repeater. (transmit on 467.675, listen 462.675, PL tone 100 on the...



Thu Nov 12th 6:30pm - 7:00pm
Leaburg GMRS Radio Preparedness
Every Thursday: McKenzie Valley Neighbors GMRS Radio Preparedness Group Network Check-Ins...



Fri Nov 13th 8:00am - 9:00am
Yoga in Leaburg
Every Friday at McKenzie Fire & Rescue's Leaburg Training Center



Fri Nov 13th 10:00am - 11:00am
SAIL Exercise Program
Join the SAIL program on Fridays for instructor-led exercises to boost strength, independence, and confidence. All age...

EMERALD ART CENTER art happens here

Fri Nov 13th 4:00pm - 7:30pm
2nd Friday Art Walk
Emerald Art Center in downtown Springfield



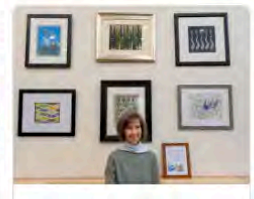
Fri Nov 13th 5:30pm - 7:30pm
Walterville Elementary Fall Fair
Free Admission Food Trucks - Cotton Candy, Fizzy Fern, King Whippy, Calle Steelo, & Corn Dog Company Carnival...



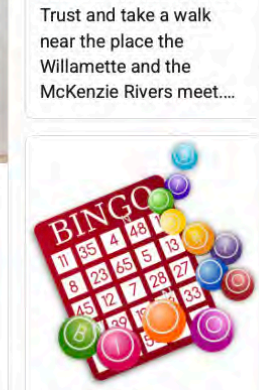
Sat Nov 14th 8:00am - 4:00pm
Living River Exploration Day
Join the McKenzie River Trust and take a walk near the place the Willamette and the McKenzie Rivers meet....



Sat Nov 14th 10:00am - 12:00pm
A Dime At A Time
Blue River Bottle Boys Collection/Sorting - Saturday morning sorting sessions every Saturday from 10-noon. Donation...



Sat Nov 14th 2:00pm - 3:00pm
Art Talk with Joanne Walch
Join us for Joanne Walch's Art Talk. Joanne Walch raised in the scenic McKenzie River area, Joanne draws...



Sat Nov 14th 7:00pm - 9:00pm
BINGO at VMCC
Bingo at the Center is a family (kids welcome) fun night - Doors open at 6:30 p.m. It is not the high dollar payout as...



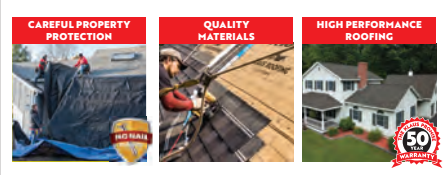
Sun Nov 15th 12:00pm - 3:00pm
Thankful Potluck



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Ghost Sightings at the Redmont Hotel

By Paul Alexander

Sitting in the rooftop bar at happy hour,
I see the lights of Birmingham
glowing against a hazy December sky.

On an evening like this one in 1952,
Hank Williams checked into a second-floor room
—so drunk a hotel down the street

refused to admit him—after arriving
in his powder-blue Cadillac chauffeured
by a teenager hired to drive him from his home

in Montgomery to gigs in Ohio and West Virginia.
Three women he invited up to his room
must have made the last night he was alive

a little less lonely, unaware, as he was,
that years of hard living had caught up with him.
Past midnight the next night,

on a curvy road in West Virginia,
his heart stopped as he lay bundled up in his coat
in the backseat of the Cadillac.

Today, I think of my father
who, like Williams, only needed a couple
of strong ones to make him turn belligerent.

I can see him in our den playing the guitar
as he sang, using his best country twang,
"I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry." I believed him.

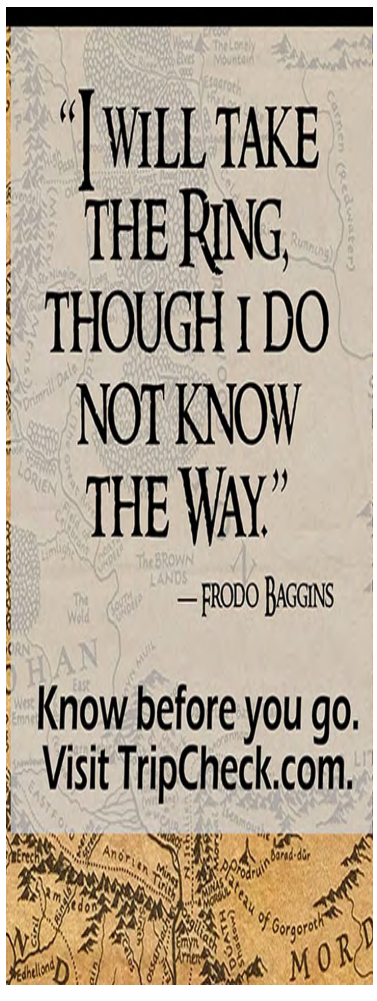
Over the years, my father often ended up
driving at night in his Cadillac
listening to Hank Williams on the stereo,

empty whiskey bottles rolling around
under the front seat each time he got pulled over.
I lost track of the times he was in and out of jail.

In the bar, the song changes. Suddenly,
his voice—that voice—fills the room.
And now I'm lost, too late to pray.
Lord, I've paid the cost on the lost highway.

Source: Poetry (October 2026)

Paul Alexander has published poems in The New Republic, Bennington Review, and The Sewanee Review. He is provost scholar of the arts and humanities at Hunter College.



MCKENZIE FIRE & RESCUE

Continued From Page 3

Nov. 7: 15:13: 90600 blk, Sunderman Rd. Mutual Aid Disregarded En Route by MVFR.

17:14: 41700 blk, Madrone St. Illegal Burn Informed Homeowner of LRAPA Regulations.

Nov.7: 20:19: 49200 blk, McK. Hwy. MVA. Assisted Dr.iver with Disabled Vehicle.

7:51: 51400 blk, Blue River Dr. Mutual Aid Assisted UMF with Assessment, 1 Transported.

