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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2018

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## Investigation into deadly fire continues

By Caitlyn May  
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*Law enforcement seeking information in a structure fire that claimed the life of a Cottage Grove man*

An early morning fire on Highway 99 had one casualty and destroyed a home. By late Monday afternoon, the smell of smoke was still in the air surrounding 1557 Highway 99 and police tape marked the spot a trailer used to sit.

Cottage Grove Police reported that it began receiving multiple calls beginning at approximately 5:45 a.m. Monday morning about a structure fire at the Frontier Park trailer park.

According to a statement released by CGPD, officers arrived on the scene to find the



CAITLYN MAY/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

**South Lane County Fire and Rescue and Cottage Grove Police responded to a structure fire in the early morning hours of Sept. 17. One individual died in the fire.**

home fully engulfed in flames.

"Two of the occupants were able to escape from the residents, however it was learned

that another adult male occupant, was still inside the home," the statement read.

CGPD evacuated nearby res-

idences and reported that South Lane County Fire and Rescue (SLCFR) arrived on scene but were unable to make entry into

the home.

"Once the fire was contained, it was confirmed that one of the occupants was deceased," the statement read. Survivors of the fire were relocated temporarily by the Red Cross.

The cause of the fire and the death are both under investigation by the Oregon State Police, State Fire Marshall, SLCFR and CGPD.

According to a statement released by SLCFR chief Joe Raade, 12 fire personnel responded to the fire along with four fire and EMS apparatus. SLCFR was assisted by firefighters from the Goshen/Pleasant Hill fire department.

"The structure was a complete loss," the statement read. "And there was a single adult male fatality."

Law enforcement is asking witnesses to Monday morning's fire contact Officer Steven Biehler at 541-924-9145 ext. 227.

## Court bars prosecution for outdoor sleeping

By Caitlyn May  
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A ruling earlier this month, by the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit defining citations for homeless individuals sleeping on the street, absent an alternative, cruel and unusual, has Cottage Grove administrators searching for answers.

"We don't know for sure yet what it means," said City Manager Richard Meyers. "The court ruling and the interpretations, so far, are all over right now."

The ruling, which was handed down Sept. 4 after two individuals in Idaho challenged existing city ordinances that prohibited sleeping overnight in city parks, makes citing individuals for sleeping on public property, essentially, a constitutional violation.

"It's criminalizing homelessness," Meyers said. "Take our parks, they close for everyone at 10 p.m. and re-open at 5. Does that mean when the park closes, and we can't tell them they can't sleep there, are we creating additional rights for homeless individuals that Joe Citizen doesn't have?"

Cottage Grove law enforcement does not typically cite individuals for sleeping on public property but rather, asks them to move. However, the ruling strips officers from issuing citations and creates the environment for confusion if the individual refuses to relocate from the area.

"There's nothing that officer can do," Meyers said. "If they're smoking or starting a fire or dripping liquid or littering, they can be cited. But if they're just sleeping, it creates a credibility issue for our officers if they're saying 'you can't be here' and the person says 'yes I can.'"

The ruling is based on the eighth amendment which prohibits cruel and unusual punishment noting that an issuance of a citation violates this amendment only if an alternative location such as a shelter is not available or the individual cannot afford lodging such as a hotel room.

However, the ruling also states that the court is not prohibiting municipalities from acting against individuals using public spaces. "Nor do we suggest that a jurisdiction with insufficient shelter can never criminalize the act of sleeping outside."

What does that mean? "We don't know."

See **COURT 11A**

## Sullivan explores longer stay

By Zach Silva  
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In May of this year, the South Lane School District board announced that Dr. Larry Sullivan would be the interim superintendent for the 2018-19 school year.

Now it turns out that he may also be interim superintendent for the 2019-2020 school year.

At the Sept. 10 SLSD board meeting, Sullivan discussed how the board will be working to continue with its plan of hiring a new superintendent for the next school year when school board member Sherry Duerst-Higgins made a suggestion.

"Having been involved with several superintendent searches, it takes an enormous amount of time. And it sounds like from the report you're doing today, that we have a lot on our plate. And I've been so impressed, Larry, with how you've dug into things not only in the school district but in the community," said Duerst-Higgins. "Have you thought, and I don't know how the board feels about this, but I think it would be really beneficial for our district if you were to serve two years."

"Or three," added board member Jerry Settlemeyer.

Sullivan initially retired from 40 years in different

See **INTERIM 9A**

## Local vet finds sanctuary with wolves



CAITLYN MAY/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

**Local veteran Jeremy Lucier sholds up a photo of himself and a wolf at Lockwood Animal Rescue in California where he volunteers his time.**

By Caitlyn May  
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Jeremy Lucier's job last April was to stand at the end of the driveway.

He'd flown from Cottage Grove to rural California after getting a phone call from a friend of his asking for help. His friend, a fellow veteran, had been working with a non-profit to rescue wolves from breeders and uninformed owners who mistook the wild animals as poten-

tial pets.

He was standing at the end of the driveway of a property the group had confirmed was housing wolves, a federally protected animal, illegally when a car sped by him.

"They chased that car for over an hour and when they finally stopped to get something to drink or to take a break, the guys, they got him. They got George."

George is what Lucier describes as a "big" guy. He was purchased, illegally,

for \$500 and his story still elicits tears from Lucier who has officially joined the volunteers of Lockwood Animal Rescue — a non-profit dedicated to providing a permanent home for wolves, coyotes and other animals through cooperation with veteran volunteers. According to organization's website, it provides a "supportive environment for combat veterans through employment, job skill

See **WOLVES 9A**

**COMMUNITY**  
Cottage Grove's 'Rosies'

Cottage Grove residents recognized for their role in America's history.

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**DOWNTOWN**  
Main Street Coordinator

Jared Sidman named as new Main Street coordinator.

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