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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2019

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## Cottage Grove participates in county-wide homeless count

By Damien Sherwood  
dsherwood@cgsentinel.com

Statistics gathered will help determine services, funding for homeless

Volunteers around Lane County participated Thursday in the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Homeless Count coordinated by Lane County Human Services. Wielding clipboards, free bus passes and snacks, local volunteers solicited surveys from people experiencing homelessness in and around Cottage Grove.

Required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be done at least once every two years, the count is conducted by Lane County Human Services annually.

The count is intended to provide a “snapshot” of the degree of homelessness in targeted areas. The data is used to measure progress and demonstrate the extent of need for funding and services in each community.

“Each area gets allocated a percentage of the total money based on their number of homeless in this count,” said Cottage Grove City Councilor Mike Fleck. “This is why it’s critical to make sure you’re counting everybody.”

Fleck volunteered this year to coordinate surveys in the Cottage Grove area, including in the Creswell and Lowell areas.

“Key pieces they’re looking at are number of times homeless,



DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

From left: Allan Katz, Annie Odean and Karen Munsell search along I-5 for people experiencing homelessness to participate in this year's Point-in-Time Homeless Count survey.

the amount of time homeless ... and demographic information,” he said. “It’s actually a pretty painless survey.”

All volunteers are required to receive training prior to the count. For security, volunteers work in teams of two or three, trained to always stay within line of sight

of each other and are restricted from entering structures or any non-public property.

Getting accurate information is important to the mission; if enough people meet the criteria of “chronically homeless,” for instance, the kinds of programs made available in an area can change.

The PIT count surveys are part of the Continuum of Care, a HUD program dedicated to ending homelessness by easing the burden on individuals or families in need of housing and promoting self-sufficiency.

While self-sufficiency is a desirable goal, many in the commu-

nity agree that shelter services are among the greatest of the city’s immediate needs.

Allan Katz, who volunteered at the Thursday homeless count, is involved in several local programs addressing the concerns of

See **COUNT A10**

## ‘Momentum’ gaining in CG housing plans

By Damien Sherwood  
dsherwood@cgsentinel.com

As cities around the state grapple with what’s been called “Oregon’s housing crisis,” Cottage Grove does not stand among them with any special immunity. Low vacancy rates and scarcity of choice have burdened home-seekers, reaching unbearable levels for many in a community with a high demand for affordable housing.

In a Jan. 28 City Council meeting, efforts to address the issue passed an vital milestone when councilors

See **HOUSING A11**

## Promotions, new hires at SLCFR

By Damien Sherwood  
dsherwood@cgsentinel.com

On Jan. 24, four members of the South Lane County Fire & Rescue (SLCFR) were sworn in and pinned with new ranks. *The Sentinel* interviewed each to discuss their accomplishments.

**Danny Alton**

**Resident Reserve Firefighter:**

Moving from his hometown of San Diego, Danny Alton first became acquainted with the area when he matriculated to the University of Oregon to study human physiology.

“I fell in love with Eugene because of the university. I really enjoyed the trees,” Alton said. “The greenery wasn’t something I was used to. A lot more than in San Diego.”

After receiving his EMT basic certification and working for a time in the area with ambulance



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From left: Newly hired Alex Wales, recently promoted Dylan Fitzgerald and Tim Heuser, and newly hired Danny Alton of South Lane County Fire & Rescue.

agencies, he pursued a career in the fire service. It was only in the last couple months Alton was introduced to Cottage Grove.

“It’s an awesome community. I love how tight all the people here

See **SLCFR A8**

## Cycle Oregon to return to Cottage Grove

By Damien Sherwood  
dsherwood@cgsentinel.com

Cottage Grove can expect more wheels on the road this September.

Cycle Oregon, a nonprofit which organizes annual bicycle trips around the state, has made public its routes for this year, including a Sept. 13 arrival in the Cottage Grove area as part of its longest loop.

The loop, dubbed the Classic, is a week-long journey from Sept. 7 to Sept. 14, rounding out the penultimate day of the trip with a stop on the shores of Dorena Lake. Billed as “showcasing some of Oregon’s most spectacular vistas, pristine waters and fine Oregon

See **CYCLE A7**

### COMMUNITY

#### CG Carousel Project

A world renowned wooden horse carver will contribute to the project

PAGE A3



### BETTY KAISER

#### Cook’s Corner

Secretly cooking with cottage cheese

PAGE A5

### INDEX

Calendar .....	B12
Channel Guide .....	B5
Classifieds .....	B7
Obituaries .....	A2
Opinion .....	A4
Sports .....	B1

cgnews@cgsentinel.com  
(541) 942-3325 ph • (541) 942-3328 fax  
P.O. Box 35, Cottage Grove, OR 97424  
Corner of Sixth and Whiteaker, Cottage Grove

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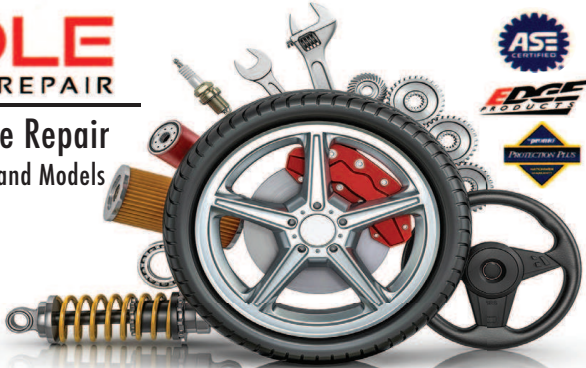
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