

# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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# Rent the VMCC for your next event!

Please call Shelly Pruitt to learn more and make your reservation: (541) 554-9332.

Check out <u>Event Recaps &</u> Reservations for more info!



click the links below to dig in

**BINGO** 

NOV.8

**SENIOR CENTER** 

11/4, 11/11, 11/18, 11/25

LITTLE LEAGUE POKER

11/4, 11/11, 11/18, 11/25

SAIL

11/7, 11/14, 11/21, 11/28

**THANKSGIVING FEAST** 

11/27

**NEXT MONTH** 

**CHRISTMAS BAZAAR** 

DEC. 13 & 14 9AM-3PM



Fundraising Recap

# A Joyful Success: VMCC's First Annual Breakfast Book Fair Raises \$1,000!

On Saturday, October 18, the community came together for good books, good food, and even better company — raising **\$1,000** in just three hours.

Guests enjoyed a delicious homemade breakfast in a cozy "autumn bookshop" filled with fiction, non-fiction, cookbooks, children's books, and more. The event was a true celebration of community spirit and teamwork, bringing us one step closer to a debt-free VMCC.

Read the full fundraising recap (pg 2) >



Membership Updates

#### Membership Renewals & More

Membership at VMCC isn't just about dues — it's about belonging to something that gives back. The 2026 **"\$50 to Freedom" Campaign** is underway, and membership renewal letters will be sent out the first week of November.

Members enjoy quarterly luncheons, community events, and the satisfaction of helping VMCC thrive. **Business memberships** now include ad opportunities and sponsorship perks — a winwin for local visibility and community impact.

Read the full membership update (pg 4) >



Upcoming Fundraisers

The holidays are right around the corner — and so are some exciting VMCC fundraisers!

Join us for the Christmas Bazaar on December 13–14, 2025, featuring dozens of local artisans, festive foods, and gifts galore. Then mark your calendar for a night of intrigue at the Murder Mystery at the Deadwood Saloon on March 13, 2026 — an 1800s-themed evening of fun, prizes, and community spirit. Every event brings us closer to our goal of paying down VMCC's \$209.000 construction debt.

Read the full update on upcoming fundraisers (pq 3) ·



In This Issue

#### Don't Miss What's Inside!

There's so much more happening at VMCC over the next couple of months!

From upcoming November events to **Senior Center Happenings** and **Community Support** to **Entertainment & Events, Business Member Spotlights**, and more — every page celebrates the heart of our valley.

Grab a cup of coffee and enjoy the full November issue to stay connected, inspired, and in the know.

Click the links near the top of the page to navigate as you wish.

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# **FUNDRAISING RECAP**







# A Joyful Success: VMCC's First Annual Breakfast Book Fair Raises \$1,000!

The Vida McKenzie Community Center was buzzing with energy on Saturday, Oct. 18 for our first annual Breakfast Book Fair, a brand-new community tradition that combined two of our favorite things—good books and good food!

In just three hours, the event raised \$1,000 through book and breakfast sales, and external donations, helping us move one step closer toward our goal of becoming a debt-free community center.

Shelly Pruitt and Tammy Pelton served up a delicious homemade breakfast that had guests coming back for seconds. Special thanks to Michelle Spurlock and Mekyael Caramra for helping out in the kitchen and ensuring a successful and tasty event!

Jeanine Rhode, Lori Cagle (Jeanine's mama), and new volunteer Lisa Moore collected books leading up to the event and, with the help of Sherry Jones, organized hundreds of them into cozy, autumn-themed displays. Thank you to Shelly Pruitt for allowing the team to store and sort the books in her shop!

Thank you to the generous sponsors of this fundraiser Emerald Fruit and Produce in Eugene Dave and Nancy Swenson (owners of API Paint Products) Visitors browsed fiction, non-fiction, children's favorites, and collectible cookbooks — with many shoppers leaving with arms (and bags!) full of new reads. Leftover books were donated to the Leaburg Public Library, Sweetbriar Villa Senior Living Center in Thurston, and St. Vinnie's.

