

# NEWS from BENTON COUNTY

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## Prep now can help save homes in a wildfire

During a wildfire, firefighters may not have the resources to defend every home. Fortunately, homeowners can take action to protect their homes before a fire starts; allowing firefighters opportunity to maximize their skills and resources.

Now is the time to prepare your home and create an emergency plan for your family. Prepare a "Ready, Set, Go!" plan for evacuation and you will be ready if the need arises. A handy pre-planning checklist can be found at <http://www.co.benton.or.us/cd/cwpp/protection>.

Landscaping with fire in mind is another major step toward

safety. Firewise home design and improvement also plays an important role in preventing ignitions that could lead to total home loss. For example, strong winds during wildfire can carry burning embers more than a mile to land on a roof, enter unscreened openings and collect in the nooks and crannies of a home. Even homes "in town" are vulnerable to embers.

"When considering improvements to reduce wildfire vulnerability, consider the home ignition zone," said Jack Cohen, a research physical

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## Benton County celebrates a quarter century of ADA

Benton County put on a celebration to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act in July.

The event was created to celebrate the 25th anniversary of passage of the law which has been called perhaps the single most comprehensive piece of civil rights legislation in American history.

The schedule of events for Benton County that day included presentation of a proclamation by the Board of Commissioners declaring ADA Awareness Day; presentation of the 2014 Keith E. Billings Award in recognition of outstanding service to people with disabilities in Benton County; and presentations from OSU Disability Access Services; Access Benton County; the Linn-Benton-Lincoln Disability Services Advisory Council; Professor



Emeritus Dick Weinman; the county's Developmental Diversity Program; and Benton County Dial-a-Bus.

All the presenters focused on disability

services and ADA access from various service agency perspectives.

The Keith E. Billings Award winner for 2014 was the Kiwanis Club's Grab-Bar

Program, which has installed more than 1,500 grab bars in homes and residential facilities throughout Benton County. On hand to accept the award were Kiwanis President Barbara Malloy and Kiwanis Grab Bar Program Coordinator Brian Egan.

One in every five Americans is or will be covered by the legislation during their lifetimes. Benton County's was one of many celebrations taking place across the United States in July, culminating in a national recognition of the ADA anniversary at various cities on July 26. More information about the ADA is available online at <http://www.adalegacy.org/>.

The event was co-sponsored and hosted by the Benton County Health Department and the Benton County Special Transportation Program.



# Benton County roundabout embraced by drivers

The long-anticipated roundabout at the intersection of SW 53rd Street and West Hills Road in Corvallis was completed and open to full traffic flow on Friday, July 24, to little fanfare.

That's good news because drivers have been successfully navigating the first, fully functional roundabout in the Corvallis area. No major accidents have been reported.

Paving occurred in early July, with final concrete placed in mid-month and striping and signage was completed the day it opened. Benton County met its goal of having the intersection fully functional five days before the start of the Benton County Fair and Rodeo.

Motorists will notice that landscaping of the center island will not be completed until the fall, which is the best time of year to plant and landscape. West Hills Road – which was closed at the intersection for construction – was re-opened by Friday evening.

Since this is a relatively new type of

traffic feature in Benton County, it is important to remember the rules of the road when it comes to navigating a roundabout. Motorists should negotiate the roundabout cautiously by taking the following steps:

- After yielding to pedestrians and bicyclists in the crosswalk, look to the left for traffic;
- If there is already a car in the roundabout, you must yield;
- Enter the roundabout when it is safe to do so, keeping a low speed and staying to the right;
- Keep travel speed slow (around 15 miles per hour) while in the roundabout;
- As the vehicle approaches the desired exit, use the right-hand turn signal;
- Yield to pedestrians and bicyclists upon exiting the roundabout; and
- While caution should be exercised always, never stop while in the roundabout, as the user of the roundabout has the right-of-way.

Bicyclists can either use the travel



lane, similarly to a motor vehicle, or use the path and crosswalk. Pedestrians at a roundabout should take the following steps:

- At the curb, look left for traffic approaching the roundabout;
- When the coast is clear, cross to the splitter island;

- Check right for oncoming traffic, and finish the crossing if it is clear; and
- Pedestrians do not cross the center island.

Commuters can expect brief delays over the next couple months while contractors complete minor construction work and landscaping.

## You can make a difference in community oral health

A significant number of individuals in Benton County lack access to dental services, but with the help of local dentists and health workers Benton County Oral Health Coalition is providing timely preventive and restorative dental care to those who need it most.

“Dental treatment can be prohibitively expensive,” Oregon Dental Director Dr. Bruce Austin said. “It can also have great positive impacts on people’s overall health, comfort and self esteem.”

In the past three years, there has been a 57-percent reduction in the number of dental pain visits at the Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center Emergency Department, as more than 900 individuals have been served through Benton Health Services’ dental van and voucher programs.

