

# OFFBEAT

Continued from page 4sA

ished. Authorities assumed he'd hopped a freight out of town. They angrily vowed to bend every possible effort to catching him. The very next day, though, this nice, clean morality-play narrative was already starting to show a few spots of tarnish. First off, it soon became clear that Gittings was more than just some random beat cop sucked into someone else's domestic drama.

"There is plenty of evidence to show that there was very bad feeling existing between the two men," the Oregonian reported; "that Gittings was friendly with Mrs. Bradley; that Gittings was friendly to and in sympathy with the members of Mrs. Bradley's family, who were on bad terms with Bradley."

Just how friendly Gittings was with Bradley's family – and with one member in particular – became obvious at the policeman's funeral, held the following day. The funeral service was a fairly short one, and just as it was ending, a closed carriage raced up to the funeral home and three heavily veiled women burst forth. It was Kate Bradley with her sister, Aggie Vanders, and one other woman whom the reporter didn't identify.

"My God, are we too late?" sobbed Vanders noisily. Upon being told that they were, Kate Bradley asked where the interment would be held. Then the three ladies bounded back into the carriage and raced away.

The carriage caught up with the funeral procession, then passed it and raced on to the cemetery, where the three ladies installed themselves at the open grave to await the arrival of the casket. When it did



The mugshots of Officer John Gittings and his murderer, Melville Bradley, as they appeared on the front page of the Portland Morning Oregonian on Dec. 19, 1907

come, they made a tremendous scene with noisy sobs and wails of anguish, as the dead policeman's widow stood at the head of the grave, ashen-faced and trembling, quietly weeping and obviously trying to ignore them. Remember, these intruders were her husband's murderer's wife and sister-in-law. They were clearly the last people poor Mrs. Gittings wanted to see.

If their arrival was unexpected, it shouldn't have been. The funeral director told the Oregonian's reporter that Vanders, in particular, had visited the funeral parlor twice before to view the body – the first time on the day after the murder, a Thursday, on which occasion she "cried over the body until requested to leave."

"Friday she called again," the article con-

tinues. "She threw herself across the casket, her sobs being audible throughout the building. After this scene she was not allowed to view the remains again."

The reporter then puts the pieces together – almost – with the next paragraph:

"Mrs. Vanders has long borne the bitter hatred of Mrs. Gittings," he wrote. "She lived next door to the Gittings shanty on Humboldt Street and Gittings spent much of his time in her company."

And if that weren't enough to clue Portlanders in on what was really going on, there was this small item, run as a sidebar to the main story:

"Last night it was learned that Mrs. Aggie Vanders ... demanded of the policeman's widow that she surrender certain papers, said to be in Gittings' pocketbook. The woman also asked for the dead man's watch and revolver. ... Mrs. Gittings refused to give up the belongings."

The story was starting to smell more than a little bit sordid. But the real weirdness had only just begun. We'll continue the tale next week.

(Sources: Portland Morning Oregonian archives, Dec. 19, 20, 21, 22, 1907)

Finn J.D. John teaches at Oregon State University and writes about odd tidbits of Oregon history. For details, see <http://finn-john.com>. To contact him or suggest a topic: [finn2@offbeatoregon.com](mailto:finn2@offbeatoregon.com) or 541-357-2222.

# SPIDERS

Continued from page 6A

in the Willamette Valley. Hobo spiders, research shows, are not poisonous to humans, but their bite may cause pain, redness and itching. Poisonous brown recluse spiders do not live in Oregon, according to Langellotto.

Hobo spiders and house spiders (both in the genus *Eratigena*) look so similar that experts need a microscope to tell them apart. Both are medium brown with a lighter chevron on their upper abdomens. They are usually found in dimly lit areas like boxes, closets, storage areas and woodpiles.

Another common spider, the yellow and black garden spider (*Argiope aurantia*) can be seen outside where it often sits conspicuously in its orb web in open spaces waiting for prey.

In contrast to the garden spider, black widows (*Latrodectus* spp.) build messy, mesh-type webs in out-of-the-way spots. Females have a glossy black body with a distinctive red hourglass on the bottom of their rotund abdomens. Male widows are more drab, slender and smaller.

If you're interested in having a spider identified, bring it

into your local OSU Extension office. Make sure the spider is dead; kill them by placing in a container and putting it in the freezer.

"Spiders are not going to seek you out to bite you," Langellotto said. "They tend to be shy and not aggressive. If you don't bother them, they won't bother you."

If you want to avoid bothering them, here are Langellotto's recommendations for keeping spiders at bay:

Wear gloves, pants and a long-sleeved shirt when handling firewood or stored boxes where spiders may have built funnel-shaped nests.

