



West Valley Bulletin Board

November 26, 2025 Weekly Publication Serving Sheridan, Willamina, and Grand Ronde Vol. 11, No. 41

Nicole Pugh owner & Janos Vamos journalist • bulletinwestvalley@gmail.com • (503) 687-3000 • 136 E. Main Street, Sheridan

Mimi's Story Time Gets Mayoral Reading at Willamina Public Library

Willamina Mayor Vickie Hernandez, who is often seen reading aloud agenda points during the monthly Willamina City Council meetings, can now add YouTube content creator to her resume.

The 25-year Human Resources employee of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, who now serves as Mayor of Willamina, was a guest reader on Pamela Warren-Chase's newly created YouTube channel, *Mimi's Story Time*.

Pamala, who enjoys reading

books to her grandchildren, got the idea of recording herself on her cell phone reading aloud so she could send it to her grandkids, letting them enjoy *Mimi's Story Time*, anytime, anywhere. Her husband, Anthony Chase, along with his son, Anthony Shane Chase, had a bigger idea.

And just like that, *Mimi's Story Time* was announced on YouTube in July 2025, bringing Pamala's story reading available to kids of all lineages.

So the family got to creating,

working through Capital Community Media, a community-based Salem area multimedia production and training center where the family has taken media courses. Anthony and Pamala stated that the class cost is very minimal, and you can borrow equipment and/or one of their studios for free after taking their courses.

The family, after creating a couple of episodes for the channel, decided to branch out of their home and reached out to local libraries about the possibility of doing book readings there.

The idea was presented to the Willamina Public Library board, all eager to bring the project onboard, and the idea was brought up on whether she would welcome guest readers on the program.

After some conversation, Willamina Mayor Vickie Hernandez was slated to be

the first guest reader in the 9th episode of *Mimi's Story Time*, during its first-ever public production at the Willamina Public Library on November 20.

Mayer Hernandez was excited to take part, picking out two books for the reading, one of her grandkid's favorites, *Barnyard Dance* by Sandra Boynton, followed by a tongue-twister of a story that she chose, *The Wonky Donkey* by Craig Smith and Katz Cowley.

It will take a little time before the stories join the four current episodes on their channel, @MimisStoryTime1111 on YouTube, as Capital Community Media will have first dibs on playing the content on their platform. Once uploaded, children anywhere, anytime can listen and read along, as the book is also shown, side-by-side with Pamala, as she reads during *Mimi's Story Time*.



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SALE PENDING

Willamina 4-bedroom home is tucked away in a peaceful, tree-filled setting with a cozy country vibe. Many updates in 2021. Front and back decks, metal roof, a large detached garage/shop, fenced yard, and extended parking. \$354,900



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Willamina Mayor Vickie Hernandez (right) guest reads on Pamala Warren-Chase's (left) *Mimi's Story Time*, a YouTube channel that was born from Pamala's love of reading books for her grandkids.



West Valley Bulletin Board

WILL BE CLOSED THURSDAY & FRIDAY TO CELEBRATE AND RECOVER FROM THANKSGIVING. WE APOLOGIZE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE AND WISH EVERYONE A Happy Thanksgiving

WANTED, NEW LISTINGS



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- Modern school campus in Sheridan
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 - We are particularly motivated to partner with innovative education organizations
- What are your dreams for education opportunities in Yamhill County? Let's Brainstorm! Contact: 503-435-9760

Estate Sale

BLACK FRIDAY ESTATE SALE Nov 28, 29 & 30, Fri & Sat 10AM-5PM, Sunday 10AM - 3PM 427 NE Yamhill, Sheridan.

- * Furniture & Books
- * Audio Equipment & Electronics
- * Christmas Items & Decor
- * Fabric & Crafts
- * Kitchen & Dining Room Items
- * 1970s & 1990s Collectibles

Services

Sheridan Auto Detailing, 148 N. Bridge St. in Sheridan, is now offering full details. Interior details, exterior detailing, and ceramic coating. We also detail RVs, boats, and farm equipment, including tractors and combines. Call 971-237-9649. (C)

Signs of Spike offers pinstripe repair, mobile service, car waxing, headlight polishing, and lawn mowing. Call 503-899-8537.

Shaun Wagler offers many services, including: house/pet sitting, personal mover, lawn care, car detailing, pressure washing, designated driver, scrap removal, wood/brush cutting, gutter cleaning, trash removal, and more. Call 971-241-4860 or email shaunwagler1@yahoo.com to discuss your needs today. (12/31)

Employment

River Park Senior Living is now hiring caregivers, housekeepers, and a maintenance worker. Wage DOE. Come in to apply or email your resume to patty.angus@agingways.com. (C)

Wanted

Wanted - Vintage Christmas ornaments and costume jewelry. Price paid depending on item. Call 503-481-8549. (P11/5)

Wanted - One bedroom cat (1) friendly Apartment. Excellent references available. Please Call 503-435-8373. (P11/5)

Riding Lessons

Horse Riding Lessons- available for all ages and have after school options. Call/text M&R AT 503-949-7201.

Volunteers Needed

Northwest Senior and Disability Services is seeking volunteer help at our Sheridan location to deliver meals to home bound seniors. We deliver meals three days a week and would like additional help at least one day a week. Our volunteers are eligible for a hot meal on the days they work and mileage is reimbursed. Please feel free to call (503) 843-2000 and learn more.



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Obituary



AvaJan "AJ" Grauer

Nov. 29, 1953 – Nov. 13, 2025

AvaJan "AJ" Grauer, 71, of McMinnville, Oregon, passed away peacefully on November 13, 2025, surrounded by her loving family. Born on November 29, 1953, in Rochester, Minnesota, to Frances (Fran). AJ was oldest of four sisters (Roxann, Gail, & Tammy). She grew up in Lebanon, Oregon, where she graduated from Lebanon High School in 1971 and played saxophone in the Lebanon Stage Band. She would reflect about her childhood, often speaking about the bakery her family owned and working on the farm.

AJ attended Oregon College of Education (now Western Oregon University) in Monmouth, earning her degree in Education. On March 19, 1977, she married the love of her life, Dennis Grauer. Together they shared 48 wonderful years of marriage and raised two children, Travis Grauer and Jena Hendricks.

AJ began her teaching career at Yamhill-Carlton Grade School before taking a decade off to devote herself to raising her chil-

dren and supporting their family equipment repair business. She later returned to education as a substitute teacher at Sheridan High School, eventually earning a full-time position. Her dedication and leadership led her to serve as Principal and later, Superintendent of Sheridan School District, where she retired after a distinguished career shaping young lives.

In retirement, AJ (lovingly referred to as Oma) cherished time with her grandchildren — Mason, Caleb, Maci, and Hadley. She loved building Legos, gardening, cheering them on in their sports, spending peaceful days in Central Oregon, or dreaming about her next adventure.

AJ will be remembered for her unwavering commitment to education, her love for family, and her warm, generous spirit. She leaves behind her husband Dennis, children Travis (& wife Laycee) and Jena (& husband Jeff), grandchildren Mason, Caleb, Maci, and Hadley, and countless friends, family, and colleagues whose lives she touched.

A celebration of AJ's life will be held at Sheridan High School on November 29th, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. A viewing will take place earlier that morning at Macy & Son Funeral Home from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. A graveside service will be held at Green Crest Memorial in Sheridan at 10:00 a.m. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly invites donations to a local education foundation in AJ's honor.