The event was filled with laughter, conversation, and community spirit — proof once again that the VMCC is more than just a building; it's a gathering place where neighbors connect and great things happen when we work together.

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to everyone who donated books, helped set up tables, cooked, served, shopped, and supported the event. Your generosity and enthusiasm made this first-year fundraiser a tremendous success — and we can't wait to do it again next year!





### Have books to donate to the 2026 Book Fair?

Feel free to bring your gently loved books to the VMCC with "Book Fair" on the container, or give Jeanine Rhode a call at (541) 321-9646 to coordinate drop-off or pick-up of your books. They'll be safely stored and eagerly awaiting their debut at the next book fair!

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# **UPCOMING FUNDRAISERS**

## Christmas Bazaar: Dec 13 & 14, 2025

Preparations are well underway for this year's Christmas Bazaar at the Walterville Community Center. We have some wonderful new and longtime vendors joining us this year:

Honey Paddle Farm • Lavender Farm • Tammy's Gift Baskets Galore
Renee Langlois Crafts • Martina Conn's art and jewelry
Joanne Walch's cookies • Janet Savage Art • Joyce Hubbard's Art
3J Vintage Glass Bird Feeders • Kathryn Quilling • Sandy Dunbar Art
Dawna Nickolauson crafts • Wetnose Warriors Outreach
Michael Atkinson 3D objects • Diana Brotlund cards • Flatbed Farms
SARU Bear Essentials • Lauri Goodpasture crafts • Soft Peaks Cakery
Melissa Beckwith crafts • Norma Sacketts crafts • Kiger Plews treats
Becky Kampschroeder art • Lynn Hill beaded sun catchers
Sticks & Stones sun catchers • Debra Brower cutting boards

#### **Holiday Pies for a Cause!**



- Pre-order frozen 10" pies from **Soft Peaks Cakery** \$28 each (deadline Nov. 30)
- Pickup Dec. 13 14 at the VMCC Christmas Bazaar.
- Proceeds support VMCC.
- Click here to complete the quick order form and learn more.

#### More highlights to look forward to:

- Billy Pruitt will be on hand making great biscuits and gravy and other food as well.
- Santa will arrive at 10 AM each day.
- Santa's Toy Store will be open for children young and old for reasonably priced toys - be sure to check it out!

If you have a few hours to help on either Sat. Oct. 13 or Sun. Oct 14, we can always use volunteers! Call Tammy Pelton at (951) 970-0176 to sign up.

Last year's Bazaar raised over \$5,000. This year, we're aiming to surpass this amount, so we can make another sizable debt payment.

#### Special thanks to this year's sponsors:

ACS – Automotive Calibration Specialists – Eugene
Auto Craft Inc. Body and Paint, Eugene and Springfield
Bigfoot Beverages • Foshay Construction • McKenzie Valley Pump
Mitch and Jody Hanan • The Bottle Boys

# Murder Mystery at the Deadwood Saloon SAVE THE DATE: March 13, 2026

Saddle up for a big, fun, exciting Who-Done-It Murder Mystery dinner.

This is a wild west 1800's full costume event. So, get out your western boots, your cowboy hat, your best western duds and get ready to impress!

There will be prizes awarded for best dressed for both men and women. A prize will be awarded to the table that guesses who the murderer is!

We're asking for help with the following roles and committees:

- Actors
- Decorating Committee
- Food Committee
- Social Media and Marketing Committee
- Ticket Sales

Please let Tammy Pelton or Shelly Pruitt know if you can help with this event and/or if you or your business would like to sponsor it.

# Together Toward Zero Debt:

\$209,000 to Go!

VMCC's current construction debt is \$209,000. Your continued support is needed to accomplish this payoff.

# What Your Support Keeps Alive at VMCC

#### **Senior Luncheons:**

Every Tuesday, serving dozens of local seniors warm meals and connection.

