



The Chatterbox

The power of One...

BY BETTY KAISER
For the Sentinel

"One person can make a difference, and everyone should try."

— John F. Kennedy

On Aug. 11, 1965, a routine traffic stop by police triggered a race riot in a suburb of my hometown in Los Angeles. African Americans (then known as Negroes) lived in semi-isolation in the Watts area of L.A. Unemployment was high, relations between the mostly white police and the community was strained at best. The 1964 Civil Rights Act was in its infancy. The area was a powder keg.

Ugly rumors about the traffic stop grew, flew and ignited an explosion like we Angelenos had never known. For six days, as many as 10,000 rioters took to the streets in roving bands. By the time the riots ended, 34 people died, more than 1,000 were injured and 600-plus buildings were damaged or destroyed by fire and looting.

After the riot, racial tensions continued to simmer. Young men were still unemployed and turning to drugs, gangs and violence. Into this scene came a most unlikely peacemaker—"Big Willie" Robinson.

Willie, a Vietnam veteran and member of the U.S. Army Special Forces, came home to another kind of war. He was an imposing 300 pound, 6'6" gentle giant of a man—the kind of guy that could get gang members and cops to put down their weapons and shake hands. He also loved fast cars and soon made a name for himself in East L.A.'s street racing underground in his '57 Chevy.

Veterans returning from World War II are credited with starting the hot rod racing craze. "My car is hotter than your car" conversations led them to the streets in competition for bragging rights. Later, in the 1950s my husband and his buddies raced after school in isolated areas and at night at Lion's Drag strip in Long

Beach. It was everything that a young man loves—speed and competition.

In 1966, a year after the riots, L.A. residents and politicians were desperate for ways to vent the Watts pressure cooker. Future mayor Tom Bradley (then a councilman) noticed that the local street-racing scene of hot rodders and drag racers attracted an integrated crowd. He and the Council approached Robinson to stage a series of semi-legal street races at midnight on Fridays for all comers.

More than 10,000 people showed up on the first night! Thus was born the National and International Brotherhood of Street Racers. "Jalopnik" magazine said membership was simple: pledge to race under safety supervision; abstain from alcohol, drugs, fighting; and NO squirreling during events (i.e. acting stupid while showing off).

In 1968, the program was credited to have helped L.A. keep order on the streets after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Cities like Chicago, Detroit and New York saw spikes in racial unrest.

Robinson worked for years to get a drag strip that could be operated with the low buck street racer in mind. In 1974, he finally saw his dream come true on Terminal Island outside L.A. The track was short on amenities, but it was a true melting pot for the car culture. There, on their own turf, guys could quasi-legally drag race off the city streets without the dangers of illegal racing.

Big Willie Robinson, street racer and peacemaker, died on May 21, 2012 at the age of 69. He helped thousands of men to build a brotherhood through street racing. "When you get around cars, man, there isn't no colors, just engines," he told the L.A. Times in 1981.

The power of one person to make a difference under pressure cooker circumstances always amazes me. Last month, the whole world sat up and paid attention when Ms. Toya Graham chased down and stopped her son as he took part in the Baltimore riots. I nominate her for Mother of the Year!

The riots began when Freddie Gray, a 25-year old Afri-

can American resident of Baltimore, died in police custody a week after being arrested. Gray reportedly was in good health prior to his arrest but possibly incurred neck and spine injuries while being transported to jail. He later fell into a coma and died. Charges have been filed against six police officers.

Irate citizens initially protested peacefully. Once charges were filed against the police the scene turned ugly. Angry crowds took to the streets in massive acts of violence, vandalism, looting and arson. In the end, everyone suffered—police, rioters, innocent civilians and shopkeepers. There were no winners.

Well, maybe one. Score one for mothers! I loved Toya Graham, rushing into the fray to do what she could. She didn't rush out to beat up the police, or the protestors or shopkeepers. No, she zeroed in to stop the only person that she had any control over—her son. Her actions went viral, giving us all a lesson in love and wisdom.

Graham, a single mother of six children, spotted her 16-year old son Michael wearing a hoodie and mask. She said, "I just lost it. I was shocked, I was angry, because you never want to see your child out here doing that. I don't want him to be a Freddie Gray...I'm a no-tolerant mother."

It's that reputation that made her son wince the second he saw her. He said, "when I seen you, ma, my instinct was to run." Photos show her whacking and herding him out of the crowd and home where they watched and discussed the riots play out on television.

