

Some sunset!

Hot, humid weather meant late-evening clouds and spectacular sunsets in the Cottage Grove area throughout the weekend, and with triple-digit temperatures forecast this week, it's a good bet that sundown will continue to be a magical time.

photo by Paul Henrichs

Water rate website — 4A
Wings & Wheels — 3A
Traditional 4th Picnic — 6A

Cottage Grove Sentinel

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

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Round two of heat wave forecast

Lightning has already started fires, and more could be on the way

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Extreme heat baked much of Oregon over the weekend, and with three-digit temperatures in the forecast again this week, Cottage Grove residents will again be seeking a respite from the blazing sun.

The Weather Underground website, which keeps track of weather utilizing local stations, recorded highs of 98 degrees both Friday and Saturday, temperatures more than 20 degrees above normal for this time of year. Forecasts again call for highs approaching 100 degrees beginning Thursday, continu-

ing a pattern that has already sparked wildfires in several locations throughout the state.

South Lane County Fire and Rescue Division Chief Joe Raade said that firefighters continue to be concerned about dryer-than-usual temperatures this early in the summer following a winter that never was.

"We're concerned about the dryness, but we're more concerned about the weather this weekend, with thunderstorms,

no rain and temperatures approaching 100 degrees, weather that's expected to trickle into next week," Raade said Friday.

Those concerns became valid with the start of many fires over the weekend. The Oregon Department of Forestry issued an update of fires started on lands it manages on Monday, stating that the agency and its partners "are managing fire conditions usually experienced in late July or early August." Lightning

sparked the 700-acre Harper Complex Fire near John Day, and the Sugar Loaf Fire was reported Saturday burning in grass and timber in central Oregon on Bureau of Land Management land nine miles north of Dayville. The ODF reports 74 lightning-caused fires so far this year, though that number is dwarfed by the 233 fires reportedly caused by humans.

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What now?

A look at what recreational marijuana legalization will (likely) mean for Oregon and Cottage Grove

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Cottage Grove and the rest of Oregon awoke to a new reality today, Wednesday, July 1, the first day adults over the age of 21 have been able to legally possess and use marijuana for recreational purposes.

Oregon voters approved Measure 91, which legalized recreational weed, back in November. The measure that set the deadline for legalization, though many other details are still up in the air, as the state legislature is still hammering out specifics of the new legislation.

The Oregon Liquor Control Commission has been charged with implementing the system that allows marijuana to be legally grown, bought and sold, and in response to myriad questions about that system once legalization takes effect, the OLCC has published a website, www.whatslegaloregon.com, that touches on many of its basics.

Put simply, possession is legal for those over 21, though it is illegal to use the drug in public. Adults can possess up to eight ounces of usable marijuana in their homes and up to one ounce outside the home, and they can grow up to four plants at home out of view of the public. Driving under the influence of the drug remains illegal, and marijuana can't be legally bought or sold for recreational purposes until retail shops open, though the Oregon legislature may allow medical marijuana dispensaries to start selling recreational pot on Oct. 1 of this year. Marijuana can be given away or shared between adults.

So what does all this mean for Cottage Grove?

Please see **POT**, Page 8A

Price steps down as councilor

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The Cottage Grove City Council finds itself one vote short following the recent resignation of Councilor Kate Price, who has represented Ward IV for 2 1/2 years.

Price made an announcement last week via Facebook that she and husband Ben Price "have decided to move our growing family to Eugene."

"We would have liked to stay in Cottage Grove but were unable to find a house that suited our needs," she continued. Price said Monday morning that there doesn't seem to be that much housing available in Cottage Grove anyway, and for her to continue to represent Ward IV, she would have to find a suitable home in about a square-mile of territory on the southeast end of town. The Ward takes in residents living south of Madison Ave. and east of Highway 99. Price said the decision will not affect either of the two businesses she or her husband operate in town — Anytime Fitness and Hard Knocks Brewing.

Price said she gave the City notice that she would be resigning effective July 1, and she said she's already heard "quite a lot of response" from those who may be interested in representing the ward.

"A couple people have been interested, which is great because we've had trouble

Please see **PRICE**, Page 12A

Undercrossing at Row River Road/Trail progressing

Box culvert to be installed this week

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The relationship between one of Cottage Grove's most popular tourist attractions and its main county roadways is changing in earnest this week.

Lane County Planner Lydia McKinney said late last week that site preparation work for an undercrossing that will bring the Row River Trail — a bike trail that leaves Cottage Grove before skirting Dorena Reservoir on a 34-mile loop — under Row River Road has been going on for some time now. On Friday, workers with Weitman Excavation said they'll be installing the box culvert that forms

the tunnel under the road today (Wednesday, July 1).

"They're working concurrently on both intersections," McKinney said. "We expect to have the project complete by the end of the summer. That doesn't mean there definitely won't be complications, but we're hoping to be done by the end of July or early August."

The death of cyclist and former Cottage Grove High School counselor Michele Portmann at the intersection in a 2011 collision with an automobile prompted Lane County, which oversees Row River Road, to team up with the Bureau of Land Management, caretakers of the Row River Trail, to explore safety measures at the intersection at Milepost 4 where Portmann and another cyclist, Claude Weimer, lost their lives (Weimer was killed in a crash there in 2007).

The BLM subsequently applied for and received a \$1 million Federal Lands Access Program grant to build the undercrossing, which was approved after a round of public meetings.

McKinney said the County is not anticipating any road closures related to the construction project. Workers have already paved a bypass of the road under which the undercrossing will travel, she said, and trail users are currently using an "at-grade" crossing built to accommodate equestrian trail users, who had earlier indicated that their horses would not like to travel underground via the undercrossing.

McKinney cautioned drivers and trail users to be cautious in the work area, which currently has a 35 mile-per-hour speed limit.



photo by Jon Stinnett

Workers with Weitman Excavation have cleared the old asphalt of Row River Road and plan to install a box culvert Wednesday.

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RainCountryRealty.com raincountryrealty@gmail.com 1320 Hwy 99 • 541-942-7246



Principal Brokers
Teresa Abbott221-1735
Frank Brazell.....953-2407
Lane Hillendahl942-6838
Brokers
Laurie Phillip430-0756
Valerie Nash521-1618



Licensed in the State of Oregon

CONTACT US

On the Internet www.cgsentinel.com
By telephone (541) 942-3325
By fax (541) 942-3328
By e-mail cgsentinel@cgnews.com
By mail P.O. Box 35, Cottage Grove, OR 97424
In person Corner of Sixth and Whiteaker, Cottage Grove

WEATHER



Sunny

HIGH 97 LOW 62

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