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WEATHER



Partly cloudy with a high of 80 and a low tonight of 59.

Full forecast on A5

COMMUNITY



Carousel steps closer to completion

A5

SPORTS — B



Antique planes dazzle at OAHS

B1

RECORDS

Obituaries
 Official reports
 Births
 A2

LORANE NEWS

A5

CLASSIFIEDS

Listings and public notices
 B6-B7

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'Are We Ready?' Part I — Cottage Grove's Grade Report

In recent months, residents have contended with a 100-year snowstorm, flooding and fires. What do they tell us about our area's readiness in the event of a major disaster?

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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Editor's Note: This is Part I of a three-part series that will look at the state of emergency preparedness in the Cottage Grove area, examine solutions and identify possible future threats.

This year has been a trial by fire — and water — for the Cottage Grove area. In a three-month span, locals found themselves subject to a diversity of disasters which tested the resolve



Cottage Grove Sentinel Special Series

and readiness of not just individuals, but the systems in place to guard against such onslaughts of nature.

Beginning with a once-in-a-cen-

tury snowstorm at the end of February, heavy rain and flooding followed in April only to be topped off with a massive hillside fire outside the city on Dowens Road a month later.

While many viewed the ordeal as a wake-up call, coordinators of some response efforts saw the events as proof, to a degree, of readiness.

Lane County Emergency Manager Patence Winningham, who had freshly accepted the position only four days before the snow-

storm, found Cottage Grove to be a relatively unassuming hum among the cries for county assistance during the incident.

"I actually didn't hear a whole lot from Cottage Grove based on wants and needs, which is outstanding," she said.

Cottage Grove city officials chalk that up to a level of self-reliance that fortified the city against the storm's severity.

"For the snowstorm, we were independent and successfully

See **READY 7A**

'Swing shift'



SOPHIA EDELBLUTE/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Cottage Grove's Swinging Bridge is moving towards completion. As of Friday, Aug. 2, 15 cubic yards of concrete was poured on each side of the bridge, amounting to 30 cubic yards in total. The concrete will aid in ensuring the bridge can support heavier loads and will cure over several days from Aug. 5 to Aug. 8. Steel columns are scheduled to be installed early September and the entire project is set to be completed in early November.

Sounds of symphony echo in The Grove

By SOPHIA EDELBLUTE
 COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL INTERN

The sun set over Bohemia Park on Monday, July 29, to the sound of music. The Eugene Symphony, conducted by Francesco Lecce-Chong, played through a number of pieces — from John Williams' "Harry's Wondrous World" to Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture." Mayor Jeff Gowing even conducted a piece called "Tritsch-Tratch Polka" by Strauss Jr.

The music may have started at 7:30 p.m. but the event preparation started far earlier. The back was put on the amphitheater's dome about a week in advance. The day of the event, set up of chairs, tables and equipment started at 8 a.m. The symphony's own equipment — music stands, stand lights, instruments and their own chairs — arrived in rental trucks later in the afternoon.



SOPHIA EDELBLUTE/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

The amphitheater at Bohemia Park was packed as residents gathered to hear the Eugene Symphony Orchestra July 29.

The overall cost of the event was about \$24,000, down from just over \$30,000 in past years, according to Cottage Grove City Manager Richard Meyers.

"We're not renting the lights anymore, we've whittled down

the number of port-a-potties we rent so we've just been able to whittle those costs away," Meyers said.

The costs are covered by the City of Cottage Grove and the

See **MUSIC 6A**

Residents weigh in on Sears Road

Residents, first responders and county administrators exchange thoughts on improving safety along Sears Road

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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Consensus on how best to address safety issues and whether or not to cut trees on Sears Road was hard to reach at a community input meeting July 29. Nineteen residents of Sears Road assembled in the Cottage Grove Community Center to brainstorm solutions with five county and two Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) representatives.

"I was really happy with the meeting, especially having about 20 area residents show up," said Lane County Senior Transportation Planner Becky Taylor. "I felt that was a pretty good turnout."

Community preferences were collected during a break-out session which asked residents what their specific concerns were with the county's proposed tree removal, if there was community support for other roadway departure countermeasures, if the community would support widening the shoulder to four feet and if there was community support for making other physical changes to Sears Road to improve safety.

Though residents and officials were largely pleased with the input process, residents in attendance were, for the most part, not agreeable to proposed tree removal in front of their properties, a key element to the grant funding behind the project.

Last week's community input meeting was held in response to a Feb. 12 Lane County Board of Commissioners meeting in which residents of the rural road testified in opposition to the plan, convincing commissioners to vote to delay the project until a suitable compromise could be found.

The proposed Sears Road Fixed

See **SEARS 10A**

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