THE COTTAGE GROVE
Sentinel

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Cottage Grove
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Cottage Grove Rodeo rides into its 79th year

CINDY WEELDREYER
Cottage Grove Sentinel

Hundreds of rodeo fans will soon pack the stands at the Cottage Grove Riding Club's arena for two nights of Old West fun.

The Cottage Grove Rodeo has been a much-anticipated annual summertime event since 1947 and celebrates its 79th year this weekend, July 10-11.

The Northwest Professional Rodeo Association (NPRA) sanctions the event and brings regional competitors to Cottage Grove for a full slate of rough stock and timed events. It's a two-day celebration of rodeo sports, horsemanship, and local tradition, drawing riders, spectators, and vendors from across the region.

For most of its nearly 80 years, the Cottage Grove Riding Club (CGRC) has produced the rodeo in partnership with NPRA. For many weeks, club members have been busy sprucing up the rodeo grounds south of town, at 77958 Highway 99S, to welcome their guests and performers.

Club President AJ Cave said the event remains the organization's largest undertaking each year and depends on a broad volunteer base.

"We are very fortunate to have a very committed and diverse board of directors and a lot of very helpful volunteers that work hard year-round to put together such a large event for the community," Cave said.

Rodeo proceeds support the club's year-round programs, including youth activities, member ride nights, and seasonal competitions.

EVENTS

Youth competitions begin before the main program and remain one of the rodeo's most popular features. Mutton Bustin, Calf Riding, and Steer Riding return this year, with Junior Barrel Racer qualifiers starting at 4 p.m. and kids events beginning at 5 p.m. The Grand Entry with flags and fanfare begins at 7 p.m. followed by the NPRA sanctioned events.

On Saturday night attendees are invited to stay and enjoy an after-party dance with DJ Shredder.

ROUGHSTOCK EVENTS

Bareback Riding – Rider holds onto a rigging with one hand while riding a bucking horse.

Saddle Bronc Riding – Known as the "classic" rodeo event; rider uses a specialized saddle and rein.

Bull Riding – Arguably the most intense; rider must stay on a bucking bull for 8 seconds using one hand.

TIMED EVENTS

Tie-Down Roping – Cowboy ropes a calf, dismounts, and ties three legs together.

Steer Wrestling – Also called "bulldogging"; cowboy jumps from horse to steer and wrestles it to the ground.

Team Roping – Two riders (header and heeler) work together to rope a steer's horns and hind legs.

Barrel Racing – Timed race around three barrels in a cloverleaf pattern (primarily a women's event).

Breakaway Roping – A newer event where the rope "breaks away" from the saddle horn when the calf is roped (also primarily for women).

TICKETS

Discount presale tickets are available at Brad's Cottage Grove Chevrolet, Wagon Wheel Feed Store, Country Farm and Ranch Supply, The Vintage Inn Bar and Grill and Schweitzer's Western Wear. Tickets prices at the gate are:

Adults (14+) $20, Seniors (60+) and Veterans $15, Kids

See **RODEO** Page 6

Courtesy photo

The Cottage grove Rodeo is held at the Cottage Grove Riding Club and Rodeo Grounds, at 77958 Highway 99S in Cottage Grove.

Cindy Weeldreyer / Cottage Grove Sentinel

The main entrance into Cottage Grove from Interstate 5 is "failing" according to city officials, and funding for Row River Road improvements is undetermined.

No immediate fix for 'failed' Row River Road

JEREMY C. RUARK
Cottage Grove Sentinel

Cottage Grove is now sporting a new, and what city officials describe as a vibrant, Main Street in the city's historic district following a multi-million-dollar revitalization project that was competed in late December 2025.

But the main entrance into the city from Interstate 5 remains broken. City Public Works Director Faye Stewart has told The Sentinel that Row River Road has "failed."

"It is a main entrance into the city for industrial trucks, heavy equipment, and other vehicles," Cottage Grove City Manager Mike Sauerwein said. "The road is in very bad shape and really needs major upgrades."

