

# Appeal Tribune

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2019 ■ SILVERTONAPPEAL.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

## Lighting project gives Silverton a bright future

**Bill Poehler** Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Walk in the gym of any high school and inevitably there will be lights not functioning.

Between fixtures being difficult to reach and the sheer number of bulbs in an average school, lighting is a constant challenge for all school districts.

The Silverton School District has undertaken the massive task of replacing all of its estimated 7,745 lighting fixtures with LED fixtures and bulbs in its 15 buildings, including 12 schools, in a \$1.8 million project.

Though the Pine Street campus of Silverton High School was completed in 2009 some lighting is already out of date and some areas were in need of attention, such as the foyer of the auditorium where seven of 14 lights are out.

Compared with an average home, where there are 25 fixtures and 45 bulbs, it's a big task to keep a school

lighted.

When Lorin Stanley was hired by the district to be its maintenance and facility director three years ago from the Woodburn School District, he saw the pressing need for something to be done.

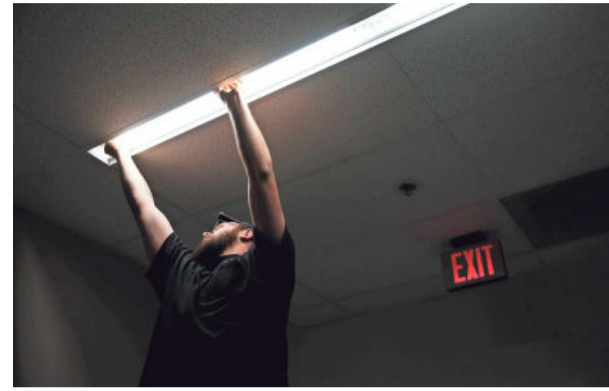
"To be quite honest, we were getting behind on things," Stanley said. "We had a lot of really old T12 fluorescent bulbs. That's when I really started pushing this lighting project."

The Silverton School District has over 4,000 students at its 12 schools. There also is a district office, bus barn and the building the Bethany Charter School occupies.

"It is a combination — some fixtures are being replaced with new LED fixtures and some are being retrofitted with tube LED lamps," said Louis Maltezos, Executive Vice President at Ameresco.

The district partnered with Ameresco, an energy ef-

See **LIGHTING**, Page 2



**Devan Fackenthall, an electrical apprentice, installs new lights in a hallway at Silverton High School on Nov. 4, 2019. Bulbs and fixtures are being upgraded to LED lighting in the Silver Falls School District as part of a \$1.8 million project.**

ANNA REED / STATESMAN JOURNAL



**Agriculture entrepreneur Frank Tiegs has pulled out of his planned \$155.5 million takeover of the bankrupt NORPAC Foods processing company. Despite filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, NORPAC Foods' processing plant in Stayton is still hiring new employees.** DAVID DAVIS AND KELLY JORDAN / STATESMAN JOURNAL

## NORPAC OPERATES IN UNCERTAINTY

**Bill Poehler** Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

For nearly 100 years, Stayton has been closely linked with NORPAC Foods.

Stayton grew up around the vegetable processing co-op that started life as Stayton Canning Company in 1924 and grew into one of the largest companies of its type in the Willamette Valley. Generations of the city's residents have worked there, either full-time or during the busy seasons.

That was all supposed to come to an end Oct. 31, when the company's new owner was scheduled to close the Stayton plant. But Halloween passed, and the plant is still operating.

Now, with the potential new owner withdrawing his purchase offer, creditors haranguing the court to get paid and hundreds of growers scrambling to find a potential replacement buyer, NORPAC's future is more uncertain than ever.

"I want to do this in the most orchestrated way we can," Bankruptcy Judge Peter McKittrick said at a hearing, "that helps preserve the value of the ongoing

business and gives the best opportunity for the farmers to have a place to sell their product to and the employees to continue to have jobs."

### Proposed sale to Oregon Potato

When NORPAC Foods filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in August, it seemed as if it were a bump in the road that would keep the company operating smoothly.

The company had an agreement to have the majority of its assets, including its plants in Salem, Brooks, Quincy, Wash., and Stayton, purchased by Oregon Potato Company, though the original plan was to close the Stayton plant.

Frank Tiegs privately owns Oregon Potato and has bought up similar companies including Willamette Valley Fruit in Salem and National Frozen Foods in Albany.

