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# Cottage Grove Sentinel

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2016

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

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## DAY OF CARING

### Cleanup, celebration mark Earth Day

BY SAM WRIGHT  
 The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Cottage Grove's Earth Day celebration held out against the looming threat of rain on Saturday. Had the weather been less forgiving, the celebration would have been moved to the Cottage Grove Armory.

But no such relocation was necessary, and Coiner Park hosted about 50 different booths that represented various environmental conservationist programs and ideals, along with local vendors and other demonstrations.

Just down the road, the downtown clean up was taking place with around a dozen volunteers and their children collecting trash off of Main Street. Local resident Britney Basting brought her three kids along to help clean up.

Please see **EARTH**, Page 12A



photo by Sam Wright

Macey and Olivia Basting help their mom, Britney, pick up trash during downtown's Day of Caring cleanup.

## Marijuana tax to appear on ballot

Council votes to refer issue to voters in November

BY JON STINNETT  
 The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Cottage Grove should get a chance to vote on a three-percent tax on recreational marijuana retail sales this November, after the City Council approved a plan to place the tax before voters Monday night.

Oregon House Bill 3400, Section 34a states that "the governing body of a city or county may adopt an ordinance to be referred to the electors of the city or county...that imposes a tax or a fee on the sale of marijuana items that are sold in the area subject to the jurisdiction of the city," a tax that cannot exceed three percent. On Monday, City Manager Richard Meyers said that several councilors had asked about such a tax on recreational marijuana, adding that the tax would have to be put on the November ballot. He said a host of Oregon communities including Veneta, Florence, Salem, Springfield and others were looking into placing a tax on November's ballot.

"Is this something you want to do?" he asked the Council, adding that if so, the Council should "instruct us to put together the materials so it can be placed on the ballot."

Councilor Jake Boone spoke first and stated that, while he is no longer employed at local dispensary Apothecaria and is not financially invested there, he still opposes the tax.

"There is a tax on recreational marijuana as it is," Boone said. "Ten percent of the state tax is set to go to the cities. I'm more than willing to wait and see how much that is."

Boone said he encountered a similar issue with an effort to place a restaurant tax before voters to fund swimming pool operations a few years back.

"They couldn't show me a nexus between why we should target this industry," he said. "An industry-targeted tax should be used to somehow offset issues that come from that industry. In this case, the money is ostensibly for increased law enforcement cost. But as the numbers show, there's been a decrease because we don't have so much illegal marijuana. You've got to have a reason to put an extra tax on somebody. Because it might be free money I don't think is a good reason."

Councilor Jeff Gowing said that he is opposed to "pretty much all tax" but would be willing to let the voters decide on this one. Councilor Garland Burback added that he's in favor "because the public can vote on it."

Please see **TAX**, Page 12A

## Zone change approved with second vote

BY JON STINNETT  
 The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The Cottage Grove City Council again voted 6-1 to approve a change in zoning for two properties on Lane Street near downtown Monday night, with the second affirmative vote putting the zone change into effect.

The Council had first examined a request

from applicants Eric Scully and Glen Taylor to rezone the two properties adjacent to the railroad tracks at 115 and 125 Lane Street from C-2 Central Business District to C2-P Community Commercial, a change that was recommended for approval by the Planning Commission in March.

At its April 11 meeting, Councilor Garland Burback explained that his lone 'no' vote

came about because of what he knew to be the intended use of the property, in this case the growing of marijuana. Burback again voted 'no' on Monday night.

As part of the requirements of the new zoning, both applicants will be required to add parking on their properties.

## OSU extension, 4-H program makes appeal for votes

BY GORDON OKUMU  
 For the Sentinel

On Tuesday, April 19, at the Healing Matrix in Cottage Grove "Support Lane County 4-H and Extension" supporters asked for the support of the public for the May Ballot Measure #20-239, which aims to provide local funding for 4-H and OSU Extension Service programs.

4-H and among other extension programs in Lane County have suffered greatly since the loss of local funding in 2010, but with a vote to reinstate programs that had been curtailed or lost due to lack of government funding, the organizers believe that restoration is coming.

John Punches, OSU Extension Services Regional Administrator, who was the main speaker during the event, explained in full the tax levy and the specific outcomes.

In his presentation, Punches said that the proposal to Fund OSU Extension in Lane County had been agreed to by the Lane

County Board of Commissioners, which preferred a local option tax measure on the May 17 ballot to provide specific support for the Extension Program for five years.

Punches clarified that the proposed tax rate of 1.5 cents per \$1000 assessed value (about \$3 per year for a typical property owner) would generate approximately \$400,000 annually, after adjusting for compression and tax collection rates. These funds would be used to enhance access to 4-H by reducing enrollment fees and supporting the club's in-school and after-school programs. It will also be used to stabilize support for Master Gardener, Master Food Preserver and Food Pantry volunteer programs. Further, Punches said the program should still leverage federal grant funds to strengthen nutrition education programs and provide operational support for an Extension forester and allow development of a Master Woodland Manager volunteer program.

Punches said the local option

tax would not result in compression to the permanent tax rates of cities or other taxing districts, and the Lane County Assessor has indicated its impact on other local option taxes would be minimal.

Punches indicated that the extension program had so many benefits including but not limited to:

The 4-H Youth Development Program that provides young people with high-quality learning experiences that promote positive interactions with adults and peers, sustained and active participation and meaningful contributions to the world around them.

The Master Gardener™ and Community Horticulture Programs that educate Oregonians about the art and science of growing and caring for plants, and facilitate comprehensive training of a dedicated volunteer corps.

The Master Food Preserver Program, which trains volunteers to answer food safety and preservation questions from the public.



Photo by Gordon Okumu

**John Punches, OSU Extension Services Regional Administrator, makes a public presentation during the 4-H and OSU extension program appeal for votes at the Healing Matrix in Cottage Grove on Tuesday, April 19.**

The Food Pantry Project, which trains volunteers to help citizens with limited-resources makes better use of available foods.

The Nutrition Education Program (NEP), which delivers fed-

erally funded programs aimed at improving nutrition and reducing obesity in low-income youth and families.

The Small Farms Program, which serves commercial pro-

ducers of niche agricultural products, beginning farmers and small-acreage landowners.

The Livestock and Forages Program serves commercial producers of beef, sheep and meat goats.

Commercial Horticulture, which runs in 2,660 farms in Lane County and encompasses 219,625 acres, with annual production value of \$142 million.

Forestry and Natural Resources Lane County is consistently one of the top two timber producing counties in Oregon. It has a large private industrial timberland base and numerous family forestlands.

Oregon Sea Grant, which helps coastal Lane County address challenges through collaborative research and education programs.

OSU Open Campus, a community-based education partnership convened by Oregon State University to provide local access to learning in order to address the unique educational needs of Oregon communities.

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**WEATHER**

Poss. showers

**HIGH 59** **LOW 40**

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