

Cottage Grove *Est. 1889* Sentinel

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WEATHER

Chance of showers with a high of 75 and a low tonight of 53.
Full forecast on A5

COLUMNIST

Mary Ellen
Pet Tips 'n' Tales.
B1

COMMUNITY

Local Rosies celebrated
A5

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DAMEIN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Community members collect donated items for those in the area forced to evacuate their homes due to the wildfires.

CG accepting donations for displaced families

BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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The City of Cottage Grove opened the Community Center last Wednesday (Sept. 9) afternoon to begin accepting donations for people impacted by the area's wildfires.

members who have been displaced by the fires and whatever immediate needs they have as they're evolving," said Patrol Sergeant Shawn Branstetter, who coordinated the donation drive.

After noticing some online efforts of Cottage Grove residents to help those in need, Branstetter decided to use the police department's Facebook platform to bet-

ter organize the response. Branstetter himself will be taking Community Center collections up to the Springfield area.

While the items are being collected as part of a relief effort for people displaced in the Thurston/Springfield area, anyone who has been affected are encouraged to make use of the collection.

been affected by it are in our community now ... or have family members who have been affected in the Springfield and Thurston area," said Branstetter. "It's close enough that affects everybody."

Hotels in Cottage Grove have

See **DONATIONS 7A**

South Lane School District delays start of school

BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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The South Lane School District (SLSD) Board voted on Monday (Sept. 14) to adopt a revised calendar for the 2020-21 school year, delaying the start of the fall term until Sept. 28.

Officials proposed the week-long delay of the first day of school due

to the challenges posed by the compounding impacts of the pandemic and area wildfires.

"We simply need more time to get all of the conferences done," said Superintendent Yvonne Curtis during the meeting. "We also need time for transportation to get all of the bus routes done."

Curtis said she had received many messages from district staff about

the level of stress caused by the recent fires, including the amount of smoke in a building causing headaches.

"There was quite a bit of feedback from staff on this and it was all very much in favor of delaying," said board member Taylor Wilhour. "People were saying things like,

See **SLSD 9A**

Though improving, air quality remains unhealthy

BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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Extreme fire events in the Pacific Northwest continue to impact the daily lives of those in the Willamette Valley and beyond.

Darkened skies and air filled with particulate matter have forced much of the population indoors to wait out the smoke blanketing the region.

In just a week, more

than a million acres of Oregon have burned, said Gov. Kate Brown in a press briefing, compared to the 500,000 acres which burn in a typical year.

Across the western United States, at least 87 wildfires are still burning, according to the National Interagency Fire Center.

Oregon itself has so far lost or sustained substantial damage to several towns such as Detroit,

See **SMOKE 6A**



PHOTO BY SAMANTHA DUNCAN

Smoke and haze blots out the sun in Cottage Grove as regional fires continue to burn.

City donates to USS Oregon; makes first use of MUPTE

BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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In a 3-2 vote, the Cottage Grove City Council opted to contribute \$1,000 to support the commissioning ceremony of the newly-named USS Oregon (SSN 793) submarine.

"If we do contribute, we can be named as the 'City of Cottage Grove' on the plaque that's inside the boat so that the crew will recognize those entities or communities that are part of Oregon," explained City Manager Richard Meyers before the vote.

According to a letter sent to the City of Cottage Grove by the USS Oregon (SSN 793) Commissioning Committee, a

See **CITY 8A**

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