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Fighting youth homelessness — 3A

Easter celebration — 12A



90 by 30 feels blue

Awareness campaign for Child Abuse Prevention Month paints the town, page 2A

# Cottage Grove Sentinel

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2015

SOUTH LANE COUNTY'S MOST AWARD-WINNING NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1889

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## Lawsuit over inmate death settled

City to pay \$450,000 to mother of a 24-year old who died of aspiration pneumonia at the CG Jail in 2012

BY JON STINNETT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The City of Cottage Grove has reached a settlement agreement with the mother of a 24-year old man who died of aspiration pneumonia in the Cottage Grove Jail in 2012.

The City has agreed to a \$450,000 settlement to end litigation in a wrongful death

suit filed by Wendy Cooper, the mother of Nathan Cooper, against the City and several representatives of the Cottage Grove Police Department for what it called the "intentional conduct, reckless or conscious disregard, deliberate indifference or gross negligence" that it says "deprived Nathan Cooper of his civil and constitutional rights."

The suit stated that CGPD failed to provide necessary medical care while Cooper was serving a sentence in the Cottage Grove Jail for possession of a Xanax pill without a prescription, a failure it says ultimately led to his death.

Megan Yarnall, a Eureka, California-based attorney, filed the suit on behalf of Cooper in March of 2013. Attorneys with Miller and Wagner LLP of Portland defended the City. Facts agreed upon by both parties in a pretrial order filed in November of 2014 state that Nathan Cooper

was booked into the jail on the morning of April 26, 2012 to serve a 10-day sentence. The next day, Cooper experienced what appeared to be heroin withdrawal symptoms. That evening, Officer Tami Howell summoned paramedics to examine Cooper.

Cooper was released on a "medical furlough" on April 29 to "detox on his own" but reportedly failed to return to the jail at the designated time. He was re-arrested on April 30. Paramedics were summoned to evaluate Cooper again on

May 1, and they told CGPD to monitor Cooper and keep him hydrated. On May 2, Cooper reportedly asked Officer Conrad Gagner what it meant to puke up blood. On May 3, Cottage Grove's Municipal Court Judge, Court Clerk and City Attorney met with Cooper in his jail cell to discuss his criminal charges. Early in the morning of May 5, Officer Jarrod Butler reportedly found Cooper unconscious during a jail check. He was pronounced deceased at 4:31 a.m.

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Also inside:



Stock rising  
Walk-off heroics power  
Lion victory, page 1B

## Bond committee tours pool, sees Harrison cost estimate

Members asked to identify priorities in advance of April 8 meeting

BY MATT HOLLANDER  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

For some time, a replacement of Harrison School has been identified as the prime target of South Lane School District's prospective bond measure. In addition, the bond committee has discussed several other projects for that bond. On Tuesday, March 31, the conversation took a more concrete form when school district officials presented the estimated cost of a new elementary school.

Based on recent school construction data from throughout the western region, a new elementary school of 85,000 square feet, which could support 500-650 students, is estimated to cost \$21.2 million, explained Superintendent Krista Parent.

At a rate of \$219 per square foot, it is 27 times more expensive to build a new elementary school in 2015 than in 1958. But while inflation and increased construction costs account for some of that difference, the profiles of schools have also changed, Parent said.

All new schools are equipped with fiber optics and network connections; most have gymnasiums that are not used for meals, and, compared to 1995, elementary schools are providing about 80 more square feet of space per student.

"Schools are no longer built with rows of desks in mind," Parent said. "There is more hands-on, project-based learning, and that requires more space."

The estimated cost for the new elementary school includes both the building cost (\$18.6 million) and the costs associated with outfitting the school (\$2.6 million). However, it is generally expected that the latter expenditures will come out of whatever funds remain after construction has been completed.

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photo by Jon Stinnett

Marc and Christina Lund completed the purchase of Sunset Hills last week after the facility went through a period of receivership.

## Lunds acquire Sunset Hills funeral chapel

BY JON STINNETT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Marc and Christina Lund have been spending quite a bit of time in Eugene lately, but they're quick to point out that Cottage Grove is still their home and headquarters.

Last week, the Lunds, owners of Smith-Lund-Mills Funeral Chapel and Crematorium in Cottage Grove, completed the purchase of Sunset Hills Cemetery, Funeral

Home and Crematorium in south Eugene, taking that business out of a brief period of receivership.

The Lunds say they became interested in purchasing Sunset Hills while assisting the organization during its time in receivership. Last year, Sunset Hills faced the threat of being shut down for lack of licensure. Previous owners had failed to qualify for state cemetery requirements.

"Someone needed to step in and do the right thing", said Marc Lund.

"So many families had put their trust in Sunset Hills, and funeral service in general. I just couldn't see letting them down."

Marc Lund pointed out that, much like Smith-Lund-Mills, Sunset Hills features a three-part business model that includes a chapel, crematorium and cemetery. Each business requires separate licensing, and the Lunds were among the few licensed funeral practitioners

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Feet, cared-for  
PeaceHealth opens  
local clinic, page 3A



## Project Prom: Interact Club works to bring down the cost of the big dance

BY MATT HOLLANDER  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Cottage Grove High School students Tori Fullerton and Tesslyn Gordon along with fellow members of Interact Club, were originally tasked with staging a prom for the community's senior citizens. But it didn't take long for them to realize an equally worthwhile opportunity in their own back yard: making prom more affordable for high-school students.

In 2014, U.S. News and World Report, citing data from Visa, estimated that the average household spends \$978 on prom, the biggest expenditures being clothes, limousine rentals, tickets and dinner.

"We realized that a lot of students were deciding not to go prom because it was too expensive," said Fullerton, a senior.

While Interact did not abandon its original plan — Fullerton said that a senior-citizen prom is on tap for next

year — the club refocused its energies over the past two months into bringing down the cost for students to attend this year's high school prom, scheduled for April 25.

The club recently held a bake sale to subsidize prom tickets for students on free or reduced lunch programs. The proceeds from the bake sale cut the price of those tickets from \$25 to \$12.50.

Interact Club, with Parent Partnership, will also host a two-day event

this weekend at the high school for students to pick from donated formal wear. The event is open Saturday and Sunday, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Gordon said that the support of local businesses has been instrumental to the project; many donated gift cards, which will be awarded in a raffle to anyone who donated a piece of formal wear.

Additionally, Shampoo Dolls Salon donated five hair and makeup appointments, which Interact Club will present

to deserving students.

"It's been a bit overwhelming trying to find the time to pull this all together, but it's such a worth while cause and we've had a lot of support from the community," Fullerton said.

Gordon, a junior, said she is confident that the project will return next year.

"The past few months have been a run of trial-and-error. We already know a lot about how we will do it better next year," she said.

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