



Merry Christmas

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## Smooth roads ahead for transit agency, riders

*Fresh funding means lots of improvements*

BY CINDY YINGST  
*The Columbia Press*

Tired of waiting at the bus stop wondering when the No. 10 will get there?

There's an app for that. At least there will be soon.

How about digging in your purse for the proper fare?

There's a technological solution coming for that as well.

Sunset Empire Transportation District will have a busy 2018 as it makes improvements and changes to the bus system, many of them prompted by new legislation.

Oregon lawmakers passed a transportation package earlier this year that includes an employee payroll tax for transit, which begins in July. One 10th of 1 percent of every dollar workers earn will be earmarked for public transit and the money will be fairly and equitably split between the big cities and rural areas.

"It's the first time we've ever had a stable source of funding for public transit," said



Hazen

Jeff Hazen, Sunset Empire's executive director. "It is a game-changer for every transportation agency in the state."

The district completed a 20-year plan in September 2016. Instead of putting it on the shelf or in a filing cabinet, Hazen has kept that on his

desk to remind him of the vision and goals necessary to get anything done in his ru-

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**Above:** Costumed rangers demonstrate flintlock muzzle loading and firing.

**Left:** Visitors listen to a presentation on winter conditions for the Corps of Discovery.

## Fort Clatsop after Christmas

*The Columbia Press*

The winter of 1805 wasn't kind to Clatsop County's most famous early tourists.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition suffered through unceasing rain with just a handful of blue-sky days.

Fort Clatsop, a replica of the fort the explorers built, is offering several programs about what it was like for expedition members in the days and months after they arrived.

The park is closed Christmas day; so the programs begin Dec. 26 and run through New Year's Day.

"This is the time of year the Corps of Discovery members were settling in for their winter at Fort Clatsop and a great time to visit the park," Ranger Sally Freeman said.

The group spent three weeks building the fort and it served as their headquarters from Dec. 8, 1805, until March 23, 1806, when they returned east to St. Louis.

*See 'Fort Clatsop' on Page 6*

## High school wins large grant for technical skills training

BY CINDY YINGST  
*The Columbia Press*

Warrenton High School will construct a large shop building to teach students work skills so they can easily find a job after graduation.

And the district will do it quickly so the career training classes can begin next year.

The 120- by 60-foot building will house a machine lab, auto shop, welding area and, eventually, a place to learn wood-based construction trades, such as home-building.

"That's the big vision," Superin-

tendent Mark Jeffery told the school board. "We hope to have it ready by Sept. 1, but it's more likely to be ready by mid-October. We have to have the permits pulled by June."

The career training building, a goal of the district for several years, will become reality thanks to a \$436,286 grant the high school won this month.

The career readiness grant comes from a joint venture of the Bureau of Labor and Industries and the Oregon Department of Education. Warrenton was one of 100 schools in the state to get one and one of only 10 to

get grants above \$400,000.

"We're super excited and we really think we have something that will meet a need," said Vice Principal Josh Jannusch, who wrote the successful grant proposal. "The money will cover the building and the instructor."

Jannusch has written some smaller grant proposals, including three grants from Verizon for \$30,000 total to develop the school's underwater robotics program.

"Our state's ability to attract and retain good jobs in fundamental-

*See 'High school' on Page 5*