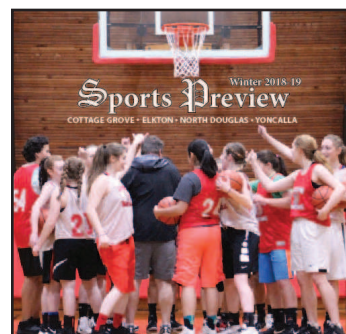


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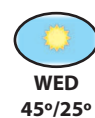
SPORTS Sports Preview section inside! B1

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For a complete six-day forecast please see page A5.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2018

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Charges brought against CGHS music teacher

By Caitlyn May and Zach Silva
cmay@cg sentinel.com • zsilva@cg sentinel.com

Investigation includes multiple charges related to sexual misconduct with a minor

Cottage Grove High School music teacher Gabe Dickinson, 37, is the subject of a police investigation into allegations of inappropriate conduct with a minor.

According to Cottage Grove Police, Dickinson was being investigated for sexual misconduct, sexual abuse-3, sexual abuse-2 and sodomy-3. During an arraignment held on Friday in Lane County Circuit Court, Dickinson was charged with three counts of third de-

gree sodomy. "Officers and detectives learned that this relationship began approximately two years ago when the student was 15 years of age and in the 10th grade. The sexual relationship continued into November 2018," a statement released by CGPD stated.

On Thursday, Nov. 29, an email was sent to Cottage Grove High School parents from principal Mike Ingman that stated, in part, "Upon learning of the allegations, Cottage Grove High School and South Lane School District moved quickly to respond."

The letter explained how the school



COURTESY PHOTO
Gabe Dickinson

district alerted the Cottage Grove Police Department, working cooperatively with police as they conduct an investigation.

"Mr. Dickinson is on leave, and is currently not at school," Ingman stated in the email, adding that, "While I cannot comment on the specifics of the allegations or the investigation, I can assure you that nothing is more important to this school and district than the safety and well-being of each of our students."

"I hope you will not let the alleged misconduct of one person cast a shadow over all of our staff members, who demonstrate their commitment to ed-

ucation and to our students every day."

Ingman also noted that counselors would be available to students affected by the situation.

Dickinson was detained and is being held at the Lane County Corrections Facility.

He was placed on leave from CGHS. According to SLSD Human Resources Director Brian McCasline, Dickinson was still on leave as of Monday, Dec. 3.

According to his personal LinkedIn account, Dickinson has worked at CGHS since 2015. He previously worked in the Bethel School District from 2010 to 2015.

The district office later released a statement on its website saying it could not comment further on the situation but was cooperating fully with law enforcement officials.

"Our staff work diligently and suc-

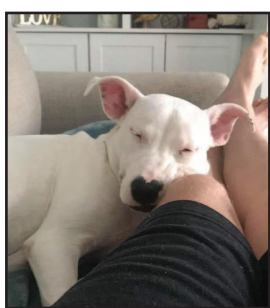
cessfully teaching our students and ensuring that they are safe and secure in their school environment," the statement read, repeating in part, "We hope that the alleged misconduct of one person does not cast a shadow over all of our staff members, who demonstrate their commitment to education and to our students every day. We have a care plan in place at Cottage Grove High School to meet the needs of staff and students at this time."

Both CGPD and CGHS ask that anyone with relevant information call Det. Tami Miles at 541-942-9145 ext. 224, or school resource officer Chris Joyce at 541-942-9145 ext. 214.

Parents with questions or concerns can contact McCasline at the district office at 541-942-3381 ext. 133.

The search for Anna

By Caitlyn May
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Cassie Asleson is devastated.

She answers her cell phone on the first ring hoping for good news but as the days trudge closer to a week, the voice that meets callers grows heavier — sadder.

Asleson, who lives in Washington, has plastered Cottage Grove with fliers, assembled a small band of volunteers on Facebook and has driven the city's streets for 15 hours a day, desperate to find her dog, Anna.

The white pit bull puppy has been missing since Friday, Nov. 23 after she escaped from the family's car at the Village Green Inn.

"I had a pit bull I got in North Carolina," Asleson said. "I was in an abusive marriage and I left him with just the dog, Roxy. She got cancer this summer." Once it was clear Roxy's chemotherapy treatments had stopped working, a heartbroken Asleson started talking to breeders and looking online for another white pit bull, to ease the pain of losing eight-year-old Roxy.

"I couldn't find one. I texted the vet on Oct. 8 to schedule Roxy's at-home euthanasia and an hour later, I got an email about

See ANA 10A

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas



CHRISTMASTIME IN THE CITY-Cottage Grove ushered in the holiday season with a visit from Santa Claus on Saturday, Dec. 1. South Lane County Fire and Rescue escorted Santa into town along with carolers who gathered in All-America Square to see the lighting of the Christmas tree. Santa hung around for photos with local children and to make note of what they wanted for Christmas.



PHOTOS C/O GREG LEE

SLSD talks Latham future

By Zach Silva
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The South Lane School District took its next step to deciding the future of Latham Elementary School.

At Monday's school board meeting, interim-superintendent Dr. Larry Sullivan, assisted by others who contributed to the report, guided the board page-by-page through the 40-page "Latham School Report." The report — that was made public on the school district's website at 5 p.m. on Monday while the board received the document on Friday afternoon — was an attempt at an all-encompassing look at the future of Latham. The report was made with the help of Communications Coordinator Garrett Bridgens and an estimated eight to 10 other individuals.

It covered the factors involved in either closing the 165-year old school or allowing it to remain open for another five years and how that decision may impact everything from enrollment to transportation to technology. It also in-

See BOARD 7A

Cottage Grove population tops 10k, could prompt mandated changes

By Caitlyn May
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The latest Portland State University population estimate placed Cottage Grove's population at 10,005, triggering mandated changes that all cities in the state of Oregon must adhere to after reaching more than 10,000 residents.

"Once the population estimate is certified the city of Cottage Grove will be over 10,000

in population," City Manager Richard Meyers office wrote in a weekly statement. "With that designation we have additional requirements in solid waste and recycling programs and in storm water treatment program. Staff has been preparing to meet the new requirements."

The estimate is expected to be certified after a review period on Dec. 17. Once the estimate is certified, Cottage Grove will be considered a city with a popula-

tion over 10,000 and the number can be used by state and local governments for revenue sharing, fund allocation and planning purposes.

As a city with more than 10,000, Cottage Grove will have to add an additional garbage service. When the city failed to hit 10,000 people in 2017 (coming in at 9,920), Meyers suggested the city may lean toward opting for a weekly yard debris service that would either be

billed separately or increase the cost of the current garbage bill.

The city must also address its waste water system by installing catch basins to separate debris.

"We started doing this but we have hundreds of storm water outlets throughout the city and we'll probably have a new staff member for this but it's budgeted in our five-year plan," Meyers previously told *The Sentinel* in 2016 when the population hovered dangerously close to

10,000 residents. The new employee would be responsible for checking the stormwater outlets and ensuring the collectors are functioning properly. In addition to budgeting for an additional employee, the city also attempted to stay ahead of the 10,000-resident curve by purchasing a vector truck earlier this year. "We use it now but it can also suck up the storm catch basin debris," Meyers previously said.

COMMUNITY

Helping the homeless
Lincoln Middle Schoolers collect socks, donation to help those in the cold
PAGE A3



FEATURE

Cowboy 911
Cottage Grove man joins others in helping rescue animals after wildfires.
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