

Visit Our Glow Holiday Lighting Ceremony This Weekend

River City Briefs

November 25, 2022

The City of Independence, Oregon | 555 S Main St, Independence, OR 97351 | 503 838-1212

Para La Versión En Español

Glow Holiday Light Display Ceremony Happening This Weekend in Downtown Independence



NOVEMBER 27TH - JANUARY 10TH
RIVERVIEW PARK | DOWNTOWN INDEPENDENCE

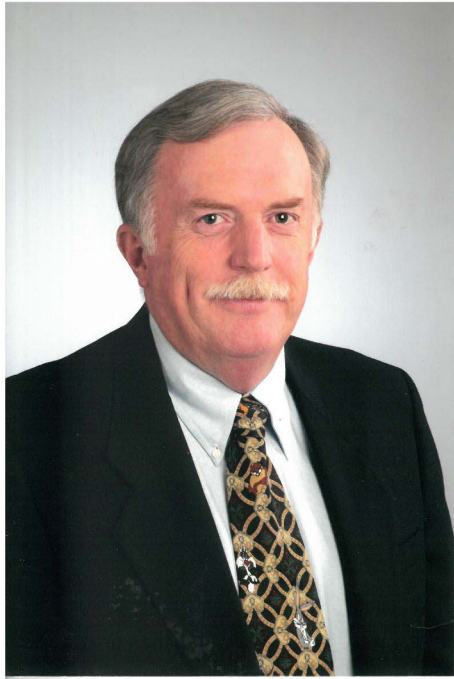
Don't forget that this weekend our Glow Holiday Lighting ceremony will take place in downtown Independence!

Help us celebrate the season by joining us for the lighting ceremony and community caroling sing-along **this Sunday, November 27, from 5 PM - 6 PM in Riverview Park.**

From November 27, 2022, through January 10, 2023, these holiday lights will shine bright every night. The walk is always free to stroll through. We encourage all attendees to take pictures of their families in the lights and tag the City of Independence on social media.

[Learn More Here](#)

Former Mayor of Independence Passes Away



Thomas Taylor Ritchey, former mayor of Independence (1994-1998), passed away peacefully in his home on Thursday, November 17, 2022, after a heroic battle with Parkinson's Disease. He is survived by his wife of 38 years, Beth Ritchey, his brother Tim Ritchey and several nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Thomas began his career in public service as a US Army helicopter pilot and mechanic during the Vietnam War and later as the mayor of Independence and a Polk County Commissioner (1998-2011).

Having grown up in Independence, graduated from Central High School, and been heavily involved in regional civic organizations, Thomas's local roots ran deep yet his aviation career took him across the entire country. While traveling and developing his aviation skills, the desire to return to the Willamette Valley was always top of mind. In 1990, Tom and Beth purchased 10 acres of land in Polk County—an effort Beth described as Thomas "trying to get back home."

"He loved Independence," stated Beth. "He really loved it."

Some of Thomas's greatest achievements as mayor were helping fix the city's sewer system and developing master plans that laid the groundwork for the beautiful river city Independence is today.

"Tom was a champion for the City of Independence his entire career and leader in our community his whole life," said Independence Mayor John McArdle. "Our city, county, and country are better places because of his service. He will be greatly missed."

A visitation service is scheduled for November 29, 2022, from 3:00-6:00 PM at Farnstrom's Mortuary, 410 Monmouth Street, in Independence, Oregon. Funeral services will be on November 30, 2022, at 1:00 PM at Farnstrom Mortuary. Graveside services will continue afterward at Hilltop

Cemetery in Independence.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, Grand Central Station, P.O. Box 4777, New York, NY 10163, 1.800.708.7644.

Independence Officer Honored at Oregon Peace Officer's Association Awards Banquet

On November 18, Independence Police Officer Eric Solberg was recognized with a Life Saving Award from the Oregon Peace Officers Association at their 52nd Annual Awards Banquet.

In December 2021, Officer Solberg responded to a report of a potential suicide and prevented the individual from taking their life through diligent action and compassionate and understanding speech.

Finding people who embody our core values of Integrity, Excellence, Courage, and Compassion is no easy feat. But with officers like Eric Solberg, we are proud to say we don't have to look too hard.

Join us as we congratulate Officer Solberg for helping make our city a more peaceful place!



Is Independence Unique In Its Housing Shortage?



Is Independence unique in its housing shortage?

Ethan Stuckmayer, Senior Housing Planner for the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, describes the current state of housing in Oregon.

"The City of Independence is not unique in its housing shortage," says Stuckmayer. "The issue is not the City of Independence, it's not Polk County, it's not the Mid-Willamette Valley, it's not even really the state of Oregon—it's really a national issue."

What are your housing needs? This has been the question presented to our community over the past few months through our Housing Needs Analysis survey. With sizable data now obtained, the city's consultant is now crafting a roadmap to address our community's housing needs. Additionally, the city will be hosting an open house in early 2023 to garner more community feedback.

We thank everyone who participated in our Housing Needs Analysis and helped us get a better understanding of the housing necessities in our community.

[Watch Video Here](#)

PUBLIC NOTICE - OPEN HOUSE

The City of Independence Public Works Department will hold a public open house to review the Water System Master Plan on November 29, 2022, from 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM in the Event Center. There will be a short presentation followed by a question-and-answer period.