Nov. 9: 4:09: 8500 blk, Thurston Rd. Medical, General. Patient Assessed, 1 Transported.

McK. Fire & Rescue will hold its monthly Board of Directors meeting on Monday, Monday, November 16, at noon, in the Leaburg Training Center.

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Need to talk? Call 988



Savings shown over aggregated single item base price. Free shipping will be applied to select package (SKU 82395). Minimum purchase of $99 per shipping address to qualify for free gift. 1 free gift per shipping address. The free gift does not apply to the purchase of Gift Cards, Certificates, Wine, Wine & Food Packs, Gift Baskets, Gourmet Salame, Caviar, and Custom Cuts. This offer cannot be combined with any other offer and is not valid on pending or prior purchases. Other restrictions may apply. Some products may not be available for sale in your area. While supplies last. Items may be substituted due to inventory limitations. Sales are subject to OmahaSteaks.com/terms-of-use. Expires 09/30/26. Omaha Steaks, LLC 26M10301

Home Country

Continued From Page 1

pocket.

h. Climb it to the tune of "The Hokey Pokey."

By using any one of these methods, you are guaranteed a First, providing no one else has climbed the peak before while using that method. If you suffer from a perpetually snakebit existence, you'll be unlucky enough to discover, after your record-smashing trek while packing a live monkey in a fanny pack, that someone else already did that, and with a larger monkey. But did he climb the mountain as fast as you did? Aha! Did he have as much rain on the trail as you did? Accc-Haaaa!

Another first.

For half a century now, people have made it to the top of Mt. Everest. It might be worth all the effort and training to get to the top of that mountain just to write in your journal, "…from there we turned downhill."

But now the trick is going to be, 1. climbing it without oxygen (already done), 2. climbing it alone (oops, did it that way, too), 3. climbing it more than once (yeah … they've done that already, too).

What's left? I wonder if the monkey in the fanny pack has to have oxygen…

Has anyone ever climbed it with nothing to eat but peanut butter sandwich-es?

Has anyone ever called a talk show from the summit?

All of this First stuff is simply to avoid having to say, "Yeah, I climbed that one, too."

No one likes rehash. There's no sense in it. If I ever climb a difficult moun-tain successfully, it will definitely be a First. I'll be able to say, "I made the first ascent of that peak under alcohol-enhanced conditions."

(Kids … don't try that at home.)

Usually the Firsts occur because a new route up the mountain is tried. This means if there is a good packed trail going to the summit, we go over about a quarter mile to an overhanging cliff and start up that sucker with nothing but fin-gernails until we reach so high up it would cause enuresis in a mountain goat.

Back in younger and more flexible days, I joined a certain search and rescue team to go get idiots' bodies out of impossible places. The actual rescues weren't too bad, because you just went in on adrenalin and got it done. But the practices were murder. You had to lean back to rappel down a vertical face, trusting your future to a nylon rope.

A person shouldn't do that.

After one retrieval of dead bodies, an old cowboy saw the sick expression on my face and felt overcome by sudden wisdom.

"Slim," he said, "you know why they tie them climbers together with ropes?"

I just shook my head.

"To keep the smart ones from going home."

.....

Brought to you by Dogsled, A True Tale of the North, by Slim Randles. Talk about challenging Nature for a cold death…. Kids, don't do it.

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SHERIFF'S REPORT

Continued From Page 3

and terrain. The deceased was a 59-year-old male. His full identity is being withheld until next of kin notifications are made. The circumstances leading to the man's death remain under investigation and currently there is no further information.

2:43 p.m: Incomplete 911 Call – Shotgun Creek Rd.

2:49 p.m: Disturbance Dispute - 37200 blk, Conley Rd.

Nov. 6: 9:27 a.m: Fraud - 88900 blk, Bridge St.

3:02 p.m: Restraining Order Service - 8400 blk, Thurston Rd.

4:21 p.m: Theft - 38400 blk, Railroad Ln.

5:13 p.m: Dog Bite - Waterville area.

8:46 p.m: Dog Bite - 55500 blk, Drury Dr.

Nov. 7: 3:17 p.m: Motor Vehicle Accident, No Injury - 90600 blk, Sunderman Rd.

3:35 p.m: Suspicious Conditions - Bridge St.

5:13 p.m: Motor Vehicle Accident, No Injury – McK. View Dr.

Nov. 8: 10:12:25 a.m: Tree Down - Blue River Reservoir Rd.

3:54 p.m: Information - 91800 blk, Mill Creek Rd.

Nov. 9: 12:13 a.m: Welfare Check - 36900 blk, Conley Rd.

3:51 a.m: Suspicious Conditions - 37200 Conley Rd. 7:15 a.m: Dispute - 90600 blk, Nadeau Rd.

4:14 a.m: Civil Service - 90800 blk, Marcola Rd. 10:58 a.m: Hit & Run - Leaburg area.

4:40 a.m: Motor Vehicle Accident, Unknown Injury - 7900 blk, Thurston Rd.

6:46 a.m: Attempt To Locate Drunk Driver - Marcola area.

10:54 a.m: Reckless Driving - Sunderman Rd.

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

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Fishing Report

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

Trout Stocking Schedule: Trout stocking is underway on many lakes and reservoirs throughout the state. The last releases of 8" to 10" hatchery fish were: McKenzie River above Leaburg Dam – 2,000.

Fish Counts

November 7, Willamette Falls

Fall Chinook – 1,324

Winter Steelhead – 31

A Moment in Oregon History

By Rick Steber
(www.ricksteber.com)

November 12 – It was said that Kate Rockwell was an impulsive and wild young woman. When gold was struck in the Klondike she ventured north to work as a dancehall performer and became a star and the favorite of every lonely miner. The miners bestowed a title on her, calling her, "Klondike Kate, Queen of the Yukon." After the gold gave out, Kate came to the High Desert of Central Oregon and filed on a homestead. But she admitted, "I was never cut out for repetitious labor." She gave up her homestead and moved to Bend. The residents of the mill town considered Klondike Kate as a rather colorful and controversial figure but she continued to live there until her death in 1957 at the age of eighty.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

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F	L	E	A	■	■	T	E	D	■	R	E	D	E	D

SUDOKU SOLUTION

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

Emergency? Call 911

Is there a way out of this Amazon account recovery black hole?