Benton County Oral Health Coordinator Molly Perino is working to recruit additional dental professionals for this rewarding work. Volunteer



opportunities include the following:

- The voucher program, with local dentists making their offices available for emergency dental referrals for people experiencing pain. Visits are reimbursed

with a flat payment for services through a grant from Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center;

- The dental van, with dental professionals volunteering for half-

or full-day increments working in a Medical Teams International emergency dental van. The van visits Corvallis neighborhoods twice a month and also travels to rural communities several times a year – including Alsea, Monroe and Philomath – where transportation may be an issue; and

- Community clinics, where dentists volunteer for parent dental days at the Corvallis Boys and Girls Club Johnson Dental Clinic. Parents of club members without dental insurance can schedule low-cost cleaning appointments and exams three or four times each year regardless of family income level. Volunteer dentists, dental hygienists and dental assistants, as well as donations of money, equipment and supplies are needed.

Anyone interested in volunteering with the dental programs can contact Molly Perino with the Oral Health Coalition at 541-766-6645.

## Wildfire Preparedness *From Page 1*

scientist from the USDA Forest Service Fire Sciences Laboratory in Missoula, Mont. "The greater the exposure potential to wildfire, the more you need nonflammable construction materials and a resistant building design. But this can be done using standard building materials."

The home ignition zone consists of the home and its immediate surroundings within 100 to 200 feet. Research shows that the home ignition zone principally determines a home's vulnerability to destruction during an extreme wildfire.

Creating a fire-resistant building design can mean the difference between a home that withstands a wildfire and one that does not. Here's a list of factors and how you can make your home more fire-resistant:

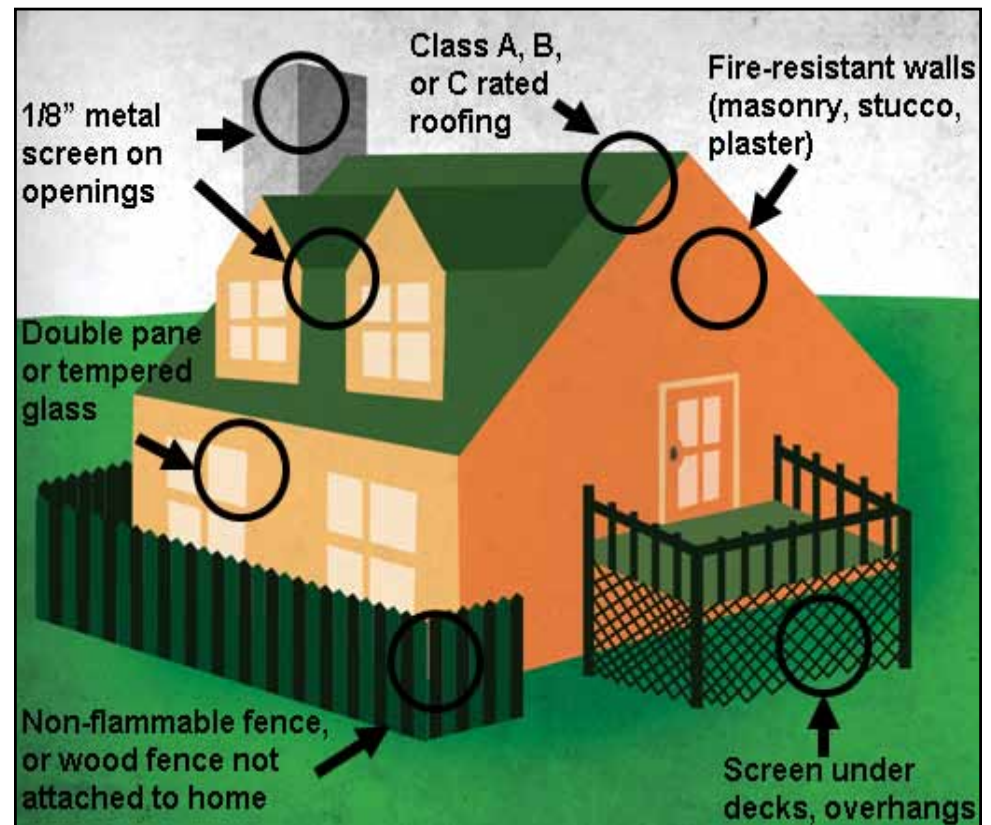
• **Surrounding Vegetation:** Remove or prune vegetation hanging over your dwelling and be sure no flammable materials (like bark) are in contact with the structure. Keep your landscape clean, lean and green within 30 feet of the home. Effective tips on how to create defensible space around your home can be found at <http://www.firewise.org>.

