

Creswell hopes it's chosen to host OSP

Concerning Creswell

News and notes from our neighbor to the north

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The Oregon State Police may be coming to Creswell, and city officials say they're thrilled with the possibility.

City Administrator Michelle Amberg told the City Council on Monday, April 13 that the Oregon State Police may be interested in relocating their Springfield Command Center to the building that formerly housed Ray's Food Place in Creswell.

Amberg said the City responded to a request for proposals from OSP for a new location between Coburg and Creswell. The City worked with a private developer to craft a proposal for the Ray's building, Amberg said, a hulking structure of some 40,000 square feet that has been shuttered since the grocery chain closed many of its stores

in the area.

A public notice sent in late-February alerted the City to OSP's desire to relocate and listed several criteria for its new location, criteria that folks in Creswell think their City can meet. These include a location not more than 1.5 miles from Interstate 5 with no major rail crossing or stoplights nearby, a location not jammed into a major retail or residential center that doesn't have heavy pedestrian use. The new center would reportedly house a forensics lab, medical examiner's office, shop space and parking for patrol vehicles. Amberg said OSP is seeking a 10-15 year lease and told the City Council that the agency would be required to rent, adding that Creswell would "get the full benefit of all the property taxes if the state would move in there," according to the Creswell Chronicle. Amberg



photo by Jon Stinnett

Many in Creswell are hoping that a building that once housed groceries can host the state police.

believes the move could create at least 80 good-paying jobs for the City.

"It really does fit," Amberg said. "We're very hopeful, and we feel it would be a great fit for this region." Other officials seem to agree, with East Lane County Commissioner Faye Stewart, Sheriff Tom Turner and Creswell's Chamber of Commerce crafting letters of support as part of the application process.

Amberg said she has heard

concerns that some in Creswell would still like to see the former Ray's building house another grocery store.

"Plenty of people would love a grocery store in that location," she said. "But the building really is too big, and a lot of chains have said that they'd rather be located on the other side of I-5. We're hoping OSP coming into that building might give another chain the incentive to build a new store here."

EPUD grant to provide solar power for building that houses Creswell food pantry

Efforts to provide food assistance to families in the Creswell area got a boost recently from a \$40,000 grant from the Emerald People Utilities District (EPUD).

Susan Blachnik, manager of Community Food for Creswell, announced last week that agreements have been signed between that organization, EPUD and the City of Creswell to accept the GREEN grant from EPUD, adding that a check was awarded to the City and passed on to CFC on Wednesday, April 15.

Blachnik said the funds will be used to install a much anticipated solar electric system on the roof of the Cobalt Building, which serves as the pantry's headquarters. The Creswell Food Pantry serves about 165 area families per week, Blachnik said, and customers are allowed to shop from the entire pantry once per month, with four additional opportunities per year. Food and finances are provided for the Pantry by local individuals, area gardeners and farmers, organizations, businesses, local food drives, Food For Lane County, the Oregon Food Bank and Feeding America.

Blachnik explained that the Food Pantry outgrew its 500-square foot space within the Creswell VFW Post in 2013. They moved to the city-owned



courtesy photo

Representatives from EPUD presented the grant to Community Food for Creswell on April 15. Pictured from left to right are EPUD's Kyle Roadman, Susan Blachnik of Community Food for Creswell, Rob Currier of EPUD, Creswell City Administrator Michelle Amberg and food pantry volunteer Kurt Blachnik.

Cobalt Building in late October of 2013, quickly filling 2,000 square feet of the spacious 9,000 square foot site. Community Food For Creswell applied for and was awarded many grants for building improvements and equipment upgrades. A walk-

in cooler and walk-in freezer, a three-door cooler and three-door freezer brought increased storage of perishable foods, but also a larger monthly electric bill.

In an effort to reduce their monthly electric bill expense,

Community Food for Creswell applied for and was awarded the first-ever EPUD GREEN (Giving Renewable Energy to Emerald Neighborhoods) Grant in the fall of 2014. The grant will be used for the purchase and installation of a 13.2 kW solar electric system on the roof of the city-owned Cobalt Building and is expected to reduce the electric expense by \$1,200 per year, perhaps more due to improvements in panels since last fall. The Green Store will be installing the system over the next one to two weeks.

Blachnik also pointed out other developments at the Cobalt Building. Multiple leaks in its roof have been repaired, she said, and the City of Creswell has lengthened its lease agreement to 10 years (from March 9, 2015) with a five-year renewal, which means the food pantry will have a secure location through 2030.

CRESWELL BRIEFS

Sale space available

Those with stuff to sell at the Creswell City-Wide Yard Sale who want a space that is secure and inside, in case of rainy or windy weather, the Creswell Grange on West Oregon Ave. has tables to rent for \$10 per table per day (one table for two days \$20, two tables at two days \$40, etc.) Friday morning set up will be at 7 a.m. The sale times are Friday, May 8 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, May 9 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Grange will also be selling a taco lunch on both days from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

To reserve your table, call Vickie at 541-895-3156.

Creswell Grange Theatrical Event

Creswell Grange will host London Grange and Crow Grange on Saturday, April 25 at 7 p.m. All three Granges will present a unique one-act play.

This free event is for everyone. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., plays start at 7 p.m. in the upstairs hall. There will be snacks served afterwards and donations gladly accepted.

Door prizes will be free to enter. Three of them will be given away. There will also be two raffle boxes, with tickets at 50 cents each or 12 for \$5. The box of tools is worth over \$100, and the box of miscellaneous is worth over \$50. Some nice surprises are in the boxes.

For more information, Call Vickie at 541-895-3156.

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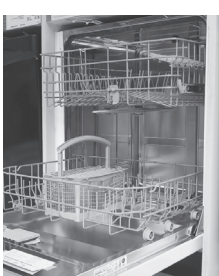
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