

Sisters salutes...

• HEARTWARMERS thanked the Rickards family, Clearwater Gallery and The Open Door for contributing \$692 from their Dine For A Cause program last winter.

HEARTWARMERS is a nonprofit that makes fleece blankets for adults and children in crisis. They have given away some 4,000.

"It made a huge difference to us," said Mary Tomjack of the Dine For A Cause. "That's a lot of blankets."

She also expressed appreciation to all the diners who came out in the middle of a harsh winter to support Dine For A Cause.

For more information

email hwb.hearwarmers@gmail.com.

• Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show (SOQS) board members Carol Dixon and Jeff Omodt presented the first SOQS Arts & Design Scholarship to Sisters High School senior Laura Waltosz. Board member Myrna Dow was on hand to present the \$1,000 scholarship to Waltosz at the GRO scholarship evening.

Laura Waltosz will use the scholarship for art supplies and expenses studying arts at Central Oregon Community College. SOQS raises funds for the scholarship each year through their Wish Upon a Card fabric postcard auction and sale.

Business roundup...

The Nugget welcomes these new businesses...

• **Aqua Hot Tubs and Barre Studio & Boutique** have set up shop at 413 W. Hood Ave. You will find hot tubs (and maintenance supplies), saunas, barbecues and more. Call 541-790-9679 for the barre class schedule.

• **Animation Art Masters, Inc.** is now open at 161 E. Cascade Ave.,

Suite 2. They are a licensed dealer for Disney Fine Art and other animation art.

• **Blue Pine Design Showroom** located at 411 E. Cascade Ave., offers custom cabinets and furniture by Dan Coker, who has been designing in Central Oregon since 2001. Watch *The Nugget* for their grand opening.

Look for these local businesses in new locations...

• **Wander+NW** has moved its location to 200 W. Cascade Ave. in downtown Sisters. They offer active women's and children's apparel, swimsuits, and accessories.

• **Sisters Farmers Market** has moved to Fir Street Park this year. The market operates every Friday from the beginning of June through September, from 2 to 5:30 p.m.

"Business roundup" provides notice of new business openings, relocations, and new ownership. If you have a submission for the column, email editor@nuggetnews.com.



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Community to discuss homelessness

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

On Monday, June 5, 5:30 p.m., at the Sisters Fire Hall Community Room, there will be a potluck and town hall to hear from the Homeless Leadership Coalition (HLC) what their Point-in-Time count on January 25 in Sisters indicates regarding homelessness in this community.

The coalition is holding community town halls across Central Oregon to present local census results and facilitate discussions on the local implications of the data. There will also be consideration of possible solutions to help the homeless among us to find safe, stable, warm homes. In Sisters, the evening begins with a potluck followed by the discussion.

The count is part of a State and national effort to identify the number of people struggling to find appropriate and adequate housing, as well as to provide a snapshot of homelessness in the United States. Information is gathered on a wide range of characteristics of the homeless population including age, gender, race, ethnicity, veteran status, and disability status.

"Through this data, local agencies and programs will be able to better target support services and develop comprehensive plans to address poverty and homelessness in Central Oregon," explained Molly Taroli, PacificSource's CCO Project Coordinator and

HLC chairperson.

The numbers aren't pretty for this year's count. Throughout all of Central Oregon, a total of 778 people, or an increase of 31 percent over the 2015 count, were homeless the evening of January 25. Of those 778 individuals, 615 (80 percent) are adults and 163 (20 percent) are children. Those living unsheltered numbered 548 (70 percent), a 35 percent increase over 2015, with only 230 (30 percent) being sheltered. There were 83 veterans and 68 unaccompanied youth.

"The number of people living unsheltered should be a wake-up call to all Central Oregonians," said Cody Standiford, HLC co-chair. "The lack of affordable housing options in our region, exacerbated by the tight rental market, is pushing too many in our community out into the cold... Many good efforts are underway to expand affordable-housing options, but we need more, and more quickly."

Individuals and families counted through this effort include, in addition to those who are unsheltered, people living in weekly motels, shelters, transitional housing, "doubled up" with other families, camping or sleeping in cars, and other places not designated for human habitation.

The most reported cause of homelessness is inability to pay rent, and the next most reported is unemployment. A number of the people who utilized the Sisters Cold Weather

Shelter this winter have full-time or part-time jobs but can't afford to pay rent in Sisters.

In the comparison between the census results for 2015 and 2017, every single category, from individuals in a family unit to chronically homeless veterans, has increased anywhere between 16 percent and 63 percent. All of the increases were a harsh reality for so many people during a month (January) of record snowfall and cold temperatures.

For the first time ever, this winter Sisters citizens operated a cold weather shelter for the homeless during the months of January, February, and March. The shelter was hosted each month by a local church, with all food, supplies, and staffing donated by the community with generous assistance from Shepherd's House Ministries in Bend.


To review the data summary from the January 2017 count or to learn how to connect with agencies and efforts in your community, visit <http://cohomeless.org>.

The Garden Angel
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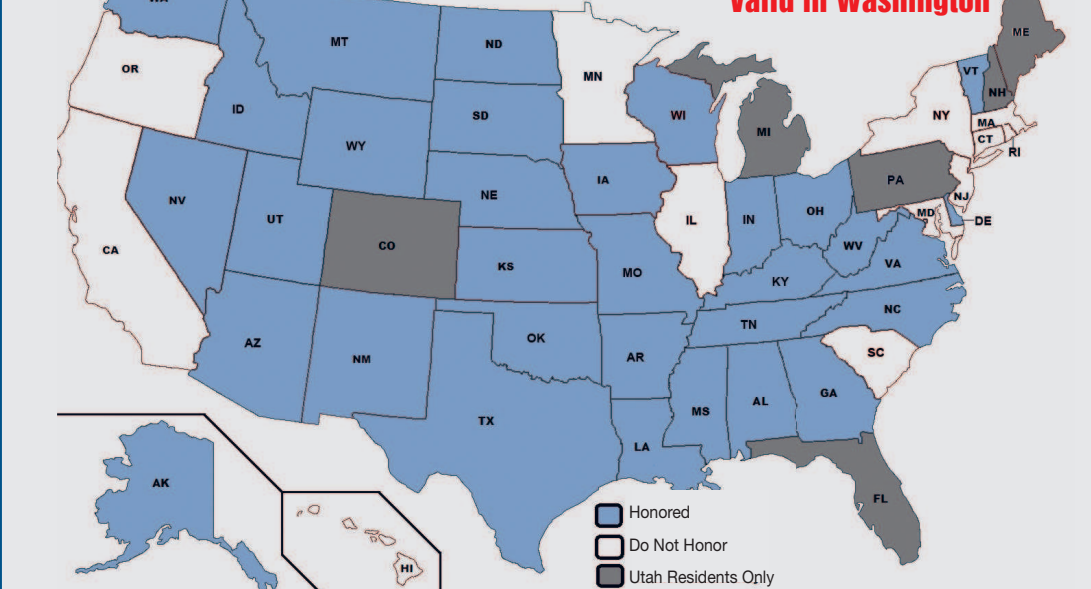
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