

## ON THE SQUARE



All-America City Square will be the subject of public meetings on May 17 and May 24.

Sentinel file photo

## City plans meetings re: downtown park

BY JON STINNETT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The City of Cottage Grove will join a handful of local organizations next month to discuss the potential solutions to issues at All-America City Square downtown.

City Planner Amanda Ferguson announced by press release that the City has received a grant from the National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Office to conduct a community planning project for All-America City Square, located at the corner of Seventh and Main streets, this spring.

An open house is scheduled at the Cottage Grove Armory from 6-8 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17, an event that aims to "gather ideas on needed park improvements and uses so we can sustain the park for future generations," the release stated. The following Tuesday, May 24 from 6-8 p.m., the Armory will host a design charrette facilitated by landscape architect David Dougherty from DLA Inc. to pursue design changes to bring about those improvements.

A charrette is an interactive planning session where citizens, designers and others collaborate on a vision for a project. It provides a forum for ideas and gives im-

mediate feedback to the designers.

Ferguson said that the Cottage Grove Garden Club, Sustainable Cottage Grove, the Economic and Business Improvement District and the Cottage Grove Main Street program are all joining in this effort.

"We all love the All-America City Square. But it is almost 10 years old. We want to find out what concerns people have and what issues have surfaced since the square was created," Ferguson wrote. "We have heard concerns expressed over the flag stone flooring, traffic flow, safety, lighting, use, signage, maintenance, etc. What are your concerns? What would you like to see change? What would you like to see stay the same?"

Ferguson said the goal of the meetings is to eventually produce design drawings that the City could use to apply for a grant by this July to renovate the park, adding that the City doesn't expect to make "huge changes" to improve conditions there.

The square at Seventh and Main became the subject of much public interest in 2007, when the EBID gained momentum and funds for a complete redesign there. At that time, the location, known as Opal Whiteley Park by many due to the iconic mural that overlooks the square, consisted of a more modest grass-covered park maintained by various locals. An at-

times contentious public process preceded the park's overhaul, which was designed by local architect Marston Morgan to include a replica of a tower that was used by early Cottage Grove firefighters, and a renaming in honor of Cottage Grove's status as an All-America City. The new park was dedicated in August of 2008.

Later, issues of vandalism in and behind the park's restrooms, along with loitering and drug activity, prompted the City to remove the picnic tables there and block off its electrical outlets in 2012.

The City began deliberations on the Main Street Refinement Plan, a comprehensive plan to redesign downtown Cottage Grove, in 2014, and the plan included a revamped All-America City Square as the centerpiece of a "festival square" concept to open up the square and encourage more public use. Public scrutiny of the concept, however, led the City to remove plans regarding the square from the MSRP, which now only includes a directive that the square be examined for a possible future redesign.

"The Main Street Refinement Plan basically punted the issues on All-America City Square," Ferguson said. "We would love to address the issues there before funding is found for construction on the refinement plan."

## Dorena-area dispute leads to shooting

The Lane County Sheriff's Office has yet to update its announcement regarding a dispute involving a shooting it says occurred on Monday, April 4 at approximately 11:26 a.m.

In a press release prepared by Detective Sgt. Carl Wilkerson (who could not be contacted by Sentinel press time for this article) the Sheriff's Office said it responded to the 39000 block of Brice Creek Road in the Dorena area regarding a report of a dispute involving a shooting.

The Sheriff's Office received additional information a woman

was reporting she had been in a dispute with her husband and she shot him. The man left the location with another party and was subsequently transported to the hospital. The woman remained on scene and awaited Sheriff's Office contact.

The Sheriff's Office said the man was subsequently admitted to the hospital for treatment of his wound(s). Following the incident, the Sheriff's Office said that no one has been arrested in response and that the investigation is continuing.

## Earth Day bash to feature family fun

Community organizations plan to join with the public on Saturday, April 23 to commemorate Earth Day.

The Urban Forestry Committee, Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council, City of Cottage Grove and the First Presbyterian Church Earth and Social Justice Committee will welcome the community for a celebration is designed to educate all ages on environmental awareness and community forestry.

The event aims to offer fun for the whole family, including live music, local food vendors, a kids' arts and crafts area, face painting, prize giveaways and demonstrations. Booths on site

will feature agencies, organizations or individuals who have a positive Earth Day message to share with the community.

"Come discover the important work many in the community are doing in order to increase awareness, and to promote and protect our treasured natural resources," said a recent press release.

The 2016 Earth Day Celebration will take place at Coiner Park, located across from Safeway on E. Main Street in Cottage Grove. The event begins at 10 a.m. and wraps up at 4 p.m. It is free and open to the public, and all ages are welcome.

## Sheriff's Office warns of telephone warrant scam

The Lane County Sheriff's Office announced that

it has learned that community members are again receiving calls saying they have warrants out for their arrest for missing a court date. The callers are demanding to have money sent to clear the warrant.

These calls are a scam, LCSO said, adding that community members should hang up immediately and not engage with the caller.

"The Lane County Sheriff's Office does not make phone calls to community members regarding warrants and would never ask a community member to purchase 'cash cards' to pay fees," said a recent press release. "If you are the victim of a phone scam and have lost money as a result of the scam, please report it to your local law enforcement agency. If you did not send any money, you do not need to call and report it."

Below are some tips to decrease your chances of becoming a phone scam victim:

Never provide personal information to callers, including your name, address or banking information.

Be aware of callers who are unprofessional, pushy, or use scare tactics such as threatening arrest if payment is not made.

Callers asking for payment through wire transfer, cash cards such as green dot cards, or other non-trackable methods are signs of a scam. Legitimate government agencies will not ask you to provide payment using these methods.

Do check the caller's information. If they claim to be from a law enforcement agency or other governmental agency, call the publicly listed phone number for that agency to verify the caller's authenticity.

Community members can also report fraud to the Oregon Attorney General's Consumer Hotline by calling 1-877-877-9392.

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