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 Pickleball, tennis sharing space, page 1B



# Cottage Grove Sentinel

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

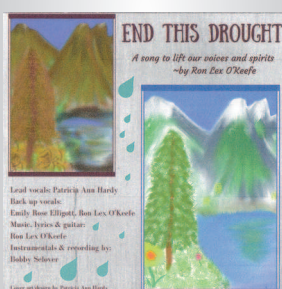
SOUTH LANE COUNTY'S MOST AWARD-WINNING NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1889

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 Local musician pens tune to end drought, page 8A



**All done!**  
 Habitat homeowner burns the mortgage, page 3A

## Trail Talk



photo by Jon Stinnett

**Kris Boylan of Weitman Excavation surveys the box culvert that will take Row River Trail users under Row River Road. Boylan said the under-crossing should be complete in the next couple weeks.**

## City, BLM meet to discuss future of Row River Trail

BY JON STINNETT  
 The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Officials with the City of Cottage Grove and the Bureau of Land Management say they recognize the valuable asset that the popular Row River Trail represents for the City and the region. Caring for that asset in the long run was the subject of a meeting that brought leaders from both agencies together last week.

Originally a rail line connecting Cottage Grove with the Bohemia Mining District, a rails-to-trails conversion brought the Row River Trail into existence, and today it spans 15.6 miles between Cottage Grove and Culp Creek. A popular destination for cyclists and other visitors, the trail welcomes an estimated 100,000 users each year.

Cottage Grove City Manager Richard Meyers said that the value the trail offers to the community is a big rea-

son why the City began maintaining the entire span of the trail — not just the three miles in town that it actually owns — last year. Liz Aleman of the Upper Willamette division of the BLM said that the City's track record with regard to maintaining its section of the trail also helped prompt the maintenance agreement.

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## Fire chief eases restrictions

Wooten said recent humidity is keeping things a bit wetter, lowering fire risk

BY JON STINNETT  
 The Cottage Grove Sentinel

South Lane County Fire and Rescue Chief John Wooten knows that local residents have work to do. And he's recently eased fire restrictions that were put in place in response to dangerous conditions to allow that work to get done.

Restrictions banning the use of open flames, power equipment such as mowers and chainsaws and other equipment that could potentially make a spark and smoking near dry brush have been in place since July 30 in response to extremely hot and dry conditions throughout the region. On Saturday, Wooten effectively lowered the restrictions one level.

"I've lifted the restrictions so that people can get their yard work done," Wooten said Monday morning. "They're essentially back to a Level 3."

This means, Wooten said, that open flames are still banned, but mowers and chainsaws can now be used — but only before 1 p.m. each day.

"The high humidity right now actually helps boost the fuel moisture of the vegetation," he explained. "That means that the burning period starts later in the day. But at 1 p.m., everybody needs to be done with that work, and there should still not be open flames anywhere."

Wooten said he was aware that the restrictions had been, well, restrictive for those hoping to break out the chainsaw or the weed-eater.

"They haven't been popular with a lot of people, so I don't like to keep them in place if I don't have to," said Wooten, who himself returned from a stint fighting the Stouts Fire near Canyonville late last week.

Wooten cautioned, though, that a return of hot, dry conditions could necessitate the more stringent restrictions. South Lane Fire has fielded a few complaints from those who have seen others violating the restrictions, he said, but by and large people have complied.

"There was an incident where an officer had to ask somebody to stop working because it was a violation, but that may have just been a case of somebody that didn't get the memo," he said.

## School Board consults with administrators

Gallery Walk allows a preview of the upcoming school year

BY JON STINNETT  
 The Cottage Grove Sentinel

With a new school year just over the horizon, administrators with South Lane School District met on Monday with members of the school board to talk about their goals and new developments for 2015-16.

"We see this as an opportunity to interact with each other, to talk about your

focus for the year, your successes and challenges," South Lane Superintendent Krista Parent told a large group gathered at the district office for the "State of the Schools Gallery Walk." Parent shared basic information about the District as a whole, such as its near-even split of 1675 and 1678 female and male students, respectively. About 67 percent of South Lane students qualify for free or reduced lunches, she said, suggesting a high poverty rate. Around 16 percent of students have a recognized disability, and 2.6 percent are learning English as their second language.

Each board member present had about eight minutes to interact with

the principal from each of the district's schools. Some schools shared similar information, such as their school's involvement with CATCH curriculum, which provides combined instruction in physical education and healthy snack choices. Instructors at London, Latham and Dorena schools also intend to collaborate on writing projects, providing a chance for students to interact with other students in their grade level that they might not otherwise see too often.

At Harrison Elementary, Principal Ali Nice said six new teachers will take

Please see **SCHOOL**, Page 11A

## Neufeld to leave Cottage Grove, resume costume design career

BY JON STINNETT  
 The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Aware that a photograph is imminent, Lesley Neufeld of Victoriana Antiques and Costumes searches for accessories to spice up her outfit. Rummaging through racks of western wear, vintage dresses and props, she snatches up a Cleopatra-style head-dress/cape combo, and voila! She's ready for her close-up.

Such is often the scene at Victoriana, where Neufeld has been busy dolling up Cottage Grove in period dress and Halloween spookery for a decade now. Still, the onetime costume designer for some of Hollywood's biggest films has felt the big screen calling her once again, and she's announced that she'll be leaving this community soon, bound for southern California.

Neufeld said she plans to keep the antiques portion of her shop on Main

Street open for the foreseeable future.

"It's smarter to let other people run the store until the building sells," she said.

The costumes, though, will go back to Los Angeles with her, where she plans to resume her work dressing up — and then dirtying up — feature films.

"My specialty is costuming for aging, dying characters and making clothes dirty and dingy so that they look authentic," she said. "Not a lot of people like doing that kind of work, but I look at it as an art form."

Creating grime for authenticity's sake was Neufeld's stock-in-trade before she moved to Cottage Grove, when she designed costumes for blockbusters like "Pirates of the Caribbean," "Waterworld," "The Scorpion King" and others. Neufeld said it was her husband, Stan, himself a director of many famed television series, who

suggested the move to Oregon.

"I was at the top of my career with 'Pirates' when we moved here," she said. "If I can get back and do that again, why not?"

She said Stan's somewhat sudden passing just after Christmas last winter set the wheels in motion for her move back down south.

"I had only owned my own store for a year," she said. "I'd wanted to own a store here ever since we moved to Cottage Grove. I've got to sell my house here, too. It's too big, and there are just too many memories. I've loved living in Cottage Grove, but I need a change."

Neufeld said she doesn't yet know which films she'll be working on, but she does know that her line of work is currently in demand. She said she'll keep her costumes around through this Halloween, and she wants to be moved by Christmas.



photo by Jon Stinnett

Lesley Neufeld of Victoriana Antiques and Costumes said she'll be headed back to Hollywood this year.

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### WEATHER



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