Graham hopes that with the perspective of time it will be a teachable moment for her son. I'm thinking that it's a teachable moment for all of us: Respect one another, play by the rules, don't hurt others, make a scene for a good cause but start the training at home.

God bless the peacemakers. They make a difference. It's a task for each of us to try.

Betty Kaiser's Chatterbox is about people, places, family, and other matters of the heart. Contact her at 942-1317 or via e-mail — bhatty@bettykaiser.com

BEYOND THE GROVE

Impactful news from Lane County and surrounding communities

Killer gets life sentence

Douglas County District Attorney Richard Wesenburg, Jr. announced Thursday that Jesse Stuart Fanus (35) was sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole for the 1998 killing of Major General (ret.) Marion Carl during a home invasion robbery. Fanus had been convicted of aggravated murder and a number of other charges by a Douglas

County jury after a trial in 1999. The death sentence from the 1999 trial was overturned by a Marion County post-conviction relief court in 2012.

Fanus' attorneys approached the state and offered to accept life in prison without possibility of parole in exchange for the state dropping the death penalty. In return for the state's agreement to a sentence of life

in prison without parole, Fanus gave up all rights to challenge his conviction and sentence in all state and federal courts.

Major General Carl was a fighter pilot in the Pacific theater during World War II, becoming the first Marine Corps flying ace. After the war, he continued serving his country as a distinguished military aviator and test pilot.

BRIEFS FROM BEYOND

Vintage bicycle show

The Calapooia Reflections Museum would like to showcase Vintage Bicycles in a spring Bicycle Show on June 6 in the Sutherlin Community Center starting at 10 am to 3 pm. Bicycles of all kinds are welcome going back to the 1930s-40s and up to 1970s -80s. A fee of \$10 will be charged for each bicycle booth, which will raise funds for the museum.

A bike-safety program will be presented by the Sutherlin Police staff from 11 a.m. to noon.

Security and special handling of the bicycles would be considered. For information call 541-430-6873 and ask for Jo. Or email at this address to register

jbarnes495@gmail.com

Potter completes Basic Training

Air Force Airman First Class Austin Potter graduated from basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, San Antonio, Texas.

The airman completed an intensive, eight-week program that included training in military discipline and studies, Air Force core values, physical fitness, and basic warfare principles and skills.

Potter earned distinction as an honor graduate. He is the son of Jerri Potter, and grandson of Cecil and Patricia Parker, all of Drain, Ore. He is also the brother of Troy Ellis, Bryce Wertz

and Kyle Wertz.

The airman is a 2012 graduate of North Douglas High School.

Beat Goes On at Dorena

"The Beat Goes On!" at Dorena School on Friday, May 15 from 5:30 to 8 p.m., 37141 Row River Rd. The Dorena celebration will feature live music from the "The Men from S.U.R.F." and food concessions sponsored by Lane Electric. Family activities will be available such as face painting, a bounce house, book sales, and a silent auction, and the event raises funds for the education and enrichment of Dorena students.

LORANE COUNTRY NEWS

BY LIL THOMPSON
For the Sentinel

Last Monday, after two weeks of working on a mural depicting the history of the town of Crow, a mural was presented to Crow Middle/High School, which they proudly hung in the main hallway for everyone to enjoy. Special thanks go to their history teacher, Ms. Roberts, and Esteban Camacho Steffensen, a very talented local artist. Not only did these students learn about the community, the founders and rivers running through the area, they showed much on the mural. This was an exciting and educational project for the students.

Just a reminder of the All-School Awards Assembly on Wednesday morning, May 27 and Senior Recognition at 7 p.m. that same evening. Everyone is invited to share in the students' accomplishments and cheer for the seniors.

May 29 is the seniors' last

day. Wow, school is coming to a close quickly for this school year.

Parents of all eighth-grade students have until May 15 to get pictures in of your child!

After much discussion, Lorane Grangers decided to wait until September for the next spaghetti and bingo evening. With other comments, work on the Grange roof and vacations, there weren't enough members to get prepared and serve. We look forward to seeing you in the fall!

Remember the exciting Lorane Celebration 2015 scheduled for Sept. 12. You may call Lil Thompson at 541-942-5701 to sign-up to have a table at the Grange Hall. No need to wait—sign up any time.