Sauerwein wasn't able to give a specific cost estimate for the needed improvements for Row River Road, but acknowledged that the cost could be in the millions of dollars.

"We have not done a full analysis, but it would be significant," he said.

Sauerwein said the current funding options are challenging.

"We don't see any major funding opportunities on the horizon," he said. "Just like with Main Street, we are continuing to work for any kind of grant opportunities that become available."

According to Sauerwein, the city had lobbied for state funding in 2025 for the Row River Road funding, but because of the controversy over the state transportation finding issues, that funding was not approved.

He added that general maintenance of all the city's streets continues with limite4d city funding.

"We are doing as much as we can with the funding that we have available to us through gas taxes to maintain our streets as best we can," he said. "There are really a number of streets in town that really do need help. Our street budget is mostly paid for with gas taxes, and there's been plenty in the media about how those funds are actually going down."

Follow developments of this story online at cgsentinel.com and in the Wednesday print editions of The Sentinel.

Lawsuit could upend management of public lands

ALEX BROWN
Oregon Capital Chronicle

A new lawsuit challenging a logging project in Oregon threatens to unravel the management plans governing hundreds of millions of acres of federal public land.

At stake are thousands of leases and permits covering billions of dollars of economic activity — including mining, drilling, grazing, logging, ski resorts, wind and solar projects, outdoor recreation, hunting and fishing. If successful, the lawsuit could throw the management of huge swaths of the West into chaos.

Some experts fear the new legal uncertainty around federal agencies' management authority could unleash a tsunami of lawsuits targeting everything from mining to the conservation of wildlife habitat.

"They've opened Pandora's Box here," said Susan Jane Brown, the attorney who filed the lawsuit and serves as principal at Silvix Resources, a nonprofit environmental law firm.

"When you throw that whole system into chaos, it's a problem whether you're the oil and gas industry or the timber industry or someone who wants to take a fall rules.

Some legal experts contend that by using the law to target public land policy, Congress unwittingly invalidated hundreds of land use plans, along with decades worth of permits and management decisions. The Oregon lawsuit is the first to test that theory in court — but across the country. Oil and gas drillers could have their permits challenged in court. Ranchers could lose their leases. And understaffed federal agencies would have to redraft hundreds of plans that typically take years to complete.

"This has been flying under the radar," said Michael Carroll, a land management campaign director with the Wilderness Society, an environmental group. "[Congress] basically opened themselves up to multiple lawsuits from any number of stakeholders calling into question whether or not an agency has the authority to issue permits."

The Congressional Review Act

The three-decade-old Congressional Review Act requires new regulations issued by federal agencies to be submitted to Congress before taking effect. Congress then has a review period of 60 working days during which it can vote to revoke them.

This review power was rarely invoked until Trump's first term, when Republicans used it to overturn 16 regulations. The GOP has been even more aggressive in Trump's second term, overturning 23 rules so far, including conservation standards for water heaters, overdraft lending regulations and restrictions on pollutants in tire manufacturing

Until recently, management plans for federal public lands were not

See **OREGON** Page 6

Courtesy photo from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources

A harvester crane processes a log on a thinning project in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in Washington state. A new lawsuit targeting a timber harvest in Oregon could upend management of federal lands across the West.

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www.**cgsentinel**.com

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A CLOSER LOOK

Concealing camping items in purse leads to warrant arrest

The following is from the Cottage Grove Police Department's Weekly Update.

- Over the weekend of June 20th, Sergeant Carlton and K9 RIPP competed in Springfield's annual Police K9 competition at Silke Field. The competition consisted of five scenarios including box search, obstacle course, apprehension/redirect, fastest dog, and handler protection. Springfield Police stated that the 2026 K9 competition was one of the tightest and most exciting competitions they have seen in recent history.

- Officers responded to Bi-Mart after loss prevention detained a woman who had concealed multiple camping items in her purse and exited the store without paying. Officers discovered she also had an active warrant out of Union County. She was cited in lieu of custody for Second-Degree Theft (ORS 164.045) and lodged at the Lane County Jail on the outstanding warrant.

