

NEWS from BENTON COUNTY

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OSU group digs into Fort Hoskins site

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Benton County is no stranger to history, but how many Oregonians know that it had a part in the Civil War?

"Most Oregonians have no idea that the Civil War happened in our own backyard," Oregon State University Professor of Anthropology Dave Brauner said.

Fort Hoskins – a Benton County park located 15 miles northwest of Corvallis on Hoskins Road – was established in 1856 and was one of the three Oregon forts monitoring the Siletz and Grande Ronde reservations. With the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, the army troops at Fort Hoskins were sent east. The fort then was garrisoned by volunteer infantry troops. While the volunteer troops still monitored the coastal reservations, their duties also included keeping the secessionist movement in the Willamette Valley under control.

For college credit OSU undergrads, lead by Brauner, will have a chance to get their hands on some history this



summer when they dig at Fort Hoskins. The students are digging up a root cellar where troops would have stored food and supplies. They also plan on digging up a powder magazine where explosives would have been stored.

With the help of Professor Brauner, OSU students have gained field

experience at Fort Hoskins before. The fort previously was used as a dig site in 1976, 1977 and 1993. Past digs at Fort Hoskins have proven to be a useful educational tool.

These digs also have lead to a wealth of knowledge about the troops stationed there and their daily lives.

Benton County has been working diligently with OSU throughout this process.

"We've had nothing but support from all levels of county government," Brauner said.

Three dimensional building outlines of Fort Hoskins, called "ghost structures", are a feature which the Benton County natural Areas and Parks Department would like to add to the site to give visitors an idea of what the fort looked like.

The work provides an opportunity to make Fort Hoskins more informative and interesting for visitors, adding value to the Benton County Natural Areas and Parks system. All the information collected in the dig will be used for that purpose. "We try to tell a story," Benton County Natural Areas and Parks Director Jeff Powers said. Artifacts found during the dig also become part of the OSU archives.

Professor Brauner and his students will be at the site through August 13. Fort Hoskins is open to the public daily and community members are encouraged to visit.

Bicyclists and motorists share the road

During the summer when more bicyclists are on the road, it is important for motorists and bicyclists throughout Benton County to be mindful of each other and share the roads.

An especially dangerous time is during the week of the Benton County Fair and Rodeo. Some motorists choose to park illegally on the roadways around the Fairgrounds instead of using the designated parking lots. Most of these vehicles are blocking bicycle lanes which also are a form of traffic lane. Blocking these lanes is illegal and can result in citation by law enforcement personnel. Open vehicle doors also are not allowed to obstruct bicycle lanes.

"You can't park there any time," Benton County Road Manager Laurie Starha said. "That's no different than parking in the middle of the road."

Bike lanes can be differentiated from fog lines based on the width of the white line. An 8-inch white line designates a bicycle lane, while the standard 4-inch white line designates a fog line. Many bicycle lanes, especially on busy streets, have symbols and wording designating them.

Laws governing bicycle use can be found in the Oregon Vehicle Code and all bicycles ridden on public streets are subject to the same rules and regulations as motor vehicles. Bicyclists are required

to obey all traffic signs and signals.

On sidewalks where bicycle riding is allowed, riders must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and give audible warning before passing them. On sidewalks bicyclists also must slow to a speed no faster than an ordinary walk when approaching or entering crosswalks, approaching or crossing a driveway or crossing a curb cut or pedestrian ramp when a motor vehicle is approaching those areas.

For the safety of everyone, it's important to be cognizant of these issues so that everyone can have an enjoyable summer outdoors and travel safely around Benton County.



Photo By Jennifer O'Dell, OSU PROMISE Intern

Sheriff's Office Drug Take In event a success!

The Benton County Sheriff's Office, in partnership with the Philomath Police Department, held its first-annual "Drug Take In" event for the public to dispose of unused or expired prescription drugs and other medications.

The event – scheduled on Saturday, May 22, at the Benton County Fairgrounds – produced surprising results. More than 175 households disposed of nearly 260 pounds of medications during the four-hour event. The majority of those participating came from the city of Corvallis. However, some came from as far away as Riddle and Lebanon.

A variety of medications were accepted, including the following:

- 67.5 pounds of prescription

- pills;
- 56 pounds of over-the-counter drugs;
- 82.6 pounds of liquids such as cough syrup;
- 21.9 pounds of lotions and creams; and
- 25 pounds of miscellaneous items such as inhalers.

The oldest medication collected was dated 1950. The primary purpose in collecting the medication was to keep unused prescription drugs from being misused. A number of national studies indicate that the intentional abuse of prescription drugs, particularly among teens, is a growing concern. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, among young people ages 12 to 17 prescription drugs have become the second most abused drug behind marijuana.

Another important benefit of collecting the medications was the environmental aspect. Disposing of medications by flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash contaminates drinking water and groundwater supplies.



