

**The First Amendment**  
 Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

“I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend.” — Thomas Jefferson (1800)

## A preview of Bohemia Mining Days to come...

**(Editor’s Note: Viewpoint submissions on this and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)**

One month from now, Bohemia Mining Days returns to Cottage Grove’s historic downtown for two days. As the severe COVID-19 restrictions we’ve been living with for the past 15 months are now lifting, BMD 2021 affords us the opportunity to come back together as survivors of a deadly global pandemic and learn to accept a new normal in how we go forward with our lives.

“Grover’s are Survivors” is the theme we’ve chosen for this year. We all have our survivor stories to share. For Bohemia Mining Days, our festival sponsors still made their annual contributions that financially “kept the lights on” for us. Planning BMD 2021 has been quite the challenge for our board and production team. Since January, we’ve remained positive and determined to continue our efforts as the risk levels went up and down. We also faced the real possibility that two weeks after all the Fourth of July celebrations a serious spike in COVID cases might force us to cancel our event at the last minute. With high vaccination rates now the threat of cancelling the event is low.

### Why the move downtown?

The Coiner Park venue is too small to space 75+ vendor booths six feet apart and leave room for attendees to maintain the required social distance. Relocating Cottage Grove’s largest event of the year downtown spreads it out across eight city blocks to give us safety space and it creates the potential for an economic boost to business owners.

Our hope is locals and out-of-town guests discover a unique treasure in one of our small specialty shops, enjoy dining in one of the downtown eateries, or throw back a cold one on a hot day in one of the watering holes in The District.

These downtown businesses are familiar to Grovers as they regularly drive by them on their way to somewhere else. This year, BMD gives them a purpose to stop and enjoy them.

Another reason for the move downtown is to respond to the hundreds of attendees who remember BMD’s longtime roots there and have asked us, in surveys and on social media, to come back. Who knew it would, sadly, take a global pandemic to fulfill their request? In 1980, after 21 years downtown, the celebration grew so big, Bohemia City had to move to various larger venues before settling comfortably

After more than a year of being apart for health and safety reasons, let’s pour out our pent-up desire for fun by participating in this newest Bohemia Mining Days tradition. Throw down a challenge to your competitive friends, family members and co-workers. Let’s see some green and yellow carts squaring off against black and orange ones. We encourage businesses and organizations to field a promotional team using a cart emblazoned with their business name.

One of the most important lessons we’ve learned from COVID-19’s impact on our organization is how utterly dependent we are on a three-day event to provide a year’s worth of administrative and program revenue. So, we are trying a few new fundraisers to diversify our revenue streams in the future.

Transitioning our Slabtown vs. Lemati Feud into a hybrid online/real world virtual game is a unique strategy to bring our community back together and seek fun ways to deliver a spectacular BMD 2022. The Food Feud is our yummy new money-maker. Inspired by the Food for Lane County annual Grilled Cheese Experience, we are partnering with local eateries to provide “a passport to culinary adventures” during July 6-20.

To join in the fun go to our website: [www.BohemiaMiningDays.org](http://www.BohemiaMiningDays.org).

There you can download applications to be a vendor or to volunteer, to enter the Grand Miners parade, to register for the Mine Ore Cart Races, to participate in the Food Feud or to learn how The Feud Game is designed to bring our community back together in healthy ways after a global pandemic.

BMD is back! We thank Sentinel readers for choosing Bohemia Mining Days as the most missed community event in 2020. On behalf of the Board, and our BMD 2021 Production Team, we invite you to participate in all the fun we have waiting for you on July 17-18 in historic downtown Cottage Grove.

### GUEST VIEWPOINT Cindy Weeldreyer & Don Williams BMD Board officials

in Coiner Park. The last time BMD was staged downtown was in 1999 for its 40th anniversary celebration.

### Mine Ore Cart Races

With only a month to go we absolutely need more racers to make this first year both fun and successful. We believe it is a unique opportunity to pair up our young whippersnappers with our old-timers. The young ones will set the record of race times in this new competition all others have to beat. The experienced builders, with a workshop or garage, will build the fastest carts. Cart materials can be reinforced cardboard, scrap wood, or metal with flames and a powder coat finish. The minimum construction safety standards leave much to imagination and creativity.

We are happy to match up willing builders and wannabe racers, so we have lots of competitors on Main Street on the third weekend of July for this inaugural race. To make your match and to get help with cart construction, call Dick Secord at 541.942.7138 or visit the Bohemia Gold Mining Museum (red barn across from Bohemia Park) on Thursdays between 1-4 pm.

## LETTERS

### HOPING TO SEE PUBLIC WORKS WORK WITH PUBLIC

It was with great interest that I read the June 10 edition with the article titled “Coastal redwoods considered for removal”.

What I found gratifying was the collaboration of the Public Works department, various city staff, property owners, utility companies, and all stakeholders. The trees’ removal must be both a heartbreaking and necessary action to be taken by all involved parties. My sympathies.

This brings to mind my current situation with the Public Works Department of Cottage Grove. My story:

I own a small 107-year-old home on a tiny piece of property in the historic northwest side of town.