- Officers responded to assist LCSO with a single-vehicle injury crash near Row River Road and Rat Creek Road. The driver had left the scene on foot but was located about a half-mile away with significant facial injuries. The investigation revealed she was driving while suspended, required to have an ignition interlock device installed, was not wearing a seatbelt, and was wanted by our agency. She was treated by South Lane Fire and Rescue and transported to RiverBend Medical Center. The Lane County Sheriff's Office assumed the primary crash investigation.

- Officers contacted two individuals inside a disabled motorhome at Chevron after learning it was associated with a wanted subject. The wanted male was arrested without incident on a statewide felony warrant for a weapons offense and a Cottage Grove warrant for Fourth-Degree Assault. He was lodged at the Lane County Jail.

- Dispatch received reports of a fire near Highway 99 South and South River Road. Officers arrived, extinguished the fire with a fire extinguisher, and South Lane Fire and Rescue ensured it would not reignite. Officers detained a nearby male who admitted to starting the fire. He was cited in lieu of custody for Reckless Burning.

- Officers responded to a report of a possibly intoxicated driver after a witness observed the driver using the center turn lane to pass another vehicle before striking a concrete parking stop in the Pinocchio's Pizza parking lot.

During the initial contact, the driver denied driving and provided conflicting explanations regarding who had been operating the vehicle. Officers confirmed with witnesses, the male subject was positively identified as the only driver of the associated vehicle. Dispatch confirmed his Oregon driving privileges were revoked.

The subsequent investigation revealed numerous signs of impairment, and he later provided breath samples of 0.17% (over twice the legal limit) Blood Alcohol Content. The driver was charged with Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants (ORS 813.010) and Driving While Suspended or Revoked – Misdemeanor (ORS 811.182). He was then given a courtesy ride to a relative's home.

POLICE BLOTTER

The police blotter relates to the public record of incidents as reported by law enforcement agencies.

All individuals arrested or charged with a crime are presumed innocent until proven guilty. Information printed is preliminary and subject to change.

For specific details about cases listed, contact the appropriate law enforcement agency.

COTTAGE GROVE POLICE

MONDAY, JUNE 22

00:48: Warrant service, 200 block N. 12th St.

03:40: Suspicious vehicle, 200 block N. 9th St.

06:49: Agency assist, 6th/Tobiasson

07:11: Suspicious subject, I5 SB MM 179

07:24: Abandoned vehicle, 100 block Tyler Ave.

07:55: Dog at large, 1100 block E. Harrison Ave.

08:00: Motor vehicle crash, 37000 block Row River Rd.

09:15: Fraud, 1300 block Birch Ave.

10:10: Fire, 200 block South M St.

13:02: Warrant service, 200 block N. 12th St.

15:43: Disturbance, 400 block South 1st St.

16:24: Theft, 900 block Row River Rd.

17:20: Theft, 100 block Gateway Blvd.

17:39: Warrant service, 100 block Gateway Blvd.

18:40: Harassment, 500 block N. River Rd.

19:14: Suspicious subject, 1300 block E. Main St.

20:21: Fire, 800 block S. 6th St.

23:06: Trespass, 1200 block Hwy 99

TUESDAY, JUNE 23

01:59: Suspicious vehicle, 800 block Row River Rd.

02:58: Suspicious subject, 800 block Olson Pl.

03:02: Juvenile trouble, 600 block S. 5th St.

04:24: Trespass, 1700 block Hwy 99

09:33: Fire, 2000 block S. 6th St.

10:12: Abandoned vehicle, 16th/Gibbs

11:38: Illegal camping, Hwy 99/Row River Rd.

14:21: Agency assist, Rat Crk/Row River Rd.

14:21: Agency assist, 900 block South U St.

17:35: Suicidal subject, 1700 block Hwy 99

17:58: Abandoned vehicle, 300 block S. 2nd St.

19:47: Assault, 700 block Hwy 99

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24

00:22: Suspicious condition, 9th/Whiteaker

01:19: Illegal camping, 1000 block E. Main St.

