

City Bridges

This Issue

In Case of Emergency	2
Backyard Burn Rules.....	2
Water Project Update.....	3
Check Out the Library.....	3
What Are Biosolids?.....	4
Up With Trees!	4

Fall 2005

News to keep you connected to Albany City government

Native Oregonian is New City Manager



Parks & Recreation Director Ed Hodney (far right) gives new City Manager Wes Hare a tour of COOL! Swanson Park Action Center.

Wes Hare officially became Albany's City Manager on August 1, 2005.

Hare, 52, served as City Manager in LaGrande for the last ten years before coming to Albany.

He graduated from high school in Bend and served in the U.S. Navy as a journalist for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for four years. He later earned a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's in public affairs, both at the University of Oregon. While working on his master's degree, he was an administrative intern with the City of Lowell in rural Lane County.

He was City Administrator in Oakridge from May 1988 to September 1995. During his tenure, the City bought an abandoned 260-acre lumber mill site to create a city-owned industrial park; built a wastewater treatment plant and a new fire station; expanded the City's main park through land donation and grants; and created the City's first economic development strategic plan.

Projects that were completed during his decade in LaGrande include an indoor aquatics center; downtown park and amphitheater; Blue Mountain Conference Center; a skatepark; fire station; establishment of an award-winning urban forestry program; upgrades to the City's telecommunications system; improvements

to the wastewater treatment plant; and numerous improvements to City parks.

Hare was granted three leaves of absence during his years in LaGrande to work as a local government consultant in Jakarta, Indonesia; a local government specialist in Kerbala, Iraq; and an economic development consultant in Croatia.

"My first goal (in Albany) is to learn as much as possible while being accessible to citizens and city employees," he said. "I appreciate the trust the City Council has shown me and will do my best to earn it during the years ahead."

After his first week on the job in Albany, Hare wrote a column about the experience.

"The last time I started a new job was about two years ago in Kerbala, Iraq; so it's not surprising that my first four days in Albany seem very good by comparison," he wrote. "What some might not expect is that there are a few similarities between the two experiences. People in Kerbala were exceptionally gracious and welcoming when I arrived, and I've found the same to be true in Albany.

"Bewildered" describes my first days in Iraq; and although I've been managing cities for 17 years, my initial week in Albany reminds me a little of the confusion I felt in the Middle East. Fortunately, I haven't encountered the threat of violence here yet.

"Despite the confusion and sense of inadequacy that always seems to accompany a new job, my first week in Albany has been great and I'm optimistic about the future," he said. "I've attended two great community events at Monteith Riverpark, and the staff at the City has been uniformly professional and personable. There are a number of interesting problems to tackle and no danger of boredom."

Hare has received numerous honors for his work: the Rural Telecommunications Advocate Award; the Herman Kehrli Award for Lifetime Contributions to Oregon Local Government from the League of Oregon Cities; and the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the University of Oregon Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management.

He and his wife Evelyn have four grown children and three grandchildren. The Hares will live in Southwest Albany.

"My wife and I feel very fortunate to be in Albany, and we are grateful for the opportunity to live and work here," he said. "We hope to contribute to the community and look forward to many new friendships, not to mention more visits from our grandchildren who live relatively nearby."

Wes Hare's weekly newsletter columns are posted on the City's Web site, www.cityofalbany.net.

New Low-Income Assistance Program for Water Bills

The City Council has approved a pilot program that will help some Albany residents pay their water bills.

The Low-Income Assistance Program will go into effect January 1, 2006 for a two-year trial. The program will help low-income senior and disabled customers by providing a credit for the first four units of water used each month. A unit of water is 100 cubic feet, or 748 gallons. Qualifying customers will still be required to pay their base charge, any surcharges, and all regular charges for consumption beyond the first four units.

To qualify, a customer must be at least 18 years of age with a water bill in their name. Qualifying customers also must prove they have a low income based on HUD income limits and meet the City's definition of disabled or be over 60 years of age. Customers who enroll in the program will be required to recertify annually to continue to receive assistance.