ADVERTISING

In the West Valley Bulletin Board

is as low as \$15 per week

Don't have a design? Graphic design is included in the advertising price.

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Hey kids! It's Time to Write Santa a Letter!

Drop your letter to Santa in the special mailboxes at the West Valley Bulletin Board, or Willamina IGA

Be sure to drop off your letter between Now and Dec. 12 so Santa will have time to answer your letter. Make sure to put your address on your letter for Santa.

SHERIDAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY

**2026 Museum Calendars
On Sale Now!**

**Saturdays 10-3 at the
Sheridan Museum of History**

\$15 each

3 or more \$12 each

2026 CALENDAR

Annual Scout Christmas Tree Sale

Sheridan's Troop 215 has been selling Christmas Trees for over 25 years.

The sale begins Nov 29

M-F 4-7 pm

Sat-Sun 12 noon-7 pm

SW Railroad and Bridge streets across from Sheridan Building Materials, next to City Hall.

Please help support our Scouts this holiday season.





Bulletinwestvalley@gmail.com

Warm Fuzzies

Thank you to all who helped support the Grand Sheramina Food Bank Thanksgiving distribution. Your donations of cash, cans, bottles, and food helped make Thanksgiving Dinner for some West Valley families a reality, and we could not have done it without you.

~Grand Sheramina Food Bank

A Message from the Sheridan Superintendent

Happy Thanksgiving Week!

Sheridan Schools are committed to making the holidays a festive time for all of our students and families.

As we enter the holiday season, it's a great time to remember there are a number of organizations who share this mission and are working hard to make the season bright for everyone, whether you want to help or need some extra support.

Holiday Food Boxes - Contact your local food bank if you need to receive a food box. Churches United for West Valley is collecting donations from those wishing to help cover costs, \$25 covers the cost of one box.

Sheridan Tree of Giving - pick up a gift tag at any of the following locations: Mercantile, Sheridan Pharmacy, First Federal Bank.

Coat Drive - Various locations around town are collecting new coats through December 1 for students in West Valley.

Wrapping Paper - Sheridan Methodist Church is collecting wrapping paper to wrap donated gifts.

Also, be sure to mark your calendars for the following holiday concerts:

- SHS Choir/Band Concert: Tuesday, December 16 at 6:30pm
- FCS Elementary Christmas Concert: Wednesday, December 17 at 5pm
- FCS Middle School Christmas Concert: Thursday, December 18 at 6pm

All are free and open to the public.

Sheridan Schools will be closed for the holidays on the following days:

- Thanksgiving Break: Wednesday, November 26 through Friday, November 28
- Christmas Break: Monday, December 23 to Friday, January 3

Wishing you all a safe and happy Holiday Season!

Sincerely,
Dorie Vickery Ed. D.
Superintendent

Sheridan School District
School District Office: 971-261-6959
Sheridan High School: 971-261-6970
Faulconer Chapman School: 971-261-6960

Holiday Activities Dates Are Set to Light Up the West Valley In December

The West Valley is set to ring in the holidays starting Dec. 3 with calls to Santa. From 6-8 p.m. kids can call and talk to the man himself at 503-843-3811, if parents would like to communicate some info beforehand to prep Santa they are encouraged to do so by emailing sheridan.rotary1@gmail.com or on Facebook messenger Sheridan Oregon Rotary Club.

Letters to Santa are being accepted at The West Valley Bulletin Board office 136 E. Main St., Sheridan, at the IGA store in Willamina. Make sure to have a good return address so Santa can write back. Deadline to drop off is Dec. 12.

Home Christmas light contests are underway in both Willamina and Sheridan, both are offering cash prizes, the first-place winner of each is \$100. To register your home in Willamina visit willaminaoregon.gov/lightscontest or drop by Willamina City Hall. Willamina's deadline to enter is Dec. 17, and you can pick up your maps, ballots, and free hot chocolate at Coyote Joes from 5-7 p.m. Dec. 20. To register your home in Sheridan email Bulletinwestvalley@gmail.com, drop by the Bulletin Board office, or message on Facebook at West Valley Bulletin Board. Deadline for registering to appear on the map in Sheridan is Dec. 10.

Santa is visiting friendly pets at The West Valley Mercantile on

Saturday Dec. 6 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. to pose for pictures.

Willamina's Christmas Lights Parade is Saturday Dec. 6, line-up starts at 5 p.m. with the parade starting at 6 p.m. The parade ends at the Fire Hall where Santa will be visiting, the city will light up the tree, the high school band will be performing, and there will be free cider, cookies and candy canes for the kids.

Sheridan's Christmas Lights Parade is Saturday Dec. 13, line-up starts at 5 p.m. with the parade starting at 6 p.m. The parade ends at the Sheridan High School where the tree will be lit, kids can meet Santa and get a gift, Rotary will be providing free hot chocolate, and you can pick up maps for the Deck the House decorating contest. Neither parade requires pre-registration just show up with you or your rig lit up.

A Little Bit Country Daycare located at 31741 SW Savage Rd., in Sheridan, is holding open house on Dec. 14, and 21, where Mr. and Mrs. Claus can be found posing for pictures from noon-7 p.m. there will also be crafts and cookies.

The Sheridan Museum of History is holding a Homemade Christmas Bazaar now through Dec. 20 between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. every Saturday.

Sheridan's Small-Town Christmas Bazaar will be held from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Dec. 13-14 at the Sheridan High School.

WEST VALLEY COMMUNITY CAMPUS

The community garden has been able to donate 626 pounds of food to local area food banks and individual seniors.

Thank you to those individuals and businesses who sponsor and support the garden, especially, Wilco, Western Waste, Sam Stewart, and Jennifer Mueller. Sam and Jennifer have offered amazing help and dedication.

Sponsored by WEST VALLEY FUNERAL HOME
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Our Best Thanksgiving Wishes To Our Amazing Community From Your Local Businesses!

We Deeply Appreciate Your Support and Loyalty

Sheridan Rotary
P.O. Box 322 • Sheridan

**Green Crest
Memorial Park**
office@greencrest
memorialpark.net
503-843-3420

Sheridan Fire District
233 SW Mill • Sheridan
503-843-2467

City of Willamina
City Council & Staff
411 NE C • Willamina
503-876-2242

City of Sheridan
120 SW Mill • Sheridan
503-843-2347
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**West Valley
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**Willamina Coastal Hills
Chamber of Commerce**
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503-472-6114

**Sheridan Chamber
of Commerce**
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Ruff Life Rescue
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Grand Ronde • 503-879-5003

West Valley Mercantile
342 S. Bridge • Sheridan
503-843-9088

Delphian School
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Hurricane Coffee
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971-241-2564

**Sheridan Family
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503-843-3888

Stuck Electric
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503-843-2322

**West Valley
Funeral Home**
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503-843-2525

Hofenbredl Realty
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Sheridan Pharmacy
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503-843-2422

**Sheridan Museum
of History**
142 S. Bridge • Sheridan
Open 11am-3pm Sat.

Angel Bookkeeping
421 Main • Willamina
971-237-1230

**Grand Ronde
Water Association**
26690 Hwy 18
Grand Ronde
503-879-5624

**The Confederated
Tribes of Grand Ronde**
9615 Grand Ronde Rd.
Grand Ronde, OR 97347

Hampton Lumber Mills
Willamina Division

**Sheridan
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ARE YOU DRINKING KANGEN WATER?



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THE HYDRATION STATION

Food Pantry Prepping For Thanksgiving Need

The Grand Shermina Food Pantry needs your help to "Feed the Need" for holiday food boxes. The organization is requesting holiday side dishes: canned corn and green beans, dressing, fruit cocktail, potatoes, sugar, and flour. Cash donations are also needed to buy butter, milk, and other perishable items for their Christmas boxes. Stop by on Monday or Tuesday to donate. The food pantry is located at 120 North Bridge Street, or call Judy at (503) 313-5702 or judyadams123@yahoo.com.



