

## OREGON IN BRIEF

From wire reports

**Piano teacher accused of sexually abusing student**

SHERWOOD — A piano teacher in Sherwood has been accused of sexually abusing one of his students.

KGW reports that the suspect, 29-year-old Christopher M. Griffin, was arrested Saturday and has been charged with sodomy, sex abuse and unlawful sexual penetration.

Police say Griffin allegedly had several encounters with the victim while teaching piano lessons at Let's Make Music and Dance, a music school in Sherwood that serves kids from age 3 up to adults.

DeLyn Griffin, Griffin's mother and director of Let's Make Music and Dance, posted a statement on the school website Sunday evening that says her son is innocent. She said he will not work at the school while charges are pending.

**Oregon Senate OKs Holocaust education requirement in schools**

SALEM — The Oregon Senate overwhelmingly approved a measure requiring schools to teach students about the Holocaust and other acts of genocide.

Senators voted 27-0 on

Tuesday to include the Holocaust as part of the statewide social studies curriculum. A recent poll found that two-thirds of American millennials surveyed could not identify what Auschwitz is.

Only 10 states require some level of Holocaust and genocide education in the classroom. Chief sponsor of the bill Sen. Rob Wagner, D-Lake Oswego, said that more education is needed to combat the "recent increase in anti-Semitic violence and hate speech" across the country.

The measure now goes to the House for approval.

**Man accused of starting more than 20 fires in Portland**

PORTLAND — A man has been arrested on suspicion of intentionally setting fires in downtown Portland.

Portland Fire and Rescue said investigators believe Jack Edward Vandorin Young started more than 20 fires since March 8. Nine or 10 of those fires were started in the west part of downtown on March 8 and 9.

KOIN reports that arson investigators have been tracking the suspect since

he was caught on surveillance video on March 1 allegedly setting off false fire alarms.

Young was arrested Sunday evening and charged with two counts of arson. It wasn't immediately clear if he had an attorney.

**Oregon governor pushes for prepaid mail-in ballots**

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown is pressing Oregon lawmakers to pass a measure paying for prepaid postage on mail-in ballots, a move she says would boost voter turnout in a state that boasts one of the highest electoral participation rates in the country.

California and Washington state have already passed measures requiring election officials to provide prepaid mail ballots.

Oregon became a leader in voting accessibility after switching to a vote by mail system 2000. The state also became the first to implement a robust automatic voter registration system that automatically signs people up to vote when they get a driver's license.

But the governor notes that postage stamps can still act as a "functional

barrier" for some people, particularly low-income and young people who are less likely to have stamps.

Currently, voters who can't afford stamps can turn in their ballots for free at their county clerk's office or at a ballot drop box.

**Alaska Airlines flight to Seattle returns to Portland**

SEATTLE — Alaska Airlines says a flight headed to Seattle returned to Portland after the crew shut down one of the aircraft's engines.

KOMO-TV reports Alaska Flight 2228 departed from the Portland International Airport at about 10:30 a.m. Tuesday and returned about a half hour later.

The airline says in a statement that pilots were notified of an issue with one of the propeller's speed control shortly after takeoff.

The crew then shut down

an engine, which is standard procedure. The Bombardier Q400 aircraft landed safely.

The Seattle-based airline says it was working Tuesday afternoon to get the 76

passengers and four crew members on a different Alaska plane.

The airline says its pilots are trained for single-engine operations, which are rare.



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## ELGIN

Continued from Page 1A  
sewers experience inflow and infiltration often, according to Dan Larman, the city's public works supervisor.

"Having significant inflow and infiltration issues means we need to be able to pinpoint problem areas on our own instead of renting equipment from other municipalities," he said.

The offer from La Grande came with impeccable timing, as the City of Elgin recently received \$476,400 in grant money from Business Oregon to kickstart its wastewater system renovation project — something that has been on Larman's mind since he began working with the public works department nine years ago.

"It's a good thing to get started, and I have total faith in Elgin's City Council and our public works crew," he said. "I don't think the project will get dropped. We'll keep progressing year after year."

Larman noted the sewer's makeover will cost about \$6 million over a 20-year period when it's all said and done, but with the grant money and the CCTV van at its disposal, the city can get to work immediately.

Also at Tuesday night's council meeting Judge Laura Eckstein gave a progress report on reestablishing the city's court.

"We have now entered our third phase of court," she said during the meeting. "We had the set-up phase, we had the getting-up-to-speed phase, and now we are in the phase where we have our first misdemeanor criminal case, which is a huge step for us."

In August 2017, Elgin held its first municipal court case in six years with Eckstein as its newly appointed judge. Since then, she's been handling ordinance cases, such as traffic and animal license violations, with a goal of building up to criminal cases.

"We had to start from scratch," she said. "We always intended to take criminal cases, but we had to phase the process in."

Eckstein will see her first misdemeanor criminal case in Elgin on March 27, followed by two juvenile cases in the near future.

Dawson Larman, newly appointed student councilor and Dan Larman's son, gave his first detailed report to the city council. He spoke of his meeting with Elgin School District Superintendent Dianne

Greif on the district's budget plans.

Dawson reported Elgin High School's gymnasium roof will likely be replaced this summer after it endured severe wind damage, and the school's track coach, Emily Sorensen, hopes to host its first track meet in years at home, although the district will need to reallocate funds to buy new equipment for the meet.

The student councilor also pointed out the lack of mental health counselors at Elgin High School and Elgin Middle School, and said the superintendent "main priority" is to hire full-time counselors, depending on the budget.

Also at Tuesday's meeting, Duffy said the city council is still looking for grants to purchase a new ambulance, which will cost about \$250,000. The mayor also would like to apply for more grant money in the area of arts and culture for the City of Elgin in the near future.

As he has stated before, Duffy explained grant funding is especially vital for rural communities to grow and thrive.

"A small community like ours has to have grants to succeed," he said. ■

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## Grande Ronde Hospital proudly welcomes: Edward Frink, MD

Joining the Grande Ronde Hospital and Clinics team as an Anesthesiologist



**Edward Frink, MD**

Anesthesiologist Edward Frink, MD, joins the GRH team from the Central Oregon area. Dr. Frink is a graduate of the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine and is board certified by the American Board of Anesthesiology.

Dr. Frink enjoys outdoor activities including camping, fishing, and hunting. He is a worldwide traveler pursuing his fly fishing passion. When not fishing, he is often found following his two daughters to horse-jumping events or remodeling his 1958 Airstream. He looks forward to providing high-quality Anesthesia services to Union County.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Frink to the Grande Ronde Valley!

Learn more about Dr. Frink in our online  
Provider Directory at [www.grh.org](http://www.grh.org) today!



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