

Cycle *from A1*

Mayor Jeff Gowing. “Please come back and enjoy our community.”

More than 250 volunteers from Cottage Grove were involved with aiding various aspects of the function including serving food and cleaning tables.

On top of supplying an influx of consumers, Cycle Oregon awards grants to local organizations who participate in volunteerism. The grants extend to community needs which fall under categories such as environmental conservation, historic preservation and bicycle-related projects.

A planned visit to Cot-

tage Grove was canceled in 2017 due to wildfires, however Cycle Oregon honored that year’s grants to build two bicycle fixit stations and donated \$650 to Bohemia Mining Days.

With a stated dedication toward “transforming individuals and communities through bicycling,” the nonprofit boasted awarding \$125,400 in grants toward the communities they touched during their 2018 event.

As Friday marked Cycle Oregon’s third visit to the area, Cottage Grove ranks highly in favored destinations for the group.

“They tell us that when they survey their riders, that this is definitely among the favorites of the places that they stop,”

Palmer said. “We would take them every year if they would like to, but we know that they can’t keep going to the same spot. We’d be happy to host them again if they’re willing.”

While a previous visit had placed riders in town scattered across various fields and parks, the city determined that because of the size and space demands of the event, the organization should set up in Schwarz Park for a second time.

This year, however, the city came up with a unique idea to show off the area.

“We were talking about how it would be really nice to try to get some of the riders into town to see Cottage Grove since

they were staying out at Schwarz Park and we knew a lot of them wouldn’t have the energy left to ride into town,” said Palmer. “We have a good relationship with LTD (Lane Transit District) and we put in a request to see what they could come up with and they came through for us.”

The transportation authority lent a bus and set up a block of about six hours to bus people from the park into town and back, depositing visitors downtown across from City Hall. Though more than 1,500 cyclists were at the park, the hope was that syphoning at least a fraction of participants into downtown would have a positive economic effect.

“It took a slightly indi-

rect route so that we could take them by a couple of things like Bohemia Park, the Chambers Railroad Bridge and the Swinging Bridge so they could see that’s being restored,” said Palmer.

Riders were also treated to a downtown deal similar to the Show Your Bib promotion during this year’s Gran Fondo in which select businesses offered discounts and deals to participants in the cycling event.

“Thanks to some help from Travel Lane County, they did a refreshed version of Show Your Bib,” Palmer said. “We gave a map and an insert and a list of all the different businesses that they could visit while they’re here and get

discounts.”

Cyclists began their departure from Schwarz Park at 6:30 a.m. Saturday morning to Oakridge.

Though the group’s time spent in Cottage Grove was fleeting, Palmer is optimistic that such events put the city on the map.

“The biggest impact are those ripple effects from an event like this where people are coming ahead of time and checking out the area. ... Then they come afterward because they saw something cool or they had a great time,” Palmer said. “We want to leave those people with the best impression of Cottage Grove that we can so they want to come back and bring their friends and family.”

Prepared *from A1*

complete a home inventory. The task involves taking photos and writing descriptions of assets and items of value in the house, an undertaking which may save time, money and stress in the event of a disaster. Residents are also encouraged to review their insurance coverage.

Task two is to install or verify the operation of smoke alarms in each room of a house.

Smoke alarms can cost between \$8 and \$65 depending on the features, but the American Red

Cross offers to provide and install them for free.

“You can’t beat that,” Meyers said of the Red Cross program. “The basic minimum is that you should have them in every room and in the halls. ... And they recommend that when they hit 10 years, get a new one.”

The contest’s third task asks families to complete a household communication plan. Meyers stressed that disasters don’t always wait for the whole family to be together when they strike.

“So how do you get back together?” he said. “Of all of them, that may be one of the most important things

for people to think about.”

The city’s website provides several communication plan forms to fill out, including plans for kids to carry with them when at school.

Finally, the fourth task requests individuals to become part of a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) or to give blood.

Although a CERT program is not scheduled to begin in Cottage Grove until mid- or late October, applications are currently being accepted by South Lane County Fire and Rescue at southlanefire.org/join-us/cert.

Meanwhile, a blood

drive will come to the city on Sept. 26, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Cottage Grove Community Center.

“Hopefully we get a lot of people giving blood because we desperately need blood in the blood banks,” Meyers said.

After accomplishing one of the above tasks, participants can enter the prize drawing from the city’s website.

Prizes include a solar-powered extendable Luci Light, a solar-powered radio/flashlight, a family-sized LifeStraw wa-

ter purifier and Mountain House Emergency Meal Kits which are good for 30 years and a total of 31 servings per kit.

In addition to a more prepared citizenry, Meyers is also hoping to create a culture of preparedness among city employees by running a similar but separate contest for them.

“The theory behind our city employee program is, our city employees and their families need to be prepared for an emergency because if they’re prepared, then they’re more likely to

respond and do the work they’re supposed to do,” Meyers said.

One notable issue during the snowstorm this year was a shortage of county staff due to a lack of home preparedness.

The deadline for entering the contest is Sept. 30, household winners will be drawn Oct. 3 and prizes will be distributed on Oct. 4.

More information about the contest can be found at www.cottagegrove.org/citymanager/page/preparedness-month-contest.



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