



Crews battle Creswell mill fire

The blaze burns a company office and a warehouse, and sends flames up a 40- to 50-foot tree out front

BY KIRSTEN WILLIAMS
The Register-Guard

CRESWELL — A fire at a Creswell mill lit up the night sky Sunday as firefighters from the South Lane, Goshen, Pleasant Hill and Eugene Springfield departments rushed to a location in the 82000 block of Butte Road.

Creswell Forest Products' office and warehouse went up in flames as well as a 40- to 50-

foot evergreen tree out front. The fire burned the office's computers and supplies in the warehouse, including a forklift, said Capt. Aaron Smith of South Lane Fire and Rescue.

The mill as well as a second, nearby mill are adjacent to a newer residential neighborhood of both single-family houses and apartments. The tree went up like a torch, shooting sparks high into the cloudy night sky. Neighbors reported the fire.

The large stacks of lumber were not ignited by the fire, which was reported shortly before 7:15 p.m. and was being brought under control — amid giant billows of smoke — about 8:30 p.m. No one was in the building when the fire started, and three-quarters of the building was burning by the time 25 firefighters arrived on the scene.

A neighbor said several teens tried last week to set the mill on fire.

Officials said the cause of the fire remained under investigation, and an estimate of the damages was not yet available.



A fire Sunday evening at Creswell Forest Products in Creswell lights up the night sky as firefighters battle the flames. The blaze burned an office and warehouse space.

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"The lack of housing is almost like a foot on the region's throat."

— DAVID WADE, ORGANIZER OF EUGENE WORKSHOP ON BACKYARD TINY HOMES

BIG INTEREST IN TINY HOMES

Workshop attendees learn about the backyard housing alternative

A daunting fact: More than 60 percent of Eugene households spend more than a third of their annual income to pay for housing.

The increased demand for affordable housing has Lane County residents thinking big about living small, according to representatives from SquareOne Villages.

Tiny housing is an increasingly popular alternative to apartment or single-family housing: It provides a private space, a source of rental income, a way for older people to downsize to a more manageable home, and it provides first-time homebuyers with an affordable foothold in the real estate market.

A nonprofit organization dedicated to "bridging the gap" between living on the street and viable housing via tiny houses, SquareOne played host to about 80 people Sunday at Eugene Friends Church. They had come to the fundraising workshop to learn how they can build and locate tiny houses on their property.

The \$25 tickets to the event benefited Emerald Village, a subdivision of 22 tiny houses for low-income residents that is under development on a one-acre plot on Railroad Boulevard.

SquareOne Villages sold the building plans to each of the tiny houses under development in Emerald Village that were designed by various Lane County architects free of charge.

The building plans are being sold to residents hoping to build their own tiny house — or secondary dwelling unit (SDU) — for \$500, with the profits split between the architects and SquareOne.

Four presenters — with the opening speech by Eugene Mayor Lucy Vinis — addressed the importance of backyard housing in Eugene.

Speakers advocated for streamlining the process for obtaining the necessary permits and zoning variances to

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AMIRAN WHITE/For The Register-Guard

Architect Will Dixon chats with Sylvia Porter (left) and John O'Brien about tiny homes during a workshop on backyard housing to raise funds to complete the Emerald Village development. The event was hosted by SquareOne Villages and held at Eugene Friends Church on Sunday.

County contract talks continue

It wasn't clear whether the two sides planned to meet again Monday

BY ELON GLUCKLICH
The Register-Guard

Lane County and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees union met in all-day contract negotiations Sunday, but they did not announce an end to talks late Sunday night.

It was unclear Sunday night whether the sides would resume labor talks through a mediator Monday.

More than 500 Lane County government employees went on strike Wednesday, protesting the county's three-year contract offer for AFSCME-represented workers.

The county's proposal would give the employees roughly 3 percent average raises in the contract's first year.

The union has proposed far higher raises than the county's offer, averaging 14.8 percent for AFSCME general unit employees in the contract's first year and 19.8 percent for the AFSCME nurses unit, based on the union's last public offer submitted last month.

Union officials say they've since moved significantly closer to the county's offer. An Oregon AFSCME spokesman said Friday that the gap between the union and county proposals had closed to about \$2 million over the three-year deal. County officials said the two sides still were far apart.

The county and union have been negotiating since March on new contracts for the AFSCME general and nurses units, which represent nearly 700 Lane County gov-

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Siuslaw School District seeking renewal of levy

BY ALISHA ROEMELING
The Register-Guard

FLORENCE — The Siuslaw School District in Florence wants to renew its five-year local option levy, which voters most recently approved in May 2014; it is set to expire in June 2019.

The levy helps the district pay for physical education, vocational classes, fine arts and music, and some technology and online learning programs.

"For us, it basically takes care of making sure we have a full school year and smaller class sizes at the elementary level," Siuslaw School District

Superintendent Andy Grzeskowiak said. "It also helps pay for CTE (career technical education) programs like the automotive classes, culinary arts, manufacturing technology, wood shop and music."

About 1,350 students are enrolled in the Siuslaw district.

Grzeskowiak said the tax rate would remain the same as the current rate of 75 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The levy provides

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View the district's levy measure filing with this story at registerguard.com

Creswell City Hall, office hit by vandalism

A suspect is arrested after passers-by report destruction downtown

BY THERESA NOVAK
The Register-Guard

CRESWELL — A man used a plastic trash can lid to break out several windows at Creswell City Hall, 13 S. First St., and a neighboring real estate office early Sunday morning, according to Lane County sheriff's Sgt. Blake Dornbusch.

He said that multiple 911 calls came in around 5 a.m. reporting a man downtown

"breaking windows and generally being disorderly." Authorities who arrived soon afterward arrested a suspect in connection with the damage, he said.

Donald Jackson Harvey, 28, of Creswell was booked into the Lane County Jail around 6:45 a.m. on a felony charge of criminal mischief and misdemeanor charges of criminal mischief, criminal trespass and disorderly conduct.

Dornbusch said the damages were estimated at \$1,000.

The news quickly was shared on a Creswell community page

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A boarded-up window and broken glass are left at Creswell City Hall after it was vandalized Sunday morning.

