

The Citizen-Reporter



SHERMAN COUNTY

A Sherman County Government Publication — December 2023

Winter Fire Safety

The winter months are prime for holiday cheer and time with family, but they also come with a greater risk of fires inside the home. According to FEMA, Christmas trees account for hundreds of fires each year across the U.S. Typically, shorts in electrical lights or open flames from candles, lighters, or matches start tree fires.

From 2016-2020, 19% of home decoration fires in Oregon were started by candles. In December, that number increased slightly to 22%. Forty-four percent of decoration fires started by candles happened in November–January.

The Peak month for home cooking fires in Oregon is December. The average number of monthly cooking fires for January–November is 76. In December, that number jumps dramatically to a total of 112, 32% higher than other months. These stats highlight the importance of fire safety during the winter months and taking extra precautions around holiday festivities.

2024 New Year's Eve Bash

2024 New Year's Eve Bash—The Biggest New Year's Party in Town presented by The Sherman County Fair Board and Countryfied.

December 31, 2023 at the Sherman County Fairgrounds in the New Arena. Doors open at 8:00 p.m. \$20.00 per person, 12 and under are free.

- Bounce House
- Live Music
- Beer Garden
- Kid Friendly
- Photo Booth
- Pizza By the Slice
- Door Prizes
- Concessions
- Dancing

www.shermancountyfairfun
<https://countryfiedmusic.com/>



Tri-County Hazardous Waste and Recycling

The Tri-County Household Hazardous Waste and Recycling Program wants to thank everyone who participated in our 2023 Sherman County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events, we had a fantastic year! Our program was able to collect 8,615 pounds of hazardous material out of Moro and 3,566 pounds out of Wasco with a grand total of 12,181 pounds of hazardous waste removed out of Sherman County, how cool is that!

Last year we collected a grand total of 6,931 between Moro and Wasco combined, which is 5,250 pounds less than what was collected this year. Let's keep it up! We plan to be back in business with free collection events starting up again in April through November of 2024. Don't forget to look for us out supporting the communities at local farmers markets and county fairs. We couldn't do this without out you!

We can be reached at:

(541) 506-2529

www.tricountyrecycle.com

NEW USDA Service Center

Sherman County has a new USDA Service Center in Moro that houses Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS), Sherman County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), and Sherman County Area Watershed Council. The new USDA Service Center is located at 2004 First Street in Moro, just down the hill from the OSU Extension Office. Office hours are open Monday through Friday 8:00 am—4:30 pm.

Poster Contest

Sherman County School and home-schooling students participated in a local conservation poster contest “One Water”. Congratulations to our second-place winners: Madeline West and Olivia Burbank. Congratulations to our first-place winners: Helena Stuart, Grady Webber, Simon Burbank, Isaiah Burbank, and Erin Burbank. Digital copies of the first-place winning posters were sent on to State for judging. The State winners will be sent on to be judged during the annual meeting of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) in February.

STEP Program

Sherman County School 4th and 5th graders participated in the STEP program this fall. This program involved receiving trout eggs from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to hatch in their classrooms. The trout were observed and studied for a few weeks before

being released into a local pond by Mrs. Wambold’s 4th grade class.

Conservation Calendar

December 12: Watershed Council meeting, 7:30am- SWCD Regular Board Meeting, 8:30am

December 25: Christmas Holiday, office closed

January 1: New Years Day, office closed

January 15: Martin Luther King Jr. Day, office closed

Visit our website at

www.shermancountyswcd.com

Follow us on Facebook @ Sherman County SWCD

Sherman County Medical Clinic

The Sherman County Medical Clinic is offering free blood pressure checks at the Sherman County Senior Center on the 1st Friday of each month from 11:30AM - 12:30PM.

Winter Fire Safety Checklist

- Test and ensure your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are working correctly.
- If your plans involve a holiday tree, choose one with fresh, deep-green color and flexible needles.
- Remember to water your tree daily—a tree may consume between a quart and a gallon of water per day.
- Be sure you have at least three feet between your holiday tree and any heating source.
- Ensure the tree is not blocking an exit and that the decorations you use are flame-resistant and flame-retardant.
- Always unplug tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

Sherman County Senior Center Update

The Sherman Co Senior Center has a list of items to loan out, such as: walkers, wheelchairs, canes, etc so if you or anyone you know is in need of one of these items please call the Senior Center at 565-3191 to see about borrowing an item.

