



WINTER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Philomath Community Services | *People Helping People*

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Welcome to Winter 2026! As we settle into the season, we're entering a moment of renewal for Philomath Community Services. This year brings a refreshed executive team and a renewed sense of purpose, shaped by the lessons of a turbulent year. Even as federal programs like SNAP faced uncertainty, our community stepped forward with remarkable generosity—through donations, volunteer hours, and countless acts of neighbor-to-neighbor support.

Winter is always a time to take stock, and this year we feel especially energized by the momentum building around PCS. Community engagement is growing, partnerships are strengthening, and we're laying the groundwork for a year filled with meaningful impact. Stay tuned for March on Hunger and other 2026 initiatives that will bring us together in service.

Message from our Executive Director

Dear Friends,

We are very grateful for your generous support during 2025 and as we enter 2026. This community has stepped up to support Philomath Community Services and the people we serve in truly meaningful ways.

I wish that I could tell you that the crisis is over and all our community members are food secure, but that is not the case. SNAP benefits were paid in November 2025, but many households received significant cuts to their benefits or lost them all together. Those households will have to turn to food pantries, gleaners, meal sites and backpack programs for assistance. Overall food insecurity in our communities is growing. With your support, we will strive to meet the continued needs of our community.

Please take time to review our [Most-Wanted List and How to Help](#) flyer he following flyer and consider how you can support Philomath Community Services and the people we serve. [Contact us](#) if you would like to tour PCS or learn more about how you can help.

Sincerely,

Sharon Thornberry



Newsletter Signup

If you are reading this but have not signed up for our newsletter, please [subscribe here](#).

Welcoming Our New PCS Board Officers

Philomath Community Services is proud to announce the newly-elected Executive team:

★ **Jodi Russell** has stepped into the role of President, bringing her deep commitment to community service and proven leadership as former Vice President.

★ **Mike Goodrich** joins the executive team as Vice President, offering his wealth of experience in board leadership and community engagement.

★ **Tom Klipfel** continues his steady service as Treasurer, ensuring financial accountability and organizational strength.

★ **Sandy Heath** takes on the role of Secretary, adding her thoughtful perspective and dedication to PCS's mission.



Together, this team blends experience, vision, and passion for service. We look forward to their leadership as PCS continues to meet the needs of our neighbors and strengthen our community. Link to the full press release [here](#).

Celebrating Dedicated Service

At a recent Board meeting, PCS President David M. Low presented Brent Kaseman with an achievement award in honor of his years of service on the PCS Board. Brent has served faithfully since 2020, most recently as Secretary, and his steady leadership has been a true gift to our organization.

As a bank manager and commercial loan officer, Brent brought valuable financial expertise to PCS, helping guide decisions that strengthen our ability to

serve members and meet community needs. Beyond his professional skills, Brent's kindness, generosity, and commitment to the mission of feeding and clothing our neighbors have shone through in every role he has taken on. His dedication reflects the values of Orthodox Christian service and sets a bright example for others.

We are deeply grateful for Brent's contributions, his volunteer spirit, and the lasting impact he has made on PCS.



A Breath of Fresh Air

We are excited to share that PCS has received two new air scrubbers (high-efficiency air filters) thanks to the Smoke Ready Grant with the Benton County Health Department. These units will significantly improve indoor air quality in our building during a smoke event.

We're grateful for this support and proud to take another step toward a healthier, more resilient space for our community. Big thanks to Benton County! Pictured here is our Executive Director, Sharon, with Loren Emang of the County's Public Health Emergency Preparedness program.



Navigating Trying Times

PCS is no stranger to navigating difficult times with strength, thanks to our generous community. This past season, we saw unprecedented demand and uncertain funding.

Hear from Executive Director Sharon Thornberry, in this video [update](#) from the thick of the turbulent autumn.



Familiar Faces, New Beginnings

As of this past season, we have new co-Program Managers for the PCS Gleaners!

Jennie and Linda bring over a decade of combined experience in community service and grassroots support. With personal backgrounds that reflect the resilience and determination of those they serve, Linda and Jennie understand firsthand how mutual aid and connection can transform lives. Their leadership is marked by tireless dedication, empathy, and a deep commitment to fostering dignity through service. Together, they ensure that the Gleaners program remains a vital resource for families navigating hardship, offering not just food and supplies, but a network of care and empowerment.