***Henry Dickson is trapped in a digital hall of mirrors after his** iPad crashes and requires a back-up restoration. Amazon's security system demands he approve a notification on an app he can't access. Can a loyal customer find a human at Amazon with the power to override a buggy algorithm?*

I've been an Amazon customer for more than 20 years. I've spent thousands of dollars on Amazon products, and even contributed to the Amazon Vine program.

Recently, my iPad was bricked—meaning it was rendered inoperable—during an update. After I rolled it back and reinstalled the Amazon shopping app, I tried to log in. The system asked me to approve a notification sent to the app on that very iPad. Since I was not logged in yet, I could not see or approve the notification.

Now I'm stuck in an endless loop. Amazon has a recovery link where you can upload a driver's license to prove your identity, but the link is useless. It requires you to log in before you can upload the documents. If I could log in, I would not need the recovery link.

I've spoken to a dozen representatives over several days. Some were nice, but most just read scripts and promised to escalate the case. Each escalation resulted in a form email containing the same link that does not work.

I even tried the account change team at a special phone number. A representative had me email my ID and confirmed he received it. Then I immediately got an automated bounce-back saying the address does not accept incoming emails.

I've lost access to my Prime benefits and my entire Kindle library. It feels like the company's tech support is nonexistent and designed to fob customers off. I just want to regain access to the account I have maintained for decades. Can you help?

Henry Dickson, Roswell, N.M.

Amazon should have a recovery process that works when you lose access to your primary device, like your iPad. A security system that requires you to be logged in to prove you can't log in is a cruel digital tautology.

Amazon should also ensure its account change team can actually receive the documents they request instead of pointing you toward a "no-reply" black hole.

You kept great records of your interaction with Amazon, which was really helpful. But it looks like you also made several increasingly frantic calls to Amazon. When you find yourself in a loop like this, stop calling the main support line. The front-line agents rarely have the authority to bypass two-factor authentication protocols.

Instead, reach out to an executive. I list Amazon executive contacts on my advocacy site who can actually make things happen.

I contacted Amazon on your behalf. At the same time, you took a chance and emailed an executive. While Amazon claimed your account was "compromised," it finally disabled the 2FA and the old password. The path back wasn't easy. You hit another wall when the system told you that your cell phone number was already in use. Eventually, Amazon allowed you to re-register your number and regain control.

"I know your wait has been frustrating and for that, I truly apologize," a representative wrote to you in a follow-up email.

I'm glad you got your account back. You mentioned you're having second thoughts about returning to Amazon after this. That's understandable. If a company makes it this hard to be a happy customer, maybe it's time to take your business elsewhere—somewhere that doesn't treat your identity like a math problem it can't solve.

Christopher Elliott is the founder of Elliott Advocacy (https://elliottadvocacy.org), a nonprofit organization that helps consumers solve their problems. Email him at chris@elliott.org or get help by contacting him at https://elliottadvocacy.org/help/

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Questions Remain

Continued From Page 1

covered in the McKenzie River drainage. The remains were subsequently identified as Sprenger's, although additional searches failed to uncover further evidence.

Three months later, in September 2023, another bone fragment was discovered in the McKenzie River and submitted to the Oregon State Police crime laboratory for testing.

After significant delays, the nonprofit organization Dylan's Legacy, which assists families of missing persons, helped Sprenger's relatives raise funds for private DNA testing through Bode Technology in Virginia.

The laboratory confirmed that the additional bone fragment belonged to Sprenger, and his family was notified of the results in August 2025.

Although the discoveries confirmed Sprenger's death, they did not resolve the circumstances surrounding his disappearance.

Family members have maintained that his sudden departure was completely out of character. In a 2022 letter published in McKenzie River Reflections, relatives described him as "the hardest worker we've ever known" and emphasized that he would not have voluntarily abandoned his tools and unfinished work.

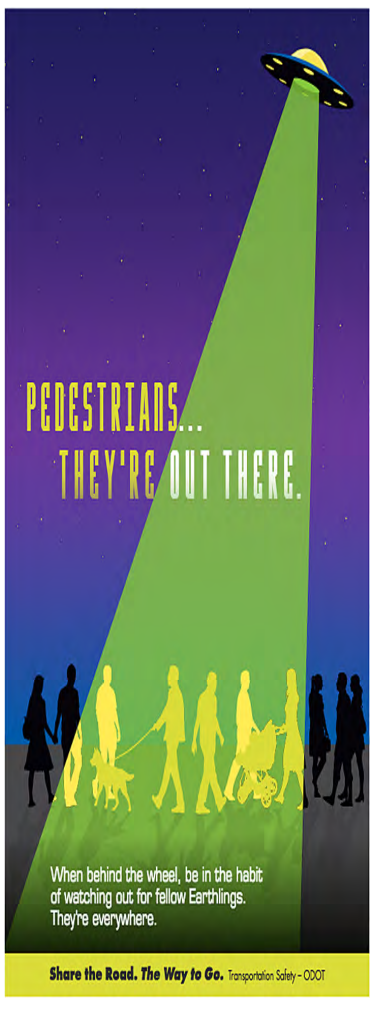
Throughout the investigation, the family has continued seeking information from anyone who may have noticed suspicious activity around Blue River Reservoir or nearby forest roads in early November 2021.

The case has drawn considerable attention throughout the McKenzie River Valley, where residents, friends and volunteers participated in searches and supported the family during years of uncertainty.

The Sheriff's Office has not announced any arrests or publicly identified a suspect in connection with the disappearance. Investigators have also not released a determination of how Sprenger died.

With the fifth anniversary of his disappearance now passed, detectives continue reviewing the case and pursuing information that could help explain what happened.

Anyone with information about Sprenger's disappearance is encouraged to contact the Lane County Sheriff's Office at 541-682-4141 and reference case number 21-6268. disappeared under suspicious circumstances near Blue River Reservoir, Lane County Sheriff's Office detectives continue investigating the case, hoping to determine what happened to the 47-year-old local contractor.



