your Lane

Volume 3
April 2010

Keeping it Clean and Green

HERE IN LANE COUNTY, we've got a lot to brag about. We enjoy a tremendously beautiful home and take pride in efforts to keep the environment healthy and our communities livable.

While many of us do our part to reduce waste and lessen our imprint, our beautiful county is regularly marred by piles of household garbage, old tires, and discarded furniture that create both a visual nuisance and a threat to human health and the environment.

Fortunately, Lane County has an effective resource in the fight against illegal dump sites: Nuisance Abatement Specialist Carolyn Young.

Carolyn spends her work week wrestling couches, piling up mattresses, and hauling in trucks full of old tires. It's a challenging job that Carolyn tackles with gusto and with help from community members who alert her of illegal dump sites.

Responding to reports from all over Lane County, Carolyn cleans up the sites, makes sure recyclables get recycled, and properly disposes trash in the landfill. Her role focuses on dump sites rather than roadside litter, helping remove large mounds of illegally dumped garbage.

When she's able to identify the responsible party, either from evidence presented by witnesses or through investigation of evidence found at the site, she enforces the Class B violation that carries a maximum fine of $287. Convicted persons may also be ordered to clean up the site themselves or pay the cost of clean up.

What can you do? Help us keep our county beautiful by reporting illegal dump sites on Lane County roads, property, and rights-of-way by calling 541.682.4120. And, remember to reuse and recycle the items you can, and to dispose of your waste properly.

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Sites IN LANE COUNTY

"When you live in a place as beautiful as Lane County, it's such a shame to see a pile of tires in a ditch or a pickup load of trash on the side of the road. Sometimes, a neighbor will stop by while I'm cleaning up a dump site and tell me how much they appreciate it, and that's nice. The real reward though, is going home at the end of the day after cleaning up a few dump sites, knowing that I helped make Lane County safer and more beautiful."

- Carolyn Young

ILLEGAL DUMPING is it the Cost?

It seems intuitive to relate illegal dumping to economic factors – that is, to assume that people who illegally dispose of their unwanted items can't afford to pay landfill fees.

In our experience, that just isn't so. In cases where we've identified the people illegally dumping, it has been common to find that they actually drove farther to dump illegally than they would have if they'd gone to a transfer site. Much of the material they dumped could have been recycled for FREE. Electronic waste (like televisions, computers, and monitors) has been accepted for free at five Lane County transfer sites and several other service providers since January 2009, yet they are among the most commonly found illegally-dumped items.

The nuisance abatement program has been managed by the Public Works Waste Management Division since 2006, when the division was directed to address the problem of illegal dumping on Lane County roads, property, and rights-of-way.

Since 2006

More than 150 tons of roadside waste has been removed including:

- More than 3,000 tires
- 150 appliances
- 100 sofas
- 120 mattresses
- More than 1,000 TVs/ monitors

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT FREE RECYCLING OPTIONS?
Give us a call at ... 541.682.3111
or go to ... www.lanecounty.org/PW_WMD

A Seed is Planted... A Program Grows...

From its humble beginnings as a community service program, the ***Martin Luther King, Jr. Horticulture Program*** has evolved into a full-fledged, job-training and vocational program for youth served through Lane County Department of Youth Services.

Partnerships with the City of Eugene, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service began more than 10 years ago. At that time, the community service program served approximately 50 youth and performed approximately 400 hours of service work per year.

In 2009, the MLK Horticulture Crew served more than 300 youth who performed more than 2,000 service project hours in the community.

"Our overall goal is to remove barriers to a youth's future success through positive engagements in their community," said Matthew Sterner, program supervisor.

Youth involved with the Horticulture Program learn a multitude of skills in the areas of landscape maintenance, stream and ecological restoration, sustainable gardening, and native plant propagation. The focus has always been on eco-friendly ways youth can produce food locally, and enhance and expand native habitats.