The Mayor's Water Task Force recommended a low-income assistance program as part of the City's Water Financial Plan that was adopted in October 2004. This program is expected to cost approximately \$44,000 annually, which will be funded by a 35-cent charge on each residential customer's water bill.

For more information on the low-income assistance program, contact Utility Billing at 917-7547.



City Opens First Roundabout



Albany's first traffic circle, or roundabout, opened to traffic in early August. The intersection of North Albany and Gibson Hill Roads was redesigned to allow North Albany Road to connect with the Covey Run Subdivision eventually.

Annual Fire Station Treasure Hunt

Saturday, October 8

Visit your local fire stations on Saturday, October 8, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. during the Fire Station Treasure Hunt.

All Albany fire stations will be open to the public for tours, activities, and demonstrations by firefighters. Come and discover the wide variety of services your fire department provides and have some fun!

Albany Fire Station locations:

- 110 Sixth Avenue SE (Station 11)
- 120 34th Avenue SE (Station 12)
- 1980 Three Lakes Road SE (Station 13)
- 2850 Gibson Hill Road NW (Station 14)

City of Albany Directory

Mayor:

Chuck McLaran 928-3114

Ward I Councilors:

Dick Olsen 926-7348

Doug Killin 926-6829

Ward II Councilors:

Sharon Konopa 928-3067

Ralph Reid, Jr. 928-7382

Ward III Councilors:

Bessie Johnson 791-2494

Jeff Christman 926-0528

City Manager:

Wes Hare 917-7505

City Hall Phone Numbers

General Information 917-7500

Ambulance Billing 917-7710

Building Inspection 917-7553

City Council Message 917-7503

City Manager 917-7501

Downtown

Carnegie Library 917-7585

Engineering 917-7676

Finance Office 917-7520

Fire Department 917-7700

Human Resources 917-7501

Main Library 917-7580

Mayor's Message 917-7502

Municipal Court 917-7740

Parks & Recreation 917-7777

Planning and Zoning 917-7550

Police Department 917-7680

Public Information Office 917-7507

Senior Center 917-7760

Transit 917-7667

Water and Sewer Billing 917-7547

Water/Sewer/Streets 917-7600

**Emergencies
(Fire, Police, Ambulance)
Dial 911****City Bridges Info**

City Bridges is published by an editorial team from the City of Albany. Questions and input about this newsletter can be directed to the City Manager's Office, 333 Broadalbin SW, P.O. Box 490, Albany, OR 97321-0144.

Contributors

Chris Bailey • John Burton
Craig Carnagey • Kerri Goergen-Doll
Wes Hare • Matt Harrington
Lorri Headrick • Deb Keehn
Marilyn Smith

Hot weather coincided with the opening of COOL! Swanson Park Action Center in July.**In Case of Emergency****ICE Your Cell Phone**

A campaign encouraging people to enter an emergency contact number in their mobile phone's memory under the heading ICE (In Case of Emergency) rapidly spread throughout the world as a particular consequence of the July 7 terrorist attacks in London.

Originally established as a nationwide campaign in Great Britain, ICE allows paramedics or police to be able to contact a designated person or next-of-kin in an emergency situation.

Bob Brotchie, a paramedic with East Anglian Ambulance Service, launched ICE in May this year. Brotchie, 41, who has been a paramedic for 13 years, said, "I was reflecting on some of the calls I've attended at the roadside where I had to look through the mobile phone contacts struggling for information on a shocked or injured person. Almost everyone carries a mobile phone now, and with ICE, a rescuer would know immediately who to contact and what number to ring. The contact person may even know of their medical history."

By adopting the ICE advice, your cellular phone will help emergency responders quickly contact a friend or relative, which could be vital in a life or death situation. It only takes a few seconds to do, and it could easily help save your life.