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Sheridan School District Secures \$500,000 Federal Grant to Enhance School Safety

News Release From Sheridan School District

SHERIDAN, OR – November 12, 2025 – The Sheridan School District is pleased to announce it has been awarded a \$500,000 federal grant through the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP). The funding will be used to enhance physical safety and emergency preparedness measures at both Faulconer-Chapman (grades K-8) and Sheridan High School.

The \$500,000 award will be used to update badge-based access control, upgrade surveillance technology, expand exterior lighting and modernize intercom and emergency notification systems. Entry areas at both schools will also be evaluated for enhanced security, as will areas of school grounds that remain unfenced. This investment underscores the district's proactive commitment to providing a secure learning environment for all students and staff. The improvements will be implemented in coordination with the Yamhill County Sheriff's Office, Yamhill County Emergency Management and the Willamette Service District to ensure systems are responsive, integrated and aligned with broader emergency response plans.

"We are very grateful to the COPS program for recognizing our commitment to student safety with this critical funding," said Dorie Vickery, Superintendent of Sheridan School District. "This grant will allow us to make significant upgrades to currently aging systems and shows the importance we place on safety in our schools."

The improvements will impact the safety of over 700 students and 100 staff members across both schools. The COPS School Violence Prevention Program is a competitive grant designed to improve security at schools and on school grounds. It supports efforts by state, local, and tribal authorities to provide a safer environment for students through evidence-based violence prevention programs.

Word Scramble

Use the letters and clues below to unscramble the words related to International Computer Security Day (Nov. 30). Place the letters from the circles on the dashes at the bottom to solve the last remaining word.

□ ○ □ □ □ □ □

R E K C H A

□ □ □ ○ □ □ □

C R A B H E

○ □ □ □ □ □ □

T I I D G L A

□ □ □ □ □ ○ □ □ □

T O E R U M P C

What do computers and Captain Picard protect?

— — — —
○ ○ ○ ○



Last weeks answers

**Hasbro, Token,
Hotel, Monocle,
Chance, Utility,
Thimble**

Sheridan City Council Meeting: Southside Open and Last Official Act

The Sheridan City Council held its regular meeting on November 17 at Sheridan City Hall. Some key points of the meeting were as follows:

Yvonne Hamilton performed her last official act as City Recorder for the City of Sheridan before she retired on November 18 (see Yvonne Hamilton Retires article), swearing in City Manager Preston Polasek, Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Amber Mathiesen, and Compliance Officer/Community Services Coordinator Kaihdan Trombla.

Community resident Michael Michaelson brought his public comment before the council, raising a concern he had heard from three fellow residents about a possible shutdown of parking on W Main St., due to an oversize load that was going to be coming through town. He was out of town at the time of the notice. Michael stated, "The truck should not have been on that bridge in the first place; that's a driver error, not a resident of town error. You got handicapped residents of the apartment next door, that can't walk a block. I live there too. I'm able-bodied. I park at the end of the block so the lady next door, that has a young child, can park closer. But my concern is for other people. They should be able to park there. That should not be shut down because of a driver error. We need to be doing something against those companies, those drivers, hold them accountable, not your residents of town. I'm asking the city to look into that. If it was something that didn't come up, please reconsider and look into it from that angle."

Yvonne was presented the Excellence Award by Mayor Cale George and the Oregon Municipal Records Association Legacy Award, which was presented by former Sheridan Mayor, Harry Cooley.

The third reading of Ordinance 2025-05, amending chapter 13.04.480 of the Sheridan Municipal Code relating to water rates and charges, was voted on and approved. Water rates will increase for all residential and commercial customers on the City of Sheridan grid, both in and out of city limits, from \$8.28 to \$8.53 per 100 cubic feet (cf) of water used. The average household usage in February of 605 cf will see an increase of \$1.51 for the month. The August

household average of 1,070 cf will see an increase of \$2.68 on that month's bill. This increase will go into effect starting January 1, 2026, and will be reflected on the first bills mailed in 2026.

The third reading of Ordinance 2025-06, amending chapter 13.12.260 of the Sheridan Municipal Code relating to sewer user charges, was voted on and approved. The 3 percent rate increase will increase equivalent residential unit (ERU) rates by \$1.48 per month (see November 17 agenda packet for more specific information). Standard households will see their monthly bill go from \$49.38 to \$50.86 per month. The increase will go into effect starting January 1, 2026, and will be reflected on the first bills mailed in 2026.

Council approved a contract with the Strategic Economic Development Corporation (SEDCOR). The contract includes management of the Enterprise Zone, business recruitment and retention services, and other business support services at the direction of the City Manager. The contract will not exceed \$25,000 unless otherwise approved by the City Council.

Contracted City Planner, Liam Bean, prepared and submitted a grant application to the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) to prepare an updated housing capacity analysis for the City. The grant was awarded to the City and will fund up to approximately \$60,000 to prepare an updated housing capacity analysis for the City of Sheridan. This would replace the current adopted housing element of the Sheridan Comprehensive plan and will help direct housing policy for the next 20 years.

As required by the DLCD, support for the acceptance of the grant must be approved by the governing body.

Resolution 2025-L was presented before the council for support of the DLCD grant application, and was unanimously approved by the council.

Public works submitted their report to the council. Key points of their report included:

Work continues at Hebert Memorial Plaza; construction is set to continue for the next few weeks.

Concrete forms have been installed at the Jefferson Dog

Park.

Pumps and aerators at South Side Park have been installed. Testing is still in progress, but the park is now open.

The liquid chlorine upgrade is complete, and residuals have been more consistent at both ends of the system.

Public works cleaned 600 feet of storm systems on the west end of town, and work was done on the Jefferson St. storm system near the dog park. Crews have also been actively cleaning catch basins and jetting culverts with the city vac trailer.

The Sheridan Public Library reported two successful programs in the month of October. The Decorate-a-Pumpkin program saw 48 individuals attend the event.

The library also held its first Halloween Family Fun Day, which featured games and activities for individuals and families to enjoy. The event drew 96 community members.

Since the Family Fun Day was such a success, the library staff has put together a Christmas Family Fun Day, which will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on December 5, with Santa making an appearance from 10:30 a.m. to Noon for story time and pictures. Games and activities will also be available.

The library received a number of donations over the past month. One community member donated about 40 books that were all within two years of publication and in excellent condition; 30 of those books were added to the library's collection. Another community member donated a Merlin Enhanced Vision Machine for our patrons to use in the library. This machine lets a patron with low vision enjoy any printed material by enlarging the print directly from the item onto a monitor with larger font sizes. Patrons can change the size of the text to what works best for them and can also change to different color settings to help enhance the text for their specific needs.