• **Roof:** The roof can be the most vulnerable to burning embers during extreme wildfires. Installing fire-resistant roofing material with a Class A, B or C rating, such as composition shingle, metal and clay or cement tile will help keep flames from spreading.

• **Walls:** Materials that resist heat and flames include cement, plaster, stucco and masonry, such as concrete, stone, brick or block. If your home has vinyl siding, use metal screening over openings that may become exposed if the siding were to melt due to heating during the wildfire. Even wood siding can better resist ignition when flammable vegetation is kept at a distance.

• **Windows:** The heat of a wildfire can cause glass on exterior windows to fracture and collapse. Without a metal screen, a collapsed window will allow firebrands to enter and ignite the house. Double-paned glass can help reduce this risk. Tempered glass is the least likely to break due to the heat of a wildfire. For skylights, go with glass; it withstands higher temperatures than plastic or fiberglass.

• **Openings / Attachments:** Eaves, fascias, soffits and vents should be



"boxed" or enclosed with metal screens to prevent objects larger than 1/8 of an inch from entering the home. The undersides of overhangs, decks and balconies should be screened or enclosed with fire-resistant materials. Allow no flammable materials such as dry leaves, firewood or fir needles to accumulate on or beneath decks.

Make sure fences constructed of flammable materials, such as wood, don't attach directly to your home.

There are no guarantees that a home will be fireproof, but if you take action to be "Firewise," you can greatly increase the chances that your home will withstand a wildfire. Our wildfire season is not over yet.

## County seeks environmental award nominees

The Benton County Board of Commissioners and Environmental Issues Advisory Committee are seeking nominations for the Third-Annual Benton County Environmental Award.

Many Benton County individuals and organizations in the community accomplish a great deal for the health of our environment through their hard work, dedication and vision. The Benton County Board of Commissioners and EIAC created this award to recognize the year's most outstanding environmental contributions in the community.

Any individual or organization is eligible to nominate or apply for the award. Winners will demonstrate

a commitment to environmental stewardship that goes beyond compliance with regulatory requirements. To be considered for the award, individuals or organizations will have:

- Enhanced environmental conditions within Benton County;
- Implemented environmental projects, practices or plans with tangible results;
- Provided leadership in improving the environment in Benton County; or
- Lent support to the County Sustainability Policy through their efforts.

The Environmental Issues Advisory Committee will review all nominations

and make recommendations to the Benton County Board of Commissioners. The Commissioners will make a final decision on awardees. The EIAC then will contact all applicants to inform them of the decision. The award will be presented at the Environmental Issues Advisory Committee Public Forum, scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 8, at the Corvallis Benton County Public Library in Corvallis.

Deadline for nominations is Thursday, Sept. 10. The signup form and more information is available online at [http://www.co.benton.or.us/boc/pio/documents/2015\\_environmental\\_award.pdf](http://www.co.benton.or.us/boc/pio/documents/2015_environmental_award.pdf).

2015 Benton County Environmental Award Nomination Form

Please fill out the information below and mail or deliver to:  
Benton Co. Public Works  
340 SW Army Ave.  
Corvallis, OR 97331

We need mail to: [LARRY.STARBAGG@benton.or.us](mailto:LARRY.STARBAGG@benton.or.us)

Name (Individual or Organization) \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Individual or Organization) \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Using a maximum of five pages, briefly describe the services, and describe the activities or projects that the nominee has accomplished to enhance the environmental conditions in Benton County.



# Hot weather impacts county fair

“County Wide/Country Pride” was the theme of this year’s Benton County Fair and Rodeo, but a more apt theme might have ended up being “Hottest Show in Town.”

Even though 100-plus-degree temperatures each day of the four-day event created a barrier to many who might have come out and enjoyed the event, those who braved the heat seemed to find themselves having a good time. The event, scheduled July 29 through Aug. 1, included misting machines, some air-conditioned facilities and large exhaust fans in an attempt to help keep people cool. Those who braved the weather experienced the joy of shaved ice, ice cream cones, frozen lemonade and many other cool-me-down type treats.

Benton County Fairgrounds Manager predicts an approximately 22-percent drop in attendance due to the weather. But in the evenings when the sun began migrating further toward the Pacific

Ocean and the fairgrounds cooled off, it was a pleasant place to be. In sticking with a tradition of localism, homegrown country artist Jackson Michelson drew a huge crowd on opening night. He was flanked by opening act Jeremy McComb as the opener and followed by headliner A Thousand Horses.