Why not put ICE in your phone now? Simply select your person to contact in case of emergency, enter them under the word ICE with their telephone number. For more than one contact, enter ICE1, ICE2, and so on.

**Residential Backyard Burning**

Weather permitting, from October 1 through December 15, you can burn your yard debris.

Before igniting the burn pile, call the Burning Advisory at (541) 451-1904 after 8:30 a.m. each day and select Option 1 for information about domestic burning. The recorded message will let you know if it is an authorized burn day, how soon you can get started, and when the fire must be out.

Make sure that your burn pile doesn't include any manmade materials or anything else that would produce dense smoke or noxious odors. The only thing you are allowed to burn is natural yard debris (grass, leaves, or shrub and tree clippings). Also, be sure to have an attached water hose and fire extinguishing tools readily available and stay with the pile until the fire is completely out.

No permits are required from the City of Albany to conduct backyard burning. The Fire Department urges you to follow these guidelines and to please conduct your burn in a safe manner.

**Maintain Your
Wood-Burning
Heat Appliances**

Protect your home and family by inspecting and cleaning your wood-burning heat appliances before it's time to use them.

Inspect the flue

- Ensure adequate distance from burnable materials like wood, cardboard, paper, or insulation. Burnable materials should be at least two inches away from the flue.
- Repair cracks.
- Remove creosote buildup.

Clean chimney caps

- Remove, clean, and reinstall caps.
- Replace caps if damaged or unable to remove creosote buildup.

Inspect woodstoves and fireplaces

- Repair any damage or cracks in masonry.
- Ensure that woodstove doors are properly sealed.
- Ensure that doors and screens are in good condition.

Keep burnable materials at least 18 inches away from a wood-burning appliance.

Start the season with a large, hot fire. Use dry, seasoned hardwood to burn the creosote out of the appliance. All future fires during that season should be smaller, using seasoned wood. Never burn paper, plastic, or garbage; they will create more creosote buildup.

Maintain your wood-burning appliance by removing ashes regularly. Place them in a metal container, water, stir, and water again. While cooling, place metal container away from anything that could burn.

Chimney brushes and rods may be borrowed at no cost from Albany Fire Department Station 11 at 110 Sixth Avenue SE. Be sure to measure the length and dimensions of the flue to know the correct brush size and number of rods you will need.



333 Broadalbin SW, Albany, OR 97321
www.cityofalbany.net

Joint Water Project Nears Completion

The new water plant built as a cooperative project between Albany and Millersburg is in the final stages of construction. All of the equipment has been installed and is currently being tested. The plant is expected to begin producing drinking water for both cities in October and to be fully operational by the end of this year.

Current activity includes testing the pumping and chemical systems and training City staff to operate and maintain the plant and its systems. The new facility adds approximately ten million gallons of water per day to the existing system and provides protection against contamination or failure at the existing Vine Street Water Treatment Plant.

The new facility uses a state-of-the-art membrane filtration system to provide high-quality drinking water.

The project is well ahead of schedule and under budget. Originally, the facility was expected to be complete in February 2006 and cost \$38.6 million. The plant is on track to be completely operational by the end of December and should cost approximately \$35.5 million.



Need to Know? Visit the Library!

The Albany Public Library has access to a number of databases which are seamlessly available on City of Albany computers and from home or work with your library card. Library databases are accessible at: <http://library.cityofalbany.net/reference/db.php>.



Near the end of the database list is ReferenceUSA. It is a telephone book with a difference. With a standard phone directory, a user needs specific information to retrieve a phone number. With ReferenceUSA, a tiny element of information will find almost anyone in the U.S.

Because you define the elements that you wish to search you can find all of the Andersons in Albany... or in Oregon... or in Utah... or in 97321... or in 973 ... or in 541. You can find all the Jeremiahs (first name) in Albany... or in Oregon.

You find a scrap of paper on your desk with a telephone number. Is it important? Why not look it up?