During grant tracking, City Manager Preston Polasek announced that the Yamhill Street Wastewater Project has been fully reimbursed, bringing that budget item from a negative balance to zero.

The City of Sheridan will file for an extension request for the Southside Park grant, which is currently on an extension through December 31.

Kai Cottam, Public Works Director, apologized for the length of time the Southside Park was closed, stating that the group took on what portion of work that was agreed upon and found out that the division was understaffed. "When we need four people at the park working on the pump structure, then we get a call, we don't have enough people at the park anymore to complete the work. And that strung out for too long. So I just want to apologize to the public and council for that. That's not something that was planned, of course. It's not indicative of what we wanted to do, but it was the result."

Planning report announced that the City of Sheridan has been awarded a grant for transportation growth management (TGM). This grant is intended to address issues that crossover between land use planning and transportation. The grant award is \$220,000 for the purpose of updating the Transportation Systems Plan.

The council discussed the possibility of changing the council's regular meeting start time to 6 p.m., making it the same start time as the council work sessions. Mayor Cale George, along with many of the council members, agreed to look into the change. The council and city staff will look more into what is needed to change the start time before the change is enacted officially.

More information about the meeting, including the agenda and recordings, can be found on the City of Sheridan website, www.cityofsheridanor.com.

**Yoga As
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971-241-2458

yapcdoc@gmail.com

**Western Yamhill
Medical Center**

Dr. Molloy Retired on 3-14-25

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City Of Sheridan City Recorder Yvonne Hamilton Retires

After serving the City of Sheridan, Yvonne Hamilton, City Recorder for the past 24 years, decided that on November 18, it was time to let someone else have a go at one of the longest public service professions, alongside that of tax collectors. The profession can trace its roots back before biblical times, when early keepers of archives called Remembrancers, their memories serving as public record before writing came into use. Ancient Greece had a city secretary who read city documents publicly. One of

his first duties at the start of a meeting was to decree a curse upon anyone who should seek to deceive the people. The first beginning of the office of city clerk can be traced back to 1271 A.D. in The History of the Corporation of Old London. Curses and memories aside, the role of the City Clerk or Municipal Recorder has not changed much through the years. They are the hub of which local governments gather and disseminate information, the repository of records and recordings, the poster of

proclamations, the ingester of information, and the hoarder of history.

The City of Sheridan decided to celebrate her long-standing service to the community not once, but twice, during her last city council meeting, held on November 17, and her going-away party held the next day, her last day as a staff member for the City of Sheridan.

During the city council meeting, after performing her last official act as city recorder, swearing in Preston Polasek, Kaihdan Trombla, and Amber Mathiesen, Yvonne was presented with two awards. First was the Excellence Award, presented by Mayor Cale George from the City of Sheridan. The other, presented by former Sheridan mayor Harry Cooley on behalf of the Oregon Association of Municipal Records, was the Legacy Award.

Mayor Cale George stated, before the presentation of the awards, "I wanted to thank you for choosing to work for the city for the last 24 years.

You've been a part of the city administration through numerous incidents, and yet you chose to stay. When people talk to me about going to City

Hall, they say they're going to go talk to Yvonne.

You've been a wonderful representation of public service and have always had a welcoming attitude. You have excelled as a city recorder and assistant city manager and have great processes and systems in place to make sure future recorders will follow the great example you've set.

When I was first elected to the council, I immediately felt welcomed into the council role by Yvonne. And while my time as city councilor and mayor has been short, I've always knew that if I had a question, I could ask you.

You've been a great resource for information and public meeting process, and I know you've been a resource of information to others across the county and the state. I will miss being able to come into City Hall and being able to speak with you about our families, about Sheridan's past, and about Disneyland. It is hard for me to imagine City Hall without you."

Public Works Director Kai Cottman talked on behalf of himself and his staff, sharing their collective thoughts on her retirement, stating, "Today we



Yvonne Hamilton (right) performs her last official duty as City Recorder, swearing in newly appointed city staff, before her last day on the job. Yvonne served the City of Sheridan for the past 24 years.

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Sheridan Business Decorating Contest



Christmas Decorating Contest for all Businesses

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No registration required

- Voting for the best decorated business will be open Dec. 13-30, in conjunction with the Deck the House contest
- Participants will be encouraged to view businesses during the main event on Dec. 13
- The winner will have their name engraved on the plaque and will be able to display it in their business all year

Sponsored by the Sheridan Chamber of Commerce

After 24 Years of Dedicated Service to the Community

gather to celebrate someone whose presence has been a cornerstone of our workplace, Yvonne Hamilton.

Dependable, that word gets used a lot, but in Yvonne's case, it truly fits. Whether it was a tight deadline, a tough decision, or a moment when someone just needed a listening ear, Yvonne showed up steady, reliable, and always, always with grace.

What set Yvonne apart wasn't just professionalism, though it was always evident. It was the way Yvonne put people first. She led with empathy, treated every colleague with respect, and made sure that no voice went unheard. That kind of leadership doesn't just build teams, it builds trust.

As Yvonne steps into retirement, we're not just saying goodbye to a colleague. We're honoring a legacy of care, integrity, and quiet strength. Thank you, Yvonne, for showing us what it means to lead with heart. You will be missed. You will be remembered."

Former Councilor Roxie Acuff, who stepped down from her seat in December of 2024, after 17 years of service, also attended the event, having these words to say after the meeting adjourned, "Well, I knew this day was going to come sooner or later, and here it is, too soon. Not for Yvonne, but for the city of Sheridan.

For those of us who have known and worked with Yvonne, we know of her knowledge, her professionalism, and her work ethic. I don't know what her specific job descriptions have

been over the years, but I would imagine that they would include clerk, secretary, advisor, supervisor, historian, waitress, organizer, janitor, emergency contact, acting city manager, and, of course, video recorder. I would like to add to those jobs, but also, in my case, confidant and a friend.

Some of our challenges along the way have been long hours, new employees, new computers, new software versions, new planners, new engineers, new consultants, new ordinances, new resolutions, new phone systems, new coffee machines, new attorneys, new mayors, and, of course, new city councilors.

I would be astonished if anyone in this room would ever have imagined that anyone could have done a better job than Yvonne. I want to thank Yvonne for her unselfish commitment and dedication to the city of Sheridan. In closing, I never got the opportunity to publicly thank her husband, Ken Hamilton, for his years of service and dedication to Sheridan.

While not last to speak, after receiving her awards, Yvonne had her turn to speak, saying, "After 24 and a half years of serving the City of Sheridan as City Recorder, it's both an honor and it's bittersweet to say goodbye to a role that has shaped so much of my life.

City Manager Preston often refers to the City Recorder's Office as the hub of the city. However, I think the eminent political scientist, Professor William Bennett Monroe, summed it up best.

No other office in municipal service has so many contracts. It serves the mayor, the city council, the city manager, and all administrative departments without exception.

All of them call upon it for service and information. Its work is not spectacular, but it demands versatility, alertness, accuracy, and no end of patience. The public doesn't realize how many loose ends of city administration this City Recorder's office pulls together.

Throughout my career, I've had the privilege of serving the public alongside many dedicated individuals, and I couldn't be more proud of the work we've accomplished together, especially over the last year. I've seen our community grow, and we've faced challenges, celebrated victories, and been part of history.

