CIRCULATES IN THE HEART OF THE SCENIC COLUMBIA GORGE

The Skamania County Pioneer

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Stevenson brings back Kinley as city administrator

Experienced municipal leader returns with a passion for public service, extensive financial expertise, and a shared vision for Stevenson's future.

FOR THE PIONEER

The City of Stevenson is welcoming back a familiar face to City Hall.

Following an extensive recruitment process, Leana Kinley has been appointed as the City's new City Administrator. The hire brings more than 20 years of experience in financial management, public administration, and organizational leadership, along with a longstanding commitment to public service to the city, the city announced in a statement.

Kinley previously served Stevenson for seven years, from September 2017 through September 2024, as City Administrator, Clerk, and Treasurer. During that time, she oversaw municipal operations, budgeting, financial reporting, grant administration, capital projects, and organizational improvements, the release said.

Since 2024, Kinley has served as Finance and Operations Manager for the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD), based in The Dalles, Ore., where she has continued supporting regional communities through financial management, budgeting, grant compliance, and operational improvements. She has remained part of the Columbia River Gorge community throughout this time.

"After a lengthy and thorough recruitment process, we are incredibly excited to welcome Leana back to Stevenson," said Mayor Jenny Taylor. "I've worked with Leana in both the private sector and local government, including when I served on City Council and she was our City Administrator. We've built a strong professional relationship grounded in mutual respect, trust, and a shared commitment to this community. I've seen firsthand her financial expertise, her ability to navigate challenges, and her dedication to getting things done."



Leana Kinley

Kinley's career reflects a longstanding commitment to public service. Before joining Stevenson, she served more than six years as Clerk/Treasurer for the City of White Salmon. Her background also includes private-sector financial management and accounting experience, along with service in the U.S. Peace Corps in Uganda, where she supported educational programs, grant funding, and community projects.

Kinley holds an Executive Master of Public Administration from Portland State University, a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from Western Oregon University, and is a Certified Municipal Clerk. Her experience in financial management, government operations, and grant administration will be particularly valuable as Stevenson strengthens its financial planning and evaluates future investments, the city said in a statement.

The appointment also marks an important leadership transition for the City.

Since February 2026, Mayor Taylor has served as Interim City Administrator on a voluntary basis, assuming the position's administrative responsibilities without additional compensation while continuing her elected duties as Mayor, which carries a modest monthly stipend.

"Serving in both roles has given me an entirely new appreciation for the work that goes into running our City," Taylor said. "I stepped in because Stevenson needed stability, and I felt a responsibility to our staff and community to keep things moving forward. It's been an invaluable experience, but it was always intended to be temporary. I'm excited to return my full attention to serving as Mayor, knowing we have someone I respect and trust leading our day-to-day operations."

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Annual Fall Plant, Bulb and Seed Swap scheduled for Saturday

FOR THE PIONEER

Stevenson Grange 121's 2026 Community Resiliency program, the Fall Plant, Bulb and Seed Swap, will take place on Saturday, Nov. 7, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., downstairs in the Stevenson Library Gallery.

The community is invited to come and exchange and/or pick up available plants, bulbs, seeds. Most of the plants, bulbs and seeds are locally grown and harvested and are proven producers.

The Plant, Bulb, and Seed Swap event is held in order to boost and inspire local producers and local production and encourage regional sustainability and resilience.

This year there will also be a wide variety of Wind River native plants in one-gallon pots. The plants were donated by the Underwood Conservation District as surplus inventory from their native plant project at Wind River Nursery. These plants are ready to be planted in late Fall/early Winter.

Plus, all local producers are encouraged to bring contact information for the INFO TABLE to advertise local garden and farm products and to form a local producer network.

Patrons can bring their seeds and plants to the Library before 10 a.m. but all leftovers must be

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Prepare together: Help shape our community's resilience

FOR THE PIONEER

How can we help our neighbors when an ice storm closes roads and knocks out power?

Join a community workshop to explore that question and help decide whether a Resiliency Hub on Jefferson Street could serve Stevenson and Skamania County. Bring your questions and ideas to Stevenson United Methodist Church (SUMC), 325 Jefferson Street, on Thursday, Nov. 12, starting at noon. The workshop aims to finish by 4:30 p.m. and will end before the Community Feast at 5:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome at the Feast so come for the workshop and consider staying for a meal. Kate Pedersen, Energy Resilience Technical Assistance Program Manager at the Washington State Department of Commerce, will guide the workshop. She specializes in how energy systems at Resiliency Hubs support communities during emergencies.

Together, participants will explore a simulated ice storm with road closures and power outages, using the proposed hub at SUMC as the exercise location. Participants will also have a chance to learn about plans for solar power and several days of backup battery capacity at the church.