You've moved. When you moved, you forgot to say goodbye to the neighbors. Make a quick list of everybody on the street.

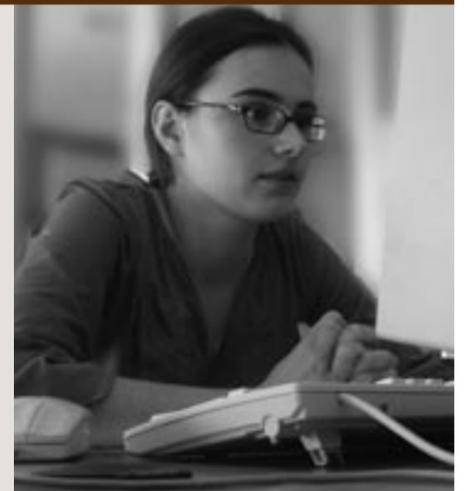
The yellow page function bar is higher. You met this guy named Very

Important at the Farm Implement Trade Show but you have forgotten the name of his company and now you want to call him. Try searching by executive name. Every business (even the City of Albany) has something called an SIC code. Find out what that code is for any business.

Find out all the businesses that do the same thing in Albany, Oregon, or the country. Do you need widgets? Try the Yellow Pages.

Want to know who really owns Izzy's? Want to know where all the Izzy's are located? Want to know how many people are employed by Izzy's? Hey is Izzy's listed on the stock exchange? Who is the contact person?

Want a list of all the employers in Albany with a workforce of 10 - 25 employees? Want to know the biggest employers in Ashland? Want to make a mailing list of all these new addresses?



You can download the list as a spreadsheet and carry on.

Card-carrying library patrons have remote access to the database. It's free and easy.

Questions?
Ask the Reference Staff at the Albany Public Library, 917-7582.

Check out eBooks at the Library

The Albany Public Library is introducing its patrons to a new way of accessing books by offering a collection of over 4,000 eBooks from NetLibrary. eBooks are full-text electronic versions of published books that library patrons can search, borrow, read, and return via the Internet.

eBooks are available at <http://library.cityofalbany.net>. Covering a wide range of materials, the collection includes many titles relating to Oregon. Because of severe space limitations, the Albany Public Library has launched this new service which brings books and information to the computer screen any time of night or day and from anywhere on the globe.

Last year, library patrons checked out nearly 600,000 books, videos, and other resources.

eBook titles are available to library patrons at both the Main and Downtown Libraries and from home via the Internet. Library patrons can search the entire eBook collection for authors, titles, or keywords; and they can search within books for keywords and phrases. eBooks are available for checkout and are automatically checked back into the library collection when the checkout period expires, making the eBook available to other patrons.

Library patrons need to open a free eBook account at the Albany Public Library in order to view eBooks from outside of the library. This simple process can be accomplished at your next visit to either Albany branch. It is not necessary to have a standard library card to have access to this collection.

Get or Renew Library Cards in September

Did you know that Albany Public Library has music CDs, movies, audio books, and magazines in addition to thousands of print books? Anyone who lives in the city limits may get a free library card to take advantage of all the resources the Library has to offer.

Libraries across the country launch card drives in September. Albany Public Library invites you to participate by coming in and registering for a card or renewing your old card if it has expired. Those who get new cards in September will receive a drawstring plastic book bag with goodies inside.

"Back to the Library" night is Wednesday, September 28, 2005, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Main Library at 1390 Waverly Drive SE, featuring library tours, an introduction to Library databases and resources, and basic catalog instruction. New, returning, and current patrons are welcome. Refreshments will be available and visitors will be eligible for drawings for prizes.



Watershed Education Program Coming this Winter

Local residents have the opportunity to learn more about how their watersheds work with some taking an active part in stewardship through hands-on projects. The Master Watershed Steward (MWS) program, offered through the Oregon State University (OSU) Extension Service, is coming to the Linn/Benton area this winter.

