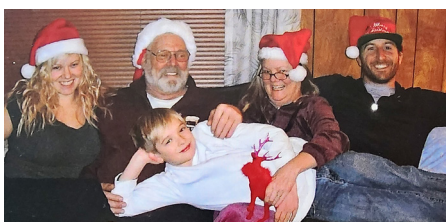


Senior Living: Parkhill discovers Packwood while gold hunting

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SW WA Night Skies: May night skies filled with Blue Moon, conjunction and more

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Vikings' Coco Baldwin, left, and Avery Teinhaara run side-by-side during the 400-relay on Tuesday at Mossyrock

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# The East County

# JOURNAL

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## County sets rules for cannabis shops in Packwood

BY AMBER BROWN  
East County Journal

Budget problems have been on many organizations agendas this year. With expenditures increasing and revenues not keeping up, the Lewis County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) are looking at options that they had previously decided were not for them. One option that they are

reviewing is allowing the retail sale of cannabis products in unincorporated Lewis County.

The BOCC has tasked the Lewis County Planning Commission (LCPC) with drafting a code package that would allow cannabis retail sales in unincorporated Lewis County. The LCPC is not tasked with deciding whether it's right or wrong, just a code package that the BOCC can review

and decide whether or not to implement it.

Director of Community Development Mindy Brooks said that Lewis County is down 50 employees since 2008. They have implemented more efficient programs to assist, such as the SmartGov portal for online permit requests. "We are at the point that we cannot make more cuts. We need more revenue," Brooks

said.

Most government is funded through taxes and fees. "Property taxes are the largest single ongoing revenue source for the county. The second largest revenue source is sales and use tax. Cannabis retail is a source of revenue not currently utilized by Lewis County," said Natalie Kamieniecki, staff presenter.

With cannabis retail sales,

there are three categories in which Lewis County can receive revenue. The first is a "per capita share distributed to all cities and counties that do not prohibit cannabis business," a PowerPoint presentation by the staff stated.

Lewis County is one of six counties in Washington state that has so far prohibited cannabis

See **Cannabis** Page 2

## Fairhart in need of a transplant

BY AMBER BROWN  
East County Journal

"I am frustrated with not knowing why," Morton resident Elee Fairhart said about his failing kidney health. "I watched what I ate, exercised, kept my weight down and still the numbers get worse."

Fairhart is now in Stage 4 kidney failure and is almost at Stage 5. "I don't really know the cause," he said. He believes it has to be a long-standing case of diabetes. He has had the disease for more than 30 years.

"I was able to control it through exercise and diet for the first eight years," he said. After that, his numbers kept creeping up and the doctors started him on metformin and then another drug and so on. The numbers on his metabolic panel just keep getting worse.

Fairhart is currently



Elee Fairhart

working with the University of Washington donor program to try to find a new kidney.

"If I can't find a donor, then they will put me on dialysis," he said. The average life expectancy of someone on dialysis is five years. If he receives a kidney transplant from a living person, then the average is 10 to 14 years and if he receives one donated after a person passes then the life expectancy is five to eight years.

"The University of Washington has an 87 percent success rate for the first year of the transplant," Fairhart said. They are very

See **Fairhart** Page 3



Mossyrock Schools courtesy photo | East County Journal

### Reading buddies

Mossyrock elementary School student Connor Morgan, left, listens to a story read by high schooler Russell Eckloff as part of the districtwide community service activities the week of April 20. For more on this event and other activities in Mossyrock Schools, see Schools on page 8 of today's East County Journal.



Amber Brown | East County Journal

Diane Markham is posing with her educational skeleton, Boney, which was in her office for her entire time at the Hospital Foundation. When she became the marketing and communications director, it was relocated to the hospital conference room.

## Markham ready for her next chapter

BY AMBER BROWN  
East County Journal

Morton resident Diane Markham, also known as Diane Evans, is retiring from her position as marketing and communications manager at Arbor Health Hospital. She has been in that position for the last 20 years. Prior to that she had worked at The East County Journal for 14 years.