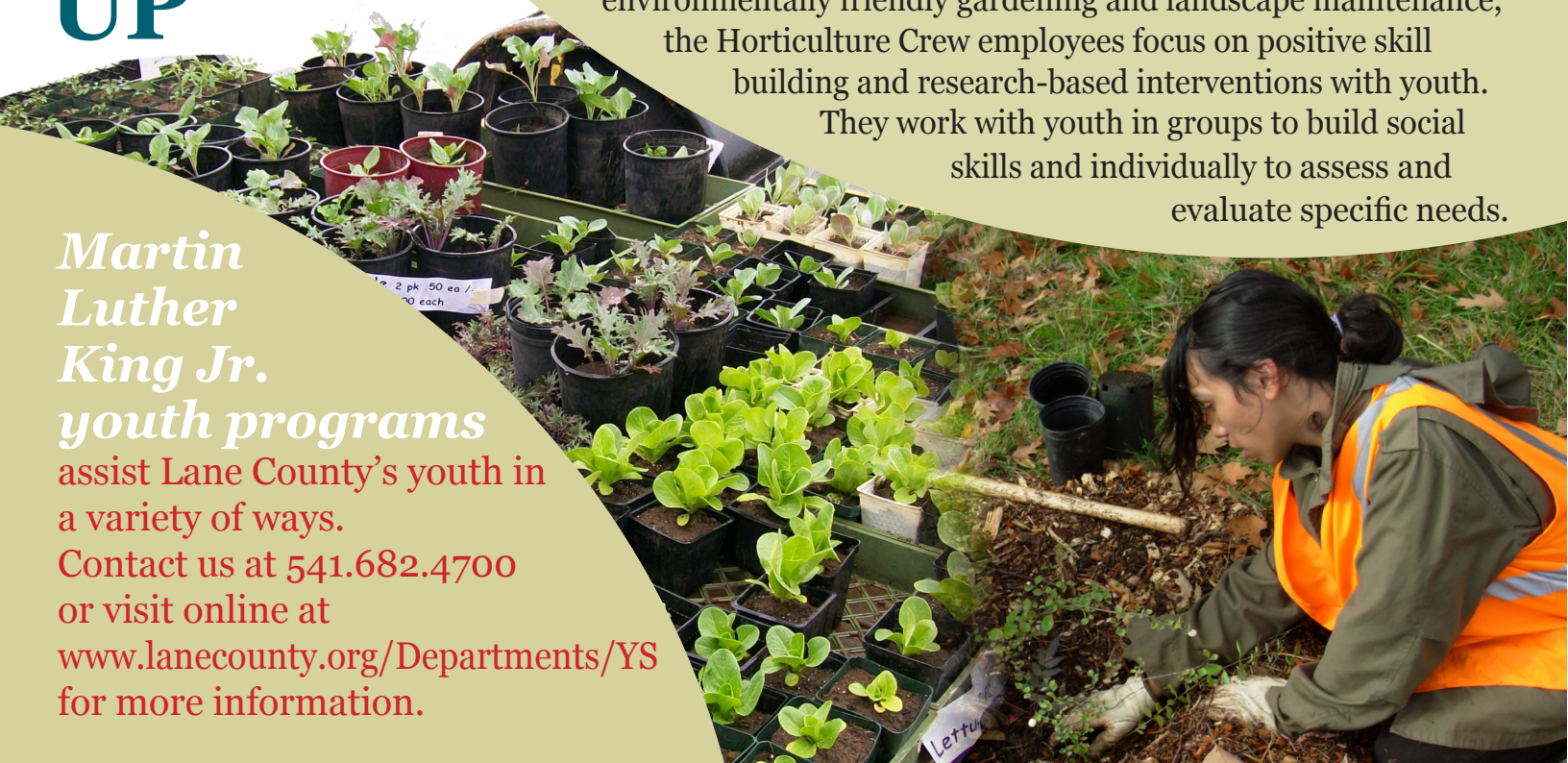
Some projects:

- Stream restoration for the City of Eugene.
- Greenhouse construction for the department's garden.
- Native plant landscaping for the BLM.
- Maintenance and expansion of the department's native plant garden.
- Use and maintenance of the composting facilities.

