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Tribute: Rainier Police Chief Ralph Painter

Columbia County still mourns Rainier Police Chief Ralph Painter who was killed January 5, 2011, while responding to a disturbance at a local car stereo store. Painter died of a single gunshot wound to the head. The suspect reportedly used Painter's own gun.

Painter had deep roots in the area and was well liked and respected among citizens, police officers and the public safety community. He joined the St. Helens Police Department as a reserve officer in 1983 and the Rainier Police Department in 1988. He was promoted to sergeant in 1999 and chief in 2006.

Painter was honored on Friday, January 14 at a formal memorial gathering at the University of Portland's Chiles Center. Hundreds of police officers from all over the U.S. and Canada attended along with more than 4,000 other mourners. Local residents, friends and family also gathered at Rainier High School on Saturday, January 15 to remember this well-loved father, husband and police officer who was a "nice guy with a good sense of humor."

All of us at Columbia 9-1-1 express our deepest sympathy to his family. We honor his outstanding contributions to public safety, and miss him as a colleague and friend.

Columbia County Sheriff Jeff Dickerson said, "Chief Painter embraced the badge and its demands to the end. He has entered into the halls of American heroes who knew the risks but went in anyway. Today we mark his sacrifice. Enter into your rest, good and faithful servant."

Chief Painter's family has established a fund that will award scholarships to Columbia County high school cross-country or track and field competitors. You may make a donation to the Ralph Painter Memorial Fund at St. Helens Community Federal Credit Union, P.O. Box 537, St. Helens, OR 97051. If you'd like to learn more about the May 5 ceremony in which Chief Painter's name will be added to the Law Enforcement Memorial Wall in Salem, go to www.oregon.gov/DPSST/docs/2011LEMemorial.jpg.



Columbia 9-1-1 Communicator

Information from your Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District

Winter/Spring 2011

Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District

P.O. Box 998
St. Helens, Oregon
97051

Non-Emergency
Dispatch:
(503) 397-1521
1-800-696-7795

Dispatch Fax:
(503) 397-7797
1-800-734-7795

Administrative Office:
(503) 397-7255

Administrative Fax:
(503) 366-7196

www.columbia911.com

New Year, New Administrator

Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District welcomes Richard (Rick) Whitehead as its new administrator. He succeeds Sally Jones, who retired Dec. 31.

Whitehead comes to Columbia 9-1-1 from Austin, Texas, where he most recently served on the operations board of a combined transportation emergency communications center that fostered interoperability and new technology installations. His 30-plus year career spans all aspects of military, municipal and county law enforcement and includes directing Emergency (9-1-1) Communications, Homicide, SWAT and Special Operations. He is an experienced public safety trainer and has successfully implemented accreditation and regional radio and mobile data projects. He has also worked in collaboration with child protection, family violence task force and school resource officer units.

Whitehead has a degree from Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas.



Rick Whitehead



Sally Jones

He is also a graduate of the FBI Academy and the Leadership and Command College of Texas, and holds a Certified Public Manager designation from the Hobby Center for Public Services. Rick and his wife, Deb, have three grown children. They settled into the Northwest around Thanksgiving.

As administrator, Whitehead is the chief executive officer, manages all functions and services of the District and answers to the elected Board of Directors. The Board governs with involvement from the Advisory Committee, with representatives from all fire, emergency medical, police and other public safety entities in the jurisdiction.

"We are pleased to welcome such a highly qualified professional," said Dee Wooley, Board President. "The Board and the many stakeholders who helped carry out a thorough search process believe that Rick has the profes-

sional skill and prudent approach to lead our critical services into the future."

Highly Acclaimed Administrator Retires

Sally Jones, who was hired as the first Columbia 9-1-1 Administrator in March 1991, retired on Dec. 31. Since her arrival, the District has quadrupled its activity levels, invested in technology and facilities to support the growth, and managed its finances with award-winning care. Jones has been a leader and unifier throughout the community.

Earlier in her career, Jones was a nurse and 9-1-1 dispatcher, trainer and supervi-

sor. She was involved with the safety belt campaign and traffic safety programs before joining Columbia 9-1-1.

"I have been fortunate to work with a dedicated team that provides excellent service while conserving resources," reflected Jones. "We have accomplished much for our citizens and public safety partners. I know that that Board has selected the best candidate to carry on the excellent work we have begun here."

Weather Preparedness Tips From Columbia County Emergency Management

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), this winter and spring are shaping up to be wetter and colder than normal. Make sure you and your loved ones are ready.

Stock your home emergency kit with items you might need.

- Tools, such as shovels, saws and pruners to help clear downed branches, mud or even snow
- Clothing and blankets to keep your family warm
- Food, water and first aid supplies

Develop an emergency plan.

- Specify contact numbers (including someone out of town) and emergency actions
- Plan where your family will meet, within and outside of your immediate neighborhood
- Take a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) class from your local Citizen Corps chapter; keep your training current

Prepare your home for colder weather.