The Senior Center would like to extend a special thank you to Wheatacres Ranch, Chris & Carrie Kaseberg and Josh & Jessica Ball for their very generous donation of beef. We truly appreciate the generosity and love being able to feed our patrons local, good quality beef. THANK YOU!!

CHRISTMAS QUOTES

“At Christmas, all roads lead home.” - Marjorie Holmes

“The joy of brightening other lives becomes for us the magic of the holidays.” - W.C. Jones

Sherman County Public/School Library Updates

541-565-3279

shermanlibrary@sherman.k12.or.us

ShermanCountyPSL.weebly.com/

Family Storytime

Ages 0-5 yrs -
Self-guided crafts
Available for older siblings

The first
& third
Saturdays
of every
month at
9:30am

Join the fun of creative play, rhyme and rhythm
while fine tuning motor skills and coordination.



January Book Club

January 4, 2024
The Death of Mrs. Westaway
By Ruth Ware

On a day that begins like any other, Hal receives a mysterious letter bequeathing her a substantial inheritance. She realizes very quickly that the letter was sent to the wrong person—but also that the cold-reading skills she's honed as a tarot card reader might help her claim the money.

Soon, Hal finds herself at the funeral of the deceased... where it dawns on her that there is something very, very wrong about this strange situation and the inheritance at the center of it.

Full of spellbinding menace and told in Ruth Ware's signature suspenseful style, this is a "captivating and eerie page-turner" (The Wall Street Journal) from the Agatha Christie of our time.

Ask us to reserve your copy—we offer audiobooks & large print when available.

Pick Up and Delivery

Books and materials can be dropped off and picked up from various locations all year round. Please call the library for pick up and drop off locations in Sherman County.

Decorate the
Mitten Tree

BRING YOUR DONATION OF GLOVES, MITTENS, HATS AND SCARVES TO DECORATE THE MITTEN TREE AT THE LIBRARY. WE INVITE EVERYONE TO ADORN THE BARE BRANCHES WITH WARMTH. WE ARE ALSO REQUESTING WARM THROWS AND BLANKETS TO PLACE UNDER THE TREE.

PLEASE TRY TO DROP YOUR ITEMS OFF BY DEC. 16TH - HOWEVER, THE MITTEN TREE WILL BE UP THROUGH THE END OF DECEMBER AND ALL DONATED ITEMS WILL BE GIVEN TO OUR LOCAL FOOD BANK AND OTHER AGENCIES SERVING SHERMAN COUNTY.

**YOU MAY ALSO DROP OFF ITEMS AT OUR CITY TRANSIT LOCATIONS IN RUFUS, WASCO AND GRASS VALLEY.



Sherman County Public/School Library
65912 High School Loop Moro, OR 97039
541-565-3279 - shermanlibrary@sherman.k12.or.us

Hours
Tuesday and Thursday 10am - 6pm
Sat 10am - 4pm
Curbside Service available

New Best Sellers... Arriving Soon

Fiction

Armor of Light	Ken Follett
Holly	Stephen King
The Vaster Wilds	Lauren Groff
Fourth Wing	Rebecca Yarros
The Fragile Threads of Power	V.E. Schwab

Non-Fiction

Friends, Lovers and the Big Terrible Thing	Matthew Perry
The Woman in Me	Britney Spears
Killing the Witches	Bill O'Reilly

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A Study in Drowning	Ava Reid
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Childrens

Just Because	Matthew McConaughey
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Cell Phones

Cell phones give us a modern convenience that we use for far more than basic communication, but DID YOU KNOW... that it only takes an online stalker, hacker, or scammer one commonality for a teenager to feel comfortable “liking”, or accepting a friend request from them?

Teens are more likely to accept a request to be friended, followed, or chat with someone if they have even one mutual friend, belong to the same online group with even one mutual friend, or if they share similar information.

Have a family discussion about internet safety!

- Be clear and specific about rules, boundaries, and expectations.
- Talk about the scary and awkward stuff.
- Share your concerns, and check in with them regularly.
- Confirm with your child(ren) that they know the people they are friends with on any form of social media.



