

FIRE: Most residents did not have renter's insurance

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Protection District had put out a call for mutual aid, calling in trucks from Hermiston and Irrigon to help. Due to other calls in the district, the Hermiston ladder truck had to wait until off duty staff could arrive before responding.

More than 30 firefighters responded, including firefighters from Umatilla, Irrigon, Hermiston and Stanfield. It took more than three hours to extinguish the fire and clear out the buildings. After the fire, Potts and Fire Marshal Tom Bohm began an investigation, but Potts said the official determination will likely never be known.

"We've determined at this point that there was no reason to believe it was arson," he said. "All indications are that it's possibly electrical, but our investigation will not determine that completely."

The fire displaced five families; the sixth apartment in the building had been leased on Friday — the day of the fire — but nothing had been moved in yet. Most of the residents did not have renter's insurance.

According to the American Red Cross, the multi-family fire affected nine adults, 15 children and multiple pets. Two volunteers from the Red Cross responded to the scene and provided assistance for immediate and basic needs, including temporary assistance.

"When disasters like a home fire strike, the Red Cross is there. On average we respond to two home fires every single day in our region, providing temporary housing, food and comfort to those affected," said Monique Dugaw, Red Cross spokeswoman. "We also work pro actively to help individuals and families escape a home fire safely by installing free smoke alarms in homes that need them."

While the Red Cross works to provide immediate assistance, Marina Apartments and local volunteers are also gathering supplies for the families. Two families lost everything to the fire, including all household goods, clothing and children's toys. Another apartment on the first floor was flooded with two feet of water during fire suppression efforts.

Holford said she had already received donations of adult clothing but was still in need of children's clothing



Holes are tom out of the walls of a building at the Marina Apartments where firefighters were attempting to find and extinguish the slow moving fire.

in: girls sizes 4T, 5T, 6; and boys sizes 10, 12, 14.

Holford said Marina Apartments has one open two-bedroom apartment they have set aside for one of the families, and they are working with other properties to find homes for the others.

"The community has come together, they've brought clothes, blankets, even on the night of the fire," Holford said. "We're also trying to gather dishes,

furniture, toiletries. They'll have to replace everything. The families are all being amazing. They're upset, but they're holding together."

The families are also in need of dog and cat food, and volunteers are working to set up pages on GoFundMe.com for monetary donations.

Physical donations can be dropped off at Marina Apartments in the office or apartment 1500 A.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

ALLEY: Wants to require all bills come with a sunset provision

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moderate with lots of experience in the private sector," said Jim Moore, political science professor and director of the Tom McCall Center for Policy Innovation at Pacific University.

Moore said Alley is the clear frontrunner in the primary May 17 against Salem oncologist Bud Pierce and three other Republicans. But Alley faces two daunting challenges in the general election: Typically greater turnout among Democratic voters in a presidential year and a lack of name recognition, Moore said.

"As of today, there is no mass-media campaign for Alley," Moore said. "I do not think he has reintroduced himself to voters. His policy proposals are also not getting out to the large group of Republican primary voters."

Alley has proposed some creative solutions to reigning in big government. For instance, he said he wants to require that all bills come with an automatic sunset provision.

"It's like term limits for bills," he said. "Good bills they would get rubber stamped again. Bad bills, they would go."

He also has promised to crowd source for feedback on the state budget by making budget documents available on the internet.

Born in Michigan, Alley, 62, grew up in various places around the country, including Delaware, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Washington. His father was an engineer who worked his way through college by singing in a nightclub, and his mother was an actress who started her own local talk show in Michigan.

Alley's mother was a staunch Republican and worked for Richard Christiansen when he ran against Daniel Evans in 1963 for the Republican nomination for Washington governor.

"I was binding cookbooks when I was 9 years old and putting up lawn signs and that kind of stuff," Alley said. "It left a positive impression. I don't think I would be doing this without a little bit of exposure to that, where I saw it was a civic responsibility."

Alley started building small tech companies in the

"I'm not a hyper partisan person. I collaborate on everything. You have to be to be a businessperson and work all over the world."

— Allen Alley, Republican gubernatorial candidate

mid-1980s. In 1997, Alley and four friends started Pixelworks with only \$10,000.

Three years later, the fabless semiconductor business went public. During the first 10 years, when Alley was chief executive officer, the company sold about \$1 billion's worth of semiconductor products, Alley said.

When he stepped down as CEO in 2007, he started looking around for a position in public service.

"Gov. Kulongoski called me almost immediately and said, hey I would like you to consider coming in and being on my staff," Alley said.

Alley warned the Democratic governor that he was a Republican, but Kulongoski made it clear wanted the best people on his staff, regardless of their political affiliation.

"I chose Allen because he did have a business background, and it was in tech," Kulongoski said. "There were times when we were looking at a business to relocate or trying to attract a business. He actually went out and looked at those companies and called his friends about them."