#### **Homeschool Program:**

Weekly learning and enrichment for local children.

## McKenzie River Art Guild Exhibits:

Showcasing the creativity and talent of local artists throughout the year.

#### **Community Hub:**

A safe, welcoming space for meetings, celebrations, support groups, and local events that strengthen our valley.

To donate, click the link below or use your camera to scan the QR code.

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<u>Click here to donate to the VMCC</u>



Every fundraiser, raffle ticket, and donation helps us keep the lights on, doors open, and hearts connected in the McKenzie River Valley.

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# MEMBERSHIP UPDATES



**2025 Member Life Events** We're starting something new!

If you'd like to share something positive that happened in your life in 2025, please tell us all about it here.

We're looking for notable events like welcoming a new baby (even the furry kind), a wedding, an epic vacation, a new house, a milestone birthday, you or your child/grandchild graduating from college, etc.

Member Life Events will be shared in the January 2026 newsletter.

#### **SAVE THE DATES:**

2026 QUARTERLY MEMBER LUNCHEONS

Q1: JANUARY 10

**Q2: MAY 9** 

**Q3: TBD** 

Q4: TBD

# LET'S HELP THE COMMUNITY:

If you're able, please bring canned foods/dry goods to the quarterly lunches, so we can help stock the local food pantries. We'll collect the items at the VMCC and deliver them on your behalf. New Memberships & Renewals

### The 2026 VMCC Membership Campaign is underway!

This year, we're excited to announce new offerings and enhancements:

- Additional benefits for Individual/Household Memberships
- NEW Business Membership offering
- The ability to pay your dues online it's true!

Membership renewal letters are going out soon, and are due back by January 31, 2026.

# 2026 Individual/Household Memberships



### \$50 to Freedom

### **Your Membership = Our Future**

- √ Just \$50 per year
- ✓ Quarterly Free Member Luncheons (new in 2026!)
- ✓ Support programs & events for all ages
- ✓ Help pay down VMCC's construction debt

## → <u>Become a Member/Renew your Membership</u>

#### YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS.

It isn't just about paying dues – it's about belonging to something that gives back tenfold. Every dollar helps us host gatherings, classes, and programs that connect our neighbors, feed and engage with our seniors, inspire our artists, and support our youth.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

## 2026 Business Memberships



## \$100 Annually Strong Businesses. Strong Community.

- ✓ Monthly newsletter ad
- ✓ Annual <u>Business Spotlight</u> in newsletter
- ✓ Website business directory listing
- √Opportunities to sponsor events
- ✓ Help pay down VMCC's construction debt

#### → Become a Business Member

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# SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS

# There's always something uplifting happening at VMCC!

Each week brings connection, laughter, and learning — from inspiring guest speakers to Gentle Tech sessions and our energizing SAIL fitness class. Join us on Tuesdays for lunch and conversation, and on Fridays to stay active and engaged with friends.

## Senior Lunch Recap: OCTOBER

# OCT. 7 <u>Lane Electric Service Area Update</u>

April Matson, Public Relations Manager for Lane Electric, provided community updates as they make preparations to expand their service area to McKenzie River.

April shared their sustainable business values and gave us some on-the-go emergency kits!

# OCT. 21 Gentle Tech with Jeanine Marie

Participants learned how to use their cell phones (iPhones & Androids) to take a screenshot and share contact information.

Join us the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday each month and learn new skills with your cell phone!

Be sure to sign up for the Gentle Tech newsletter to stay in the loop when updates are available:

JeanineMarie.com/GentleTech

#### **OCT. 14**

#### Crafts, Conversation, and Food

We gathered for a delicious fall themed meal, and shared in fun and fellowship playing Bingo for Halloween chocolate!

**Did you know:** The Senior Services mobile unit comes out to VMCC every second Tuesday to make signing up for eligible services more accessible onsite? They'll be back Dec. 9 (Veteran's Day falls on the November date, so we'll miss them this month).