Mid-Columbia Community Action Council

MCCAC’s Household Utility Assistance team will be scheduling appointments for assistance at their main offices in The Dalles and Hood River. Additionally, MCCAC will be scheduling outreach appointments in the cities of Moro, Maupin and Cascade Locks. In order to apply, you can contact us at 541-298-5131, ext. 206 (The Dalles) or ext. 310 (Hood River). If your call is not answered, please leave a message and allow two business days for a return call. Also, Beginning December 1st, you may complete an application online at www.mccac.com/utility-assistance-and-weatherization. Applications are available in both English and Spanish, and bilingual staff are available for appointments at either main office location.

Income Eligibility Guidelines:

Household of one – Monthly gross income below \$2,785.58

Household of two – Monthly gross income below \$3,642.67

Household of three – Monthly gross income below \$4,499.75

Household of four – Monthly gross income below \$5,356.83

If you are unsure whether you qualify or for household sizes greater than 4 persons, please call our office or email us at energy@mccac.com so our staff can help determine program eligibility.

Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan

Wildfire, windstorm, winter storm, landslides, drought, earthquake, flood, volcanic events, and extreme weather, including heatwaves and cold snaps; these are the natural hazards Sherman County faces every year. Some of these hazards are more likely to happen than others, with the county currently being in a declared drought and firefighters already responding to several wildfires this year. Rough winters and strong winds are also a common occurrence, and something everyone in the community plans on annually. To lessen the effect of both common and less common natural disasters, Sherman County engages in hazard mitigation, which is a method of reducing or alleviating the losses of life, property and injuries resulting from natural hazards through long and short-term strategies.

An important part of hazard mitigation is including the whole community, and you can participate by completing the Natural Hazard Survey available by scanning the below QR code with a smartphone or visiting this website <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RYXP66L>. The survey is about public perceptions and opinions regarding natural hazards in Sherman County and will be used to help draft the NHMP.



Public Transit Driver

Sherman County Community Transportation is accepting applications for paid driver positions. Applicant must be comfortable driving in populated areas and in adverse weather and road conditions. Position may require applicant to physically assist passengers in addition to mobility devices i.e. walkers, wheel chairs, scooters.

Applicant Requirements:

- Part-Time, flexible hours dependent on transportation needs
- Minimum 21 years of age with a valid Oregon or Washington Driver's License
- Pass a Back Ground Check (criminal history and driving record), pre-employment drug screen
- Required training provided upon hiring including Passenger Assistance, Defensive Driving, and CPR
- Starting wage: \$14.28/hour

Sherman County Community Transportation provides rides for non-emergency medical appointments to The Dalles, Portland, Bend and surrounding areas. Applications may be obtained at the Sherman County Courthouse from the Transportation office, located at 500 Court St, Moro, Oregon, or online at <https://www.co.sherman.or.us/documents/employment-application/> and <https://www.co.sherman.or.us/documents/criminal-check-form/>. Sherman County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. For more information, please contact

the transportation office at 541-565-3553. Position open until filled.

Sherman County Community Transit provides public transportation services according to Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, a federal statute prohibiting discrimination without regard to race, color or national origin.

2023 Fall Grant Awards Announced by Cultural Coalition

Fall grant awards for 2023 have been announced by the Sherman County Cultural Coalition (SCCC) committing \$6,150.00 to projects that strengthen existing cultural resources or engage the community in the arts, heritage or humanities in Sherman County.

Six project applications met the goals and priorities established by the Coalition in the Sherman County Cultural Plan. Successful applicants and projects are as follows: City of Grass Valley – *Annual Easter Egg Hunt*; City of Wasco – *Sound System for Community Events*; Gorge Outfitters Supply – *Annual Rufus Catfish Derby*; Oregon Frontier Chamber of Commerce – *Sherman County Harvest Fest*; Sherman County School – *Artist in Residence*; Sherman County Prevention – *Library Story Time: Birth – 5 Year Olds*.

Funding for these community projects was made possible with a grant award received from the Oregon Cultural Trust

and matching funds generously provided by Sherman County. Applications for the next grant cycle will be available in the spring of 2024.

The Oregon Cultural Trust, with donations from Oregonians, funds 1400+ nonprofits in Oregon in the areas of arts, heritage, and humanities. When you donate to any of the 1400+ on the list, you can qualify for a state tax credit. Visit <https://culturaltrust.org/> to learn how you can get involved and qualify for the tax credit.