That deal would have allowed the company to restructure or pay off most of its \$164 million in debt and continue operating, providing a place for the over 220

See **NORPAC**, Page 3A

## Oregon Solidarity Project wins innovation award

**Emily Teel** Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A year ago California-based Copper Cane Wines & Provisions rejected more than 2,000 tons of wine grapes grown in Southern Oregon. The fruit, rejected for supposed smoke taint from wildfire impact in the region, represented a \$4 million dollar collective loss for more than 15 grape growers in the Rogue Valley. This year, a collective of Willamette Valley winemakers is being recognized with a national award for what they did next.

These wineries quickly made arrangements to bring some of the fruit north. Based on lab results from each lot, they believed the grapes had been rejected without cause. The collective of wineries includes and Silvan Ridge Winery in Eugene, King Estate in Lorane, The Eyrie Vineyards in McMinnville and Willamette Valley Vineyards in Turner. They la-

beled their collaborative wines Oregon Solidarity Wines and pledged proceeds from their sale back to the grape growers.

The collective was able to purchase more than 140 tons of grapes from six growers at a cost of \$323,750. Their effort yielded nearly 7,500 cases of wine.

Wine Enthusiast Magazine has awarded Oregon Solidarity with a 2019 Wine Star Award for Innovator of the Year. These annual awards recognize influential members of the wine and spirits industry in 17 categories that include winemaker of the year, importer of the year, etc.

"Today's leaders honor the importance of mutual respect and cooperation, especially in times of need," writes Paul Gregutt, Contributing Editor for Wine Enthusiast. "As a shining example of these touchstone beliefs, Wine Enthusiast names Oregon Solidarity as

See **WINE**, Page 2

## Oregon's distracted driving laws No. 1

**Whitney Woodworth** Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Those caught texting, browsing social media or otherwise holding and using their cell phones in Oregon face the harshest distracted driving laws in the nation, according to a recent study.

Rosenblum Law, the firm behind trafficketts.com, analyzed laws from all 50 states and ranked Oregon at the top.

Due to the expensive fine — up to \$1,000 for a first-time offense — Oregon earned the number one slot.

"Oregon has taken the strongest stance on punishing individuals for texting while driving," said Adam Rosenblum, principal attorney with the New Jersey-based law firm. "This harsh penalty is intended to deter people from using their phones while driving and could ultimately lead to fewer accidents that are caused by distracted driving."

During the 2017 Oregon legislative session, lawmakers voted to bolster the state's distracted driving laws by closing a gaping loophole and increasing fines.

First-time offenses not resulting in a crash can lead to fines of up to \$1,000. Second-time offenses or offenses that contributed to a crash result in an up to \$2,000 fine.

Those who nab a third distracting driving citation in a 10-year period can be fined up to \$2,500 and sentenced to 6 months in jail for the misdemeanor offense.

But courts may offer to suspend the fine for first-time offenders if they complete and pay for a distracted driving avoidance course, according to the Oregon Department of Transportation.

And those caught texting or using their phones don't always face the stiffest penalty.

The presumptive fines for each offense — \$260 for a first-timer and \$435 for a second-time offense — can be much lower than the maximums.

The analysis also took into account how easily a distracted driving offense can lead to a suspended license.

Illinois drivers were found most likely to get their license suspended for texting while driving.

Utah, Wisconsin and Alaska, with fines ranging from \$750 to \$400, also made the top five rankings of strictest states.

Montana, the only state with no laws restricting the use of cell phones while driving, earned the title of "most lenient" state.

Due to its low fine of \$20, California also ranked near the bottom.

The analysis only took into account state laws — but not city-specific laws — banning cell phone use while driving.

Rosenblum said due to the high number of texting-related crashes, nearly all states have passed laws.

As an authority on the subject of traffic tickets, their firm decided to compare nationwide how states are working to stop distracted driving. If Oregon's strict laws show a positive impact, it could lead other states to follow suit.

"The National Safety Council reports that cell phone use while driving leads to 1.6 million crashes each year," Rosenblum said. "If Oregon is able to lower the number of accidents caused by distracted driving, other states may follow suit and make their distracted driving penalties harsher."

For questions, comments and news tips, email reporter Whitney Woodworth at [wmwoodwort@statesmanjournal.com](mailto:wmwoodwort@statesmanjournal.com), call 503-399-6884 or follow on Twitter @wmwoodworth



**Oregon State Police Senior Trooper Cameron Bailey pulls over a driver for speeding while patrolling for distracted drivers along a section of Interstate 5 in April of 2016, during a ride along.**

STATESMAN JOURNAL FILE

Online at [SilvertonAppeal.com](http://SilvertonAppeal.com)

News updates: ■ Breaking news ■ Get updates from the Silverton area

Photos: ■ Photo galleries

Vol. 138, No. 47

Serving the Silverton Area Since 1880  
A Unique Edition of the Statesman Journal



©2019 50 cents  
Printed on recycled paper