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Honoring Our Veterans: A Community's Gratitude

By Lane Tompkins
Superintendent
McKenzie Schools

As we enter the second week of November, I want to take a moment to recognize and express our sincere gratitude to the veterans of our community and across our nation. Veterans Day provides an important opportunity to honor the men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces and to reflect on the sacrifices they and their families have made in service to our country.

Here in the McKenzie Valley, we are fortunate to have veterans who are our neighbors, family members, friends, and community leaders. Some served decades ago, while others have returned home more recently. Their experiences and contributions are an important part of the fabric of our community.

While Veterans Day is recognized once a year, the gratitude we owe those who have served should extend well beyond a single day on the calendar.

For our students, Veterans Day also provides a meaningful opportunity to learn about service, sacrifice, responsibility, and citizenship. It is an opportunity to understand that the freedoms and opportunities we enjoy have been protected through the commitment of generations of Americans who answered the call to serve.

These are lessons that connect to our work as educators. At McKenzie, we strive to develop students who Think Critically, Communicate Effectively, and Act Responsibly. Understanding the contributions of veterans, appreciating the experiences of others, and recognizing our responsibilities to our communities are all important parts of becoming informed and engaged citizens.

Service can take many forms, and the example set by our veterans reminds us of the importance of contributing to something larger than ourselves. Whether through military service, volunteering, helping a neighbor, or supporting our community, each of us has opportunities to make a positive difference.

To the veterans throughout the McKenzie Valley, thank you for your service, your sacrifices, and your continued contributions to our community. To the families who have supported loved ones during their military service, we also extend our sincere appreciation. Your sacrifices deserve recognition as well.

As our school observes Veterans Day on Wednesday, November 11, I encourage our students and families to take a moment to thank a veteran, listen to their experiences, or reflect on the significance of their service.

Thank You for Attending Conferences!

I also want to extend my appreciation to all the parents and guardians who participated in last week's Parent/Teacher Conferences. I hope those conversations provided a productive opportunity to look back on the first quarter, celebrate student successes, identify areas for growth, and strengthen the partnership between home and school.

One of the greatest advantages of being a small school is the opportunity for meaningful relationships between students, families, and staff. Those relationships are strengthened when we take the time to communicate openly and work together toward shared goals.

With one week of the second quarter already behind us, we're off to a strong start! I encourage families to continue checking in with their students about their learning, staying connected with teachers, and reinforcing the habits that contribute to success throughout the school year.

Around McKenzie This Week

Monday, our middle school boys basketball team travels to Central Linn for a 4:30 p.m. tipoff. Tuesday evening, we'll recognize our fall student-athletes at the Fall Sports Awards in the cafeteria at 6:00 p.m. Congratulations to all our athletes and coaches on their efforts this season!

Wednesday is a No School Day in observance of Veterans Day. Thursday, middle school boys basketball returns home to host Triangle Lake at 4:30 p.m., and Friday, our WATERS program will be in session.

High school open gym will also be available from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, with no session Wednesday due to the holiday.

As we move further into November, I hope we can carry the spirit of gratitude that Veterans Day represents into our daily lives. We have much to be thankful for in the McKenzie Valley, including the people who have served our country, the families who support our schools, and the staff and community members who invest in our students.

To all our veterans, thank you. We are grateful for your service and proud to have you as part of the McKenzie community.

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Change Expected in Law That Bans Some Potlucks

Not only is a new law possible next year, clarification of how to enforce existing law may only be weeks away



These homemade pies were auctioned for the White Clover Grange's Pie Day earlier this year in Nehalem. Unless Oregon food laws and how they're interpreted changes, the future of the fundraiser is now in jeopardy. (Courtesy Trav Williams, Broken Banjo Photography)

By Penny Rosenberg

Last month, the Oregon Journalism Project reported that although the word "potluck" doesn't appear in state law, the Oregon Health Authority has determined that potlucks open to the public are "single-event temporary restaurants" and are therefore forbidden from serving food cooked in home kitchens.

Along the North Oregon Coast, some groups that held potlucks earlier this year received admonitions from local health inspectors along with a warning not to do it again.

In response, one 93-year-old women's group preemptively canceled its Christmas bake sale, which raises money for local scholarships. Liz Carroll, president of the North Tillamook County Women's Association, confirmed that this year's Holiday Fair, scheduled for later this month, won't include a bake sale component.

"We're working hard to make up the funds we would have raised," Carroll says.

Carroll herself has contributed cookies and breads to the cause over the years. "It's hard to let tradition go."

This story was produced by the Oregon Journalism Project, a nonprofit investigative newsroom for the state of Oregon. OJP seeks to inform, engage, and empower Oregonians with investigative and watchdog reporting that makes a significant impact at the state and local levels. Its stories appear in partner newspapers across the state.

Oregon's Merkley, Utah's Curtis propose extending military death benefits to fallen firefighters

Merkley introduced the bipartisan bill to give wildland firefighters' families the same $100,000 death benefit given to fallen U.S. military members' families

By Alex Baumhardt
Oregon Capital Chronicle

A financial benefit for surviving family members of wildland firefighters who die fighting blazes on federal lands could increase tenfold under a new bill proposed by Oregon's Democratic U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley and Utah's Republican U.S. Sen. John Curtis.

Merkley and Curtis on Monday introduced the Honoring Fallen Wildland Firefighters Act to provide for firefighters' families the up to $100,000 benefit currently extended to families of U.S. military members killed in combat. The federal government currently provides a maximum death benefit of $10,000 to federal wildland firefighters' families.

The bill would not only increase the benefit for those families, but extend it to privately contracted wildland firefighters and those employed by state and local fire agencies.

Merkley said in a statement it reflects the "ultimate sacrifice" firefighters make.

"We must do all we can to support our firefighters who risk so much in their service to communities in Oregon and across the nation," he said.

Two wildland firefighters were killed fighting fires in Oregon this year, one on the Wrights Spring fire in Klamath County, and the other on the Austin fire in Mount Hood National Forest. An average of 17 wildland firefighters die fighting fires on federal land each year, according to the National Interagency Fire Center and U.S. Forest Service.



