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'This is what's really important'

The federal government is sending millions to the Mid-Valley. Here's who's getting it

Bill Poehler Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The future community center in Detroit, veteran housing programs in Salem and Marion County's public safety program have millions of dollars earmarked for them in the spending package signed into law Friday by President Joe Biden.

The Senate passed the \$1.5 trillion

spending package to fund the government through September and provide \$13.6 billion to aid the Ukraine on Thursday night. Included in it are over 100 appropriations for projects in Oregon.

"There's going to be a lot to celebrate for communities that said, 'This is what's really important, we need help with these projects,'" Sen. Jeff Merkley said. "This is not Congress saying here's what you must do. This is our communi-

ties saying here's what we need."

Hundreds of millions of dollars are coming to Oregon, including millions destined for the Mid-Willamette Valley.

A planned 18-unit affordable housing development in Silverton is receiving a significant boost from an appropriation.

Last year, the North Willamette Valley Habitat for Humanity began building on a 1.9-acre parcel it purchased on Pine Street near Silverton High School.

One home in the development has already been completed, but one of the

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Construction takes place on the Detroit Community Center, which received \$500,000 in federal funding. BRIAN HAYES / STATESMAN JOURNAL

WOMAN OF THE YEAR

'Give thanks with grace'



Cindy Chauran, shown here in her home being built in Gates, is Oregon's honoree for USA TODAY's Women of the Year. BRIAN HAYES / STATESMAN JOURNAL

Cindy Chauran helps rebuild a community

Capi Lynn

Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

Cindy Chauran is one of USA TODAY's Women of the Year, a recognition of women across the country who have made a significant impact. The annual program is a continuation of Women of the Century, a 2020 project that commemorated the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote. Meet this year's honorees at womenoftheyear.usatoday.com.

Cindy Chauran has much to be proud of and thankful for the past couple of years. She beat ovarian cancer, earned an accounting degree, became a grandma and watched her youngest join the U.S. Marines.

In between celebrations, she and her husband lost their Gates, Ore. home during the 2020 wildfires, and her strength and resilience inspired a community and beyond.

Extreme winds over Labor Day weekend 2020 fueled a historic firestorm that killed five people,

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Cindy Chauran poses for a portrait in her partially built home in Gates.

Answering a higher calling

3 sisters dedicate their lives serving as nuns together

Scott Craven Special for the Statesman Journal

A youthful Christine Rausch was sure of one thing as she ascended the wide staircase to the dormitory, and before she glimpsed a modest bed enclosed by a simple curtain.

Here, she knew in her heart and soul, is where she would devote the rest of her life.

Her future at the Queen of Angels Monastery in Mt. Angel was as certain and tangible as the sequoia that grew toward the heavens just outside the front door.

With her that February day in 1952 was Dorothy Rausch, her sister in blood and soon in faith. The two recently celebrated 70 years at the Benedictine monastery, half as long as the institution itself (established in 1882 by Benedictine sisters from Switzerland).

Not long afterward they were joined by a third sister, Regina.

For decades the three have dedicated their lives to bringing people closer to God through prayer and works.

Their longevity in one place is even more remarkable as you consider society's ever-transient nature.

But Christine, 90, and Dorothy, 91, said they knew what life had in store for them as they walked through the monastery's tall double doors on February 10, 1952.

From farm life to the monastery

While time has stolen what it always does over the years, Sister Christine's memories of that day remain as fresh as when her eyes set upon the elderly (and very shaky) Sister Adelaide, who greeted them at the door.

They'd arrived after a five-day, four-night drive from a farm in Rupert, Idaho, in a station wagon containing the two sisters, their aunt and uncle, two kids and an assortment of luggage.

Christine's eyes lit up as she talked about arriving at the monastery, a building more grand than anything she was expecting. After being greeted by Sister Adelaide, the entourage was escorted into the parlor for lunch.

"Tomatoes," Christine said, summoning a memory she'd not thought about in decades. "We had tomatoes from the garden, and they were delicious."

From there they were escorted to the dormitory and their beds, each of the dozens surrounded by a curtain for privacy. While the scene had long slipped from Sister Dorothy's recollections, Sister Christine recalled the joy she felt.

"I had a bed to myself. It was a wonderful feeling," she said. "No more sleeping with my sister (Regina), and on a bed that was three-quarters the size of a regular bed."

It got even better as she was introduced to indoor plumbing, a luxury they did not have at the family farm.

Even before the group was led through the adjacent cemetery, where past generations of sisters laid in rest, Christine knew she was home.

When Regina arrived a year later, it would have been natural to think sisterhood was in their DNA, as if faith were a gene. The path to Queen of Angels was lined not with helixes, but a spiral that integrated religion, school and the era.

"Such a different time," Dorothy said wistfully.

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From left: Sisters Christine Rausch, Regina Rausch and Dorothy Rausch have served as nuns together for decades at Benedictine monastery in Mt. Angel. BRIAN HAYES/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Silverton takes step towards new water treatment plant

Bill Poehler

Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Silverton took its next step in getting a new water treatment facility.

The City Council approved a zone change for the city-owned property at 907 Reserve Street at its March 7 meeting.

The city purchased the property for \$221,000 in 2017, according to Marion County Tax Assessor records. It is adjacent to the city's two other water treat-

ment plants. The house that was on it was removed.

"The site is currently vacant," Silverton community development director Jason Gottgetreau said.

The property was zoned for residential use, and the council voted unanimously to change that zoning to allow for the new development.

The city's water master plan in 2020 recommended the city build a new four million gallon treatment plant to ensure it has the capacity it needs for the next 40 years.

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