



Guest Viewpoint

Community conversation planned

Cindy Weeldreyer
Vision Keepers

Most people who call Cottage Grove home were born here or transplanted here by family or personal choice. Most will agree we live in a remarkable small town enjoying a lifestyle that is only a dream for millions of people around the world. As Grovers, we have a responsibility to be thoughtful about how to preserve, protect and enhance our community for the generations that will follow us.

The individuals and families who came before us worked hard and invested their time, talents, money and vision to create the community we enjoy today. They built roads, bridges, mills, mines, schools, hospitals, homes, churches and businesses. They joined granges, fraternal lodges and clubs to strengthen the social fabric of Cottage Grove. The relationships built within these organizations sustained them through wars, economic downturns, illnesses and natural disasters.

That was then and this is now. Today,

those organizations that still exist have an aging membership with few young people to replace them. Technology, social media, television and radio have contributed to the increasing polarization of our citizenry by repressing the conversations that build a strong sense of community.

In 2007, more than 1,000 community-minded volunteers participated in the original interactive process that created a shared vision for the future. In 2008, the city council adopted Vision 2037 and appointed Vision Keepers to ensure it remained a living document. It was reviewed five years ago to acknowledge the actions completed, those still in progress and added a few new actions.

The plan is now 10-years-old; so it's a great time to once again engage the broader community in its update. Some people who developed this plan have died or moved away. Students have graduated and left to pursue their dreams. Many new people have moved here. Many natives have returned to raise their families here. Affordable housing is a growing problem. Our country is dan-

gerously divided on major public policy issues that affect our lifestyles and our future. We will soon surpass 10,000 in population that ushers expensive new state and federal mandates to our door.

These are all good reasons to step away from online games, TV programs and social media for two hours and re-invest that time in a face-to-face chat with your family, friends and neighbors. Spend the next week thinking about what you hope The Grove will be two decades from now when we celebrate our sesquicentennial (150th) anniversary. What kind of community will the children of today and those who follow them inherit from us? Come to the Cottage Grove High School cafeteria next Tuesday (5/15) from 6 to 8 p.m. and share your vision for our growing town.

Please join us for a productive and creative evening of refreshments and good conversation. Bring the older kids to have a voice in their future and we'll provide free, quality child care for your wee little ones. For more information (and child care RSVP) call Pete Barrell at 541-767-4147.

LETTERS

Teacher Appreciation Week

During Teacher Appreciation Week, we should give thanks to the amazing educators across the country and in Cottage Grove standing together to better our public schools and improve the lives of children.

Teachers are always there for children. They get to school early and stay late. They work to ensure everyone from the straight A student to the one struggling to get by receive the care, attention, and education that they deserve. They dig into their own pockets to corral supplies for their classroom.

Teachers inspire students in their classroom every day, the teachers taking action across the country inspire me as they stand up for dignity in the workplace. I'm in awe of the educators who walked off the job to do right by their students in states like West Virginia, Oklahoma, Kentucky

and Arizona.

We all should be fed up with politicians putting classroom funding on the chopping block, while giving massive tax breaks to corporations. Our political leaders need to recognize what teachers contribute. It's time they fund our public schools and provide teachers with the means to achieve high-quality education so every child in our community can learn, grow, and thrive.

South Lane Educators, keep up the good work and know that YOU are appreciated!

-Diane Hicks
President South Lane Education Association

Invite to community conversation

In 2009 when I moved here, enthusiasm around the 2008 visioning process was palpable. It was the first time I knew of this kind of work—which involves community members coming together and creating a shared

vision of the future. How exciting!!

I've since learned that the year 2037 was chosen because it is our town's 150th birthday. This living document was revisited in 2013 during a series of community meetings.

The Cottage Grove Vision Keepers Committee, a volunteer group of stakeholders and residents who support and help coordinate the organizations working on the tasks outlined, are holding a series of conversations where community members can share their ideas and visions for Cottage Grove's future.

The second community conversation of 2018 will occur on Tuesday, May 15th from 6-8 p.m. in the cafeteria at Cottage Grove High School (1375 S River Rd). You are invited!

The desire is for these community conversations to occur more consistently. That will require the efforts of many. I've volunteered to work with this committee and I hope you, too,

will contribute your energy in some way.

This work is sponsored by the City of Cottage Grove and other community organizations, both through volunteer and fiscal support, but it truly is a process for the people and by the people and could not occur without the input of a wide variety of community members.

Read about the projects that were envisioned in 2008 at www.cottagegrove.org/vision2037. I invite you to envision what you would like to see for the future of our community. Then, please join us for a community conversation to share those visions with each other.

Let's each bring someone. Reach out and invite someone who consumes information in a different manner than you. All ages are welcome and encouraged. Childcare and refreshments are provided free of charge!

-Rose R. Miller
Cottage Grove

Teacher Appreciation Week



Look for teacher testimonials in this edition explaining why SLSD teachers teach.

I became a teacher because:

There were several teachers in my extended family. It seemed to be a part of who my family was. The teachers in my family were loving, caring people who gave a lot of themselves to others. They were highly involved in our community activities, church, social gatherings, organized events etc. It was a small town and everybody knew each other.

Having grown up in that environment and lifestyle, I suppose I naturally gravitated toward the teaching profession. After a dozen years of chasing life experiences it was time to pursue a teaching career. I thought I wanted to be a college professor and that was my goal starting out. But while in college I realized that standing at a podium and lecturing to an auditorium of 100 or more students was not what the teaching experience was going to be for me.

I thought about some of my favorite teachers from high school, what impact they had made in my life and the fact that they will always be part of the best memories of my teenage years. I wanted to be a teacher like the ones I remember.

Kent Russo



Letters to the Editor Policy

The Sentinel welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or without documentation will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside The Sentinel readership area will only be published at the discretion of the editor.

Political/Election Letters:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2)

Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

Send letters to:

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