

Gas company hosts disaster scenario

Cottage Grove played host to a disaster preparedness scenario last week that used a nearby natural gas meter station as its setting. Officials with energy infrastructure company Williams hosted a scenario that brought together fire, police, forestry and other officials at Stacy's Covered Bridge Restaurant on Wednesday, March 25, a scenario meant to outline the company's response to a potential gas line break as it may occur at the company's meter station south of Cottage Grove near Interstate 5. "This would not be the type of emergency where first responders would just rush in; there would have to be a specific coordinated response," said Cottage Grove Community

Development Director Howard Schesser, who also handles Cottage Grove's emergency response. Schesser attended the meeting along with Police Chief Mike Grover and Fire Chief John Wooten, in addition to personnel with Lane County's emergency management team. Schesser said Williams described the specific location of the meter station, how long natural gas would "bleed off" in the event of a line breakage (about 30 minutes) and how agencies could best respond to such a situation. First priorities would be to ensure the safety of responders and evacuate the scene. Schesser said the scenario was a valuable one because it allowed those who would respond to such a situation to have contact before the situation occurs.

A LITTLE 'DISORIENTATED'



From left, Sara Meyer, Alex Ihnat and Linda Schmale perform as Kiki De'Leggs, Ivan Ego and Dee Sypher in the Friends of the Cottage Grove Library mystery dinner production "Murder on the Disorientated Express" Saturday evening at the Cottage Grove Community Center. Organizer Mary McNamara said the Friends sold out their mystery dinner for the second straight year and called the event a "huge success."

WHITING

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onto a seat cushion, and Whiting, who was face-down and unresponsive. "My son said he believed that Tom had stayed under the boat holding onto a line for about five minutes," Colton said. "There was probably hypothermia involved because the water was so cold." Colton said Whiting yelled his nephew's name three times but couldn't reach him; Johnson reportedly yelled back for his uncle to grab onto something to float upon, though debris was

floating in the other direction.

"The deputies got to Charlie first, but he refused rescue until they got Tom out of the water," Colton said. Deputies attempted to resuscitate Whiting for over an hour. A yellow Labrador retriever was also aboard the boat and has not been located.

"The rescuers did an excellent job," Colton said. "The sheriff's deputies were very brave and heroic for going out there to rescue them. One more minute, and they said my son wouldn't have made it because of the hypothermia."

Sheriff Ward wrote that he was proud of how his deputies responded to the accident.

"From the time of the first 911 call, it only took 10 minutes until the responding deputies had the two victims on board the marine boat," he wrote. "I am also so very proud of my deputies, who risked their lives this morning without hesitation. They without a doubt saved the life of Charlie Johnson, and they did all they could to help save the life of Thomas Whiting."

Colton said her son and brother-in-law were very close.

"Tom was like his best friend," she said. "They did everything together."

Whiting is known to many in Cottage Grove as the owner of Whiting's Pest Control, a company he has owned since 1993. A visitation is planned this Friday, April 3 from 6-8 p.m. at Smith-Lund-Mills Funeral Chapel in Cottage Grove. A memorial will be held Saturday, April 4 at 11 a.m. at the Cottage Grove First Baptist Church with inurnment at Hawley Cemetery.

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LORANE COUNTRY NEWS

BY LIL THOMPSON
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Here's hoping everyone had a great Spring Break. The week ended Sunday evening with a fantastic attendance at the square/ barn dance at Lorane Grange with Chris Booher

and brothers playing. Everyone had a great time! Now the break is over, and all routines are back to normal.

Lorane Grange meets this Thursday, April 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Easter is this Sunday. Lorane Christian Church has two services. Their sunrise service at King Estate is at 7:30 a.m. Then guests can go down to breakfast at the church at 8:30 a.m. Their regular Sunday service is at 10 a.m. with no Bible

School. Guests may enjoy Easter Sunday at either or all of these times, as everyone is invited and welcome!

The RAC/Lorane Grange Talent Show is only a little over a week away on Sunday, April 12 at 3 p.m. There is still room for more talent, and those who wish to perform can call Lil at 541-942-5701 or Lisa Livelybrooks to sign up their special talent. Performers are asked to be there fifteen minutes early to get on

the roster. Anyone with stationary talent, like art or sculpture, can bring it to the kitchen area for set up. Everyone else, plan to attend and have an extremely entertaining afternoon. There will be finger food snacks and beverages.

Plan on enjoying the next spaghetti dinner and bingo at Lorane Grange on April 25 starting at 5:30 p.m.

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