



Cottage Grove Sentinel

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2016 SOUTH LANE AND NORTH DOUGLAS COUNTY'S MOST AWARD-WINNING NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1889 VOLUME 128 • NUMBER 44

Bond basics

Breaking down Ballot Measure 20-240

BY JON STINNETT
 The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Ballots for Oregon's May 17 primary election were mailed to voters by Lane County Elections on Thursday, April 28, meaning that voters in the southern part of the County will have about two and a half weeks to weigh the merits of Bond Measure 20-240, which seeks to replace the Harrison Elementary building, tackle deferred maintenance projects and make security and technology upgrades throughout South Lane School District at a cost of \$35,950,000. As such, the Sentinel has compiled the pertinent facts about the bond measure in advance of the primary:

Objective

Bond Measure 20-240 aims to replace the current Harrison Elementary building on South 10th Street in Cottage Grove with a new structure at the corner of 10th and Taylor streets, the site of the old Cottage Grove

High School. Current plans call for retaining the gymnasium and cafeteria at the current Harrison building for community use. The building was constructed in 1947 to educate about 125 students and now houses about 450 kids, and South Lane officials have sought to replace the school for some time due to its cramped spaces and deterioration. Construction of the new school is expected to cost \$18,921,100. Renovating the existing Harrison building was considered a possibility until it was determined that the cost of renovation (an estimated \$17,636,928) would rival that of building a new school.

Other projects and costs

In addition to a new Harrison building, the bond also aims to fund updated fire and security systems in all South Lane schools including cameras and a

Please see **BOND**, Page 9A

KING'S COURT



courtesy photo

Pageant raises over \$13,000 for CMN

Cottage Grove High School's Lion King pageant, an evening of skits, dances and laughs, raised over \$13,000 for Riverbend Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Senior Brad Geisler (third from right, in crown) earned the title of Lion King this year, while Jayden Tucker was named Mr. Congeniality. Above, Geisler is joined above by fellow contestants Nico Cornelius, Brandon Hughes, Tucker, Kendrick Murphy, Justin Epperson, Elijah Foreman and Payton Presley. Pageant organizers Carly Sand, Aggie Hite, Shelby Kidd and Savannah Crump are seated below the contestants. The event was co-hosted by Isaac Hovet and Shane May.

Also inside:



'The Nerd'
 Opal Theater courts comedic chaos, page 6A



Dynamic duo
 Wright, Weybright dominate the distances, page 6A



Suspect arrested after long standoff at area motel

BY JON STINNETT
 The Cottage Grove Sentinel

A four-hour standoff in a room at the Best Western motel in Cottage Grove led to the arrest of a 42-year old Springfield man Friday afternoon.

John Lucas, who had barricaded himself inside the room after motel personnel attempted to ensure that his room had been vacated, was arrested later after flash-bang devices and tear gas were used to enter his room, according to Cottage Grove Police Detective Doug Skaggs.

Skaggs said that motel employees called one of the motel's rooms to ensure that its occupant had checked out in advance of the check-in of another customer. When there was no reply, they reportedly opened the door to find Lucas "screaming and yelling," at which point they left and called Cottage Grove Police.

Officers Tami Miles and Matt Walker responded to the scene and attempted to talk to Lucas, who would reportedly not say much except that he had a gun to his head and wanted everyone to leave. Police recommended that the motel be evacuated, and Skaggs said the Best Western "lost a lot of business" as a result of the standoff.

Police were concerned that a woman who had checked in with Lucas might be in the room, though they were relieved to find that her car was not in the parking lot, according to Skaggs. Still, the possibility of a hostage led CGPD to contact the Lane County Sheriff's Office and request the assistance of a negotiator with its special response team.

Negotiations between Lucas and police were sparse, Skaggs said, so a flash-bang device was deployed in the room to let Lucas know that police were still on the scene. For about 20 minutes, he said

the team told Lucas to come out, that he was under arrest and that tear gas would be used if he did not exit the room.

The gas was eventually used, Skaggs said, though no response was received from Lucas. He said Lucas instead started to barricade the door even more thoroughly, after which police moved in and took him into custody, but not until a Taser was used to bring the reportedly combative Lucas to heel. Skaggs said that Lucas had a handgun in his possession at the time of his arrest. He said police were unsure why Lucas responded the way he did, though he did point out that a warrant had been issued for his arrest earlier that day for allegedly violating a no-contact order.

In the effort to subdue Lucas, his Jack Russell terrier, named Tank, escaped, though he was later found at Middlefield Oaks.



courtesy photo

John Lucas, 42, of Springfield was taken into custody with the help of flash-bang devices, tear gas and a Taser.

Cottage Grove's Marie Longfellow received the Outstanding Oregon Tourism Volunteer Award for her work with Cottage Grove's Rapid Response Graffiti Team at the Governor's Conference on Tourism in Pendleton last week.



courtesy photo

Longfellow recognized by Travel Oregon for fighting graffiti

BY JON STINNETT
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A battle against graffiti in Cottage Grove's public spaces has led to statewide recognition for one local volunteer.

Marie Longfellow was honored by Travel Oregon with the Outstanding Oregon Tourism Volunteer Award at the 2016 Governor's Conference on Tourism, held April 24-26 in Pendleton. The awards aim to "recognize people and organizations across the state that go the extra mile to enhance the travel and tourism industry in Oregon," according to a recent press release.

Longfellow herself was on hand to accept the award, which recognizes her contributions to Cottage Grove's Rapid Response Graffiti Team. The volunteer award "recognizes the significant commitment by an individual or a group of individuals who exemplify the positive impact volunteers have on Oregon's travel and tourism industry."

Longfellow, who volunteers in a number of other capacities in Cottage Grove, said she's proud of the fact that visitors to the community don't see much graffiti here thanks to the efforts of the response team.

"If it isn't there, we know we've done well," she said. "We used to take pictures

of each incident to document everything, but now we just try to clean it up right away."

The Rapid Response Graffiti Team formed two years ago, and Longfellow said the group responded to 194 cases of graffiti in public spaces and on private buildings last year. Besides the benefits for visitors, she said her own aversion to graffiti helps spur her to action.

"I don't like graffiti," she said, "and the people who are responsible for doing it in Cottage Grove aren't very imaginative."

Longfellow listed the Chambers Railroad Bridge, Bohemia and Coiner Parks as frequent targets for graffiti.

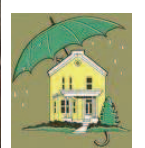
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WEATHER



Rain

HIGH 57 LOW 45

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