

Fundraiser helps online group 'Pay it Forward'

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

They've been at it for almost two years, and organizers of an event held Saturday in Bohemia Park got a bit of the community's help "paying it forward" to those in need.

This December marks the two-year anniversary of the founding of the "Pay it Forward Cottage Grove" group on Facebook, a group that uses the online platform to gather and transfer items from those in the area who can spare them to those that need them. On Saturday, a fundraiser to help cover the group's cost drew a large crowd.

"We were very busy, though a little understaffed," said Jennifer Neil, who started the group with her mother, Mindy Beer, and continues to run it from Beer's Cottage Grove home.

Neil said funds raised from the event will help cover the costs of warehouse space to store items before weekly pick-up days, in addition to purchasing supplies to fill boxes for the homeless, baby formula and other community needs. Saturday's fundraiser included a "huge free sale," that Neil said went very well, doling out over 3000 pieces of clothing. A successful silent auction, free games, a bounce house, snow cones and a dunk tank also helped round out the day's events.

The Pay it Forward group recently gained its status as a non-profit organization, Neil said, a process that was more difficult than one might imagine.

"We got it two weeks ago, and it was a big thing," she said. "They didn't know quite how to categorize us because we don't pay anybody — a lot of times a non-profit will have a paid executive director or administrator."

The Pay it Forward group, in contrast, operates due to the efforts of Neil, Beer and a handful of volunteer administrators including Monique Cristine, Amanda Wilson, Emily Robinson and Bob Ehler. The group hopes that its new non-profit status can lead to sponsorships to further its work in the community.



A fundraiser for the 'Pay it Forward Cottage Grove' group on Facebook drew a large crowd, where a free sale included the donation of over 3000 items of clothing to community members. The group recently gained non-profit status.

Reduced-cost lunches eliminated throughout School District

Students who previously qualified will now get them free

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Reduced-cost lunches have been eliminated at schools in South Lane School District, and Food Service Supervisor Monica Yoss said it's a great thing for area youth.

About 65 percent of students at South Lane qualify for free or reduced lunches, Yoss said, though students at all schools who would previously have qualified for reduced lunches will now get them for free.

Oregon Governor Kate Brown recently signed into law House Bill 5017, which will offer free lunches to about 30,000 of the state's students who previously qualify for a reduced cost. The bill appropriated \$2.4 million toward the mandate for more free lunches.

Last year, 217 of the nearly 2600 South Lane students qualified for reduced lunches. With the exception of students at Dorena School and Al Kennedy Alternative High School, these families will still be required to fill out an application, but they can now keep the \$.40 per meal they previously paid as the reduced rate.

"The same amount of people will qualify for free and reduced lunches, but now they will all be free," Yoss said. The qualifications are based on the number of individuals in a household. A two-

Please see LUNCH, Page 11A

Sheriff's Office chase yields a different wanted subject

Search for James Vaughn leads to Sebastian Bivens, wanted on a long list of charges

BY JON STINNETT
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The pursuit of a wanted subject by Lane County Sheriff's Deputies on Thursday led to the apprehension of a man long familiar to local, state and

county law enforcement — though it was not the subject police originally hoped to capture.

Lt. Chris Doyle of the Sheriff's Office said that the pursuit of James Allen Vaughn, 45, who is reportedly wanted in regard to traffic violations, began in the Row River area near Sharps



Sebastian Bivens

Creek Thursday afternoon after a failed traffic stop. Police were unable to locate Vaughn, Doyle said, though they did find his blue Chevrolet pickup truck abandoned on the Row River Trail near Harms Park.

The added Sheriff's Office staff in the area in response to the pursuit included a deputy that recognized 25-year old Sebastian Bivens of Cottage Grove as a passenger in a vehicle during an unrelated traffic stop, Doyle said. Bivens was subsequently arrested and was lodged at the Lane County Jail on Mon-

day afternoon.

Bivens has a long history of contact with Cottage Grove Police, and he managed to elude local, state and county police for much of the month of July. He was captured with considerable effort last January; he then eluded local police in the process of another arrest on June 28. On the weekend of July 30-31, Bivens was able to ditch a car he had been driving on London Road and again elude Oregon State Police and other agencies on foot — twice. He was again arrested — this time without

incident — by Lane County Sheriff's Deputies on Aug. 14 while walking near Baker Bay County Park after again evading police throughout the previous evening.

On Monday, staff at the Lane County Jail said that Bivens was being held on a host of charges including attempted assault II, possession of a stolen vehicle, eluding police, escape III, reckless driving, attempted animal abuse and criminal mischief I. The jail representative did not have information on Bivens' previous arrest this month,

though personnel with the Cottage Grove Police Department said they had been informed that he had previously been released after just a matter of hours behind bars.

Doyle said the Sheriff's Office would still very much like to speak with Vaughn, who is described as a white male weighing about 200 pounds and standing five feet, eight inches tall. Those with information on his whereabouts are encouraged to call the Sheriff's Office at 541-682-4150.



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