Learn more at
www.ci.independence.or.us/publicworks/page/public-notice-open-house



INDEPENDENCE
Oregon's Story Begins Here

The City of Independence Public Works Department will be holding a public open house to review the Water System Master Plan. The open house will be held on November 29, 2022, at 6:00 pm in the Event Center. There will be a short presentation followed by a question-and-answer period. The meeting will end at 7:00 pm. A copy of the draft master plan is available on the city website at www.ci.independence.or.us. Select 'Public Works' in the Government tab, 'Current Projects' on the Public Works page, and scroll down to the Supporting Documents.

The meeting location will be accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting to Karin Johnson, City Recorder, (503) 838-1212.

[Learn More Here](#)

**Independence Heritage Museum Open
Thanksgiving Weekend**



The Heritage Museum
will be closed
November 24 & 25.

**We are OPEN
November 26!**

10AM - 4PM: Admission is always free.

[Visit Museum Website](#)

December Library Schedule



December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Independence Public Library 175 Monmouth Street Independence, OR 97351 503-838-1811 www.ci.independence.or.us/library and LIKE us on Facebook						Friends Book Sale @ the Library 11-2 pm ----- Drop in Holiday Crafts Program Noon-2 pm
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
			Storytime with Miss Jo 10:30 am ----- Kid's Craft Time Pasta Ornaments 4 pm	Holiday Open House & Uke-tide Sing-Along with Angel Ocasio 6:30 pm		Bilingual Storytime 11 am
11		13	14	15	16	17
			Storytime with Miss Jo 10:30 am ----- Drop in DIY Gifts - all ages 4 pm			
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Reindeer Games It's all about Rudy! 4 pm	Mystery Book Club 4 pm	Storytime with Miss Jo 10:30 am			Library Closed
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	Library Closed		Storytime with Miss Jo 10:30 am	Drop in Coloring Fun for all ages kids-adults 4 pm		Library Closed

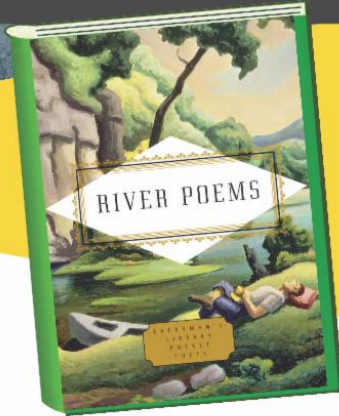
Local Book Launch Event Next Week

COME AND JOIN US FOR A

BOOK LAUNCH



CELEBRATING RIVER POEMS AND
RIVER RESTORATION



SATURDAY
DECEMBER 3
4 - 6PM

The Valkyrie Wine Tavern
301 S. Main St., Independence



Henry Hughes

Poet, Author and Professor
of Literature & Writing at
Western Oregon University

Poetry Reading & Fundraiser

Join the Luckiamute Watershed Council to celebrate our connections to rivers, which inspired the poetry in this brand new anthology edited by Henry Hughes. Several poets will be reading their contributions to this anthology, and 100% of donations – plus the proceeds of the first 20 books sold – will go to support the LWC's watershed restoration efforts!

FOR MORE INFO:

www.LuckiamuteLWC.org/River-Poems
(503) 837-0237 • Outreach@LuckiamuteLWC.org

[Learn More Here](#)

Polk County Holiday Assistance Program

POLK COUNTY REGIONAL

Holiday Assistance

2022 DRIVE-THRU EVENT
POLK COUNTY RESIDENTS
REGISTER NOW!



Adopt A Family

WHO CAN APPLY:

Polk County individuals and families experiencing a financial hardship and need assistance with food and/or gifts this holiday season.

**REGISTER BY GOING TO THIS WEBSITE
AND CLICKING SIGN UP:**

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/
POLKADOPTAFAMILY/](https://www.facebook.com/polkadoptafamily/)



POLK COUNTY REGIONAL HOLIDAY ASSISTANCE

POLK COUNTY ADOPT A FAMILY SERVES ALL POLK COUNTY RESIDENTS WHO ARE EXPERIENCING A FINANCIAL HARDSHIP. INDIVIDUALS OR FAMILIES WHO REGISTER FOR THE PROGRAM WILL RECEIVE FOOD FOR THAT HOUSEHOLD. GIFTS WILL BE PROVIDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18.

How to get involved:

ADOPT A FAMILY: DONORS WILL BE MATCHED WITH A FAMILY. THEY WILL BE PROVIDED WITH INFORMATION ABOUT THE FAMILY AND ASKED TO PROVIDE EACH CHILD WITH 1 OR 2 GIFTS FROM THEIR WISH LISTS.

VOLUNTEER: THERE ARE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER WITH THE HOLIDAY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS THROUGH ADOPT A FAMILY, CHRISTMAS CHEER, AND TOYS FOR TOTS.

SHOP OUR AMAZON VIRTUAL TOY DRIVE: TOYS PURCHASED THROUGH THIS LIST WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO CHILDREN WHO WE ARE UNABLE TO MATCH WITH A DONOR.

DONATE ONLINE: 100% OF DONATIONS WILL BE USED TO PURCHASE GIFTS FOR CHILDREN WHO WE ARE UNABLE TO MATCH WITH A DONOR.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

CONTACT STEPHANIE GILBERT AT
GILBERT.STEPHANIE@CO.POLK.OR.US

[Register Here](#)

This Newsletter Brought to you by

INDEPENDENCE

Oregon's Story Begins Here



City of Independence | 555 S Main St, Independence, OR 97351

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