

Longtime group still hopes (and stands) for peace



Local residents gather every Friday to protest the use of force in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as other social issues currently being debated.

By Caitlyn May
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After the election of Barack Obama in 2008, a man approached Louis Inmann and her group of flag waving protestors. He said he assumed that the group, with slogans like “Fox News lies” and “Save public education,” would have blindly supported the newly-elected president through the reported drone attacks.

“I told him we don’t care who’s doing wrong. Wrong is wrong,” she said. She has to pause to call back Momo, the dog who has been dutifully standing alongside the group since she was a puppy. She’s now 12 years old. “We call her the “Peace Pooch,” Inmann said.

The group, which has fluctuated from Stand for Peace and Occupy Cottage Grove, says it’s the longest running demonstration in the state. They’ve been standing on Main St. since the invasion of Iraq. “We demonstrated to save the post office too,” Inmann said. “We want to have whatever influence we can.”

Inmann is one of only two members left from the original group and she said numbers have dwindled to the level that no longer allows a single member to take a day off.

“If we were sick or something, there were enough of us to still go and do it,” she said. “But now, if one or two of us don’t then there’s no one left to come.”

Standing on the corner of 7th St., the group says it has added new signs to its nearly quarter-of-a-block display since the election of President Donald Trump. They used to wave their rainbow flags begging for peace for an hour. Now, as they’ve grown older and fewer, Inmann says that has scaled back to 30 minutes.

“We also used to hold a candlelight vigil every Sunday but two days a week just got to be too much,” she said.

It was during one of those vigils, held for soldiers killed during the war and occupation, that the group says a car tried to run over one of their signs, veering off the road to do so.

“We’ve had people give us the finger, scream at us, throw things at us,” Inmann said.

Counter-protests have sprung up occasionally she said, but lately the reception has been mostly positive.

“Now we get peace signs, honks and waves,” she said.

The group meets every Friday on Main St. from 5:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

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Dear residents of Drain, Yoncalla and Elkton,

The Cottage Grove Sentinel has served Lane and North Douglas County for more than 100 years. While attention to certain portions of our service area has ebbed and flowed, we have rededicated ourselves to ensuring that all residents, no matter their city of residence within our borders, receive quality, accurate and sourced news.

I understand the frustrations of not having a local newspaper and the subsequent battle to gain the attention of outside newspapers. And while we will not always be able to travel to every event in your neck of the woods, we will certainly make an effort. Moreover, you'll begin seeing more coverage of the issues affecting your communities in The Sentinel in the weeks to come.

However, to continue providing the coverage you need and want, we're asking for your help. We're a small staff with just two editorial positions. Cottage Grove is a busy little town and it sometimes takes two reporters to cover all of the government meetings, community fund raisers and breaking news that happens on a daily basis inside the city. It leaves some, but not a lot, of time to cover the day-to-day happenings in other communities. That's where you come in.

If you have an event, hear of breaking news or are worried about what your local government is up to, let us know. We want to report on what's happening in Drain, Yoncalla and Elkton and we will do our best to reach those stories before gossip and chatter overtake them. But in the event we miss something or there's something you'd like us to know, drop us an email, call the office or reach out via social media. We'll be there.

As ever,
Caitlyn May
Editor, Cottage Grove Sentinel

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