FROM THE GROUND UP

Future projects will involve working with local botanical gardens, the U.S. Forest Service, and the landscape department at Lane Community College.

In addition to the project goals of participating in sustainable, environmentally friendly gardening and landscape maintenance, the Horticulture Crew employees focus on positive skill building and research-based interventions with youth. They work with youth in groups to build social skills and individually to assess and evaluate specific needs.



Martin Luther King Jr. youth programs assist Lane County's youth in a variety of ways. Contact us at 541.682.4700 or visit online at www.lanecounty.org/Departments/YS for more information.

HOMELESS People Count IN LANE COUNTY

helping people • changing lives

On January 27, 2010, the Human Services Commission and its partners counted nearly 4,000 homeless people in Lane County. This was 47 percent percent more than counted in 2009. People counted were homeless on the streets, under bridges, in parks, at food pantries, at day access centers, in churches, at shelters, and in other locations. They were camped along the river, sometimes finding cover in cardboard boxes, using shelters or doubled up with friends or family.

They may have been your neighbors that used to live next door and lost their jobs and homes due to a medical crisis. As a result, they may have lost everything including hope, health, family, and friends. However, some are now on a path toward stability due to the effectiveness of our local continuum of care.

The One Night Homeless Count is a tool to educate the community about the depth of this critical social problem. It reminds us of our mission to end homelessness and find creative solutions to someday reach that goal.

Last year our community took a stand to ensure that homeless people have a place to go during extreme cold weather. The Egan Warming Center Coalition includes service providers, nonprofits, faith and social activist communities, and local government. These are people who care enough about others to make sure that they are safe from harsh weather. The project was named in honor of Major Thomas Egan, a homeless man who froze to death on the streets of Eugene in 2008. After providing 905 shelter beds at the National Armory in the winter of 2008-09, the project moved into its second season under the leadership of St. Vincent DePaul. This winter's warming centers offered six faith-based sites in the Eugene/Springfield area and provided 1,551 shelter beds. More than 400 volunteers were trained to provide comfort, safety, and support at the centers. Some of the volunteers were homeless themselves while others brought skills and expertise from varied professions and backgrounds. They shared a common bond of determination, dedication, and generosity.

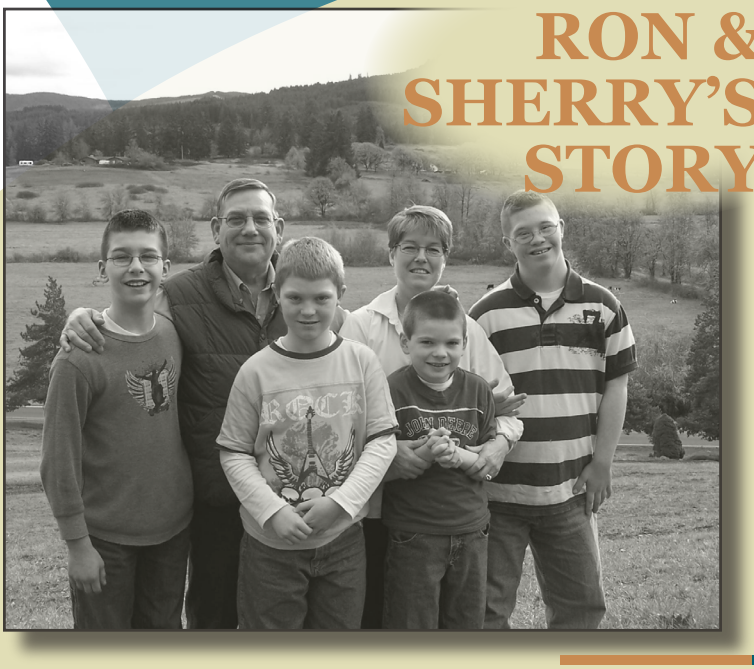
The *Egan Warming Center* is one example of how a small group of people can make a big difference. Let's hope this effort inspires more action for the 4,000 homeless people who need help from their neighbors to find refuge, hope, and a better life.

