

Cottage Grove High School joins national gun protest



PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

By Zach Silva
zsilva@cgsentinel.com

In conjunction with schools across the country, a group of 68 students walked out of Cottage Grove High School (CGHS) last Wednesday morning at 10 a.m. to push for gun control and to remember the 17 students that were killed last month at the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida.

The students gathered around the sign near the front of the school where they made a circle and locked arms on the grass as they stood in silence for 17 minutes; a minute for each student killed in Florida.

With a handful of community members gathered on the sidewalk in support, the students then ended their silence by marching around the parking lot as they chanted sayings such as “the NRA will have to pay”, “bury guns, not kids” and “we’ve had enough.”

“We felt that even though we’re a small school and stuff, we felt like we also have

a voice,” said junior Arleth Serratos who helped organize the walkout.

“We want tighter gun control, we want to do this for every school shooting that has been happening because it’s not okay. We deserve free and safe education.”

As the conversation about school shootings and gun control persisted throughout the nation and was often led by students, a group of students at CGHS – a school of approximately 740 students – wanted to make their voices heard. Serratos, a member of the CGHS MEChA group, met with school administrators about what could be done. The group put out fliers while members and other CGHS students began spreading their message across social media platforms.

“I honestly, I was so surprised,” Serratos said of the turnout. “It was kind of emotional because it shows that our school cares. It shows that students, they want to be a part of something, they want to show what they’re here for.”

“It’s just crazy because we are just students and I wouldn’t have thought that that

many people would have come out. Especially because we’re a small school and the part where we’re located too, we have different opinions. Just to see people come together and unite and show that respect for every minute is just, it was amazing to me.”

In preparation for the event, South Lane School District put out guidelines that they hoped students would abide by including staying on campus and that they would receive an unexcused absence but attendance would be taken once students were back in the building.

“I would say it was a somber event... I think it was done respectfully. It wasn’t like it was a skipping class party. They had a point of view and you could see by the way they came out and the way they acted that they had a point of view,” said principal Mike Ingman.

“In terms of educational process, for those students it was a very important that they were involved in that. So for them I think it was a really good event and went as well as it could have gone.”

Guns

Continued from A1

areas also seem to become gun owners earlier with 47 percent saying they owned a gun before the age of 18 while only 27 percent of their urban counterparts claimed the same. And of the 46 percent of rural-based adults who own guns, 75 percent say they

own more than one.

Gowing owns 20.

“That’s not sitting down and counting them. It’s an estimate,” he said.

He has a 3030 that he killed his first deer with and the gun that all of his children learned to shoot

on, including proper gun safety.

“If you handed my kid a gun they would drop the magazine and clear it to make sure it’s empty,” he said. “The thing that’s really irritating to me and we’ve been hearing this for 20 years and the Thurston school shooting was 20 to 21 years ago and a few things have changed over the years. In the 70s you had serial killers. You don’t hear about those anymore, you hear the mass killings, they’re getting all their fame from one incident.”

In October of 2015, Ian Campbell and Michael Sullivan reached the scene before the stampede of journalists that would follow. They were on the staff of the *News-Review* in Roseburg and, because they had arrived so quickly, made it into the chaos instead of being stationed behind the police tape. Umpqua Community College had become the latest in the nation’s school shootings and would become the deadliest in modern Oregon history. The gunman killed nine people and injured eight others before turning the gun on himself. All within roughly 10 minutes.

In the aftermath of the shooting, local and national news organizations descended onto the Umpqua campus as they had for every school shooting prior.

University of Oregon professors Nicole Dahmen and Lori

Shontz examined the effects of journalism on mass shootings and mass shootings on journalists in projects and papers including “Reporting Roseburg,” an in-depth reporting project that saw interviews with the journalists on the ground on Oct. 1, 2015.

One of the most-wrestled with questions then and now was whether or not reports should name the shooter. In the case of Umpqua, the gunman had a manifesto and an argument has been made that perpetrators of these crimes sought fame and notoriety.

“It’s a fine line,” Eli Saslow, who covered the shooting for the *Washington Post* said in an interview for Reporting Roseburg, “If we don’t cover news as if it’s news and we start saying we’re not going to name the shooter or we’re saying, ‘We don’t want copycats in this situation so let’s not name the location...’ The very principle of journalism is it’s our job to inform the public. Unfortunately, what we don’t control is what then happens with that information in the public.”

John Sepulveda, of OPB and CNN also spoke with Reporting Roseburg, saying, “I don’t subscribe to this idea that we should never name a shooter. That being said, I think the research is pretty clear that there are folks who look at that and say, ‘Oh, I want to copy that.’ So, there’s no point in

elevating the shooter. There’s no point in talking about the shooter other than how it relates to the victim.”

