

# OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS REGION 360 NEWS

September 2022

## OCWCOG HOLDS BLOOD DRIVE IN HONOR OF LEE LAZARO

We were honored to host our first American Red Cross Blood Drive on August 9th in honor of Lee Lazaro, a long-time OCWCOG supporter and member of the Disability Services Advisory Council. We would like to thank Suzanne Lazaro for sharing the following words to remind us of the great work Lee did in our community and the importance of making a blood donation.

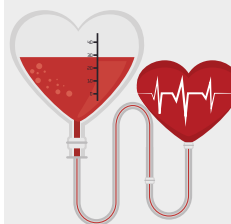
*Lee Lazaro pictured 2019*



Lee was the Benton County Rural and Special Transportation Manager for approximately five years. When he was new in the position, he immediately engaged with stakeholder groups to better meet their needs. He soon began serving as a volunteer advisor to OCWCOG's Disabled Services Advisory Council Board. Lee served as co-chair, served on the Monitor and Review Committee, and later became a member of the Meals on Wheels Advisory Committee, monitoring and supporting the Meals on Wheels program. He was a steadfast advocate for getting transportation to the otherwise homebound, as he recognized this as a critical component of well-being and health.

Lee was diagnosed with Mantle cell lymphoma in late 2018. During the last 6 months of his life, Lee relied on multiple blood transfusions as well as platelets from the Red Cross center in Salem. These two resources allowed him more quality time and an opportunity to attempt to qualify for breakthrough cancer treatment. We are forever grateful for all the blood products he received. Thank you for contributing to this blood drive in Lee's memory.

## BLOOD DRIVE RESULTS



**UNITS COLLECTED 18**  
**PRESENTING DONORS 19**  
**FIRST TIME DONORS 10**  
**IMPACT 54 LIVES**  
**PERCENT OF GOAL 105.9%**

# A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



I know we are still having warm afternoons but believe it or not, the summer months are almost over. School has started, there is a crisp breeze in the morning, and football is in full swing. The afternoon weather has been deceiving, but I think it's time for fall colors and sweaters.

Over the summer I have been able to spend time out in the community thanks to Covid restrictions lifting in many areas. As a lifelong social worker, it was wonderful to meet many of you face to face for the first time. I am looking forward to continuing my visits to local city council meetings throughout the fall, meeting new faces, and exploring how we can work together to better serve the region.

Last month we were able to move forward with our Bias Response Initiative by hitting a key milestone with the completion of community focus groups. This feasibility study is researching and collecting existing state and local anti-bias resources and identifying gaps that currently exist. Six focus groups were held across the region to gather information, and in the upcoming months we will have findings to examine and share.

Over the summer months, we have been deeply involved in crafting a clear mission and vision for the COG, along with strategic goals for us to achieve as an agency over the next few years. I am very excited for us to have a roadmap to drive the work we do as an agency. My theme for this year is "moving forward" and I am pleased to say we have made great progress on this work that will set us up to better serve our communities.

Keep smiling!

*Ryan Vogt, OCWCOG Executive Director*

## HAPPY RETIREMENT!

After seven years of service as a Board Member with OCWCOG and many years of service to the community and our region, Millersburg Mayor Jim Lepin is retiring. We would like to thank Mayor Lepin for his dedicated years of service on our Board of Directors and wish him a very happy retirement!



*Mayor Lepin with Ryan Vogt, OCWCOG Executive Director*



# CASCADES WEST BUSINESS LENDING HELPS BRING LOCAL DREAM TO LIFE



Cascades West Business Lending was excited to partner with Oregon Coast Bank to assist skōSH restaurant with start up and working capital to bring their local restaurant dreams to life. A year later, skōSH is a local dining hot spot in Waldport, offering in house dining, take out, and delivery. skōSH owners James and Courtney are committed to creating a fun and sustainable work environment that provides important job opportunities to local residents.

James and Courtney pride themselves in doing things just a “skōSH” different at the restaurant by creating clever redesigns of classic meals. They strive to highlight the majestic Pacific Northwest through many of the dishes on their rotating menu, always bringing something fresh and unique to their regular customers.

A true family owned and operated business, you can often find James in the kitchen cooking up unique menu items to serve customers. His chef skills mixed with Courtney's support have helped make skōSH what it is today.

Next time you're headed for ocean waves and sandy beaches, make sure to stop by skōSH at 285 NW HWY 101 in Waldport!



