

Appeal Tribune

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Counting the east valley homeless



People gather at Trinity Lutheran Church in Silvertown during the Point-in-Time homeless count on Jan. 31.

PHOTOS BY ABBY LUSCHEI/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Volunteers rally to provide vital resources to those in need

Justin Much Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

A legion of volunteers swept through the vast North Santiam region to find homeless individuals and families, survey them and deliver needed resources — all within a day's window, Wednesday, Jan. 31.

The task helped more than 50 people in the region, and in some cases extended to their families, while also providing social service workers a pulse on how extensive homelessness is.

"It was a start, and we were able to connect with a lot of folks and share resources," said Melissa Baurer, Santiam Service Integration coordinator/community liaison the day after the count. "I talked with a few people that I am following up with to see how I can best support them. So, I say it is a win."

The effort was part of a Point-in-Time count required by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. The count takes place during the last week in January every year.

Volunteers served out of a half-dozen hubs between Aumsville and Detroit. By the numbers, Stayton's hub at New Life Foursquare Church had the most surveyed visitors at 27, followed by the community center in Mehama, 10. Six surveys were completed at Gates Fire Hall, five in Aumsville, while Mill City's Canyon Arts Center only had a single homeless visitor.

An exact number from Detroit was unavailable, but

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Donated items are handed out during the Point-in-Time homeless count at New Life Foursquare Church in Stayton.



Lunch is served during the Point-in-Time homeless count at Trinity Lutheran Church.

Busting the homeless trap

Justin Much Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Silvertown reminds James of the Potter County, Pennsylvania, town where he grew up "many moons ago."

The resemblance — right down to the creek running through town — is a comforting one in more ways than just nostalgia; James said he feels much safer being homeless in Silvertown than he does in other towns around the region.

James was the first to visit the Point-in-Time homeless count and services at Silvertown's Trinity Lutheran Church on Jan. 31. He talked about the town's recently established warming center as one thing Silvertown does to help.

"There are more services available in larger areas, but they also get overwhelmed," James said. "There aren't as many services out here, but it's smaller and feels safer; you don't see syringes on the street in Silvertown."

James reminisced about a past that included steady work as a long-haul truck driver back east.

But a DUI derailed that gig and led him on a route toward homelessness, complicated by a drug charge in North Carolina.

"I found my way to the West Coast, and I'm not going back over the Mississippi River again," he said.

A year ago, he was making \$600 a week at Forest River. Nonetheless, he said, it was difficult getting into housing because of the sheer cost and limited availability.

He decided to snowbird it, heading to Arizona to work at a different gig. But that fell through after he had a heart attack.

Now he's back in Silvertown. On the day of the count, he enjoyed a hot meal and the company of others at Trinity Lutheran, and he hopes to return to work at Forest River and get going on a path toward shelter again.

He doesn't anticipate ever getting another CDL license, nor does he really think it would be feasible. He does anticipate getting completely free from alcohol, and hopefully settling into gentler living circumstances in the future.

Camp counselor sentenced in rape

Man to serve 3 1/2 years in prison

Jonathan Bach Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Monmouth man was sentenced to 3 1/2 years in prison for sexually assaulting a 17-year-old girl when he worked as a YMCA camp counselor at Silver Falls State Park.

Rohan Cordy was sentenced Feb. 2 in Marion County Circuit Court after he pleaded guilty to three counts of second-degree sexual abuse.

Marion County detectives arrested Cordy in February 2017 on charges that he sexually assaulted an underage summer camp counselor while he was also a counselor from June to August of 2016.

Cordy told the court he takes responsibility for his actions. He said his faith in God has grown since the incident.

"You can condemn the act, but never the person," Cordy said. "I am not a monster. I am a human being."

Marion County Judge Courtland Geyer told Cordy he made a mistake whose effects were extremely serious — and the price he is paying is extremely serious.

Deputy District Attorney Rachel Klein read a statement from the victim's mother, who said, "Our family is broken."

She said Cordy had treated her daughter as a "sex toy."

"I have no place in my heart to forgive you," the mother said in the statement.

The mother said her daughter had been in camp since she was young and had been excited to become a counselor. She had graduated high school early.

"You derailed all of her life plans," the mother said. Her daughter eventually attempted to commit suicide, the mother said, though she has gone to coun-

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Silvertown Grange is 'Raising The Roof'

Justin Much Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

If you have noticed some extra activity around Water and Division streets near the southeast edge of town, it's probably due to Silvertown Grange #748's "Raise The Roof" campaign, which began in earnest on Monday.

Grange secretary and rental coordinator Jan McCorkle said the project is underway after months of planning and marks the first phase of improvements to the 1970s-era building. The building is the second for Silvertown Grange Hall since its charter in 1930.

Local contractor Robert Solonika of Solonika Construction LLC began the project with porch repairs, and roof repairs will follow as weather permits. McCorkle said grange members are also lending hands to the effort.

The project is funded through the Raise The Roof capital campaign, which included activities such as a pie auction and eclipse-watching party, bolstered by rental fees, private donations and Oregon State Grange Matching Grant funding.

"We are excited to be embarking on these much needed and anticipated grange hall upgrades," McCorkle said. "This effort is especially poignant as we celebrate the sesquicentennial Year of the Grange — one hundred fifty years of Grange work in America."

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