

NEWS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release



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Project Homeless Connect for Lane County Seeks Donations

Eugene, Ore. – Planning is underway for the third annual Project Homeless Connect for Lane County—an event that helps meet the needs of homeless citizens living in the local community. The event will be held **Friday, March 6, 2009** at the Lane Events Center at the Fairgrounds.

The one-day, one-stop event invites citizens who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, to come and receive basic necessities and services to help them move out of homelessness. Guests are offered free medical, dental and vision checkups, hot meals, haircuts and giveaways of basic provisions. Information on housing, employment, schools, and services available for youth, families, seniors and veterans is also provided.

A variety of donations are needed for this year's event. Organizers are seeking coats, sleeping bags, backpacks, hats, gloves, socks, children's clothing, canes, crutches, hand sanitizer and other personal hygiene products. Anyone wishing to donate these items may do so by bringing items to St. Vincent de Paul store locations in Eugene, Springfield or Florence. Donations must be clearly labeled "For Project Homeless Connect." Donation barrels are also available for those interested in collecting items at business or organization venues. Financial contributions may be made via United Way of Lane County – Project Homeless Connect, 3171 Gateway Loop, Springfield, Oregon 97477.

Last year's Project Homeless Connect event, served 1,158 guests with the help of 281 service providers and more than 600 community volunteers.

"Project Homeless Connect is a transforming experience for both homeless guests and community volunteers. The benefits of this one-day event reverberate all year long," said Pearl Wolfe, event co-chair. "So many community members want to be part of the solution to end homelessness and giving through in-kind and cash donations is one way to do that."

As part of PHC outreach activities, socks, gloves and scarves also will be handed out during Lane County's one-night homeless count on **Wednesday, January 28, 2009**. Homeless singles and families will receive these items, as well as information about the 2009 Project Homeless Connect event, as they are counted at drop-in centers, emergency shelters, food pantries, meal sites and in public places. Last year's annual one-night count revealed that 2,111 citizens were living in temporary shelters or on the street that given night. In addition, throughout the year more than 11,000 Lane County residents were homeless at the time they sought help from one of the county's 28 service programs.

For more information about Project Homeless Connect, visit www.homelessconnect.org or contact Sophia McDonald, Project Homeless Connect Coordinator, at [\(541\) 682-4614](tel:5416824614) or Sophia.mcdonald@co.lane.or.us or Pearl Wolfe, Project Homeless Connect Co-Chair (541) 556-4428. *(Pearl's number is not for publication; media use only please).*

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