When the Parkland shooter entered the school, he was wearing his Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps shirt. When Peter Wang, 15, was shot in Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, he was wearing his JROTC uniform and reportedly holding open the door for others to escape. He was posthumously admitted to West Point Academy.

There’s no JROTC program in South Lane. Gowing doesn’t remember there being one when he attended school in the 70s and Thompson recalls speaking out against the effort to start a program in the 80s.

“What caught my eye in the proposal when they were looking at rebuilding the high school and trying to pass a bond to upgrade the school was the selling point that if they did, they would start a JROTC,” Thompson said. “They needed a firing range and talked about having one in the wrestling room. I didn’t think guns in the school was appropriate.”

All South Lane schools are currently weapon-free zones with the exception of the school resource officer—one Cottage Grove police officer assigned to the district who spends the majority of the day at the high school. However,

while tobacco-free zone signs dot several locations around Cottage Grove High School, a sign that denotes the property as a weapon-free zone is not visible on the exterior of the building. The district does, however, have signs posted outside of the local middle school and one of the five elementary schools. South Lane district policy complies with the federal Gun-Free School Zone Act that prohibits the possession or discharge of a firearm in a school zone but the policy also permits individuals with valid carry licenses under Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 166.291 and ORS 166.292 to have weapons “under their control.”

After the shooting in Parkland, Florida that killed 17 students and administrators, calls for stricter gun laws were also followed by suggestions that schools arm their teachers.

It’s a discussion that hasn’t happened yet in Cottage Grove.

“I believe the board would have to set a policy that defines teachers carrying guns and what that would mean here at Cottage Grove,” South Lane School Board Chair Alan Baas said. “At this time the notion of arming our teachers here in Cottage Grove has not shown up as board discussion.”



SPRING Tune-Up

Only \$99*

We'll make sure your system is running effectively and efficiently. Call for details and an appointment today, and beat the spring rush!

Complete Heating & Cooling System Service
Reasonable Rates • All Work Guaranteed

JAMES HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING
COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL

www.jamesheating.com
115 Lawrence St., Eugene, OR 97401
CCB #47396
Bus. (541) 461-2101 • Fax: (541) 686-4820

SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS APPLICANTS FOR BUDGET COMMITTEE



The South Lane School Board of Directors is selecting a community member to serve on the District Budget Committee to represent Positions 3, 4 and 7. All positions serve a three-year term.

To be eligible for appointment, a school district budget committee candidate must:

- Not be an officer, employee or agent of the district
- Be a qualified voter of the district

Interested citizens are asked to obtain an application from the District Office located at 455 Adams and return it to Acting Superintendent Kyle Tucker or Tonya Kerns, Board Secretary, South Lane School District, P.O. Box 218, Cottage Grove, OR 97424. **The deadline for application submission to the South Lane School District office is April 11, 2018.** Information about the responsibilities of the position is attached to the application.



Home Pride Painting and Repair LLC
Over 30 years of experience

Schedule Now For Spring and Summer Interior and Exterior Painting
Call us for a Free Quote!

“We do small remodels, home repairs and decks!”
Serving Lane & North Douglas Counties
541-735-0089
ccb# 217560



ORDER TODAY!
Many styles, sizes and Colors to choose from



Family owned and operated for over 47 years.

BOYCE & SONS LANDSCAPE AND BUILDING MATERIALS
Open 7 days a week!
79149 N. River Road
541-942-4664



Did You Know?

With your subscription you receive access to the mobile friendly Cottage Grove Sentinel e-Edition.

- Get Local & Breaking News, Sports and Classifieds
- View our News Archives
- Read Special Publications



View it on your computer, tablet and smartphone, with unlimited access, no need to download an app.
Not taking advantage? Call or email us today!

Cottage Grove Sentinel
www.cgsentinel.com
541-942-3325
You trusted local news, sports and special publications since 1889.



Insuring your life helps protect their future.

Matt Bjornn ChFC RICP, Agent
1481 Gateway Blvd
Cottage Grove, OR 97424
Bus: 541-942-2623
www.bjornninsurance.com

It can also provide for today.
I'll show you how a life insurance policy with living benefits can help your family with both long-term and short-term needs.
GET TO A BETTER STATE.®
CALL ME TODAY.



State Farm Life Insurance Company (Not licensed in MA, NY or WI)
State Farm Life and Accident Assurance Company (Licensed in NY and WI)
Bloomington, IL
1203087.1



delicious
FAMILY DINING

We'll make you feel right at home with great food and friendly service!

Daily Specials
20% off for Active Military & Vets.
Tuesday Night is Senior Night 4-8 pm.

OPEN DAILY
Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
6am-10pm Sun-Thur
6am-10pm Fri & Sat.

the **Vintage Inn** FAMILY RESTAURANT
1590 Gateway Blvd. • Cottage Grove
541-942-7144