Firefighters construct handline on the southeast portion of the McCully Fire in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest in Oregon on Aug. 24, 2026. (Photo courtesy of the National Interagency Fire Center)

Four firefighters died when they were trapped fighting a fire on the Utah-Colorado border in June, and two pilots perished when the helicopter they were using for firefighting crashed in Utah in August.

"Wildland firefighters willingly put themselves in harm's way to protect our homes, communities, and public lands," Curtis said. "When one of these brave men or women makes the ultimate sacrifice, we have an obligation to stand behind the family they leave behind."

Nearly a dozen firefighting, climate and timber associations and unions, including the National Federation of Federal Employees and the National Association of State Foresters, support the bill.

The U.S. Senate is in recess until after the November election.

Senior reporter Alex Baumhardt covers education and the environment for the Oregon Capital Chronicle. Before coming to Oregon, she was a national radio producer and reporter covering education for American Public Media's documentaries and investigations unit, APM Reports. She earned a master's degree in digital and visual media as a U.S. Fulbright scholar in Spain, and has reported from the Arctic to the Antarctic for national and international media and from Minnesota and Oregon for The Washington Post.

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Guest Opinion

Continued From Page 2

continuum would also strengthen working families, our economy and our communities by ensuring parents have reliable support and young people have opportunities to thrive.

Young people need healthy screen alternatives: safe places to go, trusted adults, peers to connect with and opportunities to discover what excites them. Afterschool and summer programs provide those experiences through sports, arts, STEM, outdoor activities, mentoring and hands-on learning.

These types of programs can improve attendance and academic outcomes while strengthening teamwork, communication, problem-solving and decision-making skills. Learning does not end at the last bell. By investing in opportunities outside the classroom, we help young people gain the confidence, connections and capabilities they need to succeed inside it.

But Oregon's access gap to these programs is enormous. America After 3PM research found that 5 out of every 6 Oregon children whose parents want them in afterschool cannot access a program. Families in underserved communities face some of the greatest barriers, even though their children stand to benefit greatly.

The settlement identifies youth-supporting programs as an intended use of the funds, but it does not guarantee that Oregon's share will be directed there. State leaders will have discretion over how the money is spent. With Oregon facing budget pressures, there will be temptation to use dollars elsewhere. They should resist it. A settlement rooted in harms to young people should be used to strengthen systems that support them.

This is a chance to focus on more than one-time grants. The attorney general, governor, Legislature, families, educators, early-learning providers and youth-development organizations can come together to create a durable framework that expands access and builds capacity long after the settlement dollars are spent.

Other states show what is possible. Vermont has established a Universal Afterschool and Summer Special Fund supporting a mixed-delivery system, while Minnesota created a Department of Children, Youth and Families that brings child care, early learning and youth services into a more coordinated structure. This is Oregon's opportunity to build its own approach, one that treats early learning, afterschool, summer and youth development as connected parts of a continuum.

Rayfield helped secure an important first step. We ask that he keep pushing for comparable protections across Snapchat, TikTok and YouTube, close the gaps that remain, and work with youth-development and early-learning leaders to ensure settlement resources strengthen the real-world places and programs children need to connect, learn, play and grow.

A settlement born from concerns about the digital world can become a catalyst for something larger: a safer online environment and a stronger, more equitable youth-development framework for Oregon's future.

Beth Unverzagt is executive director of OregonASK, a statewide network working to expand access to high-quality afterschool, summer learning and other expanded learning opportunities for Oregon children and youth. She has led OregonASK since its founding in 2005 and was named a White House Champion of Change in 2016 for her work advancing summer learning.

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Water Storage Network

Continued From Page 1

& Electric Board's Leaburg power canal, which has eliminated or reduced access to several traditional water collection sites.

Staffing is another concern: as volunteer participation declines, the district has fewer personnel available to operate equipment at remote water collection sites.

Because drawing water from a river or boat ramp often requires multiple firefighters for safety, personnel who could otherwise be fighting the fire are diverted.

McKenzie Fire & Rescue reports there are nine existing water storage locations, including the two recently completed. Five more are planned as funding and construction schedules allow, adding another 101,000 gallons of emergency water storage capacity.

Planned locations include EWEB's Lloyd Knox Park, Goodpasture Road, Mt. Hagen Road Mill Creek Road near Tokatee Golf Course.

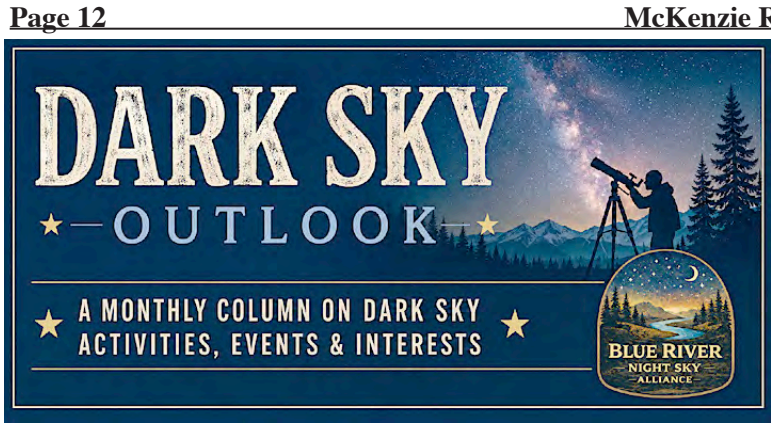
Once all five proposed tanks are installed, the district's storage network would have a combined capacity of approximately 240,000 gallons.

As the water storage project moves forward, McKenzie Fire & Rescue is seeking permission to use a portion of its existing PIER funding to purchase additional firefighting equipment. The proposed change in the project's scope would allow the district to acquire equipment needed to support fire suppression operations and help fill the new storage tanks.

Lane County commissioners will consider the request during a public meeting on Tuesday, November 17, at 9 a.m., which will include a presentation about the program and an opportunity for residents to provide testimon at the Lane County Public Service Building, 125 E. Eighth Ave., Eugene, with doors opening at 8:45 a.m. The meeting will also be available for viewing through the county's online webcast.