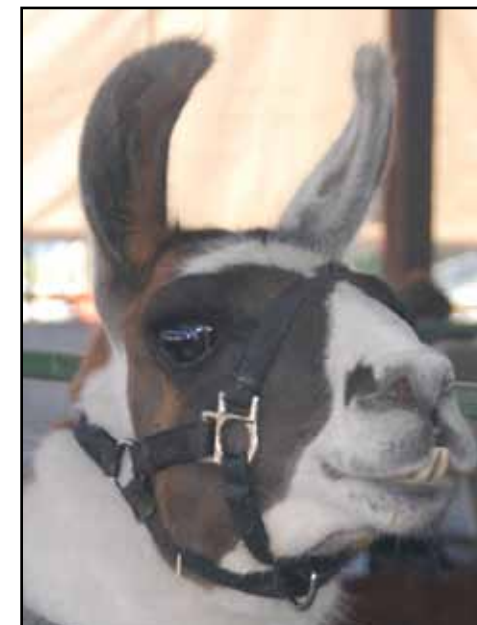
Faith and Family night was a new feature implemented by this year’s Fair Board, with Christian artists Hawk Nelson and Sanctus Real performing. Classic rock legends Foghat rocked the mainstage on Friday, July 31, and despite a low turnout in the beginning by the end of the show the audience area in front of the stage was full. Continuing in a longtime Benton County Fair and Rodeo tradition, Johnny Limbo and the Lugnus provided two separate shows with a steady dose of classic 1950s and ‘60s hits on the final day of the event.

Beyond the musical attractions there was even more family entertainment

including Hypnotist Extraordinaire Tammy Harris Barton, “Mutton Bustin” sheep-riding for children and an opportunity to see exotic animals and reptiles up close with Walk on the Wildside – a non-profit organization dedicated to helping all species of animals who, for various reasons, find themselves without a place to live.

A new and interactive exhibit at the 2015 Fair this year was “Splash Dogs,” a dog sport organization which showcases man’s best friend in an exciting and competitive atmosphere, while providing loads of continuous entertainment. Given the hot weather, many audience members appeared quite jealous of the dogs, who got to happily cool off in the pool at the end of each jump.

Of course, there was much more going on throughout the event with numerous 4-H participants and community members showing livestock, artwork, crafts, sewing, photography, baking,



canning and myriad other skills. The Benton County Fair and Rodeo truly is an event with something for everyone.

## Health Centers earn grant to fund Linn expansion

The Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn Counties was awarded a United States Department of Health and Human Services grant for \$1.1 million recently to open a new health center in Sweet Home.

The Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn Counties is a family of Federally Qualified Health Centers operated by Benton County and overseen by an independent appointed board. The health centers offer high-quality affordable care to some of the region’s most vulnerable populations at its four locations – Benton Health Center, Lincoln Health Center, Monroe Health Center and East Linn Health Center in Lebanon. Services include primary care, oral health, family planning, behavioral health, pharmacy and other services. The Health Centers are certified as a Patient-Centered Health Home due to quality of care delivery and wrap-around services that treat the whole person in an integrated way.

“We are very excited about receiving

this grant,” Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn Counties Director Sherlyn Dahl said. “Our board has been talking about the possibility of expanding access to care in Sweet Home for some time. We are especially pleased to be partnering with Linn County Health Department to develop a fully integrated model of care, providing primary care, mental health and addiction services, oral health and public health services in one location.”

Linn County Health Center locations are self-supporting financially and are run without the support of Benton County property tax dollars. The East Linn Health Center in Lebanon has been a profitable enterprise while providing high-quality affordable care to those who need it most and health center leadership is hopeful that the same trend will follow in Sweet Home.

“Linn County is proud to partner with Benton County once again in the pursuit of accessible, enhanced and integrated healthcare services to the Sweet Home community,” Linn County

Health Department Director Frank Moore said. “This innovative effort, in pursuit of truly integrated healthcare, builds upon the current strengths of partners and promises great benefit to East Linn County residents and vastly improved access to services.”

The Community Health Centers received the funding award during National Health Center Week and was one of 266 successful applicants in 46 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In all \$169 million in Affordable Care Act funding was awarded for this fiscal year’s New Access Point grants.

Successful applicants deliver comprehensive primary care in communities that need it most. These new health center sites are projected to increase access to health care services for more than 1.2 million patients across the country. The most recent awards build on \$101 million awarded to 164 new health center sites in May.

“Across the country, health centers have provided a source of high-

quality primary care for people in rural and urban communities for 50 years,” Acting Deputy Secretary Mary Wakefield said. “These Affordable Care Act funds build on the strong legacy of the health center program and provide even more individuals and families with access to the care they need most.”

The investment will add to the more than 700 new health center sites that have opened as a result of the Affordable Care Act, including those awarded earlier this year.

“Health centers now provide primary care to 1 in 14 people living in the United States,” United States Health Resources and Services Administration Acting Administrator Jim Macrae said. “These awards mean that more communities than ever can count on a health center to help meet the increasing demand for primary care.”

For more information about the Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn Counties, those interested can go online to <http://www.bentonlinnhealthcenters.org>.