For additional information on the Sherman County Cultural Coalition, please visit our website at <https://www.shermancountyculturalcoalition.com>.

Merry Christmas
and Happy New
Year from
County Court!

Judge Dabulskis,
Commissioner Bird,
and
Commissioner Miller



A Christmas Note

I love to gaze at a decorated Christmas tree all lit up with Christmas lights. When you turn down the room lights and stare into the Christmas lights, do you remember the magic you felt as a young child at Christmas time? I do, and as I stare glassy eyed at a Christmas tree, I often wonder what my grandchildren's earliest and favorite Christmas memories will be.

My earliest Christmas memory comes from a time when I was about 5 or 6 years old. We lived in a small run down house in Mar-ley, Illinois. There were 5 of us kids – my older twin brother, a younger sister, and 2 younger brothers. Us four boys slept in a couple of bunkbeds in a small bedroom that was built right off of the living room where the Christmas tree stood. That year we decorated the tree with strands of popcorn. Decorating the tree was quite a big deal when I was growing up. All of us kids would line up in front of Mom. Mom would be sitting on the couch with boxes of glass ornaments around her. She would in turn, hand each of us an ornament with a hook on it. We would then hurry to the tree, find an open spot on a limb we could reach, hang it and rush back to get in line in front of Mom, so she could hand us the next ornament. I don't know how the upper half of the trees looked in those earlier years or how much redecorating took place after us kids went to bed. I do know, the bottom half of the trees for as high as us kids could reach, looked great that first night.

On a night right before Christmas, I woke up when everybody was sleeping. The house was very still. I got up, went to the doorway and laid down on the floor, put my chin in my hands and gazed at the Christmas tree that had all the lights on and the wrapped presents underneath it. The colored glass ornaments shone and sparkled. I don't know what could be a more wonderful sight to a kid than looking at their Christmas tree with lots of presents stacked all around and underneath it. What I remember so vividly that night was a scene straight out of a Walt Disney movie. Sitting on one of the tallest presents that had a big bow ribbon on top, was a little mouse. It was reaching up with its tiny front paws, pulling down on a strand of popcorn and eating one of the popped kernels. I could hardly believe what I was seeing. After a couple of moments the mouse stopped eating and was very still for couple seconds. It then jumped down amongst the smaller presents, I saw a flash of its tail as it climbed down between two presents and then it was gone. I didn't even have time to wake up my twin brother to show him.

That was over 50 years ago and it is still a very magical memory for me. Christmas is a time for those moments. No matter how you celebrate your holiday season, make memories that are magical. Remember those around you. You need them and they need you. It really is the time to be joyful.

P.S. To everyone who read my Christmas note about the mouse eating the strand of popcorn when I first wrote it. My twin brother read the story and immediately called to correct me. His earliest Christmas memory is of me waking him up to watch the mouse eating the popcorn. He had just told his wife the story of me waking him up to watch the mouse a couple days earlier. Once the conversation got going we remembered getting our first "Hot Wheel" cars – a Mustang and a Cougar, that Christmas – but neither of us could remember who got which car. That was the first year Hot Wheels were made. We also remembered that Mom knitted each kid a pair of yarn slippers every year for Christmas. You could really make static electricity by rubbing them on the carpet - and by shocking your younger siblings, you could really get into trouble. I hope you always have a great Christmas.

Judge Joe Dabulskis

The Judges Corner

I had planned to do a lot of things over the long Thanksgiving weekend. But as in the line adapted from Robert Burns' "To a Mouse", "The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry". It took me three days to change a light bulb. It started one morning when my wife wanted me to change a flickering florescent light bulb in the utility room. She bought new bulbs. The bulbs didn't work with the old style ballast. We decided we would (me) install some new, 6 inch, low profile, pop-in lights. Trying to use the same hole, to make one fit, I had to trim a ¼ inch off of a ceiling joist. Then the old wiring cracked because it was so brittle. The house was built in the 1950s and it was the original wiring. I replaced that section with new wire while laying on my belly in dusty insulation, fishing for a 1 inch hole drilled into a board that was two feet out of my arm's reach. When I finally got that accomplished, I decided an outlet in the attic would be nice so I could plug in a work light instead of working in the dim glow of a headlamp. I did all of this while kneeling on or lying across rafters. It was freezing cold and there was absolutely no head room. Then my marking tags came off of the ends of the wires going to a pair of three way switches. My luck just went on and on. But my wife is REALLY happy with her new lights, and only my knees, back, neck and shoulders ache. And I didn't eat too much pie. I really do have MUCH to be Thankful for!