Sheriff Diana Simpson helps with the sorting.



Reserve Deputies sort medications collected at an event last spring.

In addition to keeping medications out of the water supply, this event also included recycling the medicine containers. An estimated 40 pounds of plastic pill bottles, as well as cardboard and paperboard, glass bottles and plastic film were recycled because of the event.

The event was organized by the

Benton County Sheriff's Office and staffed with Sheriff's Office Reserve Deputies and Sheriff's Office Auxiliary Volunteers. Partners in the event included the Philomath Police Department, which assisted in the process to destroy the medications, and the Benton County Fairgrounds, which provided the event location.

Fautin tapped to lead OPHA

Benton County Health Department Deputy Director Charlie Fautin will lead the Oregon Public Health Association (OPHA) next year, having been elected the organization's president by its membership.

The OPHA is a state affiliate of the national American Public Health Association (APHA). The organization is an advocacy and educational entity that works to ensure that every Oregonian has the opportunity to live a healthy life. Fautin's leadership role with the organization helps to solidify Benton County's place as a leader in the area of Public Health.

OPHA promotes laws, policies and programs to protect the health of families, communities and work places and focuses on preventing disease and injury. Its membership includes

individuals and organizations in regions across the state. Aside from advocacy roles, the group works significantly to provide educational opportunities to members to help keep them up to date.

"A huge piece of our work is helping facilitate ongoing Public Health professional education," Fautin said. "That is the major role of the annual conference in October. It is the only event in Oregon where Public Health academics from all colleges and universities meet and learn alongside practitioners from county and state departments."

As president, Fautin will serve as a spokesman and provide a public face to the organization. This year under Fautin's leadership the organization will continue to address major public

health threats in Oregon, especially focusing on obesity and tobacco prevention.

The organization will continue to keep tabs on public health policy decisions on the state and local levels and be available to key decision-makers to help improve the direction of public health policy in Oregon. The organization includes between 200 and 300 members and many local participants from Benton County, Oregon State University and Samaritan Health Services, as well as many more from around the state.

"It's a huge brain trust," Fautin said. "We'd like that to be better known and better utilized. We want it to be the go-to organization for decision-makers and the media when it comes to public health issues."

News from Benton County

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County updates Natural Areas and Parks plan

The Benton County Natural Areas and Parks Department is updating its comprehensive plan, and county residents are being asked to help guide the future development of the department's resources.

The process currently is in full swing, providing opportunities for residents to give input that could guide the future of natural areas and parks in Benton County.

The current plan was prepared 15 years ago and successfully implemented. However, new challenges and opportunities have emerged since then, including the department's increased emphasis on "natural area" management and habitat restoration plus the opportunity to work cooperatively to create a countywide trails plan.

"Benton County has a long history of actively engaging residents in planning for the future and implementing recommendations with vision, leadership and community support," said David Reed, planning consultant for the project. "Recent public outreach meetings in Wren, Monroe, Adair Village, North Albany and Corvallis have generated a depth and quality of information that will provide an excellent framework for updating the 1995 plan."

The updated plan will offer an opportunity to address nationwide trends such as challenges associated with children and youth who lack

contact with nature and outdoor activities, as well as promote and preserve the health and well being of Oregon's aging population. The department encourages the public to share thoughts on these and a range of other strategic issues and concerns to create a shared vision for the county's future.

Four types of meetings have marked the process, with Public Outreach meetings to record individual and group comments; a Focus Group meeting for key stakeholders and leaders to weigh in on opportunities and critical issues; a Countywide Workshop to generate opinions about the existing system and explore visions for the future; and Natural Areas and Parks Advisory Board meetings for periodic reviews that will be held throughout the project. The remaining meetings can be found online at

<http://www.co.benton.or.us>.

Comments will be accepted throughout the process and should be submitted to the Natural Areas and Parks Department, 360 SW Avery Ave., in Corvallis or by calling (541) 766-6871. Comments also can be e-mailed to Benton County Natural Areas and Parks Director Jeff Powers at jeff.powers@co.benton.or.us.

"A draft summary report of the major themes we've heard will be presented to the Natural Areas and Parks Advisory Board during a public meeting later this summer," Powers said.



Sheriff's Office is an agency of service to the community



Highway 34 and Mary's Peak Road where they met her husband. A towing company was dispatched to the crash site to recover the vehicle.

During other snowy weather events when vehicles have been stuck, Sheriff's Office personnel have continued to patrol those areas making sure people stuck in their vehicles were equipped to stay hydrated and warm until they could get out.

The Sheriff's Office also is dispatched to assist in missing person cases throughout the county. Many times these individuals get lost hiking or hunting – or wander off and lose track of their whereabouts – and Sheriff's Office personnel and volunteers search the area until they are found. Often this effort on behalf of the Sheriff's Office saves lives.