There was one company in particular that Kulongoski was interested in. After some investigation, Alley told the governor "very clearly stay away from them," Kulongoski recalled.

"And I did," Kulongoski said. "I was very happy when the company went to another state, and a couple of years later, went into bankruptcy so I'm glad he told me not to do that. He is very smart."

Alley said his 14 months working in the Governor's Office demonstrated his ability to work across party lines.

"I'm not a hyper partisan person," Alley said. "I collaborate on everything. You have to be to be a businessperson and work all over the world."

Tim Nesbitt, a pro-labor Democrat who worked alongside Alley in Kulongoski's administration, said Alley was more pragmatic than ideological and brought business acumen to the Governor's Office.

"What struck me right away was his ability to scrutinize different proposals by the Office of Economic and Community Development, now Business Oregon, for state-backed loans and tax credits," Nesbitt said. "I don't recall the specific projects, but he put a very sharp pencil on things and sent the proposals back to the agency to make a stronger case."

Alley left the Governor's Office to run for state treasurer. He won the Republican nomination but lost to Democrat Ben Westlund in the general election. He also made a failed bid against former NBA basketball star Chris Dudley for the Republican nomination for governor in 2010. He went on to serve as chairman of the Oregon Republican Party from January 2011 to January 2013, while continuing to invest in small tech companies.

On top of his business acumen, Alley has some of the quirk of a fictional politi-

SCHOOL: Case started with third-hand information

Continued from 1A

14-year-old boy, because his case remains in the juvenile system. She said it was her policy not to discuss juvenile cases.

The *La Grande Observer* reported Monday that defense attorneys and family members asked the judge to release the defendants to their families. The younger teen also appeared via video from the Walla Walla youth jail. Dretke decided the two teens remained a threat to the community and the victims in the case, according to the *Observer*, and denied the motions to release.

La Grande police arrested the boys last Wednesday, and La Grande Police Chief Brian Harvey at the time said the pair "talked about doing a Columbine-type of attack on the school with specific people targeted."

Harvey said he could not reveal extent of the students' plans because the investigation is active, but his department would not have made the arrests if evidence "did not show a thorough level of credibility and support for the charges."

La Grande has 19 officers, including the chief, and participates in a major crime team in Union County. Law enforcement uses such teams to pool detectives and veteran officers from different agencies to tackle big crimes, such as murder. Harvey said the case

started with third-hand information, and he, two detectives and two officers were the initial investigators. The nature and pace of information in this case, he said, did not warrant a call for the crime team.

By the end of the week, though, he asked Oregon State Police and the Union County Sheriff's Office to help, and eight to nine officers were working the investigation.

"As this particular case went further on, as we got further into it," Harvey said, "I can speak for all the investigators — this was rather disturbing to them."

The *Observer* reported the students had their initial arraignment last Thursday, where La Grande High School assistant principal Scott Carpenter spoke in front of family members of the two students, law enforcement officials and school staff.

"This is the first time students have developed a plan to kill me," Carpenter told the *Observer*. "They were actively plotting to murder me, and in an environment that society and the courts should work to keep absolutely safe and almost sacred."

McDaniel said she also could not reveal details of the investigation. Police have questioned a large number of people, she said, and that work continued even Monday.

PRIMARY: 680 'motor voters'

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Through March, the Secretary of State reports that the rule has registered 680 new voters in Umatilla County. "Motor voter" has helped Umatilla County boost its total number of registered voters to 32,644 in March, the second highest number for that month since 2001.

After a person is registered through the DMV, the state sends them a card that allows them to register with a party or opt out. Although only 47 people chose to opt out of registration, 90 percent of those who stayed on the rolls remained unaffiliated.

Alex Hobbs of Hermiston said she's spoken with many longtime local voters who were unaware of the primary restriction.

"There's a real need for basic civic education," Hobbs said.

To boost the county's participation in the May elections, Hobbs and her friend Selene Torres-Medrano of Umatilla, held a voter registration event Saturday at Java Junkies in Umatilla. The deadline to register as a voter or switch political affiliation is Tuesday.

Given that they only registered a couple of voters, Hobbs said the event

was disappointing. Hobbs said civic engagement is more difficult in Eastern Oregon and although some people encouraged their cause, others wanted to engage them in political debate, even though the event was nonpartisan by design.

But even if voters don't see Hillary or Trump on their ballots, Hobbs said the importance of voter registration extends beyond national election. May 17 also marks the date for many local elections.

Voters in the Echo, Milton-Freewater and Athena-West school districts will vote on bond measures while Stanfield and Hermiston voters will decide whether to merge the cities' fire districts and establish a new tax rate.

Other voter decisions include municipal elections in Pendleton, Hermiston and Milton-Freewater and elections for circuit court judge and district attorney.

Despite Hobbs and Torres-Medrano's initial struggles to engage voters, they're not letting it deter them.

Hobbs said the pair are planning additional voter registration events over the summer ahead of the national election in November.

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