After evaluating SUMC, the Department of Commerce hired Cascadia Renewables to develop the upgrade plan. It will be available at the workshop to help guide the simulated response. Although SUMC's membership has declined significantly, as it has at many mainline religious facilities, its building continues to serve the community.

Mid-Columbia Children's Council (MCCC) runs a free preschool in the basement, with sheltering in place included in its emergency plan.

The church also plans to replace the main building's roof in preparation for solar panels. Its kitchen is inspected annually by the Health Department and certified to meet basic requirements for serving meals to the public. Your perspective matters. Community feedback on resilience goals will help determine whether the proposed hub moves forward. Skamania County Fire and Emergency Management personnel have been invited and plan to participate.

SUMC welcomes input as it explores another way to support the community. The community is asked to join, share ideas, and help shape how we prepare together.

For more information contact Darold Ward at pyroward@aol.com or call (509) 637-3178

National Guard mobilized for ballot drop box security

BY JERRY CORNFIELD
Washington State Standard

In a precedent-setting move, members of the Washington National Guard are being deployed in seven counties to help protect ballot drop boxes in the final days of the election.

The mission, dubbed Election Neighborhood Watch by Gov. Bob Ferguson, appears to be the first large-scale activation of National Guard members to provide greater security of ballots cast in the state's mail-in system. Nearly 70% of ballots returned so far arrived from a drop box.

As of Friday afternoon, National Guard members were headed to King, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston, Clark, Lewis and Island counties. Secretary of State Steve Hobbs, who is also a National Guard member, said this "has not been done before."

Auditors say they had not detected any credible threats to drop boxes that would prompt a request for the National Guard's presence. But when the governor offered to provide assistance, several accepted, seizing on the opportunity to amplify their efforts at no cost to their local taxpayers.

"There's a lot of noise about elections right now," said Linda Kent, Pierce County's deputy auditor. "Looking at the broader context, out of an abundance of caution additional resources is not a bad idea."

Pierce County Auditor Linda Farmer said elections officials whose biggest worry was once power outages are now dealing with "threats against the people who work here and the actual ballots."

Historically, the Washington National Guard has had different roles related to the election.

Cybersecurity professionals from the guard have been activated to assist with cybersecurity tasks for every election since 2016, according to the governor's office.

In 2024, Gov. Jay Inslee activated the guard after a drop box was set on fire in Clark County in southwest Washington. More recently white powder has been sent to offices of numerous elected officials in the state and across the country.

"Amid these recent developments and the highly charged atmosphere of this election, my administration is taking every precaution to ensure that every vote counts and that counties have the resources they need to monitor and respond to potential threats," Ferguson wrote auditors.

Ferguson signed the activation order Oct. 21. It directs the guard members "to provide public safety and ballot security support" to bolster participating counties' efforts "to ensure free and fair elections." Election Neighborhood Watch began Monday and will end at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 10.

National Guard personnel are to be unarmed and in plainclothes, not their uniforms. They are not to interact with voters or have

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News Briefs

Spruce-Up Stevenson is Nov. 7

Register to Volunteer for the fall 2026 Spruce-Up Stevenson event scheduled for Nov, 7.

Gather your family and friends. Bring our neighbors together to strengthen community connection and celebrate our shared pride in Downtown Stevenson.

The community clean-up is scheduled from 9 a.m. to Noon on Saturday, Nov. 7.

Participants meet at the Stevenson Downtown Association office, shared with the Skamania County Chamber at 167 2nd Street, Stevenson, to check in, gather for announcements and get assignments.

Bring tools and wear your Spruce Up T-shirt from past years. We will have more shirts available.

All volunteers receive a $15 lunch coupon to use at participating downtown establishments!

Register and choose your preferred task: https://bit.ly/2026SpruceUpFall.

Free Chiropractic treatment for veterans

Skamania Chiropractic and Rehabilitation wants to say thank you to all Veterans for your service. The clinic is offering free treatment for veterans on Veteran's Day, Nov. 11.

Give a call while there are still have openings! Appointment Required. 138 2nd St. in Stevenson. 509-427-3600

American Legion Riders Shed Raffle

American Legion Riders are raffling a Shed made by Stevenson High School Ruff Cutts Class of 2026.

The drawing will be Veteran's Day, Nov. 11 at Post 137 in Carson.

Tickets are $10 each and available at the Post or from a Rider member. Post phone is 509-427-8989.

CCHC offering home rehab

Columbia Cascade Housing Corporation (CCHC) offers home rehabilitation programs in Klickitat and Skamania counties.

To be eligible, households must earn 80 percent area median

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This day in history

1791	Native Americans deliver crushing defeat at the Battle of the Wabash.
1922	Entrance to King Tut's tomb discovered.
1924	The first female governors are elected in the United States.
1960	Jane Goodall observes a chimpanzee making and using tools.