Want to learn more about being a foster family? Contact Lane County Developmental Disabilities Services at 541.682.3695 or go to www.lanecounty.org and click on 'Departments' then 'Developmental Disabilities'.

Fostering Abilities

Have you ever wondered how and where individuals with developmental disabilities live their daily lives? Lane County Developmental Disabilities Services (LCDDS) provides support, training, care, monitoring, protection, and crisis response for more than 1,700 adults and children in Lane County. Our services are designed to maximize their opportunities for self-determination and self-sufficiency.

LCDDS currently has 115 licensed foster homes, where individuals live in home-like settings with up to five others. Our amazing network of foster families help us provide comprehensive services that promote the well-being of our clients. What's it like being a foster family?



RON & SHERRY'S STORY

We became foster providers for Lane County in October of 1988. Before we moved to Oregon, Ron worked as a ranch manager and I worked in a bank as a loan officer. We had two children at the time. We felt we had more love to give and wanted to become foster parents, so we moved to Oregon with Ron's parents and opened "The Newcomer Home."

The joy you feel caring for each and every one of these kids will never change. Every child is "special" in their own way. We would encourage anyone that has ever thought about helping kids, with or without special needs, to get involved. Kids can teach you so much! You will be better for it because of their love.

MARK & JACKIE'S STORY

We became licensed foster providers and founded Supported Integration Services of Oregon (SISO) in July of 2006. It has been our mission ever since to provide services for developmentally disabled adults in a family home setting of which we feel proud.

We started supporting one client and now we support 17 people with a wide range of needs in four homes. The clients we support are family to us. Our lives have been changed and enriched by the individuals we support as they continue to thrive in the environments we foster them. There has been no more meaningful experience in our lives than helping these individuals achieve the greatest level of independence, empowerment, and happiness possible in their lives.

We love what we do. We strongly encourage anyone who shares the same passions and interest in improving the lives of developmentally disabled adults to consider becoming a licensed foster care provider.

United Effort for Local Projects

For more than 20 years, local governments and other public agencies have joined together to ask Congress for funding of projects in Lane County.

This partnership, the membership of which has varied over the years, is termed the "United Front."

The United Front earns attention for a select list of projects designed to improve the quality of life of Lane County residents. These projects are developed so that members of Congress who represent Oregonians can work to insert them into one of 12 appropriations bills in a process that is referred to as Congressionally-directed spending.

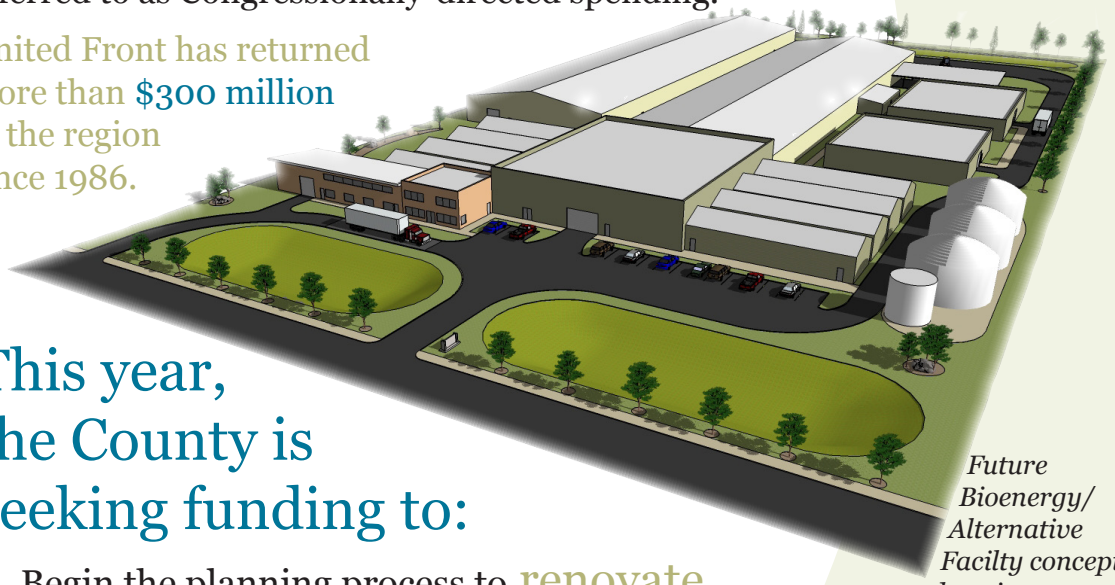
Last year, Lane County brought home more than $1 million through United Front.

