

National cohousing trend in Oregon

by Chris Thomas, Oregon News Service

For Oregonians over age 55, cohousing might be just the answer to living independently but having the support of neighbors and friends.

A Portland development is one of five in the country to receive awards from the National Association of Home Builders and AARP, as good living options for people as they age. Daybreak Cohousing, 2525 N. Killingsworth St., is credited as being on the cutting edge of a trend toward smaller homes, and neighbors who share common spaces if they wish, like big dining areas, gardens and workshops.

Some cohousing developments are designed only for seniors, but others are open to

all ages. Daybreak's architect, Grace Kim of Seattle, believes people over age 55 will make or break the cohousing trend, "The boomers are here, and they're very proactive about taking care of themselves. And I think cohousing will be something that is very attractive to them for a lot different reasons - about self-destiny, about being able to develop themselves, about gathering their friends around them - so that they know how they're going to be supported in their later years."

Kim says cohousing is a way to have privacy but also be part of a community that is committed to getting along and being good neighbors. Daybreak's residents have come from as far away as Ohio, Illinois and Arizona to be part of the cohousing trend.

Jerry Cohen, state director of AARP Oregon, says safety is a big concern as people age and want to remain in their own homes - but so is the desire to stay connected with their community. Cohousing can provide both, "They thought ahead in terms of how to design and lay out a home - I mean, not just in terms of stairs, but of true accessibility. It also really provides an opportunity to stay engaged with neighbors, family and friends."

In Oregon, there are also cohousing communities underway in Corvallis and Eugene. The Cohousing Association of the United States offers information about existing developments, or starting your own. It is online at www.cohousing.org.

Bits & Bites

By Jacqueline Ramsay



Well, hello all you survivors of 2010. How was your Christmas? Happy and satisfying as mine was - I hope. I spent most of the day playing with my seven month-old great-grandson. He's cutting teeth so he chewed on all of his new toys.

Our church had a New Years Eve B.B.Q. and party. There were 40+ for dinner but by 11:30 p.m. there were seven of us to usher in 2011. We had a prayer circle, kissed and

said, "Good night".

I saw snow falling the other day - that is until it got about five feet from the ground where it turned into rain. I guess I'd call it a snow gullywasher storm because it ran to the gutters.

It's dull, it's dark, it's quiet, no sun, no wind, only a crow calling once in awhile. Even the traffic is quiet. So my brain is on hold. I haven't even found words in the crosswords to argue with. Life is dull right now. Just eatin', sleepin', knittin', readin' and wrighten (sic). And waitin' for the mailman.

Only thing exciting; the forsythia is still blooming. Yes, new buds every day - sun, rain or freeze.

Bye now.

DIRECTV, Inc. customers eligible for part of \$13.25 million settlement

Attorney General John Kroger announced, in December, a \$13.25 million multi-state agreement with DIRECTV, Inc., one of the nation's largest providers of satellite television services. The settlement resolves allegations that the company engaged in deceptive, unfair and unlawful sales practices in violation of Oregon con-

sumer protection law.

Oregon was a member of the multi-state Executive Committee that led the investigation into DIRECTV's sales and advertising tactics, including its promotional "cash back" and rebate offers.

"Telecommunications companies consistently rank No. 1 on the Department of Justice's

Top 10 Consumer Complaints list," said Attorney General Kroger. "For that reason, protecting consumers from telecommunications fraud is one of our top consumer protection priorities."

DIRECTV is one of the single largest generators of consumer complaints, with over 1,020 filed with the Oregon De-

partment of Justice since 1996 and more than 230 so far this year. A majority of complaints pertain to the company's failure to clearly and conspicuously disclose certain fees, contract terms and other hidden limitations that applied to their subscription. Many consumers also complained about DIRECTV's practice of automatically enrolling them in additional or extended contracts without their full knowledge.

Oregon will receive \$605,000 under the agreement to be filed today in Marion

County Circuit Court, part of which will be used to cover the costs of the investigation. Among other things, the settlement terms require DIRECTV to make significant reforms to its business practices, including more transparent disclosure of terms and conditions that apply to consumer contracts.

The company has also agreed to pay restitution to certain consumers with unresolved complaints filed since January 1, 2007. Eligible consumers will be contacted directly by DIRECTV. **See DIRECTV, page 21**

24 Years Ago This Month

The January 29, 1987, issue of *The Independent* included the following news story on the front page:

Smiles, laughter and warm applause punctuated the evening at the Vernonia Area Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet held on January 17, as eight volunteers were honored for their efforts on behalf of the community.

Bill Hawkins and Dorothy Yadon were selected as Man and Woman of the Year for 1986, and received standing ovations from the more than 60 people who attended the event at Masonic Hall.

Hawkins was selected for his commitment to the development of recreational activities for area residents, and especially for his work in refurbishing the little league ball park.

Yadon, president and one of

the initial supporters of Vernonia Cares, was picked for her efforts on behalf of needy people in the area.

Others nominated for their contributions to the community included Henry Anderegg, Sue Cavinee, Janet Homan, Ray Pelster, Gertrude Schalock and Agnes Wuest.

As Noni Andersen read the reasons for each nomination, the nominees came forward and received a Certificate of

Appreciation from Chamber President Fred Klinger. Then, in the middle of the program, as if to emphasize the reason for the event, the city fire siren sounded and four volunteer firefighters rushed out, leaving their dinners to get cold.

After presentation of the awards to Hawkins and Yadon, the West Hills Chapter of the Sweet Adelines entertained the crowd with a program of barber shop harmony and show tunes.

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