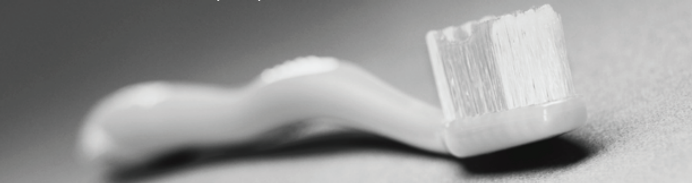
Lorane Fire Board meets this Thursday, May 14 at 7:30 p.m.

Mark your calendars for Crow High School graduation on Friday, June 5, 2015.

Don't forget to vote! If you haven't mailed it in by now, you'll need to take it to a drop box.

NEW: Digital X-Rays (use less radiation)

Implants • Teeth Whitening • Extractions
Lumineers (no prep veneers as seen on TV)



Cottage Grove Dental

Dr. Brent Bitner, DDS

350 Washington, Cottage Grove (behind Better Bodies)

541.942.7934

BINGO COUPON

COTTAGE GROVE ELKS LODGE

755 North River Road
Information 942-3554

PUBLIC WELCOME

Every Wednesday (except Holidays)
Warm Ups 6:30pm Regular Games 7:00pm
Frequent Smoke Breaks, Exciting New Game Program
"Bingo Burger Menu" Available

2 PROGRESSIVE JACKPOTS

Bring this coupon and receive
a 2nd Warm-up Pack FREE

CG

Douglas G. Maddess, DMD
FAMILY AND GENERAL DENTISTRY
Brightening Lives One Smile at a Time



Comprehensive Family Dentistry
Now Offering Digital X-Rays
Financing Options Available
Welcoming New Patients
Call for an appointment today!

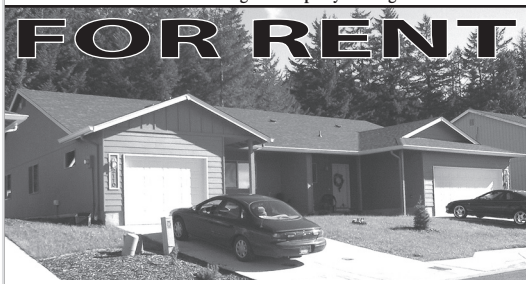


914 South 4th St. • CG • 541-942-1559
See our new website:
douglasgaddessdmd.com



Cottage Grove Board of REALTORS®

TLC
Territorial Land Company, REALTORS®
1785 East Main Street, Cottage Grove • 541-942-9141
Real Estate Brokerage & Property Management



FOR RENT
DUPLICES FOR RENT - BENJAMIN AVE.
All units are 3 bedroom, 2bath, 1100+/- sq. ft., 1 & 2 car garage units. Oak cabinets, w/w carpet, most have skylights/back covered patio. Lawn maintenance provided. Rents are \$855/mo 1 car and \$875/mo 2 car \$895/mo for corner units. Standard \$1,000 deposit with decent credit and good references. No smoking, some take pets (under 18lbs) with extra \$1,000 added to deposit.

DOUG PERKEY, Broker
www.territorialland.com



Joe Ward, Broker
75426 WILLIAMS CREEK LOOP, COTTAGE GROVE
CELL 541-912-0934 • OFFICE PHONE/FAX 541-942-3958
jowardproperties@gmail.com www.jowardrealestate.com



LAKEVIEW RANCHETTE:
15.68 ac. w/fenced pastures, timber, organic garden, orchard, berries and more. 4 bd, 2 ba, 2800 sq. ft. updated tri-level w/stunning views of CG Lake and Williams Lagoon. Large barn, shop, greenhouse, machine shed, RV pad, springs and more. \$565,000.

A1-REALTY



JOHN & LUCETTE REAKSECKER
"We Sell Real Estate"
(541) 683-6241
541-221-4004 cell
www.a1-realty.com
(Member Lane County Realtors Million Dollar Club)

WANT TO SAVE \$1,000?

Sell your home/land through John the Broker of A1-Realty. Decades of experience in helping Sellers and Buyers make money and save money in Real Estate.

Call John first! 541-221-4004 cell.

MLS

TR

We Appreciate our Affiliates

Commonwealth Financial Network
Cottage Grove Sentinel
Cynergy Pest Control
Eagle Home Mortgage
ENG Lending
Evergreen Land Title Escrow
First American Title & Escrow
First American Home Warranty
Siuslaw Mortgage
State Farm Insurance
Umpqua Bank
PayneWest Insurance
White Water Well Drilling & Pump Service
Williams & Mathis Accounting Service