



FALL 2025 NEWSLETTER

Philomath Community Services | *People Helping People*

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Hello from Philomath Community Services! As autumn settles in with crisp mornings and golden leaves, we are reflecting on a summer that was anything but quiet. From hosting events to tabling across town, our team has been busy—and energized—by the incredible turnout and support we have seen.

Despite continued reductions in federal funding, the response from our local community has been nothing short of remarkable. We have been surprised and deeply moved by how many people have stepped up by volunteering time, sharing resources, and finding creative ways to keep our programs thriving. It's a powerful reminder that resilience doesn't always come from policy—it comes from *People Helping People*.

Now, as we shift into fall, we're gearing up for another season of connection and service. We hope to see you at Philomath Fire and Rescue's Health & Safety Fair on October 11, Trunk or Treat on October 31, and the Philomath Parade of Lights in December. Additionally, stay in touch for Holiday Cheer information to be posted on the website. There is plenty ahead and plenty to celebrate.

Thank you for being part of PCS. Please read on for some highlights from this past season!

Message from the Garden

One thing that **does** slow down with the calm of autumn is Lupe's Community Garden. From outdoor storytime to delicious rhubarb, cucumbers, and watermelon, the garden had a season of sunshine and growth. Read below a message from the garden's Program Manager:

This summer, the garden kicked off the season with a planting day for kids, in the rain! We laughed off the rain as we planted small pots of the child's choice of seeds (flower, herb, or vegetable). The kids also got to try out their hand at being a pollinator and transport pollen from flower to flower in a mock insect activity. Food Hero graciously donated materials, as well as a take-home project on Juneteenth traditions with recipes for families to make. Another family event was Storytime with Katey, our local librarian from the Philomath Community Library. After several stories and many snacks, the children felt the energy for a game of hide-and-seek within the orchard. However, it turned into a giggle fest since some creativity was needed in hiding spots. An apple tree can only hide you so well. We also held two pop-up clinics (summer: tomatoes and peppers, fall: frost-tolerant veggies) for at-home gardeners to plant and take home in containers.



On the maintenance front, we got our shed painted thanks to one brave young man. Thank you, Marshall, who not only scaled the ladder but also battled a few flying insect nests. The garden was fortunate to have an intern for the summer who cleared some of the garden's overgrown areas. Along the lines of sprucing up the garden, we had two groups: OSU's sustainability class and Corvallis' Community Services Consortium's youth gardeners come prepare garden beds for the community gardeners.

In September, the Garden hosted Art in the Garden, a partnership with Maxtivity. Where artists of all ages can come create in any form of expression, with the garden serving as their inspiration. We hope that this event will spin off many others and encourage the garden to be more than just a spot to grow food. As summer transitions to fall, the garden is still actively gathering produce before the rains turn cold and the shift from warm-season fruits and vegetables to cold-tolerant vegetables. This year's produce ranged from melons to apples, peppers to okra, kale to friese, green beans to parsley, just to name a few. There are potatoes and winter squashes to come in the next few months. The garden, along with the greenhouse, will put most of the beds to rest for the upcoming winter months while maintaining a few for kale, mustard greens, root crops, and a few herbs.

I want to thank all our volunteers, community gardeners, and PCS staff who contributed to the success of the garden this year. I hope we can maintain that energy and heart for the garden in 2026.

– Natalie Cover, Program Manager, Lupe's Community Garden

Newsletter Signup

And before we get too far, if you are reading this but are not signed up for our newsletter, [subscribe here!](#)

Celebrating 50 Years of Service

Our celebration of having served the community for over 50 years took place this past summer at Cardwell Hill and was a beautiful reminder of what makes Philomath Community Services so special: the people. From the handcrafted dollhouse donated by Board Member Mike Goodrich to the spirited music of The AML Trio, the evening was filled with warmth, generosity, and community spirit.

We're especially grateful to Vice President Jodi Russell and Administrative Assistant Liza Franzoni for their behind-the-scenes magic, and to the many public servants—including Mayor Christopher McMorran and State Rep. David Gomberg—who joined us in celebration.

If you missed the festivities or want to relive the highlights, check out the [recap video linked here](#). Here's to the next 50 years—and the neighbors who make it all possible.



And huge thanks to our sponsors who helped make it possible! We're deeply grateful to our heavy-hitting **Community Champions** (\$1000): McGuire Mechanism, LLC, the PCS Board of Directors, Philomath Frolic, Philomath Pharmacy, Royal Coach Sales, Russell Attorney Services, and two anonymous donors.

