

# Socks thrown for charity at Armory

YAC's first ever sockball fight helps those in need and promotes local businesses downtown

BY SAM WRIGHT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

In an effort to help the less fortunate and to promote more business later in the day downtown, the Cottage Grove Youth Advisory Council hosted its first ever sockball fight Friday night. Dozens of pairs of socks were donated and collected at schools around town, and before the socks serve their actual purpose, they were the subjects of a mock snowball fight. The festi-

ty took place in the Armory and played out more like a game of dodgeball than anything else. "We're not only trying to donate socks for people who need them, but we're trying to get local businesses to stay open late in the hopes that this would bring more people downtown later in the day or evening," said City Manager Richard Meyers. The socks will be donated to organizations such as Community Sharing and Beds for Freezing Nights.



photo by Sam Wright  
Duane Taddei and his daughter Shelby strategize with friend Samantha Hernandez on how to win the new sockball game.

# City meets with third-party building inspectors

BY JON STINNETT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

A recent meeting that brought together representatives of Cottage Grove's Community Development Department and the company that conducts building inspections on its behalf functioned as a review of the relationship between the two groups.

Back in March, the City contracted with the Clair Company, a third-party plan review and inspection agency located in Corvallis, for local building inspections, in the process ending its contract with Mortier Engineering for those services. Cottage Grove's Community Development Director, Howard Schesser, City Planner Amanda Ferguson and Cindy Blacksmith recently met with Building Official David Flemings and Building Inspector David Willard of Clair Company to review the City's building inspection program. Schesser said the meeting was the "first time we've really sat down" with Clair representatives since the company began conducting inspections here. The City contracts with a third party for inspections. Schesser said, because it does not have the volume in building permit requests that could support the City employing someone for the purpose. Clair Company sends a representative to Cottage Grove to conduct reviews and inspections three days a week as needed.

Schesser said a main point of the discussion concerned conditional permit approvals.

"We wanted them to be a little more specific with how much more information may be needed," he said. "Once issued, these permits often allow people to get to work, though they still need additional information from the inspector. We wanted to clarify at what point they will be receiving information for their next project."

According to the City's Friday Update publication on Dec. 11, Clair and the City also discussed changing to the state of Oregon's permit tracking software from the D14 model the City currently uses.

"Once that process is completed, staff will also be able to track planning applications, and eventually the system will be connected to our financing software, as they are both owned by the same company," City Manager Richard Meyers wrote.

Schesser said that Clair Company requires a lot of information from applicants at the start of the review process, though providing that information up-front often pays off in the end.

"If everybody reads the information they provide, they know where they stand," he said. "This firm definitely requires more information up-front, but it makes for a much cleaner application in the end."

# Police believe truck theft was a 'malicious act'

BY JON STINNETT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

On Monday morning, dispatchers with the Cottage Grove Police Department said they were still fielding numerous calls about a silver GMC pickup in the rushing waters of the Row River just southeast of Cottage Grove.

Police say the 2008 pickup was stolen from one of their officers on the evening of Wednesday, Dec. 16, though Interim Police Chief Scott Shepherd declined to name the officer due to safety concerns. The officer discovered the vehicle missing when departing for a 4 a.m. shift the next morning, and a report of the truck being located in the river subsequently came in to CGPD at about 8 a.m.

Commander Conrad Gagner said police believe the truck was stolen from the officer's home as a "malicious act," possibly because the thieves knew it belonged to a cop.

"It was only driven a short distance," Gagner said. "We've had cars in the river before, and we've had stolen cars in the river, but typically they're stolen elsewhere and driven for a while before being dumped there. There was no indication that anything was stolen out of this truck, and it wasn't stripped. What other purpose could there be?"

Police say the keys were left in the truck and that the thieves most likely deposited the truck in the river at the boat ramp near the BMX track, though the truck had drifted downstream and around a



photo by Jon Stinnett  
This GMC pickup was discovered in the Row River Thursday morning.

bend by mid-afternoon Thursday. Removal of the truck will reportedly be the work of the Lane County Sheriff's Office, as that part of the Row River is located outside the City Limits. Representatives from the Sheriff's Of-

fice did not respond to calls for more information on efforts to remove the vehicle, though deputies did reportedly break out the truck's windows to ensure that no one was trapped inside.

"The water is too high," Gagner said. "We called the Sheriff's Office for the recovery, but the water is too high."

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