

Kettles from 1A

hampering traditional support systems and teams that normally address impacted communities.

It has also stretched already reduced resources for community assistance organizations, including The Salvation Army, which has been involved in disaster relief in the United States since the 1900 Galveston Flood.

Each year, more than 30 million Americans receive direct assistance from The Salvation Army, with the help of 3.5 million volunteers working at 7,600 support centers.

The organization is Christian based, with a focus on providing help not only in America but worldwide. The structure of the group is based on a military model in terms of the titles and responsibilities of individual members, who are often referred to as "Soldiers for Christ."

The collection of money for the services provided to those in crisis has in the past been primarily funded through generous corporate or philanthropic organizations, as well as money collected in Red Kettles placed in front of retail locations across the country.

The Salvation Army is often rated among the most trusted and effective religious-based aid agencies in the country.

This trust is the reason \$126 million was raised last year nationally through donations made at 30,000 Red Kettles sites around the country.

More than \$600,000 of that was brought in through fundraising efforts in Oregon. While digital fundraising for Christmas started earlier this year, most bell ringers won't be out collecting money at the iconic Red Kettles until November.

"Christmas this year will be unlike any Christmas in the history of The Salvation Army," said Major Bob Lloyd, The Salvation Army Portland Metro Coordinator. "We have seen so much need in our community because of COVID-19. Then most recently the need has increased as a



COURTESY PHOTO

The Cascade Division of The Salvation Army has been assisting with community crisis situations, including bringing food and support to wildfire victims.

result of the wildfires across the state of Oregon." Lloyd added that the needs across Oregon have continued to grow this year "beyond imagination."

As a testimony to that, based on the increase in services already provided in response to the pandemic, the organization expects to serve up to 155 percent more people in 2020 with Christmas assistance.

In Florence, Red Kettles have been a consistent source of revenue during previous holiday seasons, thanks in large part to the work done by local volunteers, according to William Olson, Director of Gift Planning for the nonprofit's Cascade Division.

"As you may know, The Florence Western Lane County area has distinguished itself in per capita fund raising for Red Kettles, especially in those years under the leadership of Sam Spayd," said Olson. "Sam and other local volunteers have worked to advise and spend with Debi Leighton the vast bulk of these kettle monies to Florence-area concerns and organizations."

The money raised from local kettle efforts helps with putting food on the table, paying bills, providing shelter and helping place gifts under the tree for hundreds of local families each year.

"At the same time, due to the closing of retail stores, consumers carrying less cash and coins, and the decline in foot traffic, The Sal-

vation Army could see up to a 50 percent decrease in funds raised through the red kettles, which would limit our capability to provide services for the most vulnerable," Olson said.

"People are still in need, regardless of what is going on around us and we at The Salvation Army are working to meet that need and are extremely grateful to the people in our communities who continue to help us."

Since March, in response to COVID-19, The Salvation Army across Oregon has provided 140,437 meals, 98,338 snacks, 43,078 food boxes, and emotional and spiritual support to 37,841 peo-

ple in need.

The group also maintains ongoing local support services for veterans, women and children and members of the LGBTQ community.

Debi Leighton is the Service Extension Coordinator for the Salvation Army of Western Lane County and she has responsibility for finding an individual to replace Spayde as the lead team member for the 2020 Florence Red Kettle Drive.

Anyone interested in assisting or leading this year's collections in the Florence area can contact her at 541-882-5280 or 541-892-2723.



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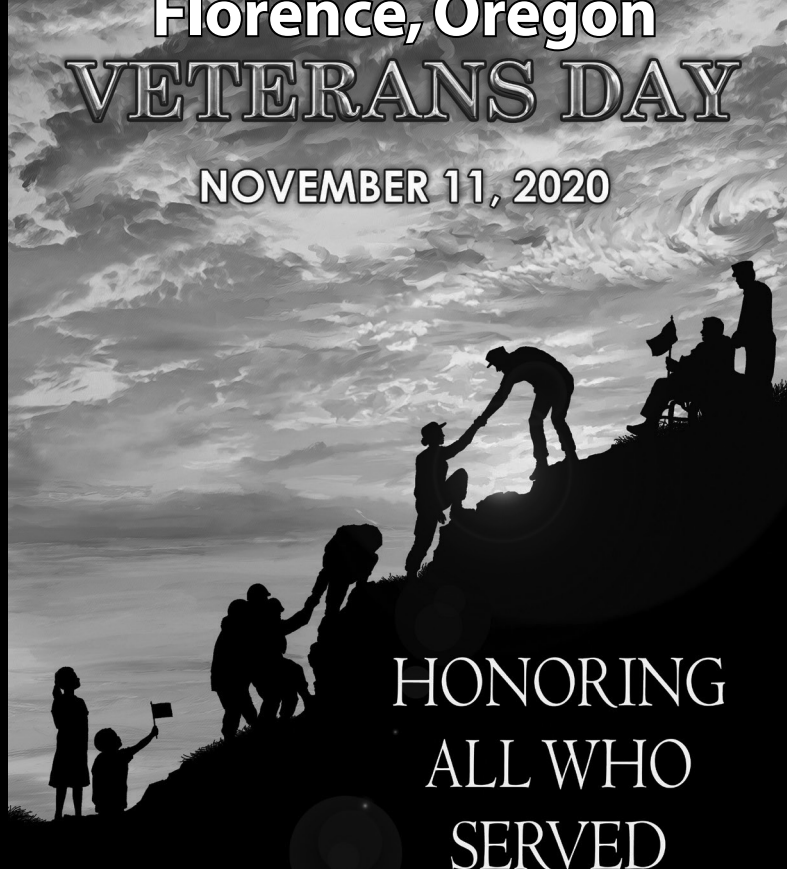
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VETERANS HONOR CRUISE
November 11, 2pm
We appreciate and honor our Veterans.
In compliance with restrictions to keep everyone safe and healthy there will be a Veterans Honor Cruise instead of a parade this year.

Participants will follow a route starting in Historic Old Town and a drive past Shorewood, Spruce Point, and Regency.