# OCT. 28 Rex Starr Train Travel Talk

Local neighbor Rex Starr shared about his summer Amtrak trip through the beautiful countryside from Eugene to Los Angeles, to New Orleans and Chicago, and back west.

Stories and pictures of travel adventures are some of our most popular presentations! Check out the Senior Lunch presenter information below and let us know if you'd like to share your adventure!



#### **Senior Tuesday Lunches**

- 11:00 a.m. Doors open
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch begins
- 12:30 p.m. Program starts

#### \$5 SUGGESTED DONATION

#### **NOVEMBER PRESENTERS**

\* NOV. 4

What's Next for Senior Spaces?

Updates from our director

Maggie Lewis on senior centers;

help us brainstorm ideas for the

VMCC.

**\*** NOV. 11

<u>Veteran's Day Focus</u> Honoring those who have served our country.

**\* NOV. 18** 

Gentle Tech with Jeanine Marie Learn how to take better photos with your cell phone - just in time for the holidays!

NOV. 25

No activity scheduled due to Thanksgiving
We'll see you again in December!

# SAIL every Friday Stay Active Into Life

- 10:00 a.m. 11:30 a.m.
- Click <u>here</u> to learn more about this empowering program.

#### \$2 SUGGESTED DONATION

### Interested in being a presenter during our Senior Lunch?

Do you enjoy sharing your experiences, talents, or knowledge with others? From travel adventures to gardening tips to lessons learned along the way — our seniors love hearing from community members like you!

**Please reach out if you'd like to be added to our presenter list:**Maggie Lewis • (510) 435-7836 • pastormaggie18@gmail.com

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# **FUN & ENTERTAINMENT**

# GOOD TIMES & GREAT COMPANY AWAIT!

Join us for **Family BINGO Night** 

every second Saturday it's a community favorite full of laughter and friendly competition.

Every Tuesday, the cards are dealt for

Little League Poker, and one Sunday each month, we gather for Films with

Friends featuring stories of courage, connection, and heart, from ocean adventures and lighthearted romances to inspiring short films.

#### FILMS WITH FRIENDS



Films with Friends is on hold until further notice.

<u>Click here to read more about this update on the VMCC blog.</u>



## **SATURDAY, NOV 8**

#### (1) Winter Hours

- Doors open at 5:30
- Games start at 6:00

#### Nº Dinner Menu

- Shelly will be serving up brats, hotdogs, chili dogs and all kinds of sweet stuff
- Tammy will be doing the decorations

#### We'll be playing 15 games

- 2 cards for \$5, buy as many as you can handle (can buy extra cards at any time)
- 20-30 minute break after game 10
- Golden Ticket
- The jackpot will be \$375.00
- Click <u>here</u> to sponsor the next jackpot!
- ♦ 50/50 Raffle
- You get half and VMCC gets half



<u>Learn more about BINGO at VMCC ></u>



#### LITTLE LEAGUE POKER

**EVERY TUESDAY 6-9 PM** 

11/4, 11/11, 11/18, 11/25

- Doors open at 5:30
- Games start at 6:00 sharp
- Potluck / snack-type food
- \$15 buy-in = \$7,000 in chips
- \$10 re-buy = \$7,000 in chips
- \$10 add-in at break \$7,000 in chips

<u>Learn more about Little League Poker ></u>

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# **EVENT RECAPS & RESERVATIONS**



# Rent the Vida McKenzie Community Center for your next event!

Looking for a local space that's beautiful, comfortable, and affordable?

#### The VMCC has it all

from a big-screen AV system and full kitchen to a cozy fireplace and patio overlooking the river. Host your next gathering where community happens!

Every rental supports VMCC's community programs, keeping this special place thriving for generations to come.

To reserve your date or schedule a tour, call

Shelly Pruitt at (541) 554-9332 or email spruitt59@gmail.com.

