

Halloween plan — 3A  
 Forest kindergarten — 7A  
 DUI stats — 7A



Soccer tops N. Eugene, page 1B

Barber shop's closing ends an era, page 12A



# Cottage Grove Sentinel

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2015

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

VOLUME 127 • NUMBER 12

## Slay appointed to Ward IV seat

BY JON STINNETT  
*The Cottage Grove Sentinel*

The Cottage Grove City Council filled a vacancy in its ranks Monday night with the appointment of Amy Slay to its Ward IV position.

The position had been vacant since Kate Price resigned to move her family to Eugene in late June. On Monday, the Council held a worksession prior to its regularly

scheduled meeting to interview three candidates to represent the ward, which takes in the southeast portion of Cottage Grove. A fourth candidate, Emily Robinson, reportedly decided not to take part in the interview process and instead opted to gain experience by pursuing an appointment to another city committee, according to City Manager Richard Meyers.

Candidates Slay, Greg Ervin and Chloe Beckes responded to a rapid-

fire series of 14 questions aimed at gauging their qualifications for the position and views on city issues. The candidates were asked about their community activities, the role they believe city government should fill, how they might approach an angry constituent and whether they would have time to perform the functions of a councilor.

Ervin, 29, has served on the

Please see **SLAY**, Page 10A



photo by Jon Stinnett

Amy Slay takes the oath of office from Mayor Tom Munroe. Slay was unanimously appointed by the City Council to its Ward IV position Monday night.

## WINE NOT

Table grapes vie for local affection in a winemaker's world

BY JON STINNETT  
*The Cottage Grove Sentinel*

For many in Oregon, the autumn's annual grape harvest conjures images of pinot noir and viognier and the crush that leads to next year's wine varieties.

It's the sort of ingrained perception that Mike Satterstrom has been working to augment these past few years. Satterstrom spent 25 years growing pumpkins and Christmas trees in California, but since coming to Oregon about eight years ago, he's worked to bring the possibilities of table grapes (and, of course, the grapes themselves) to the public consciousness. And to hear him tell it, it hasn't been an easy task.

"People here don't really eat grapes, and I haven't quite figured out why," Satterstrom said. "People ask me, 'What kind of grapes do you grow? Where's your winery?' Then they say, 'Oh, like it's something to look down on.'"



photo by Jon Stinnett

Mike Satterstrom picks a bunch of Vanessa table grapes. He said growing table grapes in Oregon has largely been an experiment, but their potential is evident.

For many, table grapes call to mind the California varieties found in the grocery store. But according to Satterstrom, everything about Oregon's table grapes is different, both from the table grapes favored down south and the wine varieties that dominate local grape discussions.

"It's a whole different world," he said. "You grow them differently. You take care of them differently. You pick them differently, and then, hopefully, you

sell them differently."

Table grapes are typically larger than their wine counterparts, offering a lot more pounds of fruit per acre. There are 13 varieties on Satterstrom's Saginaw-area farm, and the number of varieties alone is surprising to many.

California's table grapes don't often like Oregon's cooler climate, so a lot of the grapes Satterstrom grows come from New York or the Midwest.

There's the Vanessa varietal, a red New York grape with a lot of crunch. The Bronx seedless grows well here, as does the Reliance, an Arkansas-based grape that offers high production but doesn't tolerate much rain. The Interlaken is a sweet variety that some Oregon old-timers may recall.

"It's a memory some people have that they can't recall until

Please see **GRAPES**, Page 10A

## Traffic study outlines problem areas

Main St./Highway 99 intersection leads list of accidents

BY JON STINNETT  
*The Cottage Grove Sentinel*

The City of Cottage Grove has been monitoring traffic safety conditions at several locations around town, and on Monday night, the information gathered thus far was presented to the Cottage Grove City Council.

Last spring, a request for eight stop signs in a residential area touched off a discussion of traffic safety issues throughout the community that drew comment from several attendees at a City Council meeting. Since then, the City's engineering department placed traffic sensors at 16 locations and has been downloading and processing a mountain of data from each of them.

"The purpose of the discussion at the Council meeting will be to determine if the staff preparations are moving in the correct direction and if any additional information is needed," City Manager Richard Meyers said in his memorandum to the Council. He said that each of the traffic analysis devices, which take measurements through two tubes, was extensive and when printed, would take up a thousand or so pages for each location.

Perhaps of most interest Monday night was a list of the top 10 locations for motor vehicle accidents in Cottage Grove and the number of accidents at each between Jan. 1, 2009 and June of this year.

"You can see a trend where the accidents occur in areas of heavy use," Meyers said. "Were not surprised that they start with the freeway, the connectors and 99 and Main."

Topping the list was the East Main/Highway 99 intersection downtown, with 29 crashes during that span. Meyers pointed out that the number of crashes there has declined in

Please see **TRAFFIC**, Page 10A



photo by Jon Stinnett

A cyclist crosses under Row River Road on the Row River Trail Sunday. The undercrossing was built to avoid additional fatalities at the intersection.

## Wait for undercrossing over

Tunnel opens under Row River Road

BY JON STINNETT  
*The Cottage Grove Sentinel*

The popular Row River Trail, which leaves Cottage Grove before skirting Dorena Reservoir on a 34-mile loop, now includes an added feature for its many users.

On Monday, Sept. 7, an undercrossing that brings trail users under Row River Road at Milepost 4.0 opened for cyclists, hikers and horseback riders, and though construction to complete the \$1 million project is expected to continue into next week, the tunnel is being viewed as a success by those responsible for its planning.

"I think it looks great," said Lane County

Planner Lydia McKinney. "There are always surprises with any construction project, but there's been nothing major. We had to close the trail the week before last for paving, but for the most part it's been open throughout the summer, which was a goal because it sees such heavy use. The gravel paths weren't anybody's favorite, but they did help maintain access to the trail."

On Sunday afternoon, bicyclists cruised the long, slow curves leading up to both sides of the trail undercrossing, with some users seemingly traveling there just to use the tunnel for the first time. The intersection also includes

Please see **TRAIL**, Page 12A

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### WEATHER



HIGH 63  
 LOW 48

### CONTENTS

Calendar.....11B  
 Channel Guide.....5B  
 Classified ads.....7B  
 Obituaries.....2A  
 Opinion.....4A  
 Public Safety.....5A  
 Sports.....1B



6 18134 42405 2  
 75 CENTS