Special Thanks

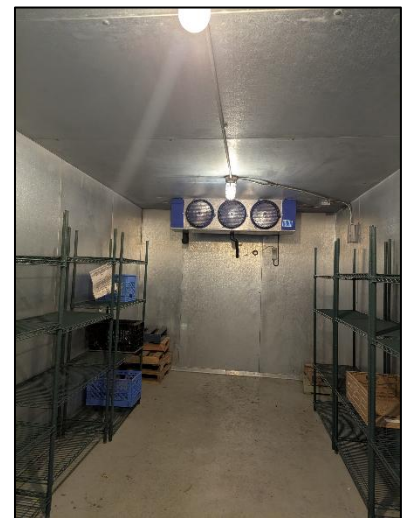
Citizens Bank's Pumpkin Contest returned again in 2025! We were glad to see a continued seasonal tradition at our local Citizens Bank in Philomath. Customers and community members voted with their dollars on which employee-created pumpkin they liked best, then Citizens Bank matched all contributions in a donation to PCS.

The Philomath School District has been a huge help this past season! From Giving Trees to food drives, students showed maturity, kindness, and initiative in helping supply their local food pantry here at PCS.

We also wanted to give special thanks to the Siletz Tribal Charitable Contribution Fund. We're deeply grateful for your two generous grants in 2025—and for your steadfast support since 2015. What a history we share!

Last but not least, we're happy to share that our freezer repair is officially complete. PCS now has a new state-of-the-art condenser and compressor system—one that may even reduce operating costs over time. This upgrade was made possible thanks to the extraordinary effort of Brad Probst and his team at Coast Range Commercial Refrigeration, who worked until midnight to finish the installation.

Brad originally installed our cooler and freezer when the building was constructed, and he has been a steadfast steward of our equipment ever since. He has also worked on Linn Benton Food Share's refrigeration for years. His reliability and commitment have kept our operations running smoothly for years, and we're deeply grateful for his partnership.



History on Display

These ornaments were made from the lights that once decorated Philomath's towering Christmas tree—a giant sequoia that stood over 100 feet tall before being removed in 2007 for the Hwy 20/34 couplet project. Crafted by a local Girl Scouts troop and shared through Shonnard's, they've now been passed to PCS.

We handed them out at the Tree Lighting and a late 2025 Rotary gathering, and we're grateful for the generous donations received. If you saw these ornaments around town, know they carry the spirit of tradition and generosity, thanks to neighbors like you.



In the News

Some highlights from the headlines:

- ★ Philomath News, an important and valued supporter of PCS, shared an insightful piece about [the Philomath food \[pantry\] seeing surge as SNAP benefits face November cutoff](#). The government shutdown is over, but the potential always looms. A potential federal shutdown could leave 750,000+ Oregonians without SNAP benefits within one month. That results in PCS seeing a surge in needs as families face tough choices. Facing the shutdown this past season, PCS was able to mobilize volunteers and successfully fundraise to meet urgent demand, thanks to neighbors like you.
- ★ Our Executive Director Sharon Thornberry was [interviewed by KATU](#) to discuss uncertainty, SNAP, and the hope and challenges ahead. Sharon's interview begins at timestamp 11:30.
- ★ Philomath City Mayor Christopher McMorran helped coordinate and share a fun little [video](#) (link and thumbnail to the right) on how folks can help PCS. We are grateful for our Mayor!

Notice: No Dumping, Please!

We appreciate your generosity—but please donate responsibly. Unattended dumping is illegal and creates challenges for our staff and volunteers. To learn how to make proper donations that truly help our neighbors, please see our [donations page](#) here.

Thank you for supporting our mission with care and respect.





Holiday Cheer Wrap-Up!

Another incredible season is in the books! This was Jennifer Ringwald's final year as Program Manager, and we are grateful for her years of leadership and heart. Incoming Program Manager Cynthia Ferguson jumped in early and is ready to carry the program forward.

Thanks to our community, we filled a storage unit by November, supported families from October through December, and ensured every child received at least seven gifts. Donations poured in—204 Amazon wish-list items and support from over 100 sponsors—plus a fun raffle featuring dollhouses, bikes, a nutcracker, and more. This year's impact:



- ★ 75 families • 133 adults • 191 children
- ★ 1502 lbs new items • 601 lbs used
- ★ 286 lbs donated to Gleaner Santa • 91.8 lbs to JKK
- ★ 50 volunteers • 300 hours

Holiday Cheer is in great hands with Cynthia, and we're already excited for next year! 🌲



That's it for now! Thank you for reading.

PCS Online

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Donation Webpage



Main Webpage

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