For **2025 Rental Pricing**, click here.

You can find the **2025 Rental Agreement** here.

Event Recap

## **NOV 1: Rooted in Heritage Art Show**

On Saturday, November 1, the McKenzie River Artists Guild's second Art Opening highlighted the works of **Joanne Walch** and **Marjarie Lewellen**. Guests were treated to lovely background music provided by pianist **Janet Savage** and sips of wine poured by **Freytag Winery**. Student-volunteers passed nibbles while visitors learned about background and technique directly from these talented artists.

The current installation will remain in place until the end of 2025, so you will have many opportunities to enjoy (and purchase) these works.



Glass artpiece by Janet Savage

**Event Recap** 

## NOV 2: Marriage on the McKenzie Open House



On Sunday, November 2, **Vida McKenzie Community Center** was one of ten McKenzie Valley venues to participate in *Marriage on the McKenzie*, a **McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce** supported, and valleywide campaign designed to directly market the McKenzie Valley as a wedding destination to prospective brides and grooms.



VMCC visitors were greeted by a welcoming entrance assembled by **Amber Jackson of Honey Paddle**. They were also treated to sips of wine poured by **Freytag Winery** and fabulous nibbles prepared by **Ozcar's Catering**. Floral arrangements designed by **Pretty Petals** and a glass-art picture of a bride created by **Janet Savage** adorned the room.

A photo station created by **Hummingbird Balloons** was available for quick pics. **Amy**, of Hummingbird Balloons, has allowed VMCC to house this gorgeous Fall-themed photo booth until after Thanksgiving. This will give VMCC visitors many opportunities to snap some great group photos and, of course, selfies.



#### Curious about Marriage on the McKenzie?

Listen to this interview with Gerry Aster & Audrey Spencer on KPNW's Wake Up Call on Oct. 27. They share details about how Marriage on the McKenzie got started and what's next! Learn even more by emailing this dynamic duo (email addresses linked below).

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# **COMMUNITY SUPPORT**



## First Annual VMCC Thanksgiving Feast

A Seat for Everyone at the Table {To guarantee your seat, RSVP by Nov. 20}

This Thanksgiving, the Vida McKenzie Community Center is opening its doors for a **free community feast**. Come enjoy a warm meal, good company, and the spirit of gratitude as we gather for our **first annual Thanksgiving celebration**. Hosted by Shelly Pruitt, Ben & Jeanine Rhode, and Lori Cagle.

- **Date:** Thursday, November 27, 2025
- Preserve Your Preferred Timeslot: 12-1 PM · 1-2 PM · 2-3 PM · 3-4 PM
- Location: VMCC, 90377 Thomson Lane, Vida OR



The goal of this free event is to ensure everyone has a place to gather, share a meal, and feel at home this holiday season. Whether you're spending the day solo, new to the area, or simply want to celebrate with neighbors, **you're warmly invited to join us.** 

In addition to the meal, we'll be hosting a **Coat Drive**. We're collecting gently used and new warm jackets to help those in need this winter. If you have one to spare, please bring it to the feast.

This event is dine-in only; no "to-go" orders will be available. To help us plan, please **complete the RSVP form by Nov. 20** to let us know who's attending, when to expect you, and if you're able to volunteer before or during the event.

### **Our Deepest Gratitude to our Amazing Sponsors**

If you'd also like to sponsor the Thanksgiving Feast, <u>please click here</u> to donate.

The Bottle Boys • Upriver Organics • US Chef Store Ed & Tammy Pelton • Gene & Mandy Jones Walt & Joyce Wilson • Will & Marlys Rutherford

#### Giving Back, Together

At the heart of VMCC is a commitment to connection, compassion, and community care.

Through volunteer opportunities, donation drives, and special events, we're building a stronger McKenzie River Valley together.