United Front has returned more than $300 million to the region since 1986.

This federal funding will:

- Purchase radio equipment for parole and probation officers.
- Install cameras in the County jail.
- Create a program in the jail to provide mental health services for inmates in an effort to reduce recidivism.

Thanks go to Congressman Peter DeFazio, and Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden for their role in securing this funding.



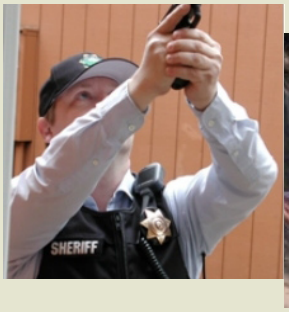
Future Bioenergy/ Alternative Facilty concept drawing

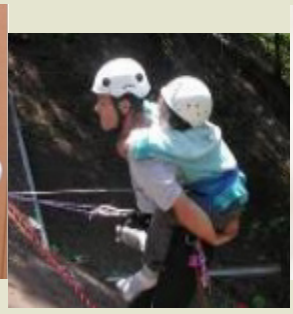
This year, the County is seeking funding to:

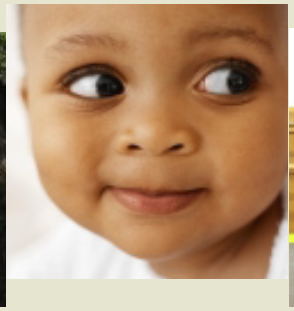
- Begin the planning process to renovate Highway 126 between Veneta and Eugene
- Provide additional funding for public safety-related equipment
- Partially fund an alternative energy project in Junction City
- Provide funding for Public Health staff to work on reducing infant mortality in Lane County
- Expand teen courts

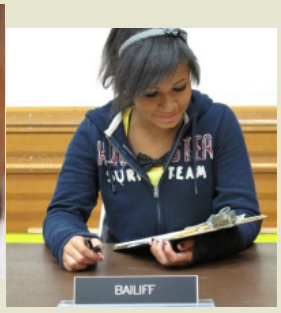
"The 'United Front Trip' helped get the message out to our congressional delegation and their staffs about the needs and challenges facing Lane County today and tomorrow. The success of this trip will be measured not only in the Federal assistance we receive but also the camaraderie and partnerships made along the way."

- Board Chair Bill Fleenor









EXPENDITURE & REVENUE

Transparency Reports

In a continued commitment to open government, Lane County now posts Transparency Spending & Revenue Receipt Reports each month on the County website. The postings provide details on all payable transactions over $100 – including who was paid, the type of expense, and what program or project initiated the expense. Additionally, revenue received that exceeds $100 is also posted.

While Oregon Law requires specific financial data to be made available to the community, the Transparency Spending & Revenue Receipt Reports go above and beyond the legal requirements. These postings make it possible for community members to view actual expenditures as they occur closer to 'real time', and to view more individual account detail.