While it's time for me to step away, I know I'm leaving the city in capable hands. Thank you to my team and all those who've supported me throughout the years. Your dedication and hard work inspired me each day. I leave with wonderful memories and a grateful heart to each of you. Thank you to my family for your support and to the community for allowing me the honor of serving.

Finally, thank you to my husband of 37 years, Ken Hamilton, whose love, support, and empathy

carried me through every day of my career. This may be the end of my professional journey here, but I'll always carry the pride of being a part of and serving this community.



Yvonne Hamilton, decked out in her retired tiara and sash, retired after 24 years as the City Recorder for Sheridan.

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Yvonne Hamilton (right) for a photo-op with Oregon Association of Municipal Recordors (OAMR) President Scott Stauffer. Yvonne was presented the OAMR Legacy Award the prior evening during the council meeting by former Sheridan Mayor Harry Cooley.

Pets with Santa Pictures

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COMMUNITY

December 2025

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------|---|------------|
| Monday | | | |
| Dec 1 | 7pm | Sheridan City Council | 120 SW I |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Dec 2 | Noon | Kiwanis | 825 NE M |
| Dec 2 | 4:30pm | Book Club | Willamin |
| Dec 2 | 4:30pm | Friends of Sheridan Library Meeting | Sheridan |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Dec 3 | 8am | Willamina EID (No Chamber in December) | Coyote J |
| Dec 3 | 6-8pm | Calls to Santa | 503-843- |
| Thursday | | | |
| Dec 4 | 1-4pm | Free Showers | Trinity Lu |
| Dec 4 | 1:30pm | Municipal Court | 120 SW I |
| Dec 4 | 5pm | Winter Extravaganza (Family Night) | Willamin |
| Dec 4 | 6pm | Sheridan Revitalization | Sheridan |
| Dec 4 | 6pm | Toastmasters | Willamin |
| Friday | | | |
| Dec 5 | 8-9:15am | Sheridan Chamber Breakfast | No Meet |
| Saturday | | | |
| Dec 6 | 11am-1pm | Pets with Santa Pictures | West Val |
| Dec 6 | 4pm | Fendall School Meeting (Christmas Party) | 37515 Ti |
| Dec 6 | 6pm | Willamina Christmas Light Parade | Commun |
| Dec 6 | After Parade | Santa Meet & Greet | Willamin |
| Dec 6 | After Parade | Christmas Tree Lighting | Willamin |
| Monday | | | |
| Dec 8 | 7pm | Sheridan Planning Commission | 120 SW I |
| Dec 8 | 6pm | Sheridan Boosters | 433 S Bri |
| Dec 8 | 7pm | Willamina School District Meeting | Live Stre |
| Dec 8 | 7pm | American Legion | 125 N Br |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Dec 9 | 6:30pm | Sheridan Fire Board | 230 SW I |
| Dec 9 | 6pm | Willamina City Council | 825 NE M |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Dec 10 | 6pm | Willamina 4th of July Committee | Willamin |
| Thursday | | | |
| Dec 11 | 1-4pm | Free Showers | Trinity Lu |
| Dec 11 | 9am-2:30pm | Red Cross Blood Drive | Willamin |
| Dec 11 | 4-5pm | Yamhill County Youth Advisory Council | Sheridan |
| Dec 11 | 5-6pm | Free Line Dancing at the Buell Grange | 5970 Mill |
| Dec 11 | 5:30pm | Willamina MS/HS Winter Concert | Willamin |
| Friday | | | |
| Dec 12 | NA | Letters to Santa Deadline | WV Bulet |
| Saturday | | | |
| Dec 13 | 9am-8pm | Christmas Bazaar | Sheridan |
| Dec 13 | 1-3pm | Makerspace Lab | Willamin |
| Dec 13 | 6pm | Sheridan Light Parade | Sheridan |
| Dec 13 | After Parade | Sheridan Tree Lighting | Sheridan |
| Dec 13 | After Parade | Santa Meet & Greet | Sheridan |
| Dec 13 | N/A | Deck the House & Business Lights Competition Starts | Sheridan |
| Sunday | | | |
| Dec 14 | 9am-4pm | Christmas Bazaar | Sheridan |
| Monday | | | |
| Dec 15 | 7pm | Sheridan City Council | 120 SW I |
| Dec 15 | 7pm | VFW | 771 NE M |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Dec 16 | 1pm | Lunch Bunch (to go lunches) | Sheridan |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Dec 17 | 5pm | Faulconer-Chapman K-3rd Christmas Concert | FCS New |
| Dec 17 | 6pm | Sheridan School District Board | District C |
| Thursday | | | |
| Dec 18 | 1-4pm | Free Showers | Trinity Lu |
| Dec 18 | 6pm | West Valley Fire District Board Meeting | 825 NE M |
| Dec 18 | 6pm | Toastmasters | Willamin |
| Dec 18 | 5pm/6pm | Willamina Library Board Session/Meeting | Willamin |
| Dec 18 | 6pm | Sheridan Parks and Rec Meeting | 120 SW I |
| Dec 18 | 6pm | Faulconer-Chapman 5th-8th Concert | FCS New |
| Friday | | | |
| Dec 19 | 8-9:15am | Sheridan Chamber Breakfast | No Meet |
| Saturday | | | |
| Dec 20 | 1-3pm | Christmas Box Handout | Grand Sh |
| Dec 20 | 3pm | End of Sheridan Museum Christmas Bazaar | Sheridan |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Dec 23 | 6pm | Willamina Planning Commission | 825 NE M |
| Thursday | | | |
| Dec 25 | | ===== MERRY CHRISTMAS ===== | |
| Friday | | | |
| Dec 26 | 5pm | Churches United Community Dinner | Sheridan |
| Saturday | | | |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Dec 31 | | ===== HAPPY NEW YEARS EVE ===== | |

CALENDAR

25 Weekly

Mill St., Sheridan
Main St., Willamina
Public Library
Public Library
oe's
3811
Lutheran Outbuilding
Mill St., Sheridan
Public Library
Museum of History
Public Library
ing
ley Mercantile
ndle Creek Rd
ity Campus to School
na Fire Hall
na Fire Hall
Mill St., Sheridan
dge St., Sheridan
am/School Library
dge St., Sheridan
Mill St., Sheridan
Main St., Willamina
na Christian Church
Lutheran Outbuilding
na Middle School
na High School
Creek Rd, Sheridan
na School Cafetorium
in Board & Willamina IGA
na High School
na Public Library
Main & Bridge Street
na High School
na High School
Area
na High School
Mill St., Sheridan
Main St., Willamina
na United Methodist
Gym
Office/Web
Lutheran Outbuilding
Main St., Willamina
na Public Library
na Library/Zoom
Mill St.
Gym
ing
heramina Food Bank
Museum
Main St., Willamina
=====

Monday:

Celebrate Recovery
Willamina Free Methodist Church 6pm
Scout Meeting
Sheridan All Prep, Sheridan 7pm
P.I.F. AA Meeting (Mon, Wed, & Fri)
Sheridan All Prep 7pm

Tuesday

Grand Sheramina Food Bank (1st & 3rd Tue),
Bridge Street, Sheridan 2-4pm
NA Meeting,
Light House Church, Grand Ronde 6pm
Yoga
Swan Hall, 242 NE Main St., Willamina 6pm
Cornhole
Ft. Hill Restaurant, 8655 Ft. Hill Rd 6pm