This season, our community support efforts focus on three key areas:

- Collecting food for local food pantries throughout the McKenzie River Valley.
- Gathering school supplies for local students through Amazon wish lists and in-person donations during our quarterly member luncheons.
- Hosting a seasonal Coat
   Drive to provide warm
   jackets for neighbors in
   need.

Whether it's serving a meal, sharing a skill, or lending a hand, every act of kindness helps our valley thrive.

We'll be sharing more about how you can support these efforts and join us in giving back, together. Stay tuned!



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# **BUSINESS MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

**New in 2026:** VMCC Business Members will now be featured in our *Business Member Spotlight* — a dedicated highlight in one issue of the VMCC Newsletter each year. Below you'll find an example of what the feature looks like, along with a link to learn how to become a VMCC Business Member. We're thrilled to launch this new benefit as part of our inaugural **Business Membership Program**, celebrating the local businesses that keep our community connected across the McKenzie River Valley.



If there's one thing you should know about Soft Peaks Cakery, it's that everything Shelly bakes comes straight from the heart — and from her licensed home kitchen in Vida.

Since 2004, Shelly has been spreading sweetness across the McKenzie River Valley with her small-batch, old-fashioned baked goods. She believes "sugar, flour, and butter equal magic," and it shows in every brownie, lemon bar, and custom cake she makes.

Shelly's desserts often feature local favorites like hazelnuts, raspberries, and blackberries — a true taste of the valley. As a VMCC Business Member, she loves connecting with neighbors and giving back through community events and donations.

You can find her treats at local bazaars and by special order. Looking ahead, Shelly plans to offer sourdough starter kits and baking classes at VMCC. "Making people happy and feeling special — that's what it's all about."









**Shelly Pruitt**, Owner/Operator · Vida, Oregon · <u>www.SoftPeaksCakery.com</u>







#### Join the VMCC Business Membership Community!

Local businesses are the heartbeat of the McKenzie River Valley — and VMCC is proud to celebrate and support them through our new **Business Membership Program.** For just \$100 per year, members are recognized in the VMCC Newsletter, featured in a Business Member Spotlight, and invited to sponsor community events.

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# **BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**



## **TAMMY PELTON**

Role: President & Treasurer Board Member Since: 2020 Hometown: Originally from

Southern California

Current Home: Vida, OR

### **About Tammy**

Tammy Pelton serves as the President and Treasurer of the Vida McKenzie Community Center Board. She works full-time as a bookkeeper at Auto Craft Inc. in Eugene, where she has been part of the team for six years.

Tammy and her husband Ed moved to Vida in late 2016 and quickly found a home within the community. After attending their first Bingo Night in October 2017, Tammy became a familiar face at VMCC — and she hasn't missed a beat since!

"As the person who handles the money at VMCC, I love seeing donations come in and that money being put to good use!"

## **Community Leadership**

Tammy began serving as VMCC's Treasurer following the 2020 Holiday Farm Fire. She oversaw all financial activity during the center's rebuilding process, managing funds that came in and out for construction.

Today, she continues to provide the essential financial oversight that keeps VMCC running smoothly as a nonprofit organization.

# Vida McKenzie Community Center

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS** 

#### **PRESIDENT**

Tammy Pelton

#### **VICE PRESIDENT**

Gerry Aster
-Term Ends 12/31/25-

Shelly Pruitt
-Term Begins 1/1/26-

#### **TREASURER**

Tammy Pelton

#### **SECRETARY**

Renee Langlois

### **BOARD MEMBERS**

Faith Bokros Sherry Jones Ann Penny Ben Rhode Rex Starr

Walter Wilson -Term Begins 1/1/26-





# Celebrate the Season Together

As we wrap up this month's issue, we invite you to mark your calendar for one of our most beloved traditions — the annual VMCC Christmas Bazaar! It's a wonderful way to celebrate community, support local makers, and kick off the holiday season together. Special thanks to Amber Jackson for this beautiful flyer!



**Tip:** Want to jump back to the beginning? Just click the VMCC logo at the top of any page and it'll take you home.