We also extend heartfelt thanks to our **Hunger Heroes** (\$500 level): Alyrica, Mulberry Contract Cutting, Oregon State Credit Union, Philomath Community Foundation, Philomath Sport & Spine, and Russell Contract Cutting. And a special shoutout to our **Sprouts** (\$250 level): Consumers Power, Inc., Sharon Thornberry, and Willamette Hose & Fittings.



Holiday Cheer Welcomes New Co-Manager

This season, we are announcing a leadership transition in our beloved Holiday Cheer program. Jennifer Ringwald, who has guided the program with care and dedication, will be co-managing alongside longtime volunteer Cynthia Ferguson, pictured on the right. Cynthia will step into the lead role in 2026, continuing the tradition of community-centered giving with fresh energy and deep local roots.

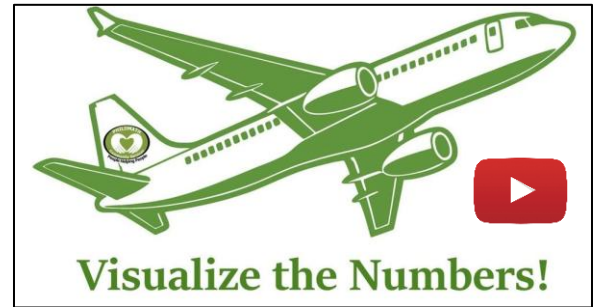
Cynthia has lived in Philomath most of her life and has been part of Holiday Cheer since 2019. With a background in nonprofit work—including her roles with the Corvallis-Benton County Public Libraries and Access the Law—she brings both heart and experience to the table. “Using my time to contribute to my community, and make it a welcoming home for everyone, is important to me,” she shares. We’re thrilled to have her help guide this program into its next chapter.

Keep an eye on the [Holiday Cheer webpage](#) for this year’s program dates to be posted!



By the Numbers

By the way, what does a year of service look like for PCS? We put together a little [visualization video](#) using data from our 2024 Annual Report, showing how the numbers (such as volunteer hours, food poundage, donation amounts) translate into quantities of real-world objects.



Philomath Frolic & Rodeo—A Parade to Remember

The Dust and Denim theme couldn't have been more fitting for this year's Philomath Frolic & Rodeo Grand Parade. With boots on the ground and smiles all around, our crew showed up in full hometown spirit to make the tradition shine once again.

Huge thanks to our incredible Parade Team—Jodi Russell, Linda Odell, Eric and She lby Gilstrap, Sandy Heath, Jamie and Larry Harris—for bringing the energy, teamwork, and heart that make this event so special. Whether you waved from the sidelines or marched down Main Street, we're grateful you were part of it.



Community Day of Service Recap

In remembrance of September 11, Philomath Community Services teamed up with the Corvallis Stake Relief Society at the Benton County Fairgrounds for the annual Community Day of Service. Together, volunteers repacked 300 pairs of socks for June's Kids Klostet and assembled 36 Birthday Kits for Nancy's Food Pantry. Our outreach table welcomed neighbors interested in learning more about PCS and finding hands-on ways to support basic-needs programs.

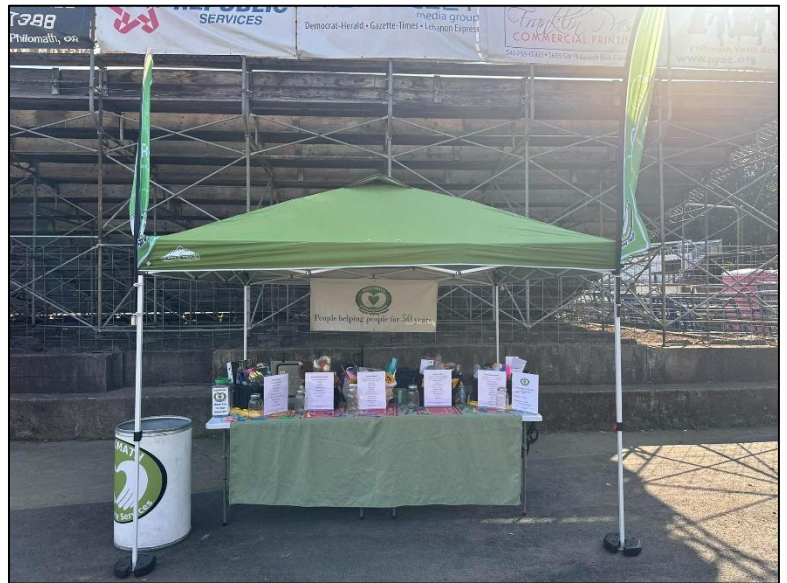
We're deeply grateful to everyone who showed up to honor the day through service. Beyond meeting tangible needs, this event helped us forge new connections. Thank you for making this year's Day of Service so meaningful!