- Insulate, weatherproof and weatherstrip your home
- Insulate pipes and allow faucets to drip during cold weather to prevent freezing
- Learn how to shut off water valves (in case a pipe bursts)
- Have fire extinguishers at home and make sure everyone knows how to use them

Learn More to Stay Safe

Information on emergency preparedness:

- ready.gov
- Columbia County Emergency Management, 503-366-3931, emergency.management@co.columbia.or.us

Information on weather watches and warnings in Columbia County:

- Blog, columbiacountyem.blogspot.com
- Columbia County Emergency Management on Facebook and Twitter

Oregon's Common Weather-Related Risks

Earthquakes

Extreme Heat

Floods

Landslide and Debris Flow

Preparedness information about these risks available on the Oregon page at ready.gov

Tornados in Oregon: Rare, But Dangerous

The recent tornado in Aumsville reminded us that tornados do occasionally happen in Oregon and Washington. In fact, since 1950, the two states have reported a combined total of 202 tornados. Most registered an EF0 or EF1. The last recorded tornado in Columbia County was on August 20, 1978 near Scappoose. There was some moderate damage to a mobile home, but no one was injured or killed.

Tornados occur very quickly, so it is essential to have a plan beforehand:

- Identify specific places your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood.
- Inquire about emergency plans at work, daycare and school.
- Determine in advance where you will take shelter in case of a tornado warning.
 - Storm cellars or basements provide the best protection.
 - If underground shelter is not available, go into an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible.
 - Stay away from windows, doors, corners and outside walls.
 - **A vehicle, trailer or mobile home does not provide good protection;** plan to go quickly to a building with a strong foundation, if possible.
 - If shelter is not available, lie flat in a ditch or other low-lying area. Do not get under an overpass or bridge.
 - Plan to stay put until the danger has passed.

Sources:

Steve Pierce, Vice-President of the Oregon Chapter of the American Meteorological Society (AMS), (503) 504-2075, stevejpierce@comcast.net

Derek White, Director, Columbia County Emergency Management, (503) 366-3905, derek.white@co.columbia.or.us

Community Spotlight: Amani Center

Columbia 9-1-1 would like our readers to know about the Amani Center in St. Helens, formerly known as the Columbia County Child Abuse Assessment Program. When there is suspicion that a child has been abused, anyone can refer a child to the Amani Center for a comprehensive assessment with a team of highly trained specialists. The process includes a digitally recorded interview and medical examination using Oregon's official guidelines to help determine abuse and identify appropriate treatment. Following the assessment, the child and caregiver meet with the Amani Center team to talk through recommendations and build a safety plan.

"Our agency is a voice for silent faces," explained Lisa Galovich, Amani Center executive director. "Children need to be believed, and they need someone to advocate for them and their families. Our focus is the health and safety of children."

Since the child-friendly center opened in 2003, it has conducted more than 600 free evaluations. The center is seeking funding for more assessment hours each week. This winter, they are also starting education/support groups for non-offending caregivers and a child safety program in St. Helens second grade classrooms. The Amani Center welcomes volunteers and invites you to attend its fundraising events. Visit the website, amanicenter.org, or call the center at (503) 366-4005 for more information.

Register Your Cell Phone for Emergency Notification

The Columbia Alert Network, or C.A.N., is a high-speed telephone dialing service that notifies citizens of important, time-sensitive emergency information. Originally available for land-line phones only, C.A.N. is now an option for cell phones, Internet telephone service or email/text too.

But you have to register your alternate number for it to work. Here's how: On the Web: look for the link at www.columbia911.com

By mail: print out the form from the website above and mail it.

If you have questions, contact Sue Reedy at sreedy@columbia911.com.



Calling All Volunteers

Public safety and community organizations throughout Columbia County rely on volunteers to support their professional staff and all the work they do in our communities. Consider giving them a helping hand.

Columbia County Public Safety and Service Opportunities

General Resource Websites

www.volunteercolumbia.com

www.columbiacountycitizencorps.org/site/

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) St. Helens Area

Terry Moss (503) 397-3333

TerryM@ci.st-helens.or.us

Scappoose Area

Norm Miller (503) 543-3114

info@scappoosepolice.com

MRC (Medical Reserve Corps)

Anne Parrott (503) 397-4651

aparrott@chdpublichealth.com

VIPS (Columbia County Volunteers in Partnership with the Sheriff)

VIPS Coordinator

Columbia County Sheriff's Office (503) 366-4611

www.co.columbia.or.us/sheriff

SAR (Search and Rescue)

Search and Rescue Coordinator

Columbia County Sheriff's Office (503) 366-4611

www.co.columbia.or.us/sheriff

Mounted Posse

VIPS Coordinator

Columbia County Sheriff's Office (503) 366-4611

www.co.columbia.or.us/sheriff

Columbia County Sheriff's Office Reserve Program

Sgt. Dustin Hald (503) 366-4611

Columbia County Sheriff's Office

www.co.columbia.or.us/sheriff

Red Cross—Oregon Trail Chapter

Volunteer Services (503) 528-5624

RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program)

Nancy Harwood (503) 397-5655

rsvp@orpud.net

NW Oregon Foster Grandparent Program

Nancy Harwood (503) 397-5655

nworegonfgp@hotmail.com

CASA of Columbia County (Court Appointed Special Advocates)

Kathryn Bourn (503) 366-4133

Columbia Pacific Food Bank

(503) 397-9708

474 Milton Way, St Helens, OR

United Way of Columbia County

(503) 556-3614

uwcc@hotmail.com