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DarkSky Advocates Support McKenzie Valley Tourism Corridor

By Ken Engelman

The McKenzie River Valley has long attracted visitors for fishing, camping and scenic beauty. Now, some people feel another natural resource could help strengthen the region's tourism economy - clear dark night skies.

Sha Spady, who leads a local effort to promote lower-impact outdoor lighting, envisions creating an internationally recognized dark-sky corridor between Springfield and Sisters, attracting visitors interested in stargazing and experiencing the Milky Way.

The concept builds on growing dark-sky tourism in Oregon, including the Oregon Outback International DarkSky Sanctuary in southeastern Oregon's Lake County, one of the world's largest designated dark-sky areas.

For the McKenzie Valley, where outdoor recreation has become increasingly important following the decline of timber harvesting, some see opportunities to attract additional visitors and support local businesses.

The effort has particular significance in Blue River, where rebuilding after the 2020 Holiday Farm Fire has included new outdoor lighting fixtures.

Spady recalled that immediately after the fire, much of the town was without electricity, leaving the area unusually dark. But after returning to her residence above town three years later, she noticed a new glow coming from the community.

Public buildings, including the rebuilt library, the fire station and the medical clinic were all surrounded by bright white lights.

While considerable attention had been devoted to rebuilding, local advocates believe looking at various types of outdoor lighting hadn't been a priority.

That discovery helped generate interest in incorporating DarkSky lighting into the zoning language Lane County is considering for Blue River.

Beyond obscuring the stars, excessive nighttime lighting can affect wildlife. Information presented at a community meeting explained how bright lights attracts insects away from the river, potentially reducing food available to fish. Artificial lighting can also disrupt bats and other nocturnal animals.

DarkSky Oregon expressed interest in assisting the effort and sent a specialist to inventory public lighting between McKenzie High School and the downtown area.

The assessment, which examined brightness, intensity and shielding, found there wasn't a single light in the area that met dark-sky recommendations.

The proposed solutions are relatively simple: direct illumination downward, use only the brightness needed, turn off unnecessary lights, and choose warmer amber or yellow lighting instead of harsh blue-white light.

Shielded fixtures can also prevent light from spilling into neighboring properties and waterways as well as up into the night sky.

Spady believes coordinated improvements involving homeowners, businesses, public facilities and Lane Electric Cooperative's security lighting could eventually help Blue River and the broader McKenzie Valley qualify for formal dark-sky recognition.

For now, the dark-sky corridor remains a proposal rather than a formally established program. Although Dark Sky Oregon has expressed interest by conducting the preliminary lighting assessment, Lane County has not come on board by adopting dark-sky lighting requirements.

Local advocates hope to build community support for lighting improvements involving residents, businesses, public facilities and utilities as a first step toward possible future DarkSky recognition.

For Blue River, still recovering from the Holiday Farm Fire, the proposal offers the possibility of combining environmental protection with new tourism opportunities - beginning with something as simple as using less light.



Ornament Hunt

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ensemble from the McKenzie Community Chorus, which will sing Christmas carols from 1 to 1:30 p.m. Mom's Pies will be on-site selling frozen pies and freshly baked slices, while Rollin' Dough and two or three additional food trucks are expected to serve visitors between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Members of Boy Scout Troop 216 will help direct parking during the event. Although donations are not required, contributions will be appreciated as the Scouts raise money for their 2027 activities.

The Discovery Center celebration will be part of a larger day of holiday activities throughout the McKenzie River Valley, with several community organizations and attractions welcoming visitors. The Leaburg Library will offer holiday stories and bookmark ornament activities, while the River Run Gallery will feature holiday crafts. The Leaburg Hatchery will also participate, providing games and activities for families. Farther upriver, the Vida McKenzie Community Center (VMCC) will host a live music fundraiser featuring pizza from the Stage Stop.

Additional festivities include the annual Christmas raft parade, scheduled for 4:30 p.m., and the lighting of the historic Belknap Bridge. Together, the activities will provide opportunities for families to spend much of the day exploring the valley, visiting local businesses and participating in community holiday traditions.

McKenzie River Valley are encouraged businesses to become involved by contributing lodging, dining, recreational experiences and other prizes that will help create a memorable McKenzie River getaway. The effort is designed not only to reward participants in the holiday celebration but also to introduce visitors to local businesses and encourage return trips to the valley. Donations being sought include one- or two-night stays at local lodging properties, with contributions combined to create a two-night getaway package.

Organizers are also seeking vouchers for family-friendly activities or attractions, along with gift cards valued at $50 or more for restaurants, wineries, breweries, outdoor recreation or other visitor experiences. Additional contributions could include wine, beer, culinary or regional experience passports that encourage visitors to explore more of the Willamette Valley and return for future visits. For local lodging operators, restaurants, outfitters and other tourism-related businesses, participation offers an opportunity to showcase their services to visitors who might otherwise be unfamiliar with the McKenzie River Valley.

The initiative also reflects continuing efforts to strengthen the valley's visitor economy by connecting local attractions and businesses with regional tourism promotions.

The Discovery Center event is being held in conjunction with WVVA's ninth annual Ornament Hunt, which runs from November 20 through December 31. This year's regional hunt will feature more than 350 locally crafted wooden ornaments hidden along nearly 40 trails throughout the Willamette Valley, the western Cascades and the Oregon Coast Range foothills.

Since its introduction in 2018, the Ornament Hunt has encouraged residents and visitors to explore public lands, discover new hiking destinations and recognize the volunteers who maintain the region's trails.

The WVVA is again partnering with Cascade Volunteers to place ornaments along participating trails. A complete list of locations is scheduled to be released on November 20. Participants who discover an ornament can register their find through WVVA's website for a chance to win a grand prize that includes a Willamette Valley getaway.

The new Ornaments for All Abilities event builds on that tradition while emphasizing that outdoor recreation and holiday celebrations should be available to everyone, regardless of physical ability.

For the McKenzie River Discovery Center, participation provides an opportunity to welcome new visitors, showcase the facility and strengthen connections with regional tourism organizations. Organizers are also seeking volunteers, business donations and community members interested in providing additional holiday activities.

