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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2019

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LTD reduces service, adds MOD routes

By Caitlyn May
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“There’s no way to say this nicely, this is just ill-conceived.” That was Cottage Grove City Councilor Mike Fleck’s summation of the presentation by LTD that rolled out its new service changes for the council Monday night.

During an unusually packed meeting, the organization introduced Mobility on Demand (MOD), a service most equitable to Uber or Lyft in the private sector where individuals can schedule rides from their home and reach their destination through ride shares compiled through an algorithm. The pilot program went into effect on Monday in conjunction with a reduction in LTD services. The organization will no longer offer its circulator route through Cottage Grove with the exception of its first two routes in the morning and last route in the evening. According to LTD program organizer Cosette Rees, those routes are the least popular among those offered.

“I can’t tell you how excited I am to be a part of this,” said Ruth Linoz, director for South Lane Wheels which operates the Ride Around Town route in Cottage Grove which will also cease to operate. However, South Lane Wheels will still offer rides to Eugene and individual scheduled rides.

The purpose of instituting the MOD program, according to Rees, is to increase diversity among riders and access to transportation services.

“Let’s say I need to be at the doctor at 8:15 a.m.,” said bus rider Michelle Thurston. “I schedule the ride but it’s my understanding that it’s not first come, first serve so if someone else calls at 7:56 before the bus comes for my ride and the system determines that’s the best trip, they’ll get the ride. I won’t get to Eugene in time and get fired by that doctor for missing an appointment.”

Several residents gave public comment, echoing Thurston’s concerns, including Jane Rapier, who said she and her husband bought their house with bus stop locations in mind.

“I don’t know if you’ve ever waited for a bus in the rain but that seat gets wet,” she said. “I’m 80 with a disability and I’m sitting waiting on a wet bench.”

Wait times dominated the conversation with LTD no

See **LTD 6A**

Civic pride going ’round



On Monday, Jan. 14 members of the Friends of the Cottage Grove Carousel were awarded the Cottage Grove Prospector and Gold Diggers Civic Pride Award—a yearly award presented to a business or group that has demonstrated efforts to better the community. After the presentation, the board met to choose 12 historical photographs of Cottage Grove and the surrounding area for the carousel’s running boards. The carousel is currently located at King Estate Winery on Highway 99 but the group hopes to find a permanent home for the attraction closer to Main Street. According to group president, Don Williams, the main fundraising effort is currently focused on obtaining a canopy and other short-term accommodations for the carousel at a cost of \$60,000.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Rumor of homeless camp property just that

By Caitlyn May
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The city of Cottage Grove has to find a solution to its lack of a designated homeless camp after a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision that prohibits municipalities from citing homeless individuals for sleeping on public property. The options range from altering operational hours at city parks to developing land as an alternative for the homeless to sleep on. The city is still discussing the issue with its attorneys but curious residents and local social media watchers think they’ve discovered the city’s plan.

However, according to City Manager Richard Meyers, they’re wrong.

“That has nothing to do with the homeless camp,” Meyers told *The Sentinel* in response to questions surrounding the property located behind the post office off Main Street. For weeks, local social media groups have been plastered with messages and exchanges that insist the property is set to become a homeless camp.

“We are fixing up the property to be able to use it and take care of it during the summer,” Meyers said. “We’re going to take care of the parking lot because there was a large pool there as more and more people are using the dog park and getting back there.”

Meyers also cited the need to have additional space for the yearly carnival that comes to town in the event that the existing space at Bohemia Park is too wet — as it has been in year’s past. “We thought it’s

See **RUMOR 9A**



South Lane schools tackle bullying

By Caitlyn May
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According to a recent survey conducted by the Pew Research Center—a nonprofit organization that follows social trends

within the U.S.—six in 10 students report being the subject of cyber bullying. The statistic adds to the traditional bullying experienced by students at both the national and local level.

In South Lane School District, administrators have part-

nered with experts—and each other—to tackle the issue that has jumped from school hallways, locker rooms and cafeterias to social media platforms and text messages.

According to the school district’s policies, cell phone usage

is limited on school grounds but it is difficult for schools to police behavior that occurs outside of the school day. During class time, however, students are held responsible for their behavior based on district policy and a variety of behavioral matrices at the 10 South Lane Schools.

At Bohemia Elementary, there is no distinguishing between bullying and cyber bullying but teachers and administrators would rather there be zero incidents of bullying and so, they’ve joined other South Lane Schools in taking a proactive approach. Buddies, not Bullies was started last year as a program meant to expand students’ relationships across grade levels and decrease incidents of bullying. Once a week, kindergarteners and fifth graders come together as buddies and engage in different activi-

ties.

“Pretty strong relationships are formed during that time with the idea that we know a cross section of the school and they’re not isolated in their grade level,” said principal Heather Bridgens. “They get pretty excited when they see their buddies in the cafeteria or the hallway.”

Last year, Bohemia reported just 14 referrals based on bullying which accounted for one percent of the total referrals at the school. This year, that number is already up by .7 percent, five months into the school year.

According to Bridgens, the school’s definition of bullying is based on age-appropriate designations and may look different than bullying at higher grade levels.

“We work really closely with

See **BULLYING 7A**

CITY COUNCIL

State of the City
Mayor gives state of the City address, swears-in new councilors

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MUSIC

New singer in town
Buddy Monlock will perform tonight in Cottage Grove

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