

Series from A1

bring lower insurance costs to Cottage Grove.

CRS is a FEMA-instigated community program that rewards local floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum standards of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

For those in a 100-year flood zone, such insurance is required.

With the CRS program, discounts are available based on point scoring. Entering the program at a score of 10, each point downward to 1 awards everyone within a jurisdiction five percent off their NFIP flood insurance policy.

"Just to come in at a 10 is quite a hurdle," said Ferguson. "We came in at a 7 last year. We have the capacity to go down to a 5 as soon as our building department has been here long enough to get rated."

After meeting that three-year requirement of the building department, a 25 percent discount may be available to those in the area.

"There are all sorts of pieces of the puzzle," Ferguson said. "When we looked at the community rating system, we realized we didn't have to change anything we were doing and we would get a really high rate."

With the application approved last year, 2019 billing recipients should see a 15 percent drop in cost.

Though incentive remains to further raise the standards within Cottage Grove floodplains, much of the waterflow control rests with management of reservoirs by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"The Coast Fork is 90 percent controlled by the release out of Cottage Grove Lake Reservoir," Ferguson said. "And the Row River, when it hits Cottage Grove, is about 40 percent controlled by the release out of Dorena."

All things considered, Ferguson believes the city met its disaster challenges admirably this year.

"I think it would be an A-minus," she said. "Nobody's ever perfect."

Other city officials echoed Ferguson's evaluation.

"I just feel like we have a really good leadership team here that has experience and the ability to address critical thinking and

how to get through what's ahead of us," said Stewart. "Not only thinking about the moment, but thinking about, 'What's the future?'"

Lessons Learned

For all the high marks reported on emergency responsiveness, city officials admit there is always room for improvement.

"I would say the first place we learned we lacked was coordination with entities within our own community," said Stewart.

Questions remain on whether communication could have been improved in quality and speed with emergency services and the school district.

Messages to the public, for example, sometimes provided contrary information or needed updating.

On the county level, communication with the county's newly formed emergency operations center was somewhat bare.

"Maybe we didn't communicate well enough with them as they set up their emergency command center," Stewart said. "They reached out midway through the process and asked if we needed anything, but we were feeling really comfortable about how we were addressing things and didn't feel like we needed any additional support here."

Winningham speculated that part of that lack of communication was the fact that the county's emergency operations center had previously directed most of its help to the sheriff's office and many were unaware of its new capacity.

"Now it's evolving," she said. "The commissioners have pulled the program out from under the sheriff's office and made it its own program that supports the entire organization and the community, too. That's where I came on board."

For Stewart, having access to the proper information is half the battle and more county-to-city information exchange could prove useful.

"It's like everything: knowing the resources that are out there and plugging into them," he said.

During a post-disaster debriefing by Cottage Grove Police Chief Scott Shepherd, city officials also learned of an overlooked segment of the population.

"We have a pretty vulnerable population when power is out for a while," Stewart said.

Refilling oxygen tanks and getting access to medication can be critical concerns for some in these conditions.

During the snowstorm's power outage, the Peace-Health Cottage Grove Community Medical Center provided aid, food and rest for people in the area seeking help and oxygen.

"When we had the debrief, that's another area I think we could really help each other," said Stewart, "is having a better communications system with the hospital."

Meanwhile, the city's Wi-Fi hut ran into its own snag.

"We did discover some weaknesses regarding fueling our generators," said Ferguson.

Getting fuel to the city's Wi-Fi propane generators during the snowstorm was a challenge due to the danger on the road posed to the provider. Also, other companies refused to touch it as they weren't certified.

"So, we need to diversify our fuel source," Ferguson said. "And that's a good thing to learn."

'It Boils Down to the Individual'

While the city devised and implemented its own disaster response, households in and out of the city

dealt with struggles of their own. Stories of neighborly rescues and assistance began to emerge before the snow had stopped falling, many coming from the rural roads where hundreds of downed trees had created scenes evocative of a post-apocalyptic world.

In one case, Gene Hursh, a Harrisburg grass seed farmer with acreage in the Cottage Grove area, cruised the roads around Dorena with his nephews, looking for people to help.

April Klein of Sallee Road was one of the lucky recipients of Hursh's kindness.

"We were buried," Klein said. "You couldn't even get out of your driveway to get to the store, to go to work, to go into town to get water if you needed it - nothing."

Klein estimated about 17 to 20 people were trapped on the road, but after flagging Hursh down, "It freed everybody," she said. "It was just such a nice thing."

Hursh said he cleared the road for "about a dozen or more" houses all together, working for two days to help people as far as Pleasant Hill. One family in particular, Hursh remembered, had no electricity or even a wood heating system.