Wednesday

Willamina EID (No Chamber in December)
Coyote Joe's 8am
Bridge Learning Play Group (Age 0-5)
430 SW Monroe St, Sheridan . 9:30 - 11:30am
Creative artists and artisans
Willamina Christian Church 10am-2pm
Sheridan Rotary Meeting
Sheridan School District office, Sheridan ... Noon
Willamina Food Pantry, Civic Club,
340 B Street, Willamina 4-6pm
Willamina 4th of July Committee
Willamina Christian Church Basement 6pm

Thursday

Bingo
VFW Hall, Willamina 5:30pm
Mill Creek Road Band Live Music w/Potluck (Free)
Buell Grange, Mill Creek Rd. Sheridan 6-8pm
NA Meeting,
Light House Church, Grand Ronde 6pm

Friday

Grand Ronde Food Bank Distribution
9765 Grand Ronde Rd, Grand Ronde 10am-2pm
Grand Ronde Community Clothes Closet
9765 Grand Ronde Rd, Grand Ronde 9am-Noon
American Legion Bingo
125 N Bridge St., Sheridan 5:30pm

Saturday

Sheridan Museum of History,
142 S. Bridge St, Sheridan 10am-3pm
Willamina Museum of History,
188 D St, Willamina 1-4pm
Tina Miller Youth Center
172 NW 4th Street, Willamina 3-6pm
Odd Fellows Bingo
143 SW Monroe Street, Sheridan 5:30pm
Narcotics Anonymous (Emmanuel Lutheran)
315 W. Main St., Willamina 7-8pm

Sunday

Buell Grange Market
5970 Mill Creek Rd, Sheridan 11am-5pm
Tina Miller Youth Center
172 NW 4th Street, Willamina 1-4pm
Yoga
Swan Hall, 242 NE Main St., Willamina 5pm
NA Meeting,
Light House Church, Grand Ronde 6pm
Open Mic Night
Wildwood Hotel and Lounge 6pm



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Sheridan Chamber: Chemeketa Providing More than Just Education

A business or organization does not have to be from the Sheridan area to be part of the Sheridan Chamber of Commerce. Last week, the Sheridan Chamber of Commerce meeting was hosted by one of those organizations, the Chemeketa Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

Matt Geiger, Executive Director for the Chemeketa Center for Business and Industry (CCBI) at the community college, was the presenter to the Sheridan Chamber of Commerce. Within the CCBI is the SBDC. While housed inside the community college, Matt stated that it's part of a unique, larger network, the only community college-based network in America.

Chemeketa SBDC operates in Marion, Yamhill, and Polk counties, and attends nine different chambers within that area.

He started by giving handouts for the group, stating, "There's no way in 15 minutes (the allotted time for the host) that you are going to absorb everything, but it's also a resource," adding two other handouts about the

network, Secretary of State information, and guilds on how to start a business.

Matt reported that the SBDC has nine advisors at the center, ranging from different knowledge bases and expertise, though all fall within a generalist advisor, stating, "They can sit down with you and deal with all your stuff. This is a national program funded by the Small Business Administration. Because of that, our services are free. When you get business advising from us, it is one-on-one, confidential, no-cost business advising." Meetings with the SBDC can be held in person or over Zoom.

Another feature of the SBDC is its access to statewide services, which are funded by Business Oregon. "One of the biggest ones we deal with on a constant basis is the Capital Access Team (CAT)," Matt noted. The organization has a CAT team representative who can help small businesses obtain money through loans, grants, or other programs.

Also in the SBDC's arsenal is

their Community Development Officer (CDO), another part of Business Oregon.

"So if you have a situation where you need help with some manufacturing laws, have a zoning question, need funding to build a warehouse, but also need help with a business plan, you'll have a whole team here to help you get it together," Matt stated. All of their advisors have an MBA or have run or are currently running their own business.

The SBDC also partners with other tri-county business community groups. Matt voiced, "We don't want to duplicate services. If you are already doing something great, how do we get people to you? We fill in the gaps. We are the generals, the business advisors, the brokers of information. It is dealing with a trusted partner who can decide and provide you with how to get valuable insights into your business that you may not have thought of."

The SBDC can also connect business owners to free or low-cost education. They can also provide networking

opportunities like Salem Capital Connections, giving one-on-one opportunities with various state services, or the Power Lunch Series, held in different locations in the tri-county area, where experts from different fields provide information on a wide range of topics.

The SBDC is currently recruiting for their Small Business Management Program, a \$900 nine-month course taught by college professors, business owners, and experts in the field on nine different subjects, that runs through the school year. Matt mentioned that it's a deeper dive than you will get from your advisor; however, you also get assigned an advisor during the course.

Another service provided by the SBDC is customized workforce training, where the requirements of your business can have a designed program to ensure your licensing, certification, and other training needs can be met and maintained.

Matt exclaimed, finishing off the presentation, "And that's why they call it the Center for Business and Industry."



CHRISTMAS IN GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

A Sheridan Museum of History presentation
by

TRAVIS DOW

December 6, 2025
1:30 p.m.

SHERIDAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY
142 South Bridge Street

The presentation is free and open to the public.



Matt Geiger (center) presented information of programs and support that the Chemeketa Small Business Development Center can provide to business owners to the Sheridan Chamber of Commerce.



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Young Wrestlers Grapple at Bulldog Tournament

In the early morning of Saturday, November 22, cars lined the Oaken Hills Drive up to the Willamina School Campus, as over 400 wrestlers from around the area took part in the wrestling invitational, hosted by the Bulldog Mat Club.

With teams from West Salem, Dallas, Yamhill-Carlton, Nestucca, Gorge Wrestling, Junction

City, Tillamook, Amity, and many other clubs and schools. The Bulldog Mat Club had over 30 kids hit the mat, several of them under the age of seven, competing in their first-ever tournament.

"It's early in the season. All of our kids are wrestling well and showing a ton of improvement," stated Tournament Director Ray

Carpenter. "In addition to this, this was the first year we had all-girls brackets. This was a huge success, also.



Reece Ryan (top) works on overpowering his opponent during the Bulldog Mat Club wrestling tournament held Saturday.



Palmer Heidt comes up victorious after pinning her opponent.

Dragons Net Three All-State Volleyball Athletes

OSAA announced the 2025 volleyball all-state teams, with three players from the Delphian Dragons squad making the cut. Each team consisted of four hitters, two setters, and two defensive specialists (Libero).

Second-team honors went to Senior hitter Liv Curry, Amelia Peterson was selected to the third team as a setter, and junior Mila Vysotska made the honorable mention list as a hitter.

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*In Honor of our Nations
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Presents
American History Corner*

Smallpox and the American Revolution

A little-known fact about the American Revolution was the impact that smallpox played. As early as the 1760's, Dr. Joseph Warren was operating a smallpox inoculation clinic but many were leery, but he continued to run the clinic until his death after the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775.

The continental army tried to invade Canada but due to the crippling effects of the disease, George Washington was forced to retreat after the battle of Quebec. The situation was also putting a drain on recruitment for the army because the young men were fearful of contracting the disease. The British forces had more immunity due to previous exposure to smallpox. In 1777, Washington decided that every new man entering the army was to receive an inoculation and he began strict isolation measures which helped to reenergize and strengthen the army. He once stated that "smallpox was more destructive than the sword."

