

BEYOND THE GROVE

Impactful news from Lane County and surrounding communities

Development of Creswell's economy gets a hand

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Tourism and economic development initiatives in Creswell are getting a boost from a brand-new position created specifically by the City of Creswell for the purpose.

Maia Hardy came to Creswell from Multnomah County last September as the city's RARE (Resource Assistance for Rural Environments) intern, and she's been hired full-time to encourage economic development effective Oct. 1.

Hardy explained that she's been hired to provide capacity at both the City and Creswell's Chamber of Commerce, in addition to serving as a liaison between the two organizations.

"Creswell doesn't have an organization that focuses on economic development," she said. "There are new board members and a new administrator at the Chamber, and I've been helping them incubate a lot of projects."

And according to City Administrator Michelle Amberg, Hardy is "doing a great job."

"These are things that always needed to be done, but there was never anyone who had the time to do them," Amberg said. "We've needed to add people in the area of economic develop-



photo by Jon Stinnett

Maia Hardy was hired full-time to promote economic development and tourist initiatives in Creswell.

Concerning Creswell

News and notes from our neighbor to the north

ment."

Recent initiatives have included bringing a foreclosure prevention workshop to town, in addition to a micro-enterprise workshop that took place last month. Grant funding for tourism initiatives is also being sought, funding that is slated to fund a partnership with Travel Oregon to create a "passport" program that will encourage visits to Creswell-area farms and other businesses, the "Farm, Forks and Fermentation" pro-

gram.

Amberg said that Hardy has also worked to identify and help promote Creswell's under-utilized commercial lands and buildings, which includes the effort to bring an Oregon State Police command center to the old Ray's building. The City hopes to hear news of that effort in the near future. Hardy and City Planner Maddie Phillips are working together on an economic development analysis for the City's comprehensive plan that should be completed in December, and students from Oregon State University have helped work on a plan to promote development at the Creswell Airport.

Hardy explained that economic development in Creswell has been "very touch and go."

A few years ago, Bi-Mart and Ray's went up and things exploded," she said. "But then the bubble burst. In the last two years, though, there's been a lot more development. Creswell has also struggled with retail leakage, as about 2500 people leave here every day to go work, and often shop, in Eugene and Springfield. We're pushing projects that we think are important to this community, that we haven't had the staff to support."

Drain train show

The North Douglas Performing Arts Council and The Drain Chamber of Commerce presents a model train show, the Holiday Preview for Train Lovers of All Ages, on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 5-6 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Monday, Dec. 7 from 10

a.m. to 1 p.m. (for grade-school children only on Monday) at the Drain Civic Center, 205 West A Street in Drain. Admission is free. Questions can be directed to Joe and Jackie Burres, 541-836-2505 or the website at www.ndpac.org or on Facebook at North Douglas Performing Arts Council.

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LORANE COUNTRY NEWS

BY LIL THOMPSON
For the Sentinel

Those who missed the meeting on Monday at Lorane Grange can attend the next one on Thursday, Nov. 19 at Applegate Elementary at 5 p.m. It aims to provide information on prospective improvements to Crow High School and Applegate Elementary and an opportunity to learn about the master plan

and meet the architect.

I hope to see everyone at the Lorane Grange spaghetti dinner and bingo night this Friday, Nov. 20. Dinner is at 5:30 p.m. with bingo beginning at 6:30 p.m. Be sure to put non-perishable goods for the Christmas baskets in any of the boxes in the organizations in the Lorane Community. These will all go into for those within the community in Lorane. Those who know of anyone in need can call Jim Baylor or the district office. Everything is kept in the strictest confidence. Crow High School senior class is taking orders for two different sizes of Christmas wreaths to be picked up on Sunday, Dec. 7. One is a basic 22-24-inch wreath for \$20, and the other is 26-28 inches for \$35. Order forms can be filled in and dropped off with payment by noon on Nov. 30.

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