

Cottage Grove Est. 1889 Sentinel



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WEATHER

Chance of showers with a high of 62 and a low tonight of 45
Full forecast on A5

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Sherwood named editor of the Cottage Grove Sentinel

Lead reporter promoted to full leadership

By Chantelle Meyer
FOR THE SENTINEL

The Cottage Grove Sentinel is heading into its next transition — but this time, it is to place a familiar hand at the editorial helm. After two and a half years as lead reporter, Damien Sherwood assumes the title of editor on June 1.

“I am excited for Damien to lead the Cottage Grove Sentinel editorial team and oversee the operations of our newsroom,” said Publisher Gary Manly. “Damien has a passion for the news that matters to our community and that is evident in his work. I am thrilled to have an editor with the integrity, reputation, expertise, drive and vision of Damien to lead The Sentinel forward as we continue to grow and expand.”

Sherwood, who has bachelor’s degrees in journalism and political science from the University of Oregon, came to The Sentinel after teaching English abroad for 10 years and a one-year in-

ternship at The Sentinel’s sister newspaper in Florence, the Siuslaw News.

“It turned out journalism is what I really wanted to do,” he said.

Sherwood’s title change comes as Ned Hickson, The Sentinel’s managing editor for the past three years, retires from 23 years in journalism.

“Damien has been an integral part of shifting the paper back towards something that we feel is more tuned into the community,” Hickson said. “He’s one of those people that really believes in

see **EDITOR** on A7

Bringing back the art



DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Downtown will light up with art and music on Friday as the Art Walk returns to Cottage Grove. After more than a year without the monthly event, musicians will take to the streets to set the atmosphere, such as in this photo from April 2019, while passers-by weave in and out of shops to examine or even purchase local artist’ work. (See A6 for the full story)

Nearly \$900,000 earmarked for CGHS scholarships

Last month, the Cottage Grove Community Foundation received \$894,335 from the estate of Janice Neely earmarked for scholarships for education majors for graduating seniors at Cottage Grove High School (CGHS).

The foundation established The Janice Neely Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund, the income from which will fund the scholarships.

Neely was a teacher, then counselor, at CGHS from 1952 until her retirement in 1987.

She was instrumental in establishing and furthering women’s sports. She coached field hockey, volleyball, basketball, softball and tennis.

She was named South Lane Education Association’s Teacher of the Year for 1971-1972 and was inducted into the CGHS Athletics Hall of Fame on April 10, 2010.

In April 2012, the “Coach Neely Fitness Trail,” a two-thirds-mile loops trail was developed at the high school and dedicated to honor her.

Neely loved teaching her students and they loved her.

South Lane School District Superintendent Yvonne Curtis expressed her appreciation for the

generous investment in the community’s students.

“We are grateful to the Cottage Grove Community Foundation for managing endowments that provide scholarships for our students to pursue post-graduation and training,” she said.

“We appreciate Janice Neely for remembering our students and for her generosity. These scholarships will enable our students who want to become teachers to receive financial support for pursuing their college degree. With this financial support, more students will be able to teach in our schools and perhaps return to our district to become South Lane School District teachers.

“Our goal to create a pathway for our students to become our teachers becomes an attainable goal for the district with financial support of students.”

The Cottage Grove Community Foundation partners with the Oregon Community Foundation in investing and managing endowment funds.

Oregon Community Foundation distributes income from endowment funds annually at the current rate of 4.3 percent. The local foundation has 43

see **DONATION** on A10

Unofficial results provide Special Election forecast

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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Preliminary results of the Lane County’s May 18, 2021, Special Election were released on May 20, with final vote totals due to be officially certified and posted on June 7.

The county’s website reports 70,011 ballots received out of 272,230 registered voters, giving Lane County a 25 percent voter

turnout rate.

While the candidates of uncontested seats seem to have predictably won out against write-ins, some contested positions were neck-and-neck.

The South Lane School District (SLSD) Board race, for instance, in which all three seats were contested, reported as few as 42 votes between the incumbent Sherry Duerst-Higgins and challenger Melanie Stuhl-

millier.

All incumbents were reported to have leads over their challengers with Colleen Valley leading by 98 votes against Erik Benson and Taylor Wilhour ahead by 210 votes against Pam Duffy.

On May 19, SLSD had already called the election by releasing an official statement on its Twitter account congratulating the incumbents on their wins.

Meanwhile, the Lane Community College Board saw a three-way contest for the Zone 1 seat between Thomas Jennings, Mark Boren and newly appointed incumbent Holli Johnson, with Johnson pulling a decisive lead at 68 percent of the vote.

Her election would make Johnson the first Black woman ever elected to LCC’s board once results are finalized.

For Zone 5, results are reporting a sizeable lead as well for Steve Mital against Al King, with Mital taking in about 64 percent of the vote.

Meanwhile, voters also seemed to overwhelmingly endorse the passing of Measure 20-319, which supports 4-H and Oregon State University Extension programs in Lane County.

see **ELECTION** on A10

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