



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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Eugene's PakTech purchases former Kwikiee building

Expansion expected to bring about 35 jobs to town right away, 100 over time

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

A Eugene business will be expanding its operations into Cottage Grove, and the City is expected to soon fill one of its largest industrial building vacancies, City Manager Richard Meyers announced via press release on Monday.

The City has helped market the former Kwikiee building, an 80,000 square foot behemoth at 230 Davidson Avenue, since the manufacturer of steps for recreational vehicles closed up shop here in 2007. In May of this year, an announcement was made that a buyer had likely been found, and the City shared more details of that arrangement

on Monday. Based in Eugene, PakTech manufactures injection-molded packaging handles and in-line automated application equipment. According to the release, the company "provides handles and application equipment to food and beverage and consumer goods industries, aiming to make it easy for consumers to grab, carry and release multiple products using a simple, low-waste, 100 percent recyclable handle." The expansion is expected to

bring 35 jobs to town in the near future and up to 100 jobs as the utilization of the Cottage Grove facility is fully realized, according to PakTech President Jim Borg, who spoke to the Sentinel Monday afternoon. Borg said his company has seen its largest growth recently in the craft beer market, and its handles can be seen atop the four and six-packs of many of the area's microbreweries, though the company also sells its products internationally. "We have 1600 companies us-

ing our handles now, and we're expanding in Europe, New Zealand and Australia," Borg said. "We hope to fill that market from here as much as possible." First, though, will be the replacement of the roof of the Kwikiee building, which Borg said is "at the end of its life." A substation will also need to be installed nearby by the Emerald Peoples Utilities District to fulfill PakTech's need for power, which is reportedly already in the works. "Emerald strives to be a good

economic partner to the cities and communities we serve," said Scott Coe, Emerald PUD general manager. "The addition of this customer has allowed us to advance planned capital improvements. Although it will take a significant commitment of time and resources, we are committed to rising to the challenge." Without the infrastructure improvements at EPUD, Borg said his company could max out the use of power in that area.

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GIVING IT A TRI



photo by Greg Lee

From left, Aleck Norland, 10, Mike Hill, Pam Fairchild and Drew Marsch power their pedals during the second leg of Saturday's Tri at the Grove Triathlon, held at Cottage Grove Lake. More on the triathlon can be found on page 1B.

Council votes to place gas tax hike on ballot

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The City Council moved a step closer Monday night to placing an increase in the City's fuels tax on the ballot this November.

The Council voted 6-1 to direct city staff to draft a ballot measure for the Nov. 8 election that will ask voters to approve a three-cent hike in the tax the City receives at the pump. If approved, the increase would set Cottage Grove's fuels tax at six cents per gallon.

By law, gas tax revenues can only be used to fund street repairs, and while the Council voted overwhelmingly to support placing the tax on the ballot, many councilors also acknowledged that the increase could not be the ultimate solution to an estimated \$9 million backlog in needed maintenance to Cottage Grove's streets.

On Monday night, City Manager Richard Meyers produced a graph showcasing the City's gas tax revenue over the past 13 years.

"You can't get any more flat than that," Meyers said, describing revenue that has hovered around \$300,000 per year throughout that span. Another graph, this one including a line with a much more upward trajectory, described the increase in construction costs for streets over that same time period.

Meyers pointed out projects such as improvements at

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Local man perishes in logging accident

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Friends and family are mourning the loss of a 55-year old Cottage Grove man who perished in a logging accident last week.

PJ Patterson has been described as a man who loved his God, his family and hunting — in that order — above all else.

"He was the happiest man I knew, the greatest man I knew," said his son, Jeffrey Patterson, on Monday. "This is a loss that will never be forgotten."

Brendan Patterson shared the same praise for his father.

"His prayer life was one of the best I'd ever seen," Brendan Patterson said. "For the past 12 years, he called me every morning to pray, and it was the same

with my brother." Patterson was owner/operator of his own business, PJ Patterson Cutting, Inc. His family chose not to dwell on the details regarding his passing Thursday morning, except to say that the accident occurred while he was cutting logs for power poles in the Layng Creek area on a contract with the U.S. Forest Service. They've instead chosen to focus on the positives of a man who inspired and uplifted those around him.

"Anybody that ever talked to him was treated as family," Jeffrey Patterson said. "He never held a grudge; he was one of the most forgiving men that ever was. If you ever talked to him, it was obvious how much he loved his God and his family."

Patterson also said that, to his



PJ Patterson

father, his mother Jeanie was "his everything."

"He set the bar pretty high for everybody," he said. "No matter how bad he hurt in the morning, he still got up and went to the job."

Well-wishers will celebrate Patterson's life this Saturday, July 30 at 11 a.m. at the Cottage Grove High School football field.

School District pleased with Harrison bond sales

Construction cost estimates have risen, however

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

South Lane School District officials traveled to Portland last week to sell a group of bonds that will furnish the District with the almost \$36 million approved by voters to rebuild Harrison Elementary School and make security and technology upgrades.

The District sold the bonds on Tuesday, July 19, and according to Superintendent Krista Parent, the District couldn't have fared much better in the process, securing a low interest rate that should allow South Lane to structure the bonds to the District's advantage over their 25-year life span.

Voters approved the bonds with a comfortable margin last fall, and South Lane hopes to start the 2018-19 school year with a brand-new Harrison School. Parent said she was thrilled that the District would be working with an interest rate just under three percent after the sale of the

bonds, which should allow it to levy an annual rate of under \$2 per \$1000 of assessed property value.

"We were working hard to get under that \$2 per \$1000 threshold," she said. "We won't know the exact rate until we hear from the County Assessor in October, but we hit the market so perfectly that it looks like it only gets better from here."

Parent said that Piper Jaffray, the firm that has worked on the District's behalf to sell the bonds, entertained multiple offers for each bond. She said South Lane will be able to assess taxpayers at \$1.90 per \$1000 until 2030, at which time the rate could drop to \$1.32 per \$1000. The assessment could drop even further, however, if growth in the number of homes that the District is able to tax is greater than the 2.75 percent that has been anticipated.

The expected drop in the assessment could

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WEATHER

 Sunny

HIGH 91 **LOW 60**

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