NOTICE OF PLANNING COMMISSION VACANCY

The Planning Commission is appointed by the City Council of the City of Willamina to three year terms. If the vacancy is caused by anything but the expiration of term, the appointee shall serve the remainder of the expired term. The role of the Planning Commission is to administer the subdivision and zoning ordinances and make recommendations to the City Council concerning land use issues.

Applicants for this position must be available to attend at least one regular meeting generally scheduled in the evening.

At the discretion of City Council, appointees to the Commission may reside outside the city limits, but must own a business or property within city limits, or have demonstrated through other means, such as civic or volunteer activity, that they have a sincere interest in the future of the City. At no time shall a quorum of the Commission reside outside city limits. Other restrictions may apply based upon occupation and family relationships.

To apply, complete a Government Office Application which can be found on the City of Willamina website willaminaoregon.gov or at City Hall. Applicants can submit the applications via email to stevensk@ci.willamina.or.us or submit the application at City Hall.

Please call Krystal Stevens, Deputy City Recorder, at 503-876-2242 with any questions. You may also email Krystal at the email address above with questions.



Call to Amity Artists: Second Annual Amity Art Collective Tour May 15-17

The Second Annual Amity Art Collective Tour has issued a Call to Artists to participate in the Studio Tour that will take place the weekend of May 15-17, 2026.

Applications for this juried show are open, and can be found at www.amityartcollectivetour.com or emailing info@amityartcollectivetour.com before February 2026. Artist applications due by February 2026, cost is \$70 (student: \$25).

This free, self guided journey through open studios and inspired spaces with local artists, was a successful event last year with over 14 open studios and 25 local artists.

The Amity Art Collective hopes



to engage even more artists this year, including high school artists. The public is invited to participate on the tour and witness creativity in motion, explore works-in-progress, engage in conversations, and discover the soul behind every piece of art. For further information: www.amityartcollectivetour.com.

Congratulations to this years winner of the Turkey Joke Contest

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TURKEY'S TRUST
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Last issue's crossword solution

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Horoscopes Nov.26 - Dec.2

ARIES - Mar 21/Apr 20

Right now you are inspired to roll up your sleeves and clear away the clutter so you can focus on what counts, Aries. Your productivity soars this week.

TAURUS - Apr 21/May 21

Your words will carry extra weight between this week and next, Taurus. Don't hold back on speaking about what is in your heart. You may navigate your way to romance.

GEMINI - May 22/June 21

Gemini, this week you may feel energized to pursue new connections with family and friends. Plan a few long overdue catch-ups, and bask in that feeling of contentment.

CANCER - June 22/July 22

Some may call you timid, Cancer, but not this week. You put all of yourself out there the next few days, and others may be hanging on your every word.

LEO - July 23/Aug 23

Money is at the top of your priority list, Leo. You may be dreaming big or content to just make sense of finances that have gotten a bit off the rails.

VIRGO - Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, it's all about honesty this week and letting others in. Don't sugarcoat things with the people you love. They will love you even if you're in need of some support.

LIBRA - Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, release what is draining your energy, especially before the busy holiday season is in full force. Wrap up lingering projects and bow out of obligations that are stretching you too thin.

SCORPIO - Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, you are selective about your social circle, but stay open to new friendships. New allies bring surprising opportunities if you simply let them in.

SAGITTARIUS - Nov 23/Dec 21

Your ambitious streak is on fire right now, Sagittarius. Partnerships and acquisitions are very much within reach, so start conversations now. It's time to network as much as possible.

CAPRICORN - Dec 22/Jan 20

You pride yourself on telling it like it is, Capricorn. But candor can sometimes be costly. A measured approach in a delicate situation this week can serve you well.

AQUARIUS - Jan 21/Feb 18

Typically "what you see is what you get" is your mantra, Aquarius. Yet, this week you might hold something back to be a bit more mysterious. Others may not catch on right away.

PISCES - Feb 19/Mar 20

Relationships take center stage in your life, Pisces. Talks of further commitment could come up more often than in the past. This is an important time.



Happy Thanksgiving

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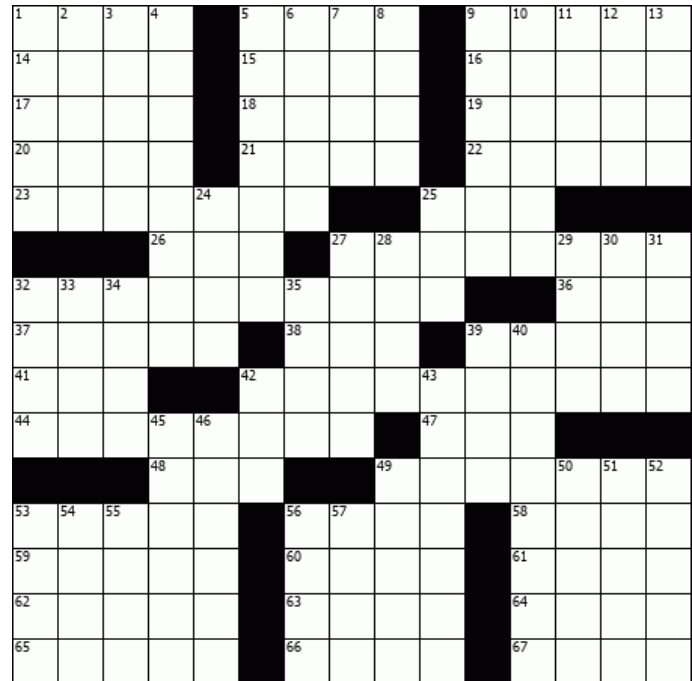
YAMS



CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1. Treat pleats
5. Edges
9. Say
14. Prima donna
15. Mexican water
16. ____ minister
17. Impersonator
18. Misfortunes
19. Speedy
20. Mister (Ger.)
21. Negatives
22. Deposes
23. Toronto's province
25. Battering ____
26. Foot digit
27. Intermittent
32. Engaged in festivities
36. Hardwood tree
37. Stand up
38. Urge
39. Firearm
41. Mama's boy
42. Principal
44. Starlike symbol
47. Social insect
48. Playful bite
49. Sailboat race
53. Colorado ski resort
56. Spring flower
58. Rocker ____ Young
59. Malt brews
60. Foal
61. Unclothed
62. Big
63. Continually
64. Customer
65. Television awards
66. Renovate
67. " ____ we forget"



Down

1. Potato state
2. Mature
3. Open to view
4. Tells (a story)
5. Mount ____ (Seattle view)
6. Arctic shelter
7. Army mascot
8. Fresh talk
9. Clamor
10. Serious injury
11. Pointers
12. Send out
13. Cincinnati team
24. Judge's garment
25. Slender pole
27. Sirloin, e.g.
28. Await judgment
29. Nutty
30. Capri or Man
31. "Silkwood" actress
32. Spanish house
33. Love deity
34. Dryer fuzz
35. Positive votes
39. Chimed
40. Turkey's largest city
42. Trendy
43. Eminent conductor
45. Pep
46. Gets the soap off
49. Agitated
50. Taunt
51. Becomes weary
52. Paying attention
53. Fit
54. Stitched line
55. Salon treatment
56. Froster
57. Wander

Hey kids! It's Time to Write Santa a Letter!

Drop your letter to Santa in the special mailbox at the West Valley Bulletin Board, or Willamina IGA. Be sure to drop off your letter between Now and Dec. 12 so Santa will have time to answer your letter. Make sure to put your address on your letter for Santa. You can use the template below or make your own.



