

Guild to host community clothing swap

The Guild, an afterschool program run in partnership with Delight, is bringing together local vendors and thousands of articles of clothing for its inaugural Swap and Shop.

On March 29, Delight will be open for customers to “shop” free clothing and local vendor booths from noon to 6 p.m.

In order to make the event a success and a true swap, The Guild is seeking quality, well-maintained clothing and shoes to be donated. It is especially seeking donations of kids and baby clothes and shoes.

Donations will be accept-

ed through Saturday, March 28, at Delight. Donations can be dropped off between 1:30 and 6:30 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday.

Delight store owner Colton Kishner-Lira said this event is personal for him because he remembers the community giving back to his family as he was growing up.

“Any parent knows that kids out-grow their clothes so fast, it’s hard to keep up sometimes,” Kishner-Lira said. “Growing up as a kid in Cottage Grove, I remember the community always stepped up when my parents struggled to make ends meet,

so I’m very excited for this great opportunity for parents to bring in items that don’t fit their kids anymore and come out with some great items that will fit them ... until the next growth spurt.”

Donations for The Guild, a 501(c)3 charity, will be accepted at the event but are not mandatory.

The program is currently using donations to fund scholarships.

“Our goal at the guild is really to create a fun atmosphere where kids can come together, play some games, flex their creative muscles while doing science. They work so hard at school all

day, we want a safe space for them to unwind and have fun,” said Dillon Hockett, the program’s new Program Coordinator. “We’re here to build community and you can’t do that when cost is a barrier.”

The Guild offers weekly programming for \$45 a month per weekday, with a discount for families who sign up for five days a week. Classes offered have a gaming or science theme, such as D&D Through History, Mindstorms Robotics and more. For more information, visit www.theguildin-thegrove.com or call 541-946-3132.

Walls from A1

struggling veterans.

“Hopefully we’ll help somebody that is on the street and can transition back into society and be one of our fellow veterans again,” said Gowing.

Buch praised the network of support surrounding the project.

“The Board of County Commissioners is very interested in serving in any way possible veterans and making sure that intersect between stable housing and supportive services all comes together here in Lane County,” she said.

Michelle Thurston, resident commissioner on the Homes for Good board, was more than supportive of the project.

“It’s something I’m just extremely ecstatic about,” she said.

Homes for Good also manages the apartment complex Riverview Terrace across Main Street from the development. As a Riverview Terrace resident for more than 20 years, Thurston expressed her excitement in bringing veterans into the fold of the complex.

“We’re going to get people who are homeless off the streets into safe, secure and affordable housing,” she said. “And they’re going to be a part of our community of Homes for Good and the community of Cottage Grove.”

Legion Cottages residents will reportedly have access to the complex’s laundry facilities, senior meals, game nights and potlucks, rounding out other supportive services with a social network.

“We know that we need to support our veterans in every way possible and housing is part of that,” said Buch. “We know that housing provides stability. It connects with services including mental health services that we know are so critical for those that are returning from service.”

The project follows a trend of housing developments in Cottage Grove, which include SquareOne’s Cottage Village, an expansion of senior living units at Magnolia Gardens and a DevNW land trust for low-income homeownership.

“I’m so proud of Cottage Grove because they have really stepped up to the plate for a variety of different kinds of housing styles,” said Buch. “This is unprecedented in the rest of the county, what is happening here in Cottage Grove.”

Cottage Village, DevNW’s land trust development and Legion Cottages have all been awarded aid through the city’s new Housing Development Cost Assistance Program, which helps cover system development charges and inspection fees for nonprofit housing projects.

The concept for Legion Cottages began when Gowing brought the idea up with

the American Legion board a couple years ago, he said.

“We were struggling as a post just to keep afloat with our finances, so it was an opportunity for a win-win that we could actually help some veterans by giving some housing, yet we could get some cash back and so it was finding the right organization to partner with us to do it,” he said.

After the city invited Homes for Good to look at the parking lot behind American Legion, the housing agency purchased the property and secured a \$225,000 grant from Lane County to help with construction of the new homes.

As with other projects, Homes for Good partnered with the University of Oregon’s OregonBILDS program to design and construct the village. The program offers university architecture students the chances to apply their skills to local housing developments.

Though much of the Homes for Good’s experience is with developments in more urban environments, Fox expressed interest in putting more of a focus on outlying areas.

“One of the things that I’m passionate about is more intentional service for rural Lane County,” he said. “I personally think that small home villages fits some of the smaller towns in rural areas better. ... So, our vision is to kind of experiment. This is our first small or tiny homes project,

but if we can dial in a design and dial in our construction process, then we just want to do more and more of them around Lane County.”

Homes for Good is currently in the process of identifying land for more affordable housing in Cottage Grove, Fox noted.

“We’re hoping that leaders or neighbors in Cottage Grove, if they know of land that we could develop on, that they would approach us,” he said.

Fox was optimistic more developments of a similar kind could find their way into the city.

“One of the things that we want to figure out is whether we can develop or bring tiny home production to scale,” he said. “I think for me, the citizens of Cottage Grove and the leadership ... they just have a can-do attitude. So, there doesn’t seem to be this resistance to developing affordable housing in Cottage Grove. In fact, it’s the opposite is what we’re experiencing.”

Thurston sees the tiny home model as a welcomed theme in the community and hopes it may set the stage for future projects.

“I think it’s a start of a movement and I think it’s a good start,” she said.

The Legion Cottages project is on course to be completed this summer. An application period has yet to be announced.

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