



# Cottage Grove Sentinel

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2016

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

VOLUME 129 • NUMBER 11

## LOCAL ELECTION COVERAGE KICKOFF

### Forums for local candidates scheduled

BY JON STINNETT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

The Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce will join forces with the City's two traditional media outlets to offer a candidates' forum for the City's mayoral and City Council candidates in the upcoming Nov. 8 election. The Chamber has tapped KNND radio station owner/personality Cameron Reiten and Sentinel editor Jon Stinnett to co-moderate a forum for the three mayoral candidates on Thursday, Sept. 22

beginning at 6 p.m. A forum for the seven candidates for City Council will follow on Tuesday, Sept. 27 and will also begin at 6 p.m. The events will consist of opening statements from each candidate, after which the candidates will address a set of questions for which they have prepared responses beforehand. Members of the audience will then be asked to prepare questions for the candidates on note cards during the event, and the questions will be vetted to ensure that they are topical and do not single out any one candidate.

Chamber forums to feature mayoral candidates Sept. 22, council candidates Sept. 27

## Police arrest two accused of printing fake bills

The Cottage Grove Police Department said that attempts to pass off counterfeit \$100 bills has led to the arrest of two Cottage Grove residents. Commander Conrad Gagner wrote via press release that on Saturday, Aug. 27, police arrested 36-year old Joel David Wurch and 29-year old Kimberly Ann Roberts on forgery charges after an investigation revealed that they had possessed and used counterfeit U.S. currency at businesses in Cottage Grove.

their purchase with counterfeit money. After the male handed the drive-up attendant a \$20 bill, it was checked with a security pen and found to be counterfeit.

Officers first responded to Walgreens regarding a report that a male accompanied by a female had attempted to purchase merchandise with a counterfeit \$100 bill. A witness followed the pair after leaving Walgreens and reported to police that they were in the drive-up at Carl's Jr. Police notified Carl's Jr. employees that the couple, in a grey van, might attempt to make

Officers contacted the couple in the drive-up area, and they were detained pending further investigation. During the investigation, police say a backpack containing \$3280 in counterfeit U.S. currency was found in the vehicle. The backpack contained mostly \$20 bills, police say, but there were also several \$100 bills, as well as \$50, \$10 and \$5 bills.

Both subjects were lodged at the Lane County Jail; Wurch on charges of Forgery 1 and Possession of a Forged Instrument, and Roberts on charges of conspiracy to commit both those crimes.

The case officer is Officer Fred Dilworth with the Cottage Grove Police Department.

# Getting to know them:



## Checking in with Cottage Grove's candidates for Mayor and City Council

BY JON STINNETT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Prior to the Aug. 23 deadline to file paperwork to run for office in Cottage Grove, there were few candidates signed up to vie for a seat on the City Council or run for mayor in the Nov. 8 election. A flurry of paperwork followed, however, and today, there are four candidates running for Cottage Grove's Ward II seat, two hoping to become an at-large councilor and three running for mayor. One current councilor is running unopposed in Ward IV.

aren't strangers to local politics — Jake Boone currently sits on the City Council and represents Ward III; Jeff Gowing represents Ward II and will vacate that seat to run for mayor, and Mike Fleck holds an at-large council seat. Should they not be elected mayor, Boone and Fleck would retain their council seats, as they're not up for reelection for two more years. Cottage Grove's mayors serve two-year terms; its councilors serve for four years.

tee. Henry Lancaster, a home-schooled student, represents the Youth Advisory Council at City Council meetings. Merlyn Adams and Rodney Cimburke round out the Ward II field.

As a sort of kickoff to the local election season, the Sentinel sought a short written statement from each candidate as an introduction to their candidacy. Candidates who did not wish to submit a written statement could choose to offer their thoughts in an interview with this reporter. Following are their responses, with indications as to whether they were written or delivered via interview:

### Mayoral candidates

Jeff Gowing  
Interview response



Gowing is a 1980 graduate of Cottage Grove High School and a 28-year Weyerhaeuser employee. He is a member of the Cottage Grove Elks, American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars posts and is married with three children and three grandchildren.

Gowing told the Sentinel he believes it's "time to step up and take the leadership role" of the City Council as mayor.

"The Mayor directs the Council, so that's the ultimate position in Cottage Grove," Gowing said. He added that he has wanted to be mayor since he was first appointed to the Council seven years ago.

"I've had seven years to learn, and I feel it's the right time for me to go for it," Gowing said.

Gowing said his "biggest pet peeves" concern public safety, including problems with drivers speeding, running red lights and talking and texting on phones while driving. He said he believes making local roads and sidewalks safe should be a city priority, as should efforts to bring new businesses to town and fill Cottage Grove's vacant spaces. Gowing said he believes the local gas tax is the "fairest way we've got now" to fund street improvements and recently spoke out against efforts to secure bonds to fund infrastructure improvements.

"I've had people tell me we need to do something about South Sixth Street," he said. "I tell them that they're driving it everyday, while I never drive it. But with a bond, you don't pay for it, and I do because I live in the City and you don't."

Jake Boone  
Written response



City Councilor Jake Boone, who served four years in the U.S. Army and studied computer science at Oregon State University before settling with his family in Cottage Grove, has held the Ward I seat for nearly six years. In addition to his role on the Council, he has been active in the community through his volunteer work with Bohemia Mining Days, the Cottage Grove Community Foundation, the Cottage Grove Community Development Corporation and the local Odd Fellows lodge. He also serves on several committees of the Oregon League of Cities in order, he says, to help protect Cottage Grove's interests at the state level.

Please see CANDIDATES, Page 10A

## Back-to-School brings changes at SLSD

New school year means staggered kindergarten start, online option, etc.

BY SAM WRIGHT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

With the school year kicking off this week, South Lane School District is introducing a few new things at its schools.

First, the School District is beginning to introduce full school days in kindergarten but will start off with a "staggered start." This means that through the month of September, kindergarten students will still have half-days and will then be introduced to full days in October.

"We feel it's a good way to make our teachers feel more supportive of the kids," said Garrett Bridgens, SLSD's Communications Director.

Along with the staggered start, the school district recently received a federal grant to implement a preschool program at Dorena and Bohemia elementary schools. Bridgens says it will be the first time in a long while that the School District has had such programs.

In addition to the preschool programs, South Lane School District has also started up South Lane Online, where students in grades 3-12 will be able to take online courses from home. The program offers over 190 different courses to take that meet or exceed the state standards across

all subjects. The online program will also give students the opportunity to be in both school-based and extracurricular activities, including clubs, athletics and special events. Students will have the ability to check in with a real teacher working within the District.

Cottage Grove High School is also starting a new program of its own. The Aspiring Teacher Program will enroll "teacher cadets," where students will learn to teach.

With the introduction of the 2016-2017 school year, South Lane School District welcomes 14 new faculty members to the district:

Abby Worth-Jones (Special Education, Latham/London), Amanda McMichael (kindergarten, Latham), Cara Morrow (teacher, Bohemia), Chelsea Mak (math, Lincoln), Chris Johnson (science, Lincoln), Jordan Johnson (math, CGHS), Kristen Barnett (preschool, Dorena), Lori Looney (fourth grade, Harrison), Rachel Rothman (SL Online, KAHS/CGHS), Rachele England (first grade, Latham), Sarah Crowl (Special Education, Bohemia), Sarah Leonard (ELA, CGHS), Tina Patten (Special Education, Bohemia) and Wendy Kelsh (preschool, Bohemia).

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