

Local church gets into the swing of summer

By Kyle McGowen
For The Sentinel

As most Cottage Grove teachers are winding down their school year in June, many local church youth and children’s leaders are beginning preparations for the months ahead. Between some churches leading vacation bible schools, all-night lock ins, festivals, summer camps, and much more, it can be a busy time of year for those leading these individual ministries.

“I just love getting kids to camp. For me camp was super pivotal in my life and my walk with God. The Lord did specific things for me in camp. He gave me specific words, and called me onto a ministry path,” said Patti Guerra, a youth leader at Cottage Grove Faith Center. I’m sure you can hear from God anywhere, but I feel like camp is a time where your kind of separated and have a like mind. You don’t have the distractions of daily life around you. For me it’s really important when kid’s kind of catch the fever for camp, get really excited, and work really hard to get there.”

With all the different events taking place over the summer for children and youth in the faith communities, it can also be expensive on families to afford it all. But many Cottage Grove churches rely heavily on fundraising to help support families in sending their kids to camps and other activities.

“If there is a kid who doesn’t go to camp because they didn’t have the money, it is not because we didn’t give them the opportunity, we have so much going on right now that can get them to camp,” said Guerra.

It can be an exhausting process for those that lead each ministry, but very rewarding. ‘Riverside Community Church of God’ recently held a bene-

fit garage sale, a dessert auction, and are selling raffle ticket to Disneyland theme parks (that were donated to the church by Disney) in hopes of their youth attending ‘Creation Festival’ in Kennewick, WA in July. The Churches teenagers helped at each fundraiser and has raised nearly \$3,000 combined so far, an effort that has left very few teens at ‘Riverside’ having to pay anything all.

“It is very rewarding to have all the kids paid for, for the simple fact that most teens can’t afford to spend a bunch of money on a big summer experience like this,” said Courtney McGowen, a youth leader at ‘Riverside church’. “Knowing that the teens are going to get touched by God makes all the work and effort rewarding.”

Cottage Grove Faith Center held similar efforts this week as Guerra made the commitment to drive to Beaverton early Saturday morning in order to pick up Krispy Kreme donuts and then drive back to Cottage Grove to sell the donuts most of that hot afternoon at a local restaurant with some of the teens and children that attend her church.

“We had to have the cash to buy them. We have to be careful, we don’t want to waste a lot of food, money, or time. So we presold about 50 dozen, we also bought an extra 50 dozen to sell. We get \$6.50 out of every \$12.00 (that they sell for). It’s an easy thing, we can do it again in a few months,” Guerra said.

Faith Center will be sending their children to



camp Crestview and their teenagers to Momentum and held their pie auction among their church community the following day. This is the sixth year the church has held their pie auction. Church member Traci Beach has led the event annually.

“Typically our kids have made a good chunk of their money from the pie auction,” Guerra added. “All the kids have accounts so that the money they earn throughout the year, such as from baby sitting at a church events, Krispy Kreme sales, or the Pie auction goes into their own youth account and they can use that money when it comes time for camp. In theory a kid who is willing to work for it will have all their camp paid for, plus some.”

Many faith based communities in Cottage Grove spend a significant amount of time leading up to and during the summer helping children and teenagers raise the money needed, something many of them believe is well worth it.

“I feel like it changes a lot about their experiences about camp, they worked for this and earned this. Not to say that kids that can just write a check don’t have that, but at the same time I feel like it’s a pretty powerful thing to know for them that they worked for it and earned it. I love camp, man I love camp,” Guerra concluded.

Legislature Continued from A1

had lawmakers crossing the aisles and battling through to come up with a \$5.3 transportation package. It included money for rural areas but most funds went to Portland with the plan also including toll roads for the city.

- A \$600 million tax on providers was the solution for thousands of Oregonians who faced losing the health care coverage they had obtained under the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare.
- In other health care news, women in the state were the subject of emotional debate on the chamber floor but eventually, lawmakers passed provisions that mandate insurers cover reproductive care, including abortions.
- Women of Oregon were also given the right to earn the same as a man for doing the same job. House Bill 2005 makes it il-

legal for an employer to pay a woman less than a man for performing the same job.

- Workers in companies with at least 500 employees will now have a much more predictable work schedule thanks to the Oregon Legislature. The body passed legislation forcing employers to notify employees of their work schedules two weeks in advance.
- Children under the age of 18 who are in the country illegally will now be entitled to Medicaid coverage in a bill that was supported by both democrats and republicans.
- Nitrous oxide was not the only tobacco shop product to see an age change. Oregonians under the age of 21 will not be permitted to purchase cigarettes under a new law passed by the legislature that raises the legal age from 18 to 21.