The Benton County Sheriff's Office is steadfast about its role as a service agency to keep the community healthy and safe from all kinds of threats.

"All of our deputies are trained to provide law enforcement services, but working for the Sheriff's Office requires the deputy to think and respond to those incidents that are not typically related to criminal situations," Benton County Sheriff Diana Simpson said. "They often have to act as a neighborhood mediator, a mental health counselor or a family intervention specialist. Their 'neighborhood beat' may cover many square miles of both residential and rural terrain. Because of their solo status and without police backup close by, they have learned to work through situations that require first-rate verbal skills and good common sense. And they are committed to providing excellent service to the residents of the county whether it is a victim of a crime or a stranded motorist caught in a snow storm."

When many people think about law enforcement agencies, the first thing that often comes to mind are flashing blue lights and tracking down bad guys.

But the Benton County Sheriff's Office does much more for the community than issuing citations and apprehending suspects. In fact, many of these deputies' days are spent dealing with other tasks that help keep the community safe and providing true service to the residents and visitors of Benton County.

One such example occurred on March 9 at about 9 p.m. when Cpl. Randy Hiner was dispatched to a non-injury single-vehicle accident on Mary's Peak Road near Alsea. That area had been experiencing snowy weather and when he arrived at the scene, the driver of the vehicle involved in the accident told Hiner that she and her four children were driving downhill toward Highway 34 when she lost control in the snow and drove into the ditch.

The vehicle went over the edge after the passenger-side tires had dropped off the shoulder of the road, causing the vehicle to roll down the embankment approximately 40 feet.

No one in the vehicle reported injuries but they all said they were "shook up." Hiner transported the mother and her four children safely down the hill to the intersection of

Sustainability saves money for BOC

The Benton County Board of Commissioners Office is reducing cost and the amount of trash sent to the landfill by conducting more business electronically. BOC office staff began producing electronic meeting packets for distribution to the Board, the public and media representatives.

The Commissioners now carry laptops to their meetings rather than paper files. From January to September

2007, the BOC office made 59,076 copies for a total cost of \$4,875. From January to September 2009 by reducing paper use the BOC office made 17,330 documents for a cost of \$1,612 to cut copy costs by 67 percent.

Weekly mailings in preparation for Board of Commissioners meetings also have been eliminated in favor of electronic distribution. Previous annual costs to send out the documents

– averaging 54 pages each – to 36 recipients every week topped out at \$2,253. This year the total annual cost of weekly mailings is \$202. That's a 91 percent cost savings.

The Board of Commissioners Office also has begun taking digital audio recordings of county BOC meetings. From 2007 to 2009 the number of tapes used each year has been reduced from 194 – costing \$386 – to no tapes and

no associated costs. Between saved staff time, postage and other resources the Board of Commissioners Office's efforts are saving an estimated \$12,500 annually.

These actions make sense for the environment and Benton County's finances, and the county is continuing to look at ways that it can be a better steward both of natural resources and taxpayer dollars.

A labor of love

Maintaining a pristine landscape around the iconic Benton County Courthouse isn't quite a full-time job, but for Benton County landscaper Rod Jarvis keeping that area spruced up is a top priority.

Jarvis – who works three days a week for Benton County on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays and also owns his own landscaping business – is in charge of landscaping, gardening and maintenance of the grounds surrounding the historic structure. Jarvis also is responsible for the landscaped grounds around other county structures in town including the Law Enforcement Building, Assessor's Office, Health Department and Avery Complex.

But with so much activity going on around the courthouse from weddings to demonstrations, not to mention the high visibility of the area along the main drag in Corvallis, keeping the grass green and thick and the bushes and flowers healthy yet trimmed takes a team of workers through the spring and summer months.

Summer Youth Corps work crews, shared with Benton County and the City of Corvallis, do much of the manual labor on the grounds under Jarvis's instruction. Crews – typically consisting of workers 14 and younger – pick up some duties around the courthouse to make extra money. Benton County corrections work crews also help raking leaves, bark mulching and cleaning up pruning debris. Jarvis finds working with both the corrections work crews and the juveniles to be quite rewarding.

"We work real well together and we do major stuff," Jarvis said. "It's not just a matter of landscaping. When we have big projects, that's when we call in the big guns. ... If it was just me with the size of the projects we've done over the years I'd die."

The 60-year-old has a long history in landscaping and gardening, having started when he was 15 doing odd jobs for people in his native Indiana. Then he worked for nurseries while going to college and ended up with a job on the grounds crew at Oregon State University.

"I was a tree climber," he said, "so I was in just about every tree at OSU."