"I am so grateful for my time working at The Journal," she said. "It gave me lots of wonderful experiences and East Lewis County is rich with wonderful people that I wouldn't have met except through The Journal."

She obtained her associate of technical arts degree from Centralia College in 1993. Her last quarter of college required

work study hours which she did through The Journal. "After graduation, I stayed with The Journal and grew in the job," Markham said.

She learned to design ads, working in the darkroom, and she sold advertisements. "I had my eye on the reporter job," she said. She wrote a humor column for many years. She was the first in the business to transfer from ad sales to editorial. Thanks to her, it has become standard practice for someone to work in both ad sales and editorial.

"I moved into being the editor for the last six years of working for The Journal. It helped to prepare me to come over to the hospital," she said. In the early years,

See **Markham** Page 2

## Housing committee to follow Livable Packwood format

BY AMBER BROWN  
East County Journal

During the regular meeting of Livable Packwood on Thursday, April 16, the new leaders of the housing committee are working on developing a charter that will help guide the future actions of the committee.

Van Anderson, president, asked that they would follow the template in the Livable Packwood documents so that they follow the same format as other committees. He also wanted to make sure that all criteria were met by each committee.

The community garden report was given by Kim Pawlawski. They had a winter sewing event and are starting to see the seeds sprouting. It's still too cold to plant in the ground but as the weather warms, they are beginning to tentatively plan more activities.

The community garden had a vendor

booth at the Packwood Saturday Market Plant Sale on May 9. They plan to have a booth at the regular Packwood Saturday Market's on each Saturday starting June 6.

The Livable Packwood Pantry, usually shortened to the Pantry, will have been tracking usage for a full year at the end of April. At the next meeting, Pawlawski is hoping to have a compilation of the information from the year. For March, the Pantry served 147 households which equates to roughly 363 individuals.

The Pantry received a large donation of dental supplies. The volunteers are putting together smaller bags with three toothbrushes, toothpaste and dental floss. As well as being available at the Pantry location at the Timber River Connections Packwood Senior Center, they will be inserting the bundles into the backpacks of the students

See **Packwood** Page 2

## Forest Service ramps up for an expected busy wildfire season

BY EVAN BURKS  
U.S. Forest Service

The warning signs flashed early this year. After a dismal winter snowpack across many western high elevations, forests are drying faster and by mid-summer may be ripe for extreme fire conditions. Communities face mounting risk, but federal fire leaders are keeping the nation's wildfire response system ready.

"All of our predictive models point to a challenging summer," says Deputy Chief Sarah Fisher, head of Fire and Aviation Management for the U.S. Forest Service. "But we have an incredible workforce and an interagency system built to adapt and meet challenges head-on."

Wildfires are burning longer, moving faster and behaving less predictably than they did even a decade ago. To meet that challenge, the Forest Service is ensuring their national fire-fighting network of more than 28,000 responders are ready.

The network includes more than 90 Interagency Hotshot Crews, 40 Type 2 Initial Attack crews and hundreds of additional Type 2 crews, which are hand crews with different capabilities for quickly containing and controlling wildfires. They are supported by more than 900 Forest Service fire engines and another 1,600 contracted engines and pieces of heavy equipment.

The Forest Service also covers the sky, managing

more than 400 aircraft including helicopters, water scoopers and 29 large air-tankers that can operate nationwide. These aircraft can respond to fast-changing conditions. They support missions for both the Forest Service, Department of the Interior and states.

Together this entire system of responders and logistical support forms a unified response structure. It moves crews, aircraft and equipment where they are needed most, regardless of agency boundaries.

"Our strength comes from working as one system in full partnership with the Department of the Interior," Fisher said. "When conditions change, we adapt quickly and over-

See **Wildfires** Page 3