

# Appeal Tribune

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## GROWING PAINS



New homes under construction in Silverton at a recent subdivision on Jaysie Drive located off of Steelhammer Road. JUSTIN MUCH | SILVERTON APPEAL TRIBUNE

### Silverton population passes the 10,000 mark

**JUSTIN MUCH**  
SALEM STATESMAN JOURNAL  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Silverton is growing. This year's census bureau estimate tipped the town's population over the 10,000 milestone; a chart shared by Charles Rynerson of Portland State University's Population Research Center lists it at 10,070 for 2017, up from the 9,725 number of 2016.

Silverton's growth is relatively modest, inching up in consistent, mild increments. But it is also controversial, eliciting significant chatter about town and in forums such as the recent Town Hall and during a lengthy Silverton City Council meeting in December focused on a proposed development at the north edge of town.

"Silverton seems to have a split personality," Silverton Mayor Kyle Palmer said. "Some want no corporate interests. Some want no more commercial development at all. Some love the new choices. Some wish they offered living wage jobs only. Some are thankful for any new employment. It really depends who you ask."

Growth inevitably means change, and Palmer and other civic leaders are realistic about that. But they also believe that with forethought and guidance the growth can be cultivated into the character of Silverton, rather than having that

#### 7 essentials to Silverton's unique appeal

Quaint, historic downtown with creekside dining establishments & the Palace Theater

The city's nearly two dozen murals

Silver Falls State Park in its backyard

Gallon House Covered Bridge

Homer Davenport Days

The legend of Silverton's Bobbie the Wonder Dog

Silverton Pet Parade

character compromised or dictated by the byproducts of growth.

During the Town Hall, City Councilor Laurie Carter juxtaposed Silverton's growth with that of Forest Grove where she lived prior to moving to Silverton four decades ago. Both, she said, were comparable in size at that time, but Forest Grove's 8,275 population in 1970 expanded to nearly 11,500 a decade later. By 2010 it topped 20,000 and its 2016 estimate stretched up just north of 24,000.

That expansion was not necessarily

See **GROWTH**, Page 3A



Infrastructure projects pave way for new homes in Silverton's Pioneer Village Phase IV subdivision down off Ike Mooney Road. JUSTIN MUCH | SILVERTON APPEAL TRIBUNE

## Aumsville firefighters helped battle Calif. wildfire

**JUSTIN MUCH**  
SALEM STATESMAN JOURNAL  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Aumsville firefighter Stormie Morlan found herself in California, fighting a wildfire that soon would become the largest wildfire in the state's history.

How big and dangerous a fire quickly became apparent.

"The first few days we were there, the crews were given a weather update and told when the winds would be picking up," Morlan said. "We didn't experience the major winds 'til the last few days that we were there, and it was definitely an eye-opener."

"There was a point when we were told to come down from the ridge because the force was so strong it was pushing us over."

Morlan joined cohort Brad Buchholz and Silverton Firefighter Ray Dandeneau in boarding up an Aumsville Rural Fire Protection District rig and heading south to bolster overwhelmed crews that battled the Thomas Fire for nearly the entire month.

"Dandeneau is a volunteer lieutenant with us and went with Aumsville because they needed someone with a specific certification — engine boss — in order to go on the conflagration," Silverton Deputy Chief Ed Grambusch said.

The local firefighters were among hundreds of other

See **WILDFIRE**, Page 3A



Aumsville firefighters Stormie Morlan, center, and Brad Buchholz, far left, have returned to Oregon after helping quell fires in California. PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRAD MCKENZIE

## Audit: Alternative schools need better oversight

**NATALIE PATE**  
SALEM STATESMAN JOURNAL  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Oregon Department of Education has not focused enough on improving education for at-risk students in alternative and online schools, according to an audit released Dec. 20.

Nearly half the state's high school dropouts come from these programs.

"Our graduation rate is one of the lowest in the country," said Secretary of State Dennis Richardson. "We have a moral and economic duty to ensure better results for our most academically at-risk students, regardless of the type of school they attend."

Department data suggests many at-risk students enroll in alternative or online education after the start of the school year and when they may be relatively close to dropping out. Sharpening Oregon's focus on at-risk students in alternative and online education settings would improve accountability, district oversight and school and program performance, auditors said.

#### What is an alternative school?

Traditional high schools, operated by districts, serve

See **AUDIT**, Page 2A

## Oregon on deadly list for driving in rain

**WHITNEY WOODWORTH**  
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USA TODAY NETWORK

With 55 crashes directly caused by rain, Oregon ranked fifth among the most dangerous states for driving in the rain in 2016.

Last year, Oregonians had a 1.37 per 100,000 chance of being in a crash specifically tied to rainy conditions, according to a recently released Best and Worst States for Driving in Bad Weather report by security provider

SafeWise.

But it's not because it rains more here.

In fact, living in a rainy state doesn't necessarily make driving more dangerous, according to the report. The rainiest state, Hawaii, only ranked 39th on the most dangerous list.

"People assume more rainfall equals more accidents," said Rebecca Edwards, the report's author. "This is false. Any rain on the road can create pooling —

See **RAIN**, Page 2A



Cars splash through water on Liberty in South Salem after a heavy rainstorm. DANIELLE PETERSON/STATESMAN JOURNAL FILE

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#### NEWS UPDATES

- » Breaking news
- » Get updates from the Silverton area

#### PHOTOS

- » Photo galleries

#### INSIDE

- Classifieds.....3B
- Outdoors.....4A
- Sports.....1B



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