

Mt. Angel getting a new mayor

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Mt. Angel mayor resigns

Andrew Otte has resigned as mayor of Mt. Angel because he’s moved out of the city limits.

After six years on the volunteer job as mayor, Otte announced his resignation at the city council’s Aug. 5 meeting. The city charter requires all members of the council, including the mayor, to live inside municipal limits.

Council President Kelly Grassman has temporarily assumed all mayoral duties until councilors vote to appoint someone to the position. That appointee will then serve through the end of 2020, when Otte’s two-year term expires.

The November 2020 election will decide the next mayor.

Playhouse cancels ‘Castle of the Rose’

Brush Creek Playhouse has canceled all performances of “Castle of the Rose,” originally set to run through Aug. 18.

Showings were canceled “due to unforeseen circumstances,” according to a news release published by Silverton Chamber of Commerce. Michael Wood and Michele Nowlin were directors.

Upcoming plays “Dracula” and “Christmas Belles” are still on the schedule for fall and winter, according to the playhouse’s website, <http://www.brushcreekplayhouse.com/>

‘Wired to the Landscape’ at Lunaria

Through Sept. 2, Lunaria Gallery presents an exhibit of current work by artists Jane Castelan-Buccola and Robert Fox. Castelan-Buccola contributes colorful abstract paintings to Fox’s fanciful sculpted flowers and images.

In the loft, the exhibit, ‘OHMYGOSH-BOTS & kindafishy’ features assemblages and sculptures by Deb Wallig.

Lunaria, at 113 N. Water St., is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Others, such as Jefferson, offer hard-ship scholarships to cover the fees.

Though most public schools charge fees to take part in some classes, the majority of fees are charged for those who play sports.

For students who play a sport year-round outside of the school sports environment, the costs grow astronomically because of what club programs charge, travel costs and equipment.

“Honestly it starts to approach a couple thousand dollars when you’re looking at all the parts of it,” said Steve Frank, of Stayton whose daughter will play soccer at Stayton this fall.

Students at Stayton will continue to pay an Associated Student Body fee of \$30 per student. The same fee is \$40 at Salem-Keizer schools.

Students participating in golf or swimming at Stayton will pay a \$30 fee as those sports are held at off-site venues that the school has to pay for its teams to use.

Shryock said when he was at McKay and Silverton as head basketball coach, those funds were set aside specifically for the athletic departments. At Stayton, it was added to the general fund.

Coaching staff as collection agency

Collecting the fees was never fun.

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intend for those funds to make up the shortfall.

There are other ways at Stayton to help athletes financially.

The Ty Hart Memorial Foundation, named for the former Stayton athlete who died in a Marine helicopter accident in 2016 in Hawaii, provides funds for equipment for students at that school and at others.

“Any kids who needs any equipment to play a sport or do an activity, they have been very generous in supplying that,” Shryock said. “With the elimination of fees, any kid doesn’t have to use a dime out of their pocket to play a sport.”

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Athletic participation fees by high schools

Stayton free
Kennedy \$100
Cascade \$100
Jefferson \$100
Dallas \$160
North Salem \$175
McKay \$175
McNary \$175
South Salem \$175
Sprague \$175
West Salem \$175

Crossings

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Circumstances can sometimes be unusual. In Eugene, a woman was hit by

a train and killed in 2014 while chasing a dog off the tracks. In a 2018 incident, a man was hit by a train and injured in Portland while chasing his girlfriend on foot, state data show.

"These are adults who should know better," she said. "They're not young

kids."

Policy decisions for railroad safety aren't always easy or simple. For example, cities can request "quiet zones" in designated areas where trains cannot blow whistles.

Salem has a quiet zone at 12 crossings of the Union Pacific Railroad line stretching from Mill Street Southeast to Silverton Road Northeast.

The Federal Railroad Administration is required to sign off on plans for the quiet zones, which typically require additional signage warning drivers and pedestrians. But Union Pacific opposes quiet zones as a matter of policy, saying they endanger public safety.

Other factors in play include Oregonians' heavy use of different modes of transportation, including walking and biking.

Out of the 154 crashes over the past 10 years, 33 involved pedestrians and nine involved someone hit on a bicycle. Of those, six pedestrians and one bicyclist were in Marion County.

"Particularly in Salem proper, as opposed to Marion County as a whole, you've got the UP (Union Pacific) main line running in a very congested area with a lot of cars, a lot of pedestrians, so the risk is going to go up," said Claudia Howells, former head of the transportation department's rail division and a volunteer with Operation Lifesaver, a nonprofit that educates the public about railroad safety in Oregon.

Education and outreach

A state analysis of 120 railroad crossing accidents found that more than half — 65 crossings — already were equipped with active equipment to warn highway users of trains.

"You don't actually want to signalize every crossing," Howells said. "That would be like putting a traffic signal at every traffic intersection."

Instead, goals in the state's crossing safety plan includes a combination of education and outreach, increased data collection — including when trains have "near misses" at intersections — and looking for more funding options for crossing equipment.

ODOT's rail division, which regulates crossings in Oregon, has limited staff for doing outreach. So it partners with Operation Lifesaver, a nonprofit that gives presentations at schools, fairs and other venues to raise awareness.

Steven Kreins, the volunteer executive director of Operation Lifesaver, said

group did about 200 presentations in 2018 and has reached nearly 24,000 people. They also work with other groups, such as bus drivers and police officers.

Krein said the group's education efforts include not only crossing safety, but also outreach about trespassing — walking on or near railroad tracks.

"I don't think a lot of people even understand it's illegal," he said.

Family searches for answers

Jack Rice was bicycling on State Street in Salem when he crossed the railroad tracks at 12th Street. It was Aug. 30, 2018.

An Amtrak train slammed into him. Witnesses told police that Rice — a 42-year-old who recently moved to the area and planned to attend Chemeketa Community College — flew through the air across State Street.

He died instantly.

The Amtrak engineer told police the train was traveling southbound at about 34 mph, within the designated speed for downtown Salem. It also was in Salem's quiet zone.

"The train is much wider and he didn't realize he was even in the way of the train," said Rice's mother, Shirley Irwin. "The law in Salem is the train's not supposed to make a whistle noise."

As a result, the Amtrak train wasn't blowing its whistle — not until the engineer saw Rice approaching the tracks and he pulled the whistle as an emergency warning.

Rice didn't seem to notice.

He appeared to stop on the tracks, looking forward but never over at the train, according to witnesses. Based on that, the engineer told police it appeared Rice thought he wasn't on the tracks.

His sister, Jessica Rice of Nashville, Tenn., said the family doesn't know exactly how events unfolded. But she said the crossing has the potential for danger, given it's in a quiet zone and it crosses such a busy street.

"We do have large concerns that nothing is going to be changed and we don't want this happening to any other family," she said. "Anything we can do to create awareness around it and how it can be changed is definitely what we want."

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