

New owners take over at downtown gym

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Sara May asked her husband, Shane, for a home gym. Instead, May bought his wife two fitness clubs.

Since April 1, the Mays have been the owners of Emerald Fitness Club locations on Main Street in Cottage Grove and at the Emerald Valley Golf Club in Creswell.

For three years, Sara May said she's enjoyed a passion for fitness that has steadily grown. She started with Crossfit, then began teaching classes at Anytime Fitness

before making the move to buy the gyms from former owner Patty Feola.

"It got me to where I am now," May said of her drive toward improved health and fitness. "I started having people reach out to me for advice and for help, and things just kept going from there. I love it all, making a difference and helping people choose a healthy lifestyle."

The Mays say they plan to extend Saturday hours soon in Cottage Grove, and the club has added new classes, instructors and equipment. Members now receive access to both clubs.



photo by Jon Stinnett

Sara and Shane May assumed ownership April 1.

'Every 15 minutes' program at CGHS

Demonstration scheduled May 3

On Tuesday, May 3, Cottage Grove High School, in partnership with the Lane County Sheriff's Office and South Lane Fire and Rescue, will be facilitating a drinking and driving prevention simulation that features a staged accident. The demonstration will simulate a drunk driving car accident involving teens, emergency responders and a Life Flight helicopter. This event is part of the Every 15 Minutes program, a program designed to make teenagers aware of the dangerous consequences of drinking, alcohol and texting while driving.

Trial ends in reckless driving, endangerment conviction

BY JON STINNETT
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It took a six-person jury a matter of a few minutes to convict Geoffrey Jones on charges of reckless driving and reckless endangerment in a trial before Judge Martin Fisher at Cottage Grove Municipal Court Thursday.

City employees, police officers and others were present for much of the trial, which began at 9 a.m. and lasted until the jury came back with its verdict at around 5 p.m. Jones, who had invited the entire Cottage Grove City Council to a trial that features a massive case file, explained that he was representing himself in court due to receiving too much income to qualify for the services of a public defender. During the proceedings, he attempted to grill Cottage Grove Police Officer Matt Walker and Reserve Officer Steven Sherwin about their observations and actions in the early-morning hours of May 16,

2015, when Jones was pulled over on a traffic stop in the Elks Lodge parking lot.

From the beginning, however, City Prosecutor John Woodworth objected to much of what Jones had to say, including his opening statement, during which Woodworth objected that Jones was making an argument as opposed to giving the six-woman jury a roadmap of the evidence he intended to produce. Jones responded that "there is no evidence" to prove his guilt on that night.

"It's all going to be fabricated by a master storyteller," he said. Jones added that he wasn't concerned about the outcome of the trial as much as he was about "impeaching" Officer Walker.

During his testimony, Walker told the court that at 12:58 a.m. that early May morning, he was parked in the Koffee Kup parking lot observing drivers as they drove down the Row River Road connector onto Highway 99. He said he observed a vehicle go-

ing slower than the speed limit and switched off his radar, at which point another vehicle drove around the first, narrowly missing a stop sign and driving through two medians at a high rate of speed. Walker said he subsequently had to accelerate to 60 miles per hour to catch and stop Jones, his first words were, "Did you see how slow that guy was going?"

Jones would attempt to cross-examine Walker and Sherwin, though his cross-examination of each was cut short by Judge Fisher, who warned Jones that he was being argumentative as opposed to asking questions of witnesses and was referencing evidence that he had not introduced pre-trial.

"It's not possible for my van to do what he said it did," Jones said, though the jury had been removed from the room prior to that comment. Jones stated that he would call no witnesses, then attempted to call both the officers as witnesses. His

line of questioning was again cut short by Fisher.

"Six citizens came here today to serve their civic duty," Fisher said. "It is our obligation not to have their time wasted. This is not the Geoffrey Jones show."

Jones said he wished to call into question Walker's anger issues, his vision, his health and state of being, but questions about both officers' vision were all he could manage before Fisher cut the proceedings short again. He also offered to have both officers drive his van to judge if it was capable of the driving he was accused of, though both declined.

Jones hinted that he intended to appeal the decision to Lane County Circuit Court and that he intended to put Woodworth, the involved officers and Fisher on trial in federal court for civil rights violations.

Jones will be sentenced on Thursday at 3 p.m. in Cottage Grove Municipal Court.

Sidewalks shaved to curb tripping

BY JON STINNETT
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Problem spots in Cottage Grove's downtown sidewalks got a "shave" of sorts early last week.

Shauna Neigh, coordinator of the Main Street Program in Cottage Grove, said a company called Safe Sidewalks, LLC came to town on April 18 and smoothed out 27 places in downtown sidewalks that had become tripping hazards, often due

to root damage created by the trees lining Main Street.

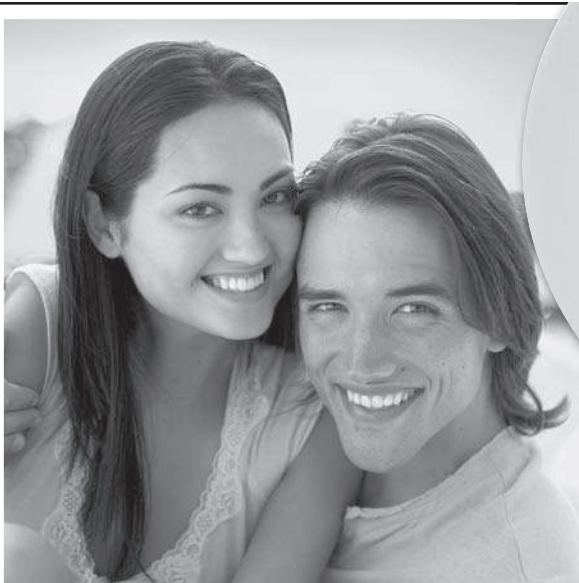
"We wanted to have it done just in time for tourist season," said Neigh, who coordinated the effort along with the City of Cottage Grove and the Economic and Business Improvement District. The EBID contributed the \$3000 for the sidewalk improvements.

Neigh said there are still a few spots in downtown sidewalks that require repairs.

"There are still a few tripping hazards," she said.

"We're working with the business owners to remedy those situations, but they're mostly in places where the cement has to be completely removed before it can be repaired."

Neigh was also excited to announce that the EBID has contributed funding to extend the hanging flower baskets that typically line Main Street down Main all the way to Gateway Blvd., adding that the baskets should be in place around Mother's Day.



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