- Charges to drug possession will change after the legislature opted to pass a bill that altered punishments for those caught with illegal substances. Individuals found to be carrying "user-levels" of cocaine, meth and heroin will be charged with misdemeanors and not felonies.
- House Bill 2355 is expected to land on Governor Brown's desk as a way to tackle racial discrimination. The law would mandate that law enforcement collect and submit data related to a person's age, sex and ethnicity after conducting a traffic stop.

Governor Kate Brown released a statement regarding the end of the legislative session, saying, "This legislative session was tough but rewarding. We began the year with a \$1.6 billion budget deficit and the ambition to build a stronger education system, invest in our transporta-

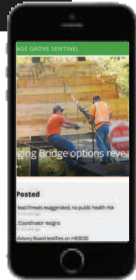
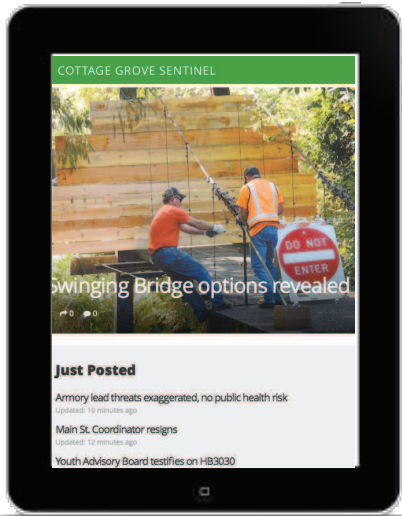
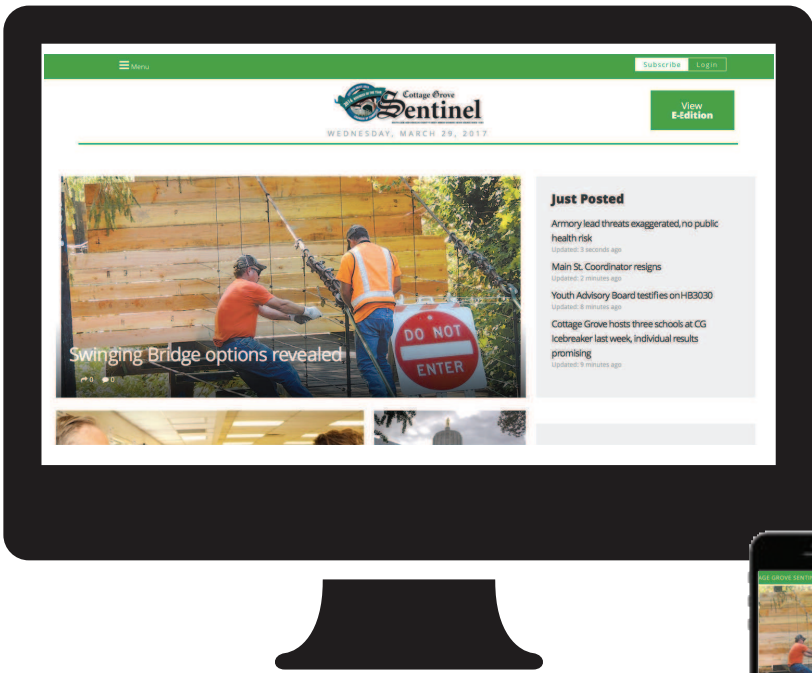
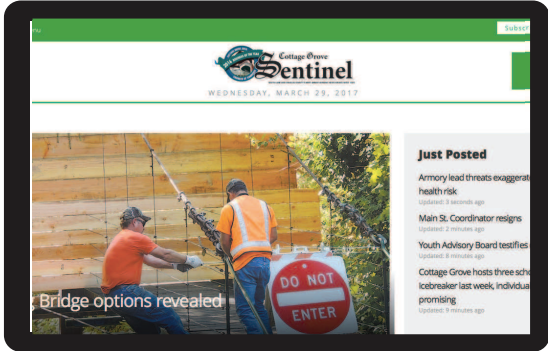
tion system, ensure all Oregon children have access to health care, and create a safer, more equitable Oregon. Today, we have balanced the budget and achieved these critical goals while standing up for Oregonians' values." She went on to say, " My priorities were supported by both parties because these solutions came from the Oregonians I’ve met across the state," Governor Brown said. "It took a lot of hard work to build bipartisan support and I’m proud of the Legislature for supporting transformative policy for Oregon. While the legislative session has ended, our work continues. I look forward to building on our successes and lessons learned for a brighter future in Oregon."

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