The MWS program consists of eight topics that provide practical watershed education to groups and community members interested in watershed stewardship. Combining expertise from OSU and

other natural resource professionals, the program strives to balance principles and applied examples in a variety of land-use types.

Taught by combining expertise from Oregon State University and other natural resource professionals, the eight topics include: watershed and stream processes; salmonid biology; soils, erosion, and conservation; riparian area functions and management; stream assessment and restoration; wetland evaluation and enhancement; working together to create successful groups; and water quality moni-

toring. Each topic includes an indoor class and either a field or hands-on experience. The program begins January 26, 2006, with a one-hour introductory/project planning session.

Participants can attend as master watershed stewards (complete the whole education program and a 40-hour project), watershed stewards (complete the education program), or attend individual sessions.

For more information about the program and how to register, please contact Denise Hoffert-Hay at (541) 619-5896. Space is limited.

Special Projects Coordinator Guy Mayes explains changes at Albany Station, the renovated transportation center, to Kathy Dedrick of Congressman Peter DeFazio's Washington Office; Diane Dennis, Public Works Director; Cathy Ingalls, Albany Democrat-Herald; and Dick Ebbert, Economic Development Director.



DeFazio was instrumental in securing a \$9.5 million federal grant for the project.

Biosolids: It Doesn't Just Happen!

Like similar facilities across the country, the Albany Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) does more than merely handle whatever comes its way. The plant uses highly technical procedures to produce two beneficial products: clean water and clean solids. After treatment, the water is clean enough to be released back into the environment without harmful side effects to the river ecosystem. In years past, wastewater treatment facilities would also use the river as the dumping area for the solids removed during the treatment process. We now know that dumping solid waste into a waterbody is not healthy for the environment and the federal Clean Water Act prohibits using rivers and lakes as receptacles for solids from the wastewater treatment process.

What do we do with those solids? For several years, the City hauled them to a landfill and paid disposal fees, until we realized the potential benefits those solids could provide. We were paying to dispose of fairly good quality fertilizer at the landfill. Like many utilities across the country, we realized we could put these solids to good use, providing a benefit to the environment and reducing disposal costs.

What are biosolids?

The treated solids generated from the wastewater treatment process are called biosolids. Many people mistakenly call this product "sludge." The solids can be considered sludge before they receive extra treatment and dewatering, which turns them into a clean, solid product suitable for application as a fertilizer. Biosolids are not raw sewage, and they are not dangerous.

The City has a rigorous program that protects the content of our biosolids. Protection begins before the wastewater reaches the plant with a stringent pretreatment program. Local ordinances regulate what industrial facilities may discharge to the City's wastewater system. This minimizes the amount of contaminants such as heavy metals in our wastewater.

At the WWTP, the processes used to create biosolids are similar to natural processes that break down wastes in the environment. The City uses activated sludge to biologically reduce the solid waste. Activated sludge means that beneficial organisms are added to the process to help break down solid particles. This is followed by heated digestion which drastically reduces the presence of harmful bacteria and other pathogens. Once digestion is complete, the biosolids are pressed to remove additional liquid, giving the

final product the consistency of cake and markedly reducing its odor.

Biosolids application

Biosolids are heavily regulated by both federal and state environmental agencies. Biosolids can be applied to some fields based on crop type, soil characteristics, location, and availability, among other considerations. Albany's biosolids are tested regularly and continually rate as "clean" according to federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards for content of heavy metals, pathogens, and other characteristics. Albany produces Class B biosolids, so application is limited to local fields with appropriate soil conditions growing crops not intended for human consumption. Most of Albany's biosolids are being used on rye grass, hay, and other forage crops.