Now he is the third groundskeeper in 42 years maintaining the courthouse grounds and it's a job in which he takes tremendous pride. Jarvis has invested a great deal of time and care into the project, digging out and replacing



Photo By Jennifer O'Dell, OSU PROMISE Intern

the triangular rose beds adorning the walkway leading up to the front doorsteps of the courthouse which has resulted in thriving rose buds. He also has removed copious amounts of English ivy from around the jail and other structures downtown, replacing it with other foliage. The plants Jarvis chooses usually are low-maintenance, unique and look good year round.

"It was a jungle when I got here," he said. "We've gotten rid of almost all the English ivy in the county sites within the city. Generally that's been one of the big deals. Ivy was a big thing (40 years ago) and then it became considered a noxious weed."

Now that the bigger projects are complete Jarvis is turning his attention to the irrigation system, which is 32 years old. He said the infrastructure is beginning to give way and he is taking the opportunity, as time goes on, to make the system more efficient by installing drip irrigation where ever possible to conserve water.

Jarvis also has been taking an all-natural approach to eliminate weeds downtown. Over-seeding with grass and using fertilizer creates a thicker lawn and discourages weeds from popping up. In areas where unwanted plant species sprout up – especially between cracks in the concrete – he uses a 50-50 mixture of vinegar and water. It takes a little longer, but it is a less harmful solution than applying pesticide.

"The courthouse is one of the most photographed properties in the county," he said. "We get a lot of compliments on the grounds."

'There's Magic in the Fair'

"There's Magic in the Fair" is the theme of the 2010 Benton County Fair and Rodeo, which kicks off August 4 at the Benton County Fairgrounds in Corvallis.

The event – scheduled through August 7 – includes an impressive entertainment lineup with Jake Owen, Clay Walker, The Guess Who and Johnny Limbo and the Lugnuts performing. Tickets are available now for the concerts, which include gate admission. Prices are \$20 for Jake Owen, Clay Walker and The Guess Who and \$10 for Johnny Limbo and the Lugnuts.

Admissions are: adults \$6 in advance or \$8 at the gate; youth \$2 in advance or \$3 at the gate; and seniors (65 and older) \$4 in advance or \$5 at the gate. Children

5 and younger get in free. Carnival wristbands also are available for \$20 in advance or \$25 at the gate and a season pass is just \$20. Parking is available at the Fairgrounds for \$13 for the season or \$4 at the gate.

There also will be discount days. All children younger than 12 can enjoy free admission on Kids' Day, August 4. Thursday, August 5, is slated as American Hero Day and all first responders, military veterans and everyone older than 65 with valid appropriate identification can attend for free until 5 p.m.

For more information about the Benton County Fair, or to order tickets, those interested can go online to <http://www.bentoncountyfair.net>.

Danika Faith wins 2010 Teen Idol competition

Three top competitors emerged out of six finalists Friday, May 21, at the Teen Idol finale event at the Boys and Girls Club of Corvallis.

The series of events – sponsored by the Benton County Commission on Children and Families and the Linn County Commission on Children and Families – is for bands and singers who are 13 to 19 years of age. The top prize winners included the following contestants:

- **First Place:** Danika Faith, of Santiam Christian High School;
- **Second Place:** Taylor Weaver, of Scio High School; and
- **Third Place:** Cheyenne Patton, of Jubilee Christian Academy.

Faith is entering her sophomore year of high school and has been performing onstage since she was 5 years old. She has been taking voice lessons since she was 10. Aside from writing songs, she plays piano and acoustic guitar and sings with both her school's choirs. Weaver has been singing

since she was 11. Two years ago she began playing guitar. She wrote her first two songs last summer and performed at the Marion County Fair, where she took first place. Patton is 13 years old, lives in Sweet Home and loves cheerleading, writing poems and listening to music. In August she plans to represent Oregon in the Fine Arts National Competition in Detroit, Mich.

The top three participants received cash awards, amounting to \$475 for first place, \$375 for second and \$275 for third. Prizes were determined by the size of the audience, with 100 percent of the proceeds going directly to the winning performers.

Teen Idol is a Drug Free Communities event designed to create a fun activity for teen-agers in Benton and Linn counties that does not involve alcohol or drugs. The event is sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Drug Free Communities Support Program.

Fire Safety Advice

Extremely wet spring weather in Benton County has resulted in abundant plant growth. By the end of summer, much of that vegetation will dry to a crisp. Add hot, dry and windy conditions and the result is a high wildfire risk.

When an extreme wildfire spreads, it can expose dozens – sometimes hundreds – of homes to fire simultaneously. In such cases, firefighters do not have the resources to defend every home. Homeowners who take proactive steps now have a far greater chance of their homes surviving a wildfire.

Is your home at risk from wildfire? You can learn what you can do to help your home survive a wildfire. At your request, we'll recommend simple steps you can make to improve your home's driveway, landscaping and construction to make it better able to survive a wildfire.

Those interested can call the Benton County Community Development Department at (541) 766-6639 to schedule an informational group workshop in your neighborhood, or request a free personalized on-site evaluation of your property.