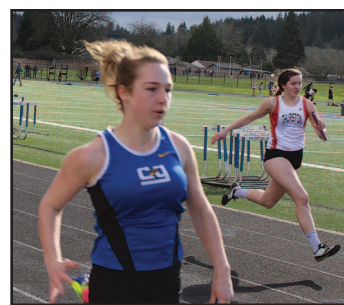




Cottage Grove Sentinel

SOUTH LANE AND DOUGLAS COUNTY'S MOST AWARD-WINNING NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1889



SPORTS

CHGS track is off and running PAGE B1

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EDUCATION



South Lane School District Superintendent Krista Parent joined Cottage Grove Mayor Jeff Gowing, Senator Floyd Prozanski, chamber director Travis Palmer, commissioner Faye Stewart and other local officials to break ground on the new Harrison Elementary School on Thursday, March 23.

By Caitlyn May
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BREAKING GROUND

South Lane School District breaks ground on \$23 million Harrison Elementary School

The first drops began to fall just before 4:30 p.m. By the time South Lane School District Communications Coordinator Garrett Bridgens took to the podium to introduce the first speaker, spectators had left their perches on nearby hills and sought refuge under a tent to join the standing room only crowd. While rain poured steadily outside the tent, inside, the mood was brighter than the sun.

"This is why I love Cottage Grove," Lane County Commissioner Faye Stewart told the crowd. "We rally around and put our community first in our needs."

Stewart joined several community leaders on Thursday, March 23 to break ground on the new Harrison Elementary School slated to open in the fall of 2018.

The groundbreaking comes at the end of several years of effort on the part of the school district. According to school board president Sherry Duerst-Higgins, the board knew eight years ago that the current Harrison building would not continue to meet the needs of the community's children. It was a notion supported by second-grader Jeffrey Conklin during Thursday's ceremony.

"I'm happy the hallways will not be as crowded," he told the crowd, assisted to the podium by Parent and a step ladder. He noted that the inconvenience of not being able to have P.E. classes during lunch would finally fall to the wayside; the current building's designated gymnasium is also the lunch room.

The program lasted just short of an hour, and despite a scheduling conflict that saw the groundbreaking taking place at the same time as the UO Men's Basketball team's attempt to advance in the NCAA tournament, more than 50 community members turned out to support the new school.

"What a wonderful thing it is to live in a community that continues to put children first," Parent told the crowd.

Voters passed a \$25 million bond measure in November to fund the building of the school as well as other SLSD projects. While Parent acknowledged the community's part in mak-

Please see **SCHOOL PG. A9**



COMMUNITY

"SOUP-ER" FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS

By Caitlyn May
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More than 200 Grovers turned out to the 11th Annual Soup-er fundraiser held by Community Sharing.

"It was a great event," said Community Sharing Executive Director Mike Fleck. "It was slow getting together this year but it came together seamlessly." The event, which allows attendees to sample soups made by residents, raised over \$9,000 this year.

"That's before expenses, so a few hundred dollars in expenses and the rest goes to Community Sharing," Fleck said.

The money raised will be able to be funneled into the organization's unrestricted funds, allowing it to utilize the money for a variety of purposes.

Please see **SOUP PG. A11**



The annual Soup-er fundraiser drew 211 people, 13 soups and raised over \$9,000.

Please see **STEWART PG. A9**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Swinging Bridge options revealed City council given prices for bridge restoration

By Caitlyn May
cg sentinel.com

The Cottage Grove City Council recommended that staff move forward with a letter of intent for a grant to repair the Swinging Bridge during its March 27 meeting.

The bridge, which has been closed since the end of last year, is eligible for an Oregon Parks and Recreational Trails grant of \$150,000. The letter of intent for the grant is due March 31.

"Staff feels concentrating on one option versus three options in the letter of intent would be beneficial in the grant process," city engineer Ron Bradsby wrote to the council.

During the meeting, Bradsby presented the council with three options from OBEC Consulting Engineers. While the plans were described as tentative, OBEC was able to include "ballpark" costs.

"The first option is an ugly, off the truck bridge," Cottage Grove City Manager Richard Meyers told council. The cost of the per-fabricated replacement

bridge clocked in at around \$370,000.

Option two would cost roughly \$261,000 but would maintain some movement in the bridge. However, according to Bradsby, the recommendation for the second option would create a bridge that did not meet current codes.

"Basically, the option is using the existing bridge and replacing the aspects that have failed like the upper cables and the decking," Bradsby told The Sentinel. While the replacements would enable to bridge to swing, OBEC reported that it would exceed the 50 pounds per lineal foot safety standard.

The issue of the city's liability soon came into play with councilman Mike Fleck inquiring as to whether or not the city would be liable if an incident were to occur on the bridge should the city decide on the second option.

"It's difficult with pedestrian things. If you build something and it doesn't follow existing codes, you are liable," Meyers said.

Please see **BRIDGE PG. A9**

COMMUNITY

Real deal on Armory

Yes, there's lead. But is it as bad as reported? City says, 'No.' PAGE A8



GOVERNMENT

Another change

Shauna Neigh of community development resigns. PAGE A3

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VOLUME 129 • NUMBER 37



Coffee with the Editor Every Tuesday 12 pm @ Backstage Bakery

Come chat about the community!

