



Weeldreyer steps up

Longtime BMD volunteer takes festival helm, page 3A



BMX faithful look back on the track, page 1B

Cottage Grove Sentinel

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

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Legendary track coach Bell dies at 88

BY SAM WRIGHT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Sam Bell was one of the biggest names to come out of Cottage Grove High School, and his death has drawn national attention in the track and field community. Bell passed away on Monday, June 27 at the age of 88.

After graduating from Doane College in Nebraska in 1950, Bell pursued a master's degree in physical education from the University of Oregon in 1956. That's when his career took him to Cottage Grove.

Before becoming a Lion, Bell

coached track and field at Central High School in Monmouth. When he arrived in Cottage Grove, he replaced the famed Wally Ciocchetti, who stayed on as an assistant. It was here that Bell got the chance to coach another big name from Cottage Grove, Dyrrol Burluson, once considered America's top mile runner and the only UO track athlete to never lose a race.

After a few years at Cottage Grove, Bell coached at Oregon State University. The Beavers won an NCAA title in cross country in 1961. He then moved on to coach at the University of California for four years before moving to Indiana, where his career

really took off.

In 28 years, Bell led the Indiana Hoosiers to 22 Big Ten championships and 23 top-10 finishes in the NCAA championships. His legacy is the revolution of the track and field program in Indiana and putting Indianapolis on the map for Olympic competition.

Bell helped organize events like the 1988 Olympic Trials, the Pan American Games in 1987 and the USA Championships in 1983 and 1985.

Bell also was an assistant track coach for the 1976 U.S. Olympic team, mentoring athletes such as Jim Spivey and Bob Kennedy.



Bell prior to taking the helm at Oregon State in 1958.

Preschool coming to Bohemia, Dorena elementary schools

Grant funding will also establish preschools at two Creswell locations

BY JON STINNETT
the Cottage Grove Sentinel

There are "lots and lots of details" that have yet to be worked out, but beginning this fall, two area schools are expected to host new preschool programs brought about by grant funding.

Jackie Lester, who serves as South Lane School District's P-20 Coordinator, a new position that works to integrate K-12 schooling with efforts to educate young people both before and after they graduate, said that South Lane has needed "universal preschool" options for some time. The new programs set to start this fall at Dorena and Bohemia schools aren't exactly "universal" in the sense that not all students are accepted, but Lester said she's still excited about what she calls "a very interesting program."

A Preschool Promise grant distributed through the Lane Early Learning Alliance will bring the new centers to South Lane in September, and Lester said the new centers are designed to have the highest rating in the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). She said a lack of preschools in the area with such a rating made South Lane a prime candidate to host such schools.

Bohemia and Dorena schools will join Creswell's Creslane Elementary and Ellie's Preschool and Daycare in offering the new program.

Lester said the rating system evaluates an exhaustive set of criteria for each school, including the number of adults per child, the qualifications of each adult, curriculum and number of hours of instruction offered (schools cannot dip below 900 hours of instruction per year). Anyone can apply to have their children attend preschool at Bohemia or Dorena, she said, though income guidelines require that families earn no more than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, or about \$50,000 per year, a higher threshold than Head Start.

"The programs are designed to serve families that get turned down by Head Start," she said.

The new preschool regulations have already been a learning experience for South Lane educators accustomed to an entirely different K-12 system, Lester said, and she said providing the program for the 34 kids that will be accepted between the two schools will be expensive at a cost of about \$11,500 per student per year.

"There is lots of training involved, more than is necessary for an elementary teacher," said Lester, who pointed out that the preschool curriculum will adhere to early learning standards with an emphasis on social and emotional learning and a heavy emphasis on play. The program also includes a mandate that students have opportunities to partake in programs such as art and music.

"Preschool has been a different language for us K-12 educators," she said. "There are rules related to transportation, food service, record keeping, staff hiring, etc."

The daily structure at the new preschools hasn't been narrowed down yet, but Lester said a typical day will likely mean instruction from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. South Lane doesn't know how long it will take to get its educators certified to administer the program, but Lester said the District is being told that it doesn't have to happen right away. Principals at each school will serve as administrators of the preschool program, which the District hopes will more fully integrate the preschools into the schools that host them.

Lester said that the state of Oregon is "backtracking" when it comes to providing preschool options at K-12 schools.

"We should've had this before we had full-day kindergarten," she said. "Most kids in our District, if they're not spending the day in their own home, they're being cared for by a relative. Most have not had any structured daycare. And you've got to start somewhere."

Those interested in preschool options at Dorena and Bohemia are asked to call 541-741-6000.



The City of Cottage Grove purchased the Armory in 2010, and city officials say that now is the time to pursue funding to restore the building.

photo by Jon Stinnett

Armory fundraising campaign begins

Local consulting firm to write no less than 80 grants in 30 months

BY JON STINNETT
the Cottage Grove Sentinel

The City of Cottage Grove estimates that it will cost about \$2.6 million to renovate the Cottage Grove Armory, which it purchased for \$395,000 in 2010 from the Oregon Military Department when the National Guard moved to a new facility in Springfield. Last Monday, June 27, the City Council approved a contract in an amount not to exceed \$463,000 to secure the needed funds.

The Armory has seen sporadic use since its purchase, and conceptual drawings have been planned and executed for the building, plans that detail possible uses including a commercial kitchen, emergency shelter, headquarters of the Cottage Grove Kids Club and more.

A faulty boiler has meant that the Armory has been without heat for some time, however, which has worked to curtail its use, and City Planner Amanda Ferguson said last week that the building is at a "critical juncture" in its existence.

"The building needs to be occupied so that it doesn't deteriorate into worse shape," Ferguson said. She said



Christina Lund has hired a team of seven to spearhead the fundraising campaign.

Please see **ARMORY**, Page 11A

Saturday crash near CG Lake claims life of motorcyclist

Police say speed is believed to be a factor

Oregon State Police have identified the man killed in a crash involving a car and motorcycle near Cottage Grove Lake Saturday afternoon.

At about 4 p.m. Saturday, according to a release from OSP Public Information Officer Bill Fugate, Troopers from the Springfield Area Command responded to a report of a motorcycle versus vehicle crash on London Road near the Cottage Grove Reservoir.

Fugate wrote that a preliminary investigation revealed that a 1999 Honda 900 motorcycle was traveling southbound on London Road at a high rate of speed just as a 2008 Chrysler Sebring was pulling out of a private drive northbound. The motorcycle

impacted the driver's side of the Sebring. The rider, identified as Cory Nathan Tocher, age 33, of Cottage Grove, was thrown from the motorcycle and pronounced deceased at the scene. The driver of the Sebring, Jeremy Paul Owens, age 41, of Eugene was not injured in the crash.

The roadway was closed for approximately 1-1/2 hours for a collision reconstruction to be completed. Police said Tocher was wearing a motorcycle helmet and added that speed is believed to be a contributing factor in the crash. State Police were assisted on scene by the Lane County Sheriff's Office, Lane County Medical Examiner and South Lane Fire and Rescue.



courtesy photo

Cory Tocher, age 33, was pronounced deceased after being thrown from his motorcycle.

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