At the annual AOC (Assoc. of Oregon Counties), conference in Eugene, it was reinforced that Sherman County is a great place on so many levels. Several other counties have such a homelessness problem along with rampant drug issues (including drug cartel) that it seemed like they are from different countries. One county doesn't have plumbing or running water at their fairgrounds. I am not saying we don't have issues but - man we are lucky. Again I am so Thankful! While at the conference the Governor did ask about the wheat that was planted at Smith Farm where she rode in the tractor.

In October I was invited to be a chaperone on a 5th grade field trip to Oak Springs Fish Hatchery near Maupin. I got a chance to watch as students caught, milked, and released spawning Steelhead. A mobile automated, fingerling adipose fin clipping machine was in use while we were there. Many of those students have made art depicting Steelhead to be displayed in the Commissioner's meeting room.

Many thanks to the preschoolers, kids and teachers for coming "Trick-Or-Treating" at the Sherman County Courthouse. Everyone loved it. The costumes and decorations were outstanding.

Commissioner Bird and I attended a "Notice of Intent" (NOI), ODOE meeting in Maupin about a proposed 800 MW solar project named "Yellow Rosebush". If built, it will be on approximately 8000 acres in Wasco County, several miles south of the BPA Buckley Substation. The earliest operational date of the solar project is 2028. Buckley Substation is slated to be rebuilt and is located in Sherman County.

While attending an Economic Summit in Cascade Locks last month, I listened to a talk about Artificial Intelligence. Some of it seems really cool, but much of the presentation was really unnerving.

The Sherman County Court, along with the Mayor of Rufus, a Sheriff's Deputy, the Justice of the Peace, and a representative of Sen. Wyden's office toured the John Day Dam in November. Concerns about Giles French Park and Rufus Landing were discussed along with learning about the Locks, fish and the power generators. The Court also visited and inspected the water project in Kent last month. Commissioner Bird and I have a small bet on which water project - Biggs or Kent will be completed first. Both have been subject to the same line as from above, - "The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry".

This quote by John Steinbeck, who incidentally wrote a story titled "Of Mice and Men" is great to keep in mind, especially as you get into the Christmas spirit, - "You don't have to be perfect, You can be good!"

Judge Joe Dabulskis



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

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Three Easy Steps to Recycle!

Do Not Recycle:

- Carbon paper
- Food-contaminated packaging
- Clear “clamshells” (berry, bakery or battery packages)
- Frozen food boxes or food stained paper
- Label backing sheets
- Paper towels, tissue, napkins
- Photographs
- Plastic-coated envelopes
- Wax, plastic or foil-coated paper
- Styrofoam.
- Plastic bags
- Plastic tubs or plant containers



The Solid Waste Transfer Site:

72526 Welk Road
Open every 2nd & 4th Saturday
10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

The Dalles Disposal
1317 West 1st Street -The Dalles, 97058
(541) 298-5149

First Sort: Commingled:

- PAPER - newspapers, magazines, catalogs, junk mail, phone books, shredded paper in a paper bag, cereal & cracker style boxes (liner removed), cardboard tubes, milk cartons & juice boxes
- PLASTIC - plastic bottles, #1 & #2 with a neck. Examples; beverages, milk jugs, shampoo, detergent, cleaners (rinse & remove caps)
- METAL - aluminum cans, tin cans (flattened), clean aluminum foil & foil baking pans, empty aerosol cans (discard cap).

Second Sort:

- All glass bottles & jars - rinsed. No lids.

Third Sort:

- Corrugated cardboard - flattened.

**All items should be clean & rinsed
with lids removed & flattened if possible.**

Self-Haul Recycling Depot Schedule:

- Moro 9 am - 4:30 pm: 2nd Friday & Saturday
- Wasco 9 am - 4:30 pm: 3rd Friday & Saturday
- Rufus 9 am - 4:30 pm: 4th Friday & Saturday
- Grass Valley 1-3 pm: Monday & Tuesday weekly