**LEARN MORE ABOUT  
CASCADES WEST BUSINESS LENDING**

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# MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEERS MAKE BIG IMPACT ACROSS THE REGION

Meals on Wheels is among the most well-known names in senior nourishment and support services. Our wonderful Meals on Wheels volunteers provide not only a nutritious meal but also a friendly visit and safety check - helping seniors overcome the challenges of limited mobility and isolation as they age. This important program helps keep seniors living independently in their own home and community where they can enjoy the connections that will help them thrive.



From January through the end of June, our Meals on Wheels sites in the region served over 40,000 meals across Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties. This work would not be possible without our incredible volunteers!



**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER WITH MEALS ON WHEELS IN YOUR COMMUNITY, CONNECT WITH US AT [OCWCOG.ORG/CONNECT](https://ocwco.org/connect).**

## SERVING BENTON COUNTY VETERANS



The Benton County Veterans Service Office is staffed by OCWCOG in partnership with the Benton County Commissioners. Our accredited Veteran Service Officers have been making efforts to connect with the community in various ways this year. They hosted a pop up office at Oregon State University in partnership with OSU's ODVA LGBTQ+ Coordinator and have attended various community events in the Benton County area, making important connections with veterans in the outskirts of the county. Recently the VSO team was able to attend the Linn/Benton Veterans Stand Down to share information regarding the services offered by the Veteran Service Office with unhoused veterans.

*Veteran Service Officers Mark, Molly, and Ian at the Linn/Benton Veterans Stand Down*



# ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES ASSISTS IN FINANCIAL DAMAGE CASE

Adult Protective Services (APS) Lead Community Investigator Madalyn Stone provided support to a community APS investigator for a financial exploitation investigation earlier this year. When Madalyn made initial contact with the victim, it became clear that they deeply believed the perpetrator and were unable to understand that the situation was a scam. At this time, the victim refused to engage in an interview with Madalyn. Madalyn briefed the assigned APS investigator on the initial contact and provided feedback on how to move forward with the case.

At the end of May 2022, a new report of concern for this victim was called into APS which resulted in a welfare check being requested by the APS screening team. A deputy with Linn County Sheriff's Office contacted the victim in May, and the victim was again resistant to share any information about their experience. Although the victim was unable to understand they were involved in a financial scam, the deputy was able to secure enough information to determine the victim believed they were working with the government in some capacity. The LCSO deputy's report of the incident was routed to Madalyn by LCSO in June. After reading the LCSO report and reviewing the case history for the victim, Madalyn requested to have the case reassigned to her with the goal of pulling together a team to meet with the victim in hopes of "breaking the spell" the scammer held on them.

Madalyn began forming a team for a joint response that consisted of APS, LCSO, and an FBI Special Agent. In July, the joint team met with the victim and the victim's children to discuss the situation and shed light on the scam that was taking place. Through these efforts, the victim was able to fully understand the scope of the scam they had unfortunately been involved in. Madalyn and the rest of the team members created a safety plan to support the victim not only from being revictimized but also in processing the trauma associated with this event. The total financial damage is estimated to be over \$300,000 and we cannot say enough about the good work that our APS team did to bring resolution to this case.

**CAREGIVER RESOURCES  
ARE AVAILABLE!**

**[ADRCmail@OCWCOG.org](mailto:ADRCmail@OCWCOG.org)**

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 15 | Finance Committee Meeting
- September 15 | OCWCOG Board of Directors Meeting
- September 21 | Albany Chamber Business Extravaganza *Come visit us!*
- September 30 | Zoom Medicare 101
- October 15 | Fraud Prevention Shred Event at OCWCOG

SEE THE FULL  
CALENDAR HERE



## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Adult Protective Services Specialist - Albany
- Case Managers - Albany/Toledo
- Transportation Brokerage Specialist - Albany
- Eligibility Specialist - Toledo
- Meal Site Manager - Roving Linn/Benton County

## VOLUNTEER WITH US!

There are a variety of volunteer opportunities available if you are passionate about serving your local community! Educate seniors about Medicare, help provide meals to seniors and people with disabilities, and more!



AmeriCorps

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**MEMBER GOVERNMENTS | COUNTIES** Linn, Benton, and Lincoln **CITIES** Adair Village, Albany, Brownsville, Corvallis, Depoe Bay, Halsey, Harrisburg, Lebanon, Lincoln City, Millersburg, Monroe, Newport, Philomath, Siletz, Sodaville, Sweet Home, Tangent, Toledo, Waldport, and Yachats **SOVEREIGN NATION** Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians **PORT** Port of Newport