Reaching Out

In other news, we have been busy engaging the community. First off, huge thanks to everyone who stopped by our PCS booth (pictured to the right) at the Challenge of Champions Bull Riding! Your canned goods and \$1 donations filled five prize baskets overflowing with goodies.

We also competed for the first time ever in the Public Safety Chili Cook-Off in Philomath! Check out the pictures below. You already read about all the creative activities the garden hosted this past summer, and our farm-fresh engagement also extends to the Philomath Farmers' Market, where we are grateful to make an appearance and see neighbors like you.



Jammin' for the Hungry

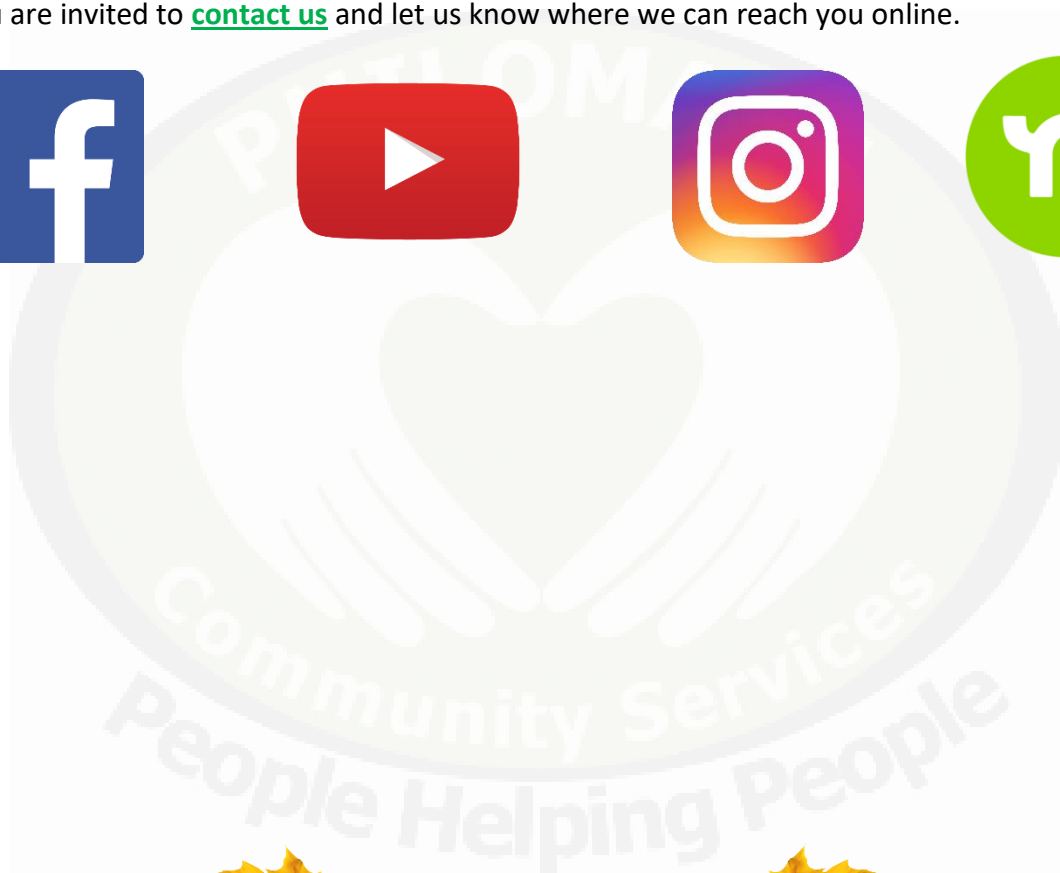
And one final reminder: Jammin' for the Hungry, in Partnership with Philomath Community Services, is still going on! We are requesting **½ pint (8oz) canning jars and rings** for their jams and jellies project. [Here is the link](#) to explain a little bit about what they do. Thank you!

That's it for now! See you later this fall!



Connect with PCS Online

PCS may be found online at Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Nextdoor. What is your preferred online platform? You are invited to [contact us](#) and let us know where we can reach you online.



Thank you for reading!



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