



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Donations Needed for Project Homeless Connect Event

Eugene, Ore. - Donations for this year's Project Homeless Connect for Lane County event are down considerably. Organizers are hoping to collect more donations before the third annual event takes place on Friday, March 6 at the Lane Events Center and Fairgrounds.

The one-day, one-stop event provides critical services and basic necessities to people who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless. Guests are offered free onsite services including medical exams, dental checkups, vision care, hot meals, haircuts and basic provisions. Over 80 local service agencies also provide information on housing, employment, education, legal counsel, addiction treatment, and a variety of services available for youth, families, seniors and veterans.

Organizers are seeking hats, gloves, socks, coats, sleeping bags, backpacks, children's clothing, canes, crutches, and a variety of personal hygiene products. Donations are being accepted at St. Vincent de Paul store locations in Eugene, Springfield and Florence. Items must be labeled "Project Homeless Connect." People interested in purchasing new items to donate can also view the Project Homeless Connect gift registry at www.homelessconnect.org. Donation barrels are available for those interested in collecting items at business or organization venues.

Last year's Project Homeless Connect event served 1,158 guests with the help of 600 community volunteers and more than 200 professional service providers, from doctors and nurses to counselors and hairdressers.

Lane County's homeless population appears to be growing according to preliminary results of the 2009 annual one-night homeless count conducted by the Lane County Human Services Commission. On any given night, more than 2,600 people in Lane County are homeless, up 27 percent from 2008. The Commission also reports that last year 1,965 school-age children were homeless sometime during the year and more than 11,000 people in Lane County were homeless at the time they sought services from a local nonprofit agency.

Project Homeless Connect is part of a nationwide movement that is working to help meet the needs of people who are homeless, while engaging the local community in finding solutions for ending homelessness.

For more information about Project Homeless Connect, visit www.homelessconnect.org or contact Sophia McDonald, Project Homeless Connect Coordinator, at (541) 682-4614 or Sophia.mcdonald@co.lane.or.us.

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