People and businesses who'd like to participate can contact audrey@mrdiscoverycenter.org.

Additional information about the regional Ornament Hunt, participating trails and prize registration is available at www.willamettevalley.org/ornament.

With activities stretching from Leaburg to communities farther upriver, Dec. 5 is shaping up as a valley-wide holiday celebration that combines outdoor recreation, local shopping, music and family entertainment while highlighting the McKenzie River Valley as a year-round visitor destination.

Emergency? Call 911



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zlies of Griswold, both finishing with identical a 6-1, 7-1 overall records. The Cardinals of Ione/Arlington also posted a 6-1 SD 1 League record and an 8-1 overall mark, and are the third seeded team out of, arguably the State's toughest 6-man football League. Tigers tangling with Elk, Cougars cat-fighting with Cardinals, Cowboys and Mustang rodeo, and Wolves tooth and claw with Grizzlies. Can't wait to see how the dust settles!

North Lake Cowboys
Rope A State Title
4th ranked Cowboys
Beat #2 and #1
To Earn State Championship

Well, it's been said everyone loves an underdog in a game. Or in this case a volleyball match. But it stands to reason that the fine folks from Central Christian in Redmond and those from up North in Dufur would not be on the same plane with that statement, understandably. The 4th ranked Cowboys from North Lake, representing the Mt. Valley League as its second place team, dispatched their OSAA State Class 1A Quarterfinal opponent, Damascus Christian, 3-1, winning the first set 25-20, dropping set 2, 21-25, and winning the next two sets, 25-15 and 25-22.

That match victory set the Cowboys on a collision course with the number one ranked team in the State, the Central Christian Tigers, the one and same team that won the Mt. Valley League ahead of the Cowboys and who had also beat North Lake on their previous two meetings, 3-1 and 3-0. But in the world of competition, it has also been stated many times, that it is hard to beat the same opponent three times in a row.

Evidence presented, the two MVL rivals squared up in the OSAA State Semifinals and North Lake blanked Central Christian, 3-0, and did so decisively. Set one 25-4, two 25-15, and the final set 25-19. That dropped Central Christian into the Championship Consolation game versus Joseph, who suffered a 3-2 Semifinal loss to Dufur.

So what happens when you upset the top-ranked team and earn a berth in the Championship game? Well, you ride the wave, even if you are still wearing your spurs.

The Cowboys of North Lake rode the wave alright, figuring correctly that since nothing seemed broken, don't engage in fixing. The second ranked Dufur Rangers were added to the pile of Cowboy upset victims, this time, by a 3-1 score (25-22, 20-25, 25-20, and 25-23). The Championship match was a hard-fought battle, worthy of the moment, by two very well-coached teams.

But in the end, the underdog won the day and the hearts of many, except in Redmond and Dufur.

On the other side of the Class 1A bracket, Echo defeated Damascus Christian, 3-0, to claim the Consolation Championship and the fourth-place trophy. Both Open Door Christian Academy and Sherman were eliminated in Consolation action. Joseph defeated Central Christian, 3-0, for third place in the Championship bracket.

In Class 2A Championship play, Imbler defeated Crane, 3-2 to win the Blue Trophy for the Wapati League Panthers. Heppner earned the third-place trophy by defeating Myrtle Point, 3-1 and St. Paul finished the season with a fourth-place trophy, beating Regis, 3-1. Top-ranked Burns finished the season at the top by defeating second-ranked Dayton, 3-1, in Class 3A action. Sisters won the third-place trophy with a tough 3-2 win over Catlin Gabel and Creswell came home with the fourth place trophy win over Westside Christian, 3-1.

Knappa Loggers Boys/
Union Bobcats
Win OSAA State 2A/1A
XC Championships

The Knappa Boys and the Union Girls Cross Country teams finished first in the OSAA State XC Championships held at Lane Community College on Saturday, November 7. Knappa scored a low of 32 points in the 5,000 meters race and the Union Boys team followed in second with 70 points. Bandon was third with 113 points.

On the girls' side, Union finished with 40 points and Lakeview finished second with 46 points. Bandon girls, just like their male teammates, finished third with 54 points.

Individually, Bandon's Beckett Pahls won the boys Championship, finishing with a time of 15:52.6 minutes. Following close behind in second was Rowdy Justis of Knappa in a time of 15:59.4 minutes. Kyler Rodriguez of Knappa took third in 16:22.4 minutes. The girls individual Champion was Jael Legutki of Bandon who finished her race in 18:57.9 min. Evelyn Hodgson of Weston-McEwen followed in second in a time of 19:08.5 minutes and Trout Lake's Melody Stock was third in 19:19.1 min. Austyn Hardwig of Triangle Lake finished sixteenth with a time of 21:12.4 min.

Long Fall Drought
Continues Locally
Eagles Missing
Championship Rounds

It's been kind of a long dry spell for Eagle Fall athletics, that is, in qualifying for State Championship post season play. McKenzie football's last appearance in a championship contest was in 2018, when the Eagles, coached by Fred Heins, lost to Joseph, 64-13, at Madras High in an unofficial 6-man playoff format. That season OSAA was experimenting with 6-man football and had not officially sanctioned it.

Prior to that season, however, one has to go clear back to the 2011 season when McKenzie, coached by Neil Barrett, lost to visiting Sherman, 76-36, in a State 8-man First Round game. That's 15 years past.

The last time McKenzie brought home a State trophy (2nd place 8-man) goes all the way back to the 2004 season, under Head Coach Rick Gardner, when the Eagles lost to Perrydale, 48-32, in the State Championship game held at Autzen Stadium. The prior season, 2003, McKenzie won the State 8-man third place trophy.

Other State football appearances were Quarterfinals in 1972, 1974, 1975, First round in 1980, 1981, 1983, and 1990, all coached by Wade Thomas.

Volleyball hasn't been quite as long missing. The Eagles made it to the First-Round playoffs in 2019 under Head Coach Lorinda Marcy, when their season came to halt due to a 3-0 defeat by North Douglas.

