

had banged on plywood replacing a downtown business' broken window that has experienced a lot of vandalism.

An EPD officer was able to take a snapshot of the person slamming on the plywood, print it out and ask downtown EPD officers if they knew who the person was.

"It was pretty slick," Mozan says. "Not the crime of the century, though."

It's a small window into what these cameras are capable of, he adds. The cameras could achieve much more just by being there, he adds.

When people see the trailers with the EPD branding, he says he hopes people will think twice "before making a bad decision."

The city's watchful focus on downtown activity concerns CLDC.

When it comes to the surveillance trailers, Cooper Brinson, a lawyer with CLDC, says that — although the Eugene Police Department may not know it — the social effect is creating docile bodies, a reference to the work of philosopher Michel Foucault.

Brinson adds that those who spend time downtown are being disciplined by power through surveillance. The function of surveillance controls and affects residents, making them subjects.

Mozan says he's aware of some of the ethical issues of having the cameras downtown, but EPD should be trusted.

"It's not our intent to squelch freedom of expression or speech. We're intentional about putting up these things in a way that they're viewing public spaces," Mozan says. "We're not here to harden up our public spaces but to make it safer for our citizens — all of them."

Because the trailers are publicly owned, it does mean

that anyone can request video or audio from wherever the trailer is parked through a public records request.

However, the trailers' camera feed is erased after 30 days unless it's being used for a case.

It's unclear whether there are more surveillance camera systems downtown. In the past, *Eugene Weekly* reported that Downtown Eugene Inc., a not-for-profit association that receives most of its money collected by the city from downtown business fees, has a surveillance system.

However, the organization's executive director, Claire Barnum, has not commented to either confirm or deny if it still has a surveillance system.

EPD also has eyes on downtown activity through old school surveillance: Boots on the ground.

Mozan says EPD has a great network of communication with Downtown Eugene, Inc.'s "Red Caps."

Earlier this year, the city of Eugene brought on a staff of five Downtown Ambassadors — dressed in blue — who stroll downtown Eugene to provide a welcoming presence and customer service-oriented duties, according to Lindsey Selser, communications and policy analyst for the city of Eugene.

The staff costs the city about \$300,000 annually, which comes from the general fund and revenue from parking, Selser says.

The Downtown Ambassador program began earlier in 2018, and so far people in Eugene aren't sure about it, according to a citywide survey.

For the third year, the city of Eugene sent out a survey to measure how people in the area view downtown Eugene. The survey had 2,228 answers and was open for a month. The results were published on Nov. 21.

In the survey, 53 percent of participants said downtown Eugene is getting worse. In addition, responders seem to not

know who the Downtown Ambassadors are: 46 percent were unsure whether the staff make Eugene safe and welcoming — and 32 percent said they didn't make the area safe.

Regardless, Selser says that in the past six months, the program has been helpful for downtown visitors. Each ambassador has a special line to EPD, but police tattling isn't his or her main duty.

Brinson says that CLDC plans to present some alternative policies that would resemble some of the work that Seattle and Oakland, California has done to prevent police surveillance.

In May 2018, Oakland's City Council voted to enact legislation that will make city departments submit a technology impact report. Oakland's Privacy Commission and city council must then approve any new surveillance technology. In addition, the city's current surveillance technology must undergo a public review and approval process.

Nicole A. Ozer, the technology and civil liberties director of ACLU of California, commended this move by Oakland in a statement, saying the people of Oakland have protected their community from secret and invasive police surveillance thanks to a "landmark" surveillance ordinance.

Brinson adds that Eugene should implement a program like Oakland, something that would have some citizen oversight over these surveillance programs that aren't toothless.

However, Mozan says he hopes the surveillance used downtown will become "old hat" in 2021. He adds that maybe the city would increase the amount of cameras to provide some sort of watchful eye for residents when the large influx of visitors flood into Eugene for the Olympic trials in 2020 and the world track championship in 2021. ■

NEWS

BY MEERAH POWELL

TWO GLAMAZONS WALK INTO A BAR (IN COTTAGE GROVE)

Local drag queens bring a show to the Axe and Fiddle

Eugene is a surprisingly active place for drag, according to queens Monique La Faye and Kares Ann Slaughter of the local troupe Glamazons. "There's more drag here now than ever," the two queens agree.

Cottage Grove? Not so much.

But, last month, La Faye and Slaughter changed that by hosting Drag Brunch at Axe and Fiddle — a popular downtown restaurant and pub about 20 miles south of Eugene. They'll be hosting a similar holiday-themed brunch event there this Sunday, Dec. 23, called "A Very Merry Drag Brunch."

La Faye and Slaughter's given names are Curtis Tsukamoto-Wixey and Cornel Hardiman, respectively. For this article, the two opted to go by their drag names and use "she" pronouns, as they do when they're performing.

La Faye is friends with a new chef at Axe and Fiddle, which is how the restaurant's co-owner Alyssa Gonzales heard about the idea of hosting a drag brunch.

For last month's event, there was a big turnout and Gonzales was thrilled, though she admits to being anxious about how Cottage Grove might react.

"I was a little nervous for our small town," Gonzales tells *Eugene Weekly*. "I was a little nervous how some people would treat it."

She continues: "Knowing the Axe and Fiddle is a safe place for any event, I knew no matter what we were going to have a lot of fun and everything would be OK."

The event was more than OK, Gonzales says. To her and her staff's surprise, there was a line outside the door before Axe and Fiddle even opened.

"The space it's given for our queer community alone has been incredible," Gonzales says. "Bringing it culturally



to Cottage Grove has been beneficial to everyone."

La Faye and Slaughter were also a little unsure about doing a drag show in Cottage Grove, but they were met with an excited crowd.

"I'm always very apprehensive walking into a space being queer," Slaughter says. "But, it was amazing. The turnout was amazing."

Because it was a daytime show, La Faye and Slaughter say they got to perform for an audience they would not have normally — from families with young children to a table with a group of people in their 70s and 80s.

"It's really nice to see kids in the crowd," La Faye says. "There's a light in their eyes. They're looking at you with wonder and amazement."

She reminisces on a time when she first started doing drag, 16 years ago, when it was more taboo to be "out" in public.

"Another queen told me never to look children in the eye while in drag," La Faye says. "It just shows how far we've come."

La Faye, who grew up in the Coos Bay/North Bend area, says performing in a smaller town like Cottage Grove was a particularly personal experience.

"It felt kind of like a little piece of home," she says. "It's nice that we can bring a community together that's not always here in one place."

As for the drag brunch itself, it's a full-on production, La Faye says. Last month's event was an hour-and-a-half long. This Sunday's will be "split into two," she says, "with two separate seatings" — a 45-minute show at 10:30 am and another 45-minute show at noon.

The Axe and Fiddle's chef creates a special brunch menu for the event, Gonzales says. He "usually does some kind of special hash," she says, along with other basic brunch options.

La Faye notes that the eggs benedict looked delicious.

The show will feature Slaughter and La Faye as well as La Faye's three "drag children" — two drag queens and a drag king (a woman dressing in masculine drag) early in their career that La Faye has taken under her wing.

There will be group and solo performances, all with a holiday theme. Slaughter jokes that she already has two Mariah Carey songs on the docket.

"I don't think I have enough red dresses," La Faye says.

"I do," Slaughter laughs. ■

"A Very Merry Drag Brunch" takes place 10:30 am and noon Sunday, Dec. 23, at Axe and Fiddle (657 E. Main Street, Cottage Grove). The show is for all ages with tickets available for \$5 at axeandfiddle.com.