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Silverton hires new city manager

CHRISTENA BROOKS
SPECIAL TO THE APPEAL TRIBUNE

A candidate with seven years' experience as a city manager and another 13 in public works administration has been hired as Silverton's new city manager.

Christy Wurster, 49, now serving as Sweet Home's temporary city manager, will start with Silverton on Jan. 17. She was hired this month by the city council to replace retiring City Manager Bob Willoughby. She'll have until the end of January to work side-by-side with Willoughby before taking over as the city's top administrator.

"This community is very actively involved in the future of the city; I see that at all levels," Wurster said. "I will be interviewing each city councilor individually, to get their perspective on where they think the community needs to go."

When they kicked off the search for a

new manager in last summer, Silverton's councilors expressed interest in hiring someone with a strong fiscal background and the ability to address the city's aging infrastructure. Its 60-year-old water treatment plant needs replacing, an upgrade that comes with an estimated \$12 million price tag, Willoughby said.

Infrastructure is one of Wurster's areas of expertise; she spent 13 years as the assistant public works director in Dallas. She also specializes in budgeting. Her master's degree from Portland State University in 2009 required her to complete a 200-hour out-of-class project. She focused on municipal budgeting, and she's since applied that training to management and budgeting jobs in Dayton, Salem, Creswell, Fairview and Sweet Home.

"She has a very good understanding of infrastructure," said Silverton Mayor

Rick Lewis. "She has a public works background, as well, which is important to Silverton as we move forward to address our infrastructure issues."

A total of 35 candidates applied for the job in Silverton, which was advertised nationally and came with an offer to pay \$110,000 to \$125,000. Wurster's contracted salary is \$112,000. The council whittled the list down to two finalists by November, and, after sending two members to visit both candidates' workplaces, recommended Wurster be hired. The unanimous vote came Dec. 12.

"From my perspective Christy has excellent communication skills and is well respected by her peers and by those with whom and for whom she has worked," Lewis said. "She does her homework and she researches issues and listens to the various sides of issues."

See **WURSTER**, Page 3A



Christy Wurster
CITY OF SILVERTON

ROOM AT THE INN



JUSTIN MUCH | STAYTON MAIL

Crews have been working full steam in preparation to reopen Marquam-area's favorite eatery and watering hole, Markum Inn. The proprietors hope to be open by New Year's Eve, but that date is tentative.

Popular MarKum Inn to reopen

JUSTIN MUCH
STAYTON MAIL

For anyone with a memory of nudging up to the bar or sitting down at the dinner table in the old MarKum Inn, the first difference you may notice about the next incarnation is light.

On the darkest day of the year, MarKum Inn was bright with natural light beaming through its broad windows, facing east, north and south. A fitting backdrop as Fr. Philip Waibel of Mt. Angel's St. Mary Catholic Church arrived at midday to bless the premises Tuesday, Dec. 20.

The local priest harbored equal doses of reverence for the task and enthusiasm brewed from memories mixed with anticipation.

See **MARKUM**, Page 2A



JUSTIN MUCH | STAYTON MAIL

Fr. Philip Waibel of St. Mary Catholic Church in Mt. Angel and Julio Valera, MarKum Inn's general manager, discuss the upcoming reopening of the popular Marquam area eatery and watering hole. Waibel visited to give the new establishment a blessing.



LAURA COVINGTON

Laura Covington took this photo of the icicles at Silver Falls State Park on Dec. 18.

Icicles force Silver Falls waterfalls trail closure

ZACH URNESS
STATESMAN JOURNAL

The danger of death-by-icicle has apparently passed at Silver Falls State Park.

The danger of 20-foot icicles impaling unsuspecting hikers led officials to close the Canyon Trail and any pathways leading to the park's iconic waterfalls.

"The trails were slippery before, but now we have 20-foot icicles falling onto the trail," said Katharine Kittinger, Silver Falls State Park specialist. "The decision to close the trail was made for visitor safety."

The closure included not only the Canyon Trail — also known as the Trail of 10 Falls — but trails around the canyon including Maple Ridge, Winter Falls and North Falls trails.

Officials said Dec. 21 that all the trails leading to the park's waterfalls had reopened, following a two-day closure that began Dec. 19 to protect the public from falling chunks of ice.

"The weather the last few days has been warmer and wetter, which has improved most trail conditions," park manager Dennis Lucas said in a news release. "Some ice does remain on trails, sidewalks and parking lots and may cause slick spots, so visitors

See **TRAILS**, Page 2A

Magnitude 2.5 quake rattles area just north of Silver Falls State Park

DAVID DAVIS AND JUSTIN MUCH
APPEAL TRIBUNE

The United States Geological Survey is reported a magnitude 2.5 earthquake just north of Silver Falls State Park along Highway 214.

The quake hit at 2:53 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 21, about 8.7 miles northeast of Sublimity at a depth of just over 10 miles.

No damage or injuries have been reported.

"I thought something hit the back of my home but then the win-

dows and the dishes in my kitchen cabinets rattled so I figured it might have been an earthquake. I felt nothing underfoot," said Brenda Fuquay Chappell who lives south of the epicenter in Lyons.

See **QUAKE**, Page 2B

Harcourts NW Oregon Realty Group

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