

Cottage Grove Sentinel

SOUTH LANE COUNTY'S MOST AWARD-WINNING NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1889 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2016

County health assessment prioritizes needs

BY JON STINNETT

The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Members of the public were invited to Cottage Grove Community Medical Center last week to help determine Lane County's health needs and goals for the next three years.

An event held Wednesday, Feb. 10 to unveil the annual Community Health Needs Assessment also included the opportunity for attendees to choose from a list of priorities for the 2016-19 Community Health Improvement Plan, and the top priority as voted on in Cottage

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committee dedicated to the design and

Aplanning of a potential new Harrison El-

ementary building will present a report to the

South Lane School Board at its Monday, Feb.

build a new Harrison on the ballot for the May

School District officials have sought to re-

place the aging Harrison building — which was

constructed in 1947 — for some time, and plan-

ning for a bond levy to replace the school began in earnest in early 2014 with the formation of a

40-plus member bond advisory committee. The

School Board voted to pursue a 25-year bond

that would be used to build a new school, pro-

vide technology and safety upgrades throughout

the District and renovate the Warren H. Daugh-

erty Aquatic Center. On Monday, the Board will

vote whether to move forward with the bond,

and if it does, the Board will have to file official

ballot paperwork with Lane County Elections

A flier that advocates of the bond levy have

been disseminating throughout the community parcels out the intended use of the nearly \$36 million that would be raised if the bond is ap-

proved by voters: Construction of a new Har-

rison building at the Taylor Ave. site of the

former Cottage Grove High School is expected

to cost about \$18.9 million; safety and secu-

rity upgrades district-wide, including security

cameras and fire security systems, is slated at

about \$1.45 million. Deferred maintenance

projects such as roof replacements are listed at

about \$2.3 million, and network and technology

upgrades are expected to cost about \$1.25 mil-

lion. The aquatic center upgrade is listed at \$2.9

million. Renovating the current Kennedy High

School location to accommodate an early learn-

ing center is tabbed at just over \$1 million, and

relocating Kennedy to the former Delight Valley

building is expected to cost \$412,000. A \$6.1

million line item for "other costs" including fur-

Please see BOND, Page 10A

Bridgens said South Lane Superintendent

nishings, fees and permits is also included.

Krista Parent had given 36 presentations to

South Lane Communications Coordinator Garrett Bridgens said the design planning committee will present its report in anticipation of the School Board's drafting of an official resolution to place a \$35-plus million bond levy to

22 meeting.

17, 2016 election.

by March 17.

economic implications of poor health.

According to PeaceHealth Senior Communications Specialist Monique Danziger, Cottage Grove prioritized two items: Promoting access to the economic and social opportunities necessary to live a healthy life and promoting healthy behaviors and engaging the community in healthy living.

Danziger said it's notable that community members are recognizing the direct impacts that social and economic factors can play with regard to living healthy, including factors such

Grove concerned the social and as high-quality education, secure jobs with good wages and housing that is both safe and affordable. Partners dedicated to community health could potentially focus on issues related to employment, finances, education, housing and transportation. With regard to healthy behaviors, the focus going forward will be on issues related to nutrition, physical activity, reducing substance abuse, sexual behaviors and stress management.

> Representatives from United Way of Lane County, Lane County Public Health, Peace-Health and Trillium came

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), which lists both progress in the three years since the last Community Health Improvement Plan and improvement needed to sustain such progress. Danziger wrote that the most notable improvement to public health in Lane County involves access to healthcare, whether through additional numbers of those receiving care through the Affordable Care Act or the opening of the new Veterans Administration hospital and other facilities. Recruiting of additional primary health care physicians has also improved healthcare access for the County's residents, she said.

But there is still a long way to go toward a healthier Lane County, and chronic diseases and accidents remain the County's leading causes of death. Tobacco use, obesity, physical inactivity and alcohol use are still the most prominent preventable causes of death.

The CHNA surveyed 2295 Lane County residents, asking them what they enjoyed most about living here. The availability of parks and natural recreation issues figured strongly, as

Please see **HEALTH**, Page 10A

Dorena

together to reveal the 2016 Committee set to present Harrison design to School Board on Feb. 22

Grange members circle five new inductees into their Grange on Friday. The Grange has struggled to find enough members to fill its offices in recent years.

Dorena Grange fights to survive

The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Toward the end of a **■** ceremony held Friday afternoon to induct five new recruits into their organization, members of Dorena Grange No.

Grangers in a welcoming embrace.

Though the circle that closed in around new members Jim and Sharon Kness, Bill Anthony, Marilyn Wilber and Steve Barnes was a regularly prescribed fea-

835 surrounded their new ture of the ceremony, the Grove and its consolidation Grange had good cause to be extra thankful for their inclusion in its ranks. The Grange faces dangerously low membership numbers that could force the closure of its facility on Row River

Road southeast of Cottage

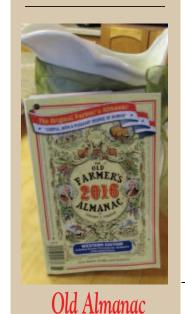
with another Grange Hall, and many, including longtime Worthy Master Joe Snook, hope such a move is not necessary.

Please see **GRANGE**, Page 10A

Also inside:



No Camping Police attempting to contact offenders, page 3A



Classic tome still has wisdom to share, page 6A



Police change tactics regarding drug offenses

With County prosecuting more felonies, attempted-possession misdemeanors become rare

BY JON STINNETT

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recent change in tactics at the Acounty level has also altered the way the Cottage Grove Police Department charges those suspected of some crimes in the City, Interim Police Chief Scott Shepherd said.

Lane County District Attorney Patricia Perlow recently told the Sentinel that her office had prosecuted 80 more low-level, drug-related felonies per month since last August in an effort to intervene before more serious crimes can be committed and defendants can amass a lengthy criminal

history.

"We've been referring many of them to the County's drug treatment court," Perlow said. "The goal has been to intervene in criminal activity earlier so that we can stop referring so many people to prison."

The change came about due to grant funding made available by the passage of Oregon House Bill 3194, which has funded more lawyers to prosecute low-level offenses. In tandem with the recent passage of a levy to fund more beds at the county jail, Perlow said the new way of business has helped the County keep a handle on criminality, though the grant fund-

ing does expire in 2017. A 26-year veteran, Perlow was appointed to head the D.A.'s office last July after the retirement of Alex Gardner. She is currently campaigning for election

to the position in November. The fact that the District Attorney's office has been prosecuting drugpossession cases has not escaped the attention of the Cottage Grove Police Department, and Shepherd said officers with CGPD have largely curtailed a practice of charging those it finds in possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia with an attempted possession charge — a misdemeanor — so that they can be charged in Cottage Grove's Municipal Court as opposed to felony charges that the County would not be able to handle.

"They're prosecuting many of those cases in the County's drug

CONTENTS

court," Shepherd said. "Because of the added attention people get through the drug court and the ability to have those offenses removed from their record through successful interventions, we've stopped those types of charges except for the occasional attempt charge where it may be nec-

Shepherd called the interventions available through the drug court a 'good thing," though he added that it will take some time to see if the change in policy is really working.

"They're just restarting the program now," he said, "so it will be a matter of time before we see whether it makes a difference. My hope is that the added attention some defendants may get through drug court will be beneficial."

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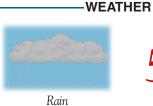
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