

CJ Patrol Homeless Alliance is starting a grassroots effort

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IVN Contributing Writer

On Dec. 2 Jimmy Evans, leader of the Cave Junction Patrol and self-styled promoter of homeless outreach in the Illinois Valley, gathered a dynamic group of individuals together Sunday in order to coordinate current activities being undertaken on behalf of Valley residents who are in need of shelter, food, warm clothes and a place to catch a decent night's sleep; and to brainstorm ways the community can help those who need further help. Among those attending were members of CJ Patrol, current Valley leaders who are already providing services, as well as community residents who just want to help.

Evans shared a "state of the homeless" update, outlining that there are currently 8-10 people living on the

streets of the city with an additional 15-20 homeless living outside the city limits (not including those living in cars). He also reported that there are more women suffering from homelessness in the Illinois Valley than usual and the patrol is kept busy handing out sleeping bags, socks, warm blankets and jackets.

The ultimate goal is to create a shelter that would serve basic needs for hygiene, nutrition and a safe warm place to sleep. Evans was approached by an anonymous donor who would partially provide funding for a warming center, but in the meantime the Homeless Alliance brainstormed ideas that could be acted upon immediately, including providing additional trash receptacles and putting porta potties in strategic locations around town. These two suggestions will be worked on with city representatives and a

determination made for potential locations.

The Homeless Alliance plans to meet again this Sunday at 4 p.m. to take more detailed action, such as forming small committees to take specific steps such as site selection, city liaison, food distribution, outreach services, construction committee and professional volunteerism or mental health organization involvement regarding counseling.

According to alliance participants, most of the city's homeless are children of current or former residents. They also felt that the 8-30 members of our homeless population would gratefully accept help from a warming center. And with the support of residents, the city's homeless can ultimately be reunited with their families.

If you are a concerned community member, helpful volunteer

or a knowledgeable professional, please consider becoming involved in the CJ Patrol Homeless Alliance. You can contact Jimmy Evans at 541-592-2407 or by texting him on Facebook Messenger. You can also

join the Alliance Facebook page. The next meeting will be at 4 p.m. at the Illinois Valley Wellness Resources office, 315 Caves Hwy. Suite C (same complex as Options for Southern Oregon).



(Photo by Laura Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Locals met to talk about homeless issues at Taylor's Country Store Sunday, Dec. 2.

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