The City applies biosolids to approved local fields using a City-owned spreader. Biosolids are beneficial to local growers because they contain nitrogen and phosphorous, two nutrients critical for plant growth, as well as small amounts of several other micronutrients such as copper and zinc. Because they are a natural product, biosolids tend to degrade slowly, releasing their nutrients over time. In other areas of the country, biosolids are used to reclaim degraded soils such as those at mine sites, and to provide fertilizer for forest growth. When applying biosolids, the City maintains separation from wells, streams, adjoining property, and roads in order to avoid any contamination of water sources or land not approved to receive biosolids. We are also careful not to apply when there is the potential for runoff. This limits application to the dry summer months. Last year, Albany produced 648 dry tons of biosolids which were applied on 263 acres of approved land.

Going above and beyond

The City of Albany recognizes the potential environmental impact of biosol-

Albany's Biosolids Policy Statement:

The City of Albany is committed to maximum beneficial use of biosolids, compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations, and continuous improvement of the biosolids management process in accordance with the National Biosolids Partnership's Code of Good Practice.



ids production and application and, as a result, has volunteered to participate in a national program to go above and beyond the regulatory requirements. Albany is a charter member in the National Biosolids Partnership (www.biosolids.org) and is developing an Environmental Management System (EMS) following their guidelines. The EMS addresses regulatory requirements, environmental protection, stakeholder input, and biosolids management practices. The result will be a more efficient program open to anyone who is interested, and helps protect the environment.

So far in our EMS-development process, we have written a comprehensive Biosolids EMS Manual, set goals for the coming year, produced a biosolids management report, and conducted our first internal audit. The next step is to have an independent firm conduct a thorough audit in order to be certified by the National Biosolids Partnership. Only a handful of agencies across the country have completed this rigorous process; we expect to be the first agency in Oregon to have a certified biosolids EMS.

We are proud of our biosolids program and encourage anyone who is interested to become part of it. Public participation is possible through comments, review of program documents, tours of the facility, or phone calls. More information is available from our Web site, <http://www.cityofalbany.net/publicworks/biosolids/>, or by contacting Chris Bailey, Biosolids EMS Coordinator, at 541-917-7629 or chris.bailey@cityofalbany.net.

Up With Trees!

Trees are a vital part of what makes Albany a great place to live. The City offers several services to maintain and enhance the presence of trees here. (See below) Visit the City Web site for more information.

Community Tree Planting Opportunities

Fall is a great time to plant trees. The City's Urban Forestry program can help.

Street trees: If you want to plant trees in the planter strip in front of your home or business, the City offers several species to choose from. The City will deliver and plant the trees. The number of trees available is limited; requests are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. If you want to plant a species other than what the City offers, you will be responsible for the purchase and will need a planting permit. All tree species selections must be made from the City's approved street tree selection list. Visit the City Web site or call the City Forester to request a tree or a copy of the street tree list.

Native Tree Giveaway: Native trees are often overlooked when making selections for planting in and around neighborhoods, but many are well-adapted for the Northwest's unique climate. Native trees come in a wide range of sizes, forms, and textures. They typically require little maintenance. Many native trees have good fall color, spring flowers, and offer habitat for urban wildlife. If you, your school, church, or community group has a good planting location and are interested in native trees, contact the City Forester.

Preventative Tree Care

Winter storms could come at any time as this year winds down. Make certain that your trees are ready for wind, rain, and ice. Take a close look: if you spot dead or broken limbs in the canopy, fissures or cracks in the stem, or significant leaning, you should have the tree pruned or, if needed, removed. Younger trees can be structurally pruned to avoid many problems in the future. Contact a certified arborist for an inspection; if it's a street tree, contact the City Forester.

Don't forget to water newly planted trees. An extended hot dry season means that new trees will need to be watered. Overwatering can be damaging; so pay close attention to your tree's water needs. While you're at it, offer your street trees a drink, too.

Upcoming Events

- October 1, 2005: Tree care information, Farmer's Market
- City Tree Commission: meets at 3:00 p.m. the third Thursday each month, Santiam Rooms, City Hall.
- Fall tree walks: check the Web site for dates and times.
- Fall tree planting event: check the Web site for dates and times.