

LCC class teaches the art of the

# Jam

BY JON STINNETT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

“Our jam sessions need to be more informative. It’s not enough to just get together and play the tunes.”

On a Wednesday evening, multi-instrumentalist and instructor Justin Booher imparts such wisdom to his class, a handful of adults of various ages gathered in a classroom at the Lane Community College branch in Cottage Grove.

“Music starts with rhythm,” Booher says. “We’re looking to provide harmonic fills over the rhythm guitars, but we don’t want to play the melody while the singer is singing it, because we need to have a harmony.”

It’s “better to be a minimalist” with regard to adorning a song, Booher said, because the song’s lyrics tell the story. And Booher should know. As a son of the famous Booher family of musicians based in nearby Scotts Valley, he has music flowing through his very veins, and though he’s still a young man, he’s been teaching for 29 years.

On Wednesdays, Booher picks up his trademark fiddle and sometimes a guitar to teach and take part in a class known as “Fast Track to Jamming,” which has called LCC in Cottage Grove home since October.

“I want you to be able to anticipate the chord changes,” he tells his students as they run through the classic “Moon River.” “We learn songs to help build our ideas, because all of the music we create with our instru-



Justin Booher teaches a more relaxed approach to music in “Fast Track to Jamming,” held Wednesdays at LCC in Cottage Grove.

photo by Jon Stinnett

ments can be made using only 12 sounds. It’s important to remember that you’re always one note from the next chord change.”

Booher’s class frequently hears such encouragement to ease the minds of those who may be apprehensive about making music or who think they need sheet music to play a song.

“Humans like to complicate things,” he says. “People say things like, ‘I couldn’t possibly do that; I didn’t get that gift. But you have to throw that notion out the window. There are all these amazing things we’ve done in our lives, and yet we continue to second-guess ourselves.’”

Instead, Booher teaches the belief that musical excellence is reachable and professional-sounding music is accessible; in fact, it’s one of the major tenets of his class.

“It’s really unique,” said student Chrissy Anderson. “I’ve never been taught music like this before. I was lost without sheet music, but he freed me. It’s a revelation.”

Many musicians have had private lessons, Booher said, but their musical education often ends there.

“We have to throw away our need to be good, to look like we know what we’re doing,” he said. “We’re building a foundation that helps us understand chords so well that we realize their structure cannot be separated from the melody.”

“Fast Track to Jamming” takes place at LCC each Wednesday from 6-8 p.m. More information is available at <https://www.lan-ecc.edu/cotgrove/cottage-grove-classes>.

## Osprey blamed for power outages relocate

A pair of ospreys blamed for disrupting power lines near Cottage Grove’s Row River Water Treatment Plant has apparently accepted a suggestion that they find another place to nest.

A spokesperson with the Emerald People’s Utility District confirmed Monday that the utility blames nesting osprey with building a nest on active power lines near the water treatment plant, activity that they say led to a recent power outage on April 29. City crews contacted EPUD about the issue, and EPUD workers removed nesting materials from the lines three times.

In its Friday Update, the City stated that “Since the birds appear to be persistent and the area around the Row River Water Treatment Plant provides good food and habitat, staff offered an abandoned power pole on the treatment plant property adjacent to the fishing ponds as a location for a nesting platform.”

Late last week, an EPUD serviceman placed a platform on top of this pole and even added some sticks to encourage the ospreys to nest at this location, and by Friday, it appeared the birds of prey had warmed to their new home.



In the inset, EPUD serviceman Neil Williamson installs a new osprey nesting platform, which the birds soon occupied.

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## Planning meeting for A.A. Square set for Tuesday

The City of Cottage Grove will join a handful of local organizations next week 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 immediate feedback to the designers.

“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?”

## Chamber releases Concerts in the Park lineup

June 22: Crossing Neptune  
Smooth groove and dance

Aug. 10: Annie Mae Rhodes  
Band, Bluegrass/folk

June 29: Michael Kevin  
Daly and Frank Sprouse  
Americana

Aug. 17: Windy Ridge  
Country Rock

July 6: Soul Deception  
Rock, Blues Soul

Aug. 24: The Reveleers  
Rumble, Classic Rock

July 13: Letters from Traffic  
Rock and Soul Funk

Aug. 31: Calvary Creek  
Band  
60s and 70s Folk

July 20: Blue Skies Big  
Band Classic Swing Jazz

Sept. 7: Abandon Shoe  
Indie Acoustic Rock, Alternative

July 27: Joy Mills Band  
Americana/Country

Sept. 14: The Sugarbeets  
Folk-rock, soul-grass

Aug. 3: Ian McFeron  
Bob Dylan, Folk Rock  
Folky pop, etc.

“There is a lot of variety of music this season,” wrote Chamber Director Travis Palmer. “Every week will be different than the next and

we have great bands that are looking forward to entertaining you with style and an abundance of awesome talent.”

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