The Eagles last earned a State trophy, sixth place, in the 2010 season held in Forest Grove. For the record, Eagle volleyball won the State's fourth place Class 1A trophy in 1976, led by Coach Carol Baker, and fourth place again in 2009, under Head Coach Dan Brenner. Baker's teams made state appearances in 1977, 1978 and 1979. The Eagles made it back in 1980 under Head Coach Mary Lou Armstrong. Coach Brenner had a great run going, his teams qualifying in seasons 2008, 2011-2018 (eight consecutive seasons)

Two seasons ago, 2024, Eagle junior (at the time) Will Meister broke through the long Cross Country dry spell by qualifying as an individual for the OSAA State XC Championships, where he finished 52nd. Meister didn't make the cut his senior season. Prior to Meister's 2024 bid, no Eagle boy earned that distinction going all the way back to 2009, when Michael Sherman, as a senior, placed 16th in the State Championships.

The last McKenzie girl cross country qualifiers was in 2011 and those two athletes were Sarah Sherman and Taya Harbick. Sherman finished her 5,000 meters State Championship race in 11th place and Harbick followed in 20th place.

For the record, McKenzie has won one State Football Championship, in 1969, when the Eagles, under Head Coach Wade Thomas, finished the Class B-11 man football season, 11-0, defeating Pine Eagle in Halfway, 31-25.

McKenzie Cross Country Boys teams won the State Championship Class A team title in 1973 and 1975 and the 2004 Class 2A-1A title. The 1973 team was coached by Vic Casteel, the 1975 team by Jack Stoops and the 2004 team by Jeff Sherman.

Eagle Boys XC teams earned second place trophies in 1959, 1972, and 1976, third place in 1989, 2006, and fourth place in 1960, 1962, 1963, 1990, and 1991. The Eagles also finished ninth in 1961, fifth in 1980, tenth in 1986, 1987, and 1988, eighth in 1992, fourteenth in 2005 and twelfth in 2007.

As for individual cross country State Champions, Dave Rees was the Eagles first, winning back-to-back in 1959 and 1960. Scott Spruill accomplished the same outcome, winning and repeating in 1975 and 1976. David Sherman was McKenzie's last to date State Champion, winning the title in 2006.

McKenzie cross country has seen 43 boy's athletes in the past score in the top twenty at the State Championships.

As for the girl's cross-country past, McKenzie teams placed tenth in 2005 and eleventh in 1998. Eleven Eagle girls have placed in the top twenty at past State Championships.

That's a rich history of McKenzie Fall Athletics. (Note: Great thanks and appreciation to Scott Spruill for his work and dedication to McKenzie Sports History which helped provide the above statistics).

Six Years After Holiday Farm Fire, Millions of New Trees Are Restoring Area Forests

Weyerhaeuser's reforestation effort surpasses Mount St. Helens replanting as burned landscapes are transformed



After the fire 260 harvest units were created as crews worked across the landscape removing burned timber, rebuilding roads, and replacing fire-damaged culverts.

Six years after the Holiday Farm Fire, the McKenzie River Valley is showing signs of regrowth: millions of young trees now cover hillsides that the flames had left black. Across its timberlands within the fire's footprint, Weyerhaeuser planted more than 21.4 million seedlings between 2021 and 2026—the largest reforestation effort in the company's history, exceeding even its replanting work after the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens.

The September 2020 wildfire, fueled by powerful east winds and exceptionally dry conditions, burned more than 173,000 acres along the river corridor. Homes and businesses were destroyed, along with vast stretches of forest, including about 52,000 acres of Weyerhaeuser timberland burned.

For Debbi Dalrymple, a Springfield-based Weyerhaeuser forester with more than four decades of experience in the region's forests, the destruction was particularly difficult to witness.

"It happened on such a massive scale," Dalrymple recalled. "To look across the landscape and just see nothing but burn, ridge top after ridge top… I'd spent the last 20 years establishing and growing stands of trees. Having them erased by fire created a profound sense of loss."

"The fire wiped out all of our previously delineated stand boundaries and age classes," she said. "We basically had to start all over."

Replanting could not begin until foresters had assessed the damage across thousands of acres, a complicated task in itself. To determine burn severity and identify areas suitable for replanting, technical teams relied on aerial photography, historical records and field inspections.

Intense wildfires can reduce organic matter and the soil's ability to retain moisture, making growing conditions difficult for young trees, and the extent of damage varied considerably across the burned landscape.

At the same time, logging crews set about salvaging fire-damaged timber, while engineers worked to restore access to areas where roads, drainage systems and other infrastructure had been damaged.

Across its timberlands, the company established 260 harvest units to organize salvage operations and prepare for future forest management. Access roads were repaired and rebuilt, and hundreds of culverts damaged by the fire were replaced.

Weyerhaeuser's Springfield operation typically planted approximately 1.4 million trees annually before the Holiday Farm Fire. Several times that number, spread over multiple planting seasons, was needed to restore the burned timberlands. Crews planted more than 21.4 million seedlings within the Holiday Farm Fire burn area from 2021 through 2026.

The McKenzie Valley restoration formed part of a much larger effort to recover from the devastating 2020 Oregon wildfires; statewide, the company planted 28.5 million trees under its post-fire reforestation program. Seedling production was expanded by 45 percent to meet the increased demand.

"We were very driven to get those trees back on the landscape," Dalrymple said. "It had to happen."

Along the McKenzie River corridor, the replanting effort's results are becoming increasingly apparent: young Douglas-fir trees are growing across hillsides the fire left blackened and largely barren. Weyerhaeuser has kept up monitoring of seedling survival, management of competing vegetation and evaluation of growing conditions to improve the success of its new forest stands. Some of the earliest plantings have done better than expected.

"The first year we planted actually had the best survival," Dalrymple said. She credited that success partly to reduced competition from other vegetation and to nutrients made available after the fire.

Shane Conway, Weyerhaeuser's vice president of Western Timberlands, called the restoration an extraordinary undertaking.

"The scale of the effort in front of the Springfield team to restore the acres impacted by the fire was beyond comprehension," Conway said.

"While I hope we never have to work through another challenge of this magnitude, the perseverance and grit it took to get to this point makes seeing the forest return that much more meaningful."