Seal holes around doors, windows and outlets for plumbing

and wiring where spiders can find entry into the house.

Sweep webs from corners, rock walls and under eaves. Repeat as necessary.

Keep porch lights switched off as much as possible to keep from attracting flying insects that make good prey for spiders. Or switch to yellow bulbs, which attract fewer night-flying insects.

Place simple cardboard sticky traps (without the use of insecticide spray) along baseboards and bed frames where wandering spiders tend to move.

Keep vegetation near house mowed or trimmed.

# Health Services Directory

## Counseling & Mental Health

**South Lane Mental Health**  
Serving Cottage Grove Since 1988

- Outpatient Counseling for Children, Adults & Couples
- Psychiatric Medication Management
- Crisis Assistance

541-942-2850 • 541-942-3939 • [www.slmh.org](http://www.slmh.org)

## Dental Health

**Jonathan E. Backer, D.D.S.**

Preventive and Cosmetic Family Dentistry

New Patients Welcome

942-8437

1551 E. Main St.

**See Dr. Bitner D.D.S., P.C.**  
350 Washington Ave • Cottage Grove  
(behind International Fitness)

**Lumineers**  
The Most Natural Veneer

541-942-7934

Delaying going to the Dentist?  
Sedation Dentistry is a Dream come True... find out if its for You!

**BIRCH AVENUE DENTAL**

- Comprehensive General Dentistry
- Advanced Cosmetic Techniques
- Implants

1325 Birch Avenue, Cottage Grove  
541.942.2471  
Park W. McClung, DDS & Tammy L. McClung, DDS

## Dental Health

**Douglas G. Maddess, DMD**

Preventive and Cosmetic Family Dentistry

New Patients Welcome

914 South 4th St. • Cottage Grove • 942-1559

**Dr. Shane Parsons**  
605 Jefferson Ave.  
Cottage Grove

**TIMBERLINE DENTAL**

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm  
Emergency appts. available daily  
New patients welcome

2 Hygienists available • Same friendly and caring staff  
Please call for an appointment at 541-942-9171

## Hearing

**Grant's Hearing Center**

Venn Vranas  
Oregon Hearing Aid Dispenser

541-942-8444  
1498 E. Main St.  
[www.grantshearing.com](http://www.grantshearing.com)

Next to Safeway in Cottage Grove  
Hearing Aids For Every Need And Every Budget

## Medical

PeaceHealth Cottage Grove Community Medical Center

Great care in a great place.

Our services include:

- Primary Care
- Laboratory
- Physical Therapy
- Imaging
- Medical Out-Patient Services
- Home Health
- Emergency Department
- Walk-In Clinic

[peacehealth.org/cottage-grove](http://peacehealth.org/cottage-grove) • 1515 Village Drive  
Hospital: 541-767-5500 • Medical Clinic: 541-767-5200

## Medical Equipment

**Grove Medical Equipment**  
"BUILDING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY"

Sales & Rentals of Respiratory & Home Medical Equipment.

541-225-5443 148 Gateway Blvd  
grovemedical@outlook.com  
Join us on Facebook

Cottage Grove, OR 97424

## Pharmacies

**BI-MART Pharmacy**  
OPEN at 9am Mon. - Sat. • Convenient Walk-Up Window  
100 Gateway Blvd. • 942-9107

To list your business call us 541-942-3325

South Lane **Wheels**  
Everyone Can Ride to Local and Metro Destinations

Providing Public, Accessible Transportation to the Region

541.942.0456  
Cottage Grove, OR 97424  
[www.southlanewheels.org](http://www.southlanewheels.org)

Turning 65 and confused about Medicare choices?

Call Paul to help simplify the complicated.

541-517-7362

Paul Henrichs ~ Independent Agent  
coverage4oregon@gmail.com

**Fiesta Cultural**  
Friday Sep 25

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN COTTAGE GROVE 6 to 8 PM

**ART WALK**

Fiesta Cultural: A county-wide initiative hosted by Lane Arts Council to celebrate Latino arts and culture.

- Ballet Folklorico Tlanese: traditional Mexican dance troupe
- Orquesta La Combinación with Xavier Tavera from Havana Cuba:
- Salsa music and dancing at 7th/Main
- Fresh, homestyle tamales
- Educational art panels celebrating Latino arts and culture

US Bank EQUITY AND INCLUSION JORDAN SCHNITZER MUSEUM OF ART  
Eugene OREGON ARTS  
Valle Verde Family EUGen!