Lane County's Budget & Financial Services employees have continuously initiated projects to deliver more information to the community, working to meet their goal of providing "government accountability to the citizens of Lane County."

Their efforts have produced award winning budget and financial documents for the last several years. They have also implemented budgeting for outcomes, which looks at the amount being spent on services and the results being achieved by those services.

The Transparency Reports are another avenue for community members to connect with, and learn more about, their Lane County Government.

To access the reports, go **www.lanecounty.org**, click on the **'For Residents'** tab, and then click on the **'Transparency Reports'** link.

Go Ahead & SAV-IT

Many of us know what it means to live within a budget and your County government is no different. As we continue to keep the budget balanced and provide essential services to local communities, we're also interested in your ideas on how we can continue to be fiscally responsible.

That's why the Lane County Board of Commissioners created the Savings Are Valuable to Individual Taxpayers (SAV-IT) Program. This program seeks your suggestions as to how we can stretch each dollar even further.

Among the Board's guiding principles is the commitment that Lane County "will always strive to get the most benefit from our available resources." Last spring, the Board recognized that exploring community members' cost-saving ideas may help achieve this goal.

This program is overseen by a community review committee. This group of seven community members has been charged with soliciting and reviewing your cost-saving ideas for Lane County.

The SAV-IT Committee will select and recognize Lane County residents for initiating cost-saving proposals. Ideas will be reviewed every month. Selected ideas will be recognized with a commemorative plaque, recognition by the head of the department involved, and by one or more County Commissioner.

Have a proposal you want considered? Check out **www.lanecounty.org** and click on **'SAV-IT Program'** under the **'For Residents'** tab.

We want to explore your ideas – send them in and get involved in your County government!

What's Happening in your Lane County Parks

Campground with Updated Amenities

Armitage Campground, inside Armitage Park, offers 37 sites for camping with water/electric/sewer/cable TV hook-ups and Wi-Fi. The park is located on the McKenzie River just off Coburg Road in Eugene. Close enough to town that if you forget something you can run home. And just enough out of town to feel like you are away from it all.

Construction is Complete...

With the construction of the Interstate 5 Bridge over the McKenzie River at Armitage Park completed, picnic shelter J is once again available for reservations. The shelter had been closed the previous two years for safety measures during construction.

Covered Bridges...

Are you a covered bridge enthusiast? Looking for a unique place to have a wedding or event? Currin, Dorena, and Stewart covered bridges are now available for rental.

Book Your Reservation in Advance

Reservations for both camping and picnicking may now be made 12 months in advance.

Want to know more?

Online: www.lanecounty.org
Reservations: ecomm.lanecounty.org/parks
Call us: 541.682.2000

Important Dates:

April 9 – Baker Bay Campground opens

April 16 – Richardson Campground opens

May 1 – Day Use Areas of Armitage, Baker Bay, Orchard Point, Perkins Peninsula, and Richardson open

Year-round – Armitage and Harbor Vista Campgrounds are open

It's time to start planning your summer fun and relaxation. Where better to spend time with family and friends than in your Lane County Parks.

73 PARKS – Hiking, picnicking, boating and beyond! Lane County provides 73 parks on more than 4,600 acres. There is a variety of recreational opportunities available. With boat ramps available on the McKenzie River, Fern Ridge, and various bodies of water along the coast, fishing opportunities are endless. Five parks – Armitage, Baker Bay, Hendricks Bridge, Orchard Point, and Richardson – offer picnic sites and/or shelters for family reunions, birthday parties, and other functions. Four parks – Armitage, Baker Bay, Harbor Vista, and Richardson – offer camping. Three parks – Baker Bay, Orchard Point, and Richardson – have marinas for mooring both sail and fishing boats. Howard Buford Recreation Area (Mt. Pisgah) offers 17 miles of hiking and equestrian trails. Camp Lane offers the unique opportunity for groups to rent an entire park exclusively for their use. This is just a quick overview; there are many more recreational opportunities in your Lane County Parks.