Dear Santa

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Faulconer-Chapman Students Learn Water Survival Skills at Mac Pool

Disasters can often spur the start of programs, awareness, and, in this case, survival swimming lessons that have been taught at the McMinnville Aquatic Center since the mid-1970s.

Back then, the community of Perrydale urged the local aquatic center to start up the program after one of the community's own young boys slipped, fully clothed, into a body of water, losing his life when he was unable to reach land again.

Since then, the center has opened its doors to third-graders from local school

districts.

This year is Faulconer-Chapman's introductory year to the program. Students from the elementary school in Sheridan work up the ladder in the three-tiered program at their own pace.

First-level swimmers learn breath control and bubbles. Putting their face in the water, they learn to breathe bubbles out of their nose (humming) until they eventually get into rhythmic bobs, going underwater until the count of three, returning to the surface for the same count, and repeating the process until the

student is comfortable with the process.

Lesson two gets the kids comfortable floating in the water on their backs, with volunteers assisting them under the shoulders until they can maintain floating on their own. The third lesson is being able to "fin" in the water, using the kicking of feet and in and out in fast, small movements of the hands to propel them to safety. In their final exam, the students fall fully clothed into the water, take the lessons they learned over the course of the

program, and make their way back to safety by being able to resurface, roll on their back to float, and "fin" until they reach the safety of the side of the pool.

"One of our biggest goals is to ensure that people are safe in the water," stated Gehna Greenslate, Head Lifeguard at the McMinnville Aquatic Center, adding as she pointed to the school faculty in the water, "It wouldn't be possible without the volunteers here, because the volunteers are really what make a difference."



McMinnville Aquatic Center swim instructor Megan Read (right), who has taught the survival swim course for many years, reviews swimming, floating, and breathing techniques with Faulconer-Chapman third-grade students in the third level of the course.

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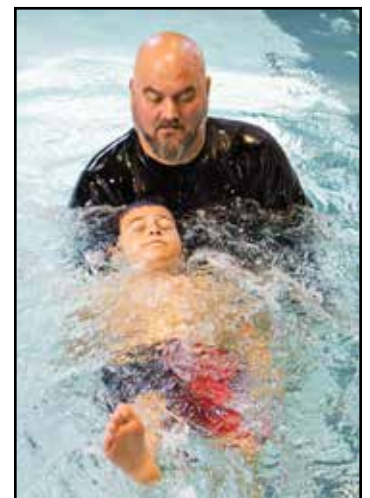
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Hard Work, Lots of Help: A Family Farm is Blend of Old and New

By Margaret Henkels

The old American tradition of the Family farm is not dead yet, and won't be as long as the Richard Kirkham family of Willamina has anything to do about it.

As long as he can remember, Richard Kirkham wanted to farm. In fact, he likes farming so much that he considers himself retired right now at age 31.

Contrary to the accepted axiom that young people can't start farming without inheriting a farm or having a pile of capital to play with, the Kirkhams had neither land nor money.

What they did have was a great desire to farm and some good friends to help them out along the way.

Kirkham was teaching school in Gaston when he and Judy saw a newspaper help-wanted advertisement for a farm manager. The next thing they knew, they had moved to Willamina and were working on the purchase of a 600-acre farm.

"I never imagined that I'd end up farming," Judy said. But Richard, whose father raises pears in the Medford area, had a clear vision from the start. Out of a family of five children, all four of the boys wanted to farm, and all now are farming throughout the country.

The overwhelming trend in farming, as well as other businesses, is towards specialization. But the Kirkham

farm practices diversity. They raise wheat, barley, sweet corn, and hay. Besides the crops, they also keep a good-sized herd of beef cattle and some sheep. You've got to be diversified to make it," Kirkham said. "If you're diverse, and one thing doesn't make it, you've got other things to fall back on."

Good neighbors, the assistance of an agricultural teacher, and a good bank have been important supports to the Kirkhams in their venture. In addition to the 600 acres that they are purchasing, they also lease an additional 1,000 acres in the rolling hills on the south side of Highway 18. It was quite a problem to get farm financing without a track record, but managing the farm prior to purchase was a big advantage.

"We're farming three family farms that other people had a tough time making it on," Kirkham commented. "We're trying to improve the land, such as by liming it, for example, but it sure takes a lot of money," he added.

Although the Kirkhams are a classic model of the old-style family farm in many ways, there are some differences. They constructed a grain storage building that holds up to 600 tons of grain.

"We do things a little differently; we sell directly to Portland and store our own grain," Kirkham explained. "When we harvest, we go right into town and fill

the rail cars up with wheat," he added.

The Kirkhams find this approach to marketing gives them more control over their product. They figure with so many things that could possibly happen, any edge giving some control is well worth the trouble and expense.

"For the farmer to survive, you have to be bigger and more efficient," Kirkham observes. "Farmers could be more efficient if farming was more profitable," he stressed. "Low production is not the problem in farming; I think if they gave the American farmer the chance, he could feed the world," he remarked. "But the problem is getting paid for the work," he added.

Kirkham's story is a far cry from the all too-familiar tale of the rich farmer wintering each year in Arizona. But one wonders if one of the little-understood farm subsidies aren't partially responsible for inflaming public sentiments against the farmer today. In a time when welfare has become an institution, the word "subsidy" still raises a red flag.

"This is the first year in two years that we haven't had the set-aside program," Kirkham noted. The set-aside program is basically where farmers are paid to not raise more than a specified amount of a crop, such as wheat. "The government has what I would call a cheap food policy," Kirkham continued. "In

farming, we produce products, and someone else sets the prices," he noted.

A "cheap food policy" translates this way: The United States sells wheat for \$4.30 per bushel to the Japanese government, who, in turn, sells it to the others for \$9 per bushel and pays their farmers subsidies to help balance the market.

American farming economics, once based on the laws of supply and demand, aren't much different than their Japanese counterparts. A solution is not only elusive, but it may even be painful and expensive.

"I think if the government got out and let the law of supply and demand take care of things, farming would be more balanced," Kirkham said.

From the start, Judy has taken responsibility for keeping the records for the farm. It is not a job she enjoys, and she is anticipating January of next year, when another innovation for the farm begins, computerized bookkeeping.

Business-wise, the Kirkhams have taken advantage of many resources available to the modern-day farmer. They have been involved for four years with the Farm Management Program at Chemeketa Community College and feel it well worth the effort. Record keeping, farming practices, and tax help are all included in the package, which is calculated to give farmers the expertise they need to survive in the business world.

Besides the continual challenge of making a profit with inputs of fuel, fertilizer, and labor going up, the Kirkhams may have another battle looming ahead.

The City of Willamina is exploring various possibilities for rebuilding or replacing the Steel Bridge. They may face a struggle to keep from having their farm divided with a projected two bridges, complete with overpasses.

Already split by Highway 18, farming Windy Oaks means dealing with main roads, traffic, and gates.

"Try getting a piece of machinery across Highway 18 on a weekend Kirkham laughed. "Everyone wants to get to Portland 15 minutes faster; why don't they just slow down?" he asked.



The Kirkhams show wheat stored in their new grain storage building in the rear. The building holds up to 600 tons. Making farming a family affair are Judy Kirkham, left, Bob Kirkham, center, and Richard Kirkham, right. ~Photo by Margaret Henkels

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