For the past 10 years I’ve maintained this home to the highest standard possible with my limited resources.

Besides having pride in living in this home, I’ve made it a point for it to be a standout in appearance and aesthetic appeal. The landscaping has garnered praise both in person and being “Yard of the Week”. At night its first floor win-

dows are illuminated stained glass.

Over the years the city has always advised me to trim my birch trees to conform to ‘code’.

There have been instances where city workers would approach me and offer to do the trimming on the birch trees while promising not to compromise the aesthetic value of them. A great and welcome help!

This year one of my birch trees had really taken off and crowded out the street corner I live on. I received a letter from Public Works concerning this.

I hired, at a price out of my budget, a tree care company. They cut so much off of the birch that it’s almost unrecognizable. I consoled myself by thinking that it will always grow back.

Soon I received a more serious letter from Public Works giving me a firm deadline to trim trees, the letter being festooned with bright red underscores.

I checked out my trees. The only tree that could possibly raise any ire was a long-established Japanese Maple. This was never an issue with the city for the past 10 years. It doesn’t quite meet the “8 feet above the sidewalk” requirement. But it has always been a shady resting place in the summer for pedes-

trians all these years. Unless they were seven plus feet tall.

I found myself greatly distressed and anxious about this second letter. Almost threatened. The tree presents no threat to utilities, pavement, sidewalk or any pedestrian under seven feet tall. This serious anxiety has led to loss of sleep and reoccurrence of my PTSD.

When I was a duly elected fire chief in NW Arizona, I always engaged the citizens, in person, when there was a problem.

Through collaboration and cooperation these problems were always solved with all parties happy. I learned early that authoritarian behavior engendered defiance and bad feelings.

The behavior of Public Works is both needlessly aggressive and sad. The public would be better served if Public Works accompanied letters with offers to meet and discuss.

Come to me personally, let’s talk. Let me know what your complaints are. I did my part to the best of my ability.

—Stephen Themmes  
 Cottage Grove

### Letters to the Editor Policy

The Sentinel welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or without documentation will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside The Sentinel readership area will only be published at the discretion of the editor.

### Political/Election Letters:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must: 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn’t follow the above criteria.

### Send letters to:

[dsherwood@cgsentinel.com](mailto:dsherwood@cgsentinel.com)

## HOW TO CONTACT YOUR REPS

### Oregon state representatives

- **Sen. Floyd Prozanski**  
 District 4 State Senator  
 PO Box 11511  
 Eugene, Ore. 97440  
 Phone: 541-342-2447  
 Email: [sen.floydprozanski@state.or.us](mailto:sen.floydprozanski@state.or.us)
- **Rep. Cedric Hayden**  
 Republican District 7 State Representative  
 900 Court St. NE  
 Salem, Ore. 97301  
 Phone: 503-986-1407  
 Email: [rep.cedrichayden@state.or.us](mailto:rep.cedrichayden@state.or.us)
- **Rep. Peter DeFazio**  
 (House of Representatives)  
 405 East 8th Ave.  
 #2030  
 Eugene, Ore. 97401

### Oregon federal representatives

- Email: [defazio.house.gov/contact/email-peter](mailto:defazio.house.gov/contact/email-peter)  
 Phone: 541-465-6732
- **Sen. Ron Wyden**  
 405 East 8th Ave., Suite 2020  
 Eugene, Ore. 97401  
 Email: [wyden.senate.gov](mailto:wyden.senate.gov)  
 Phone: (541) 431-0229
- **Sen. Jeff Merkley**  
 Email: [merkley.senate.gov](mailto:merkley.senate.gov)  
 Phone: 541-465-6750
- **Heather Buch**  
 Lane County Commissioner - District 5  
 Email: [Heather.Buch@lane-county.org](mailto:Heather.Buch@lane-county.org)  
 125 E. Eighth Ave.  
 Eugene, OR 97401  
 Or call 541-682-4203

# Cottage Grove Sentinel

541-942-3325

### Administration

Jenna Bartlett, Group Publisher

Gary Manly, General Manager... Ext. 1207  
[gmanly@cgsentinel.com](mailto:gmanly@cgsentinel.com)

- Gerald Santana, Multi-Media Sales Consultant... Ext. 1216  
[gsantana@cgsentinel.com](mailto:gsantana@cgsentinel.com)
- Carla Skeeel, Inside Multi-Media Sales Consultant... Ext. 1203  
[csummers@cgsentinel.com](mailto:csummers@cgsentinel.com)
- Kurt Krueger, Multi-Media Sales Consultant/Circulation... Ext. 1213  
[kkrueger@cgsentinel.com](mailto:kkrueger@cgsentinel.com)

### Editorial

Damien Sherwood, Editor... Ext. 1212  
[dsherwood@cgsentinel.com](mailto:dsherwood@cgsentinel.com)

### Customer Service

Office Manager, Legals, Classifieds... Ext. 1200  
[mfringer@cgsentinel.com](mailto:mfringer@cgsentinel.com)

### Production

Ron Annis, Production Supervisor... Ext.1215  
[graphics@cgsentinel.com](mailto:graphics@cgsentinel.com)

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