"They were really cold," he said. "They were very grateful to be able to get out of there and get back into town."

For those in a rural setting, such values of self-sufficiency and community reliance become exceedingly evident during a disaster.

"I think a lot of these

rural communities have figured out that they're on their own and its neighbors helping neighbors," said Winningham. "Communities do come together in the face of disaster and they help each other."

Among the projects on Winningham's radar is the empowerment of more individuals, particularly the rural areas.

"Because the more prepared they are, the less likely they're going to need me or the first responders," she said. "Ask what you learned from the snow and what have you done to fix the problem. How have you mitigated that problem so it doesn't happen again?"

Meyers, too, believes the power to respond effectively rests largely with citizen readiness.

"I think it boils down to the individual," he said. "We can be as prepared as we can possibly be. A neighbor could be as prepared as they could possibly be. But none of that's going to work if the individuals aren't ready."

Evidence of a lack of readiness became apparent during this year's snowstorm and flooding as several requests for aid to the city and county could not be met due to resource constraints. In a state of emergency, many naturally assume a hierarchy of emergency management is capable of addressing everything within its jurisdiction.

"You should flip that hierarchy," Ferguson said. "It needs to be individual and then city and then county and state and fed."

As more individuals are prepared, systems on other levels are free to address more severe problems which have overloaded more local resources.

"And that's true about each level of government," said Ferguson. "So that means the more the city can handle its own stuff, that gives the county the flexibility of dealing with the areas outside of the cities where people aren't being addressed."

See PREP 11A

Congratulations! to our Residents of the Month **Jack and Betty Dodson**



Employee of the Month Nancy Hawks



For the month of July, 2019

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10:00am
Christian Education:
Pre-K through 5th
www.6thandgibbs.com

Calvary Baptist Church
77873 S 6th St • 541-942-4290
Pastor: Riley Hendricks
Sunday School: 9:45am
Worship: 11:00am
The Journey: Sunday 5:00pm
Praying Thru Life: Wednesday 6:00pm

Church of Christ
420 Monroe St • 541-942-8565
Sunday Service: 10:30am

Cottage Grove Bible Church
1200 East Quincy Avenue
541-942-4771
Pastor: Bob Singer
Worship 11am
Sunday School: 9:45am
AWANA age 3-8th Grade,
Wednesdays Sept-May, 6:30pm
www.cgbible.org

Cottage Grove Faith Center
33761 Row River Rd.
541-942-4851
Lead Pastor: Kevin Prueff
www.cg4.tv
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Delight Valley
Church of Christ
33087 Saginaw Rd. East
541-942-7711 • Pastor: Bob Friend
Two Services:
9am - Classic in the Chapel
10:30am - Contemporary in the Auditorium

First Baptist Church
301 S. 6th st • 541-942-8242
Pastor: David Changte
Sunday School 9:30am
Worship Service 10:30am
Youth Wednesday 6:30pm
cgfirstbaptist.com

First Presbyterian Church
3rd and Adams St
541-942-4479
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Sunday School: 10:00am
fpcgrove.com

Hope Fellowship
United Pentecostal Church
100 S. Gateway Blvd.
541-942-2061
Pastor: Dave Bragg
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Bible Study: 7:00pm Wednesday
www.hopefellowshipupcc.com
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1041 Pennoyer Ave
541-942-8928
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Sunday Bible Study: 10:00am
Sunday Worship: 10:50am & 5:30pm
www.pennoyeravcoc.com

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Sunday - 10:30 PM
For weekday and Holy Day of Obligation schedule see website OLPHCG.net
Confession: 4 PM to 5 PM
Saturdays or by appointment

St. Philip Benizi, Creswell
552 Holbrook Lane
Sunday 8:30 AM

St. Andrews Episcopal Church
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Rev. Lawrence Crumb
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Seventh-day Adventist Church
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Worship Service: Saturday, 10:40
Mid-week Service: Wednesday, 1:00

Trinity Lutheran Church
6th & Quincy • 541-942-2373
Pastor: James L. Markus
Sunday School & Adult Education 9:15am
Sunday Worship 10:30 am
Comm. Kitchen Free Meal Tue & Thur 5:00pm TLC Groups
tlccg.com

United Methodist Church
334 Washington 541-942-3033
New Pastor Craig Pesti- Strobel
Worship 10:30am
umcgrove.org

"VICTORY" Country Church
913 S. 6th Street • 541-942-5913
Pastor: Barbara Dockery
Worship Service: 10:00am
Message: "WE BELIEVE IN MIRACLES"

CRESWELL:
Creswell Presbyterian Church
75 S 4th S • 541-895-3419
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Our Worship Directory is a weekly feature in this newspaper. If your congregation would like to be a part of this directory, contact us today!

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