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Former Silverton teachers win grievance

Christena Brooks
Special to Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

SILVERTON – A fight between high school teachers and administrators that began over low grades and plagiarism in a college-level writing course has ended with a finding against the school district and a settlement agreement.

Former Silverton High School teachers Ben Hynes-Stone and Travis Woodside won't get money from the Silver Falls School District. Rather, the settlement

agreement calls for the district to recall letters of reprimand it sent to the state agency that credentials teachers, and to issue them neutral letters of recommendation.

An arbitrator ruled the district was "engaging in a pattern of retaliation and reprisal" against the pair when they filed grievances during the 2017-18 school year.

"Having all of this legally documented with evidence from district administrators' emails and their own testimony is a tremendous win for teachers and unions across the United States," Hynes-Stone said.

Grading

Hynes-Stone and Woodside came to the Silver Falls School District in 2014 and 2015, respectively. They began the 2017-18 school year as co-teachers of an advanced writing course for "highly motivated and capable students" wanting to earn college credit, according to their complaint filed with Oregon's Employment Relation Board last winter.

Not long after classes began, students and parents

See **TEACHERS**, Page 2A

GRADUATION 2019

Students graduated from six Silverton-area high schools earlier this month, celebrating with cheers, tears, hugs and a turning of tassels. For more photos and a list of graduates, see Page 1B and SilvertonAppeal.com



Graduates line up during the Silverton High School commencement at Silverton High School on June 6, 2019. MICHAELA ROMÇN / STATESMAN JOURNAL

Joe Kast selected as next Marion County sheriff

Bill Poehler
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Marion County Commissioners agreed Thursday to hire Joe Kast as Marion County Sheriff to replace the retiring Jason Myers.

They will make the appointment of Kast, currently a commander in the Marion County Sheriff's office, official at the June 26 commissioner's meeting, and he will start the position July 1.

Kast will serve in the sheriff position through 2020, when it will go up for election.

"People have huge respect for him," Marion County Commissioner Kevin Cameron said. "I think Commander Kast would hit the ground running."

Kast has been with the Marion County Sheriff's Office for 23 years in five different positions and previously spent three years with the Bibb County Sheriff's Office in Georgia.

The Marion County Sheriff's Office serves a population of 344,035, including 98,931 in rural areas or unincorporated cities, and contracts with the cities of Aurora, Jefferson, Sublimity and Chema-wa Indian School.

The department covers 1,182 square miles with an annual budget of \$71.5 million and 357 full-time equivalent employees.

The Marion County Sheriff's Office is one of seven departments in the county headed by elected officials.

"I'm really looking forward to it," Kast said. "I'm looking forward to working with everyone in the office doing the good things we've been doing."

Myers will retire from the position June 30 to take a position with the Oregon State Sheriff's Association. He was elected to his third four-year term in January and announced his impending retirement days later.

Kast said he will run for the position in the next election and said he already has a campaign manager.

The person who wins that election will serve a four-year term.

Kast and Josh Brooks, a lieutenant with the Oregon State Police Department from Sublimity, were the two applicants for the appointment.

"I really like some of his ideas," Marion County Commissioner Colm Willis said of Brooks. "He brought fresh ideas."

"I came away thinking Commander Kast had more specific knowledge of the sheriff's office."

In his letter of resignation, Myers endorsed Kast for the position.

The commissioners indicated one of the reasons

See **KAST**, Page 2A

Freres donates \$1 million to stop business tax

Bill Poehler
Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Freres Lumber president Rob Freres has donated \$1 million to a group trying to send a recently signed tax on big businesses to Oregon voters, according to records from the Oregon Secretary of State's office.

Freres gave the money to the Defeat the Tax on Oregon Sales Now committee, which now has a balance of \$1,000,730.

Freres publicly exited his role on the board of Oregon Business & Industry, a lobbying group, in May over the group not opposing House Bill 3427.

The bill, which was signed into law by Governor Kate Brown May 24, increases taxes on businesses with annual sales over \$1 million by charging a 0.57% sales tax on transactions.

It is estimated to bring in more than \$1 billion over the next two years, money targeted for schools.

Freres helped start Oregon Manufacturers and Commerce, a separate business group, a year ago.

Defeat the Tax on Oregon Sales Now must gather about 75,000 signatures within 90 days of the conclusion of the current legislative session to put the measure to voters.

See **FRERES**, Page 2A

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