02:26: Criminal mischief, 3rd/Quincy

06:43: Suspicious condition, 700 block E. Gibbs Ave.

07:27: Disturbance, River Rd/Harrison

09:55: Suspicious condition, 900 block S. River Rd.

11:17: Agency assist, 300 block N. 8th St.

13:45: Fraud, 1000 block S. 11th St.

14:14: Theft, 2500 block Mosby Creek Rd.

14:44: Warrant service, 400 block E. Main St.

15:58: Warrant service, 400 block E. Main St.

19:40: Disorderly subject, 1300 block E. Main St.

20:31: Fire, Hwy 99/S River Rd.

22:05: Disturbance, 800 block Row River Rd.

23:17: Disturbance, 200 block S. 5th St.

THURSDAY, JUNE 25

06:52: Alarm, 700 block E. Gibbs Ave.

07:27: Suspicious subject, 700 block E. Main St.

07:43: Warrant service, 1200 block Gateway Blvd.

08:09: Burglary, 600 block Johnson Ave.

09:12: Abandoned vehicle, 1100 S. 6th St.

09:57: Suspicious vehicle, 1400 block Hwy 99

10:11: Warrant service, 400 block E. Main St.

10:47: Missing person, 500 block Grant Ave.

12:00: Warrant service, 1300 block Jefferson St.

12:55: Abandoned vehicle, Main/Cemetery Rd.

17:06: Theft, 2500 block E. Main St.

17:31: Disorderly subject, 100 block S. 10th St.

19:24: Suicidal subject, 1500 block Village Dr.

19:49: Suspicious condition, 1000 block Hwy 99

19:55: Fire, 1500 block Hwy 99

21:52: Reckless driving, 800 block E. Monroe Ave.

23:10: Disturbance, 1500 block N. 19th St.

23:47: Disturbance, 32000 block Rachel Rd.

FRIDAY, JUNE 26

00:05: Suspicious subject, Main/ 9th

03:19: Motor vehicle crash, Hwy 99/Lynx Hollow Rd.

07:56: Alarm, 800 block E. Washington Ave.

09:06: Nuisance, 100 block Sweet Ln.

13:43: Wanted subject, 200 block Buttercup Lp.

15:07: Warrant service, 400 block E. Main St.

15:27: Juvenile trouble, 900 block Arthur Ave.

15:39: Fraud, 700 block E. Harrison Ave.

19:15: Suspicious subject, 300 block S. River Rd.

19:41: Theft, 500 block Grant Ave.

20:30: Suspicious subject, 400 block S. 7th St.

21:12: Nuisance, 800 block N. 11th St.

21:54: Suspicious condition, 100 block N. 7th St.

22:50: Intoxicated subject, 1500 block Gateway Blvd.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27

09:13: Death investigation, 78000 block Halderman Rd.

09:18: Suspicious condition, 1500 block Gateway Blvd.

09:43: Suicidal subject, 200 block Gateway Blvd.

14:21: Fire, 8000 block Hwy 99

15:07: Fire, 77000 block S. 6th St.

15:14: Trespass, 200 block N. 12th St.

15:40: Drug activity, 900 block S. River Rd.

17:00: Suicidal subject, 900 block S. 6th St.

18:55: Trespass, 100 block North L St.

19:00: Trespass, 400 block N. 9th St.

20:45: Suspicious condition, 100 block Gateway Blvd.

21:04: Suspicious vehicle, 1200 block N. River Rd.

21:20: Suspicious vehicle, 900 block Row River Rd.

21:38: Suspicious condition, 1700 block Hwy 99

23:12: Disturbance, 900 block Row River Rd.

SUNDAY, JUNE 28

00:16: Nuisance, 6th/Main

09:35: Mental subject, 200 block N. 8th St.

09:51: Warrant service, 400 block E. Main St.

11:15: Suspicious condition, Bryant/River Rd.

12:28: Disturbance, 200 block N. 12th St.

14:12: ATL DUII, 1700 block E. Main St.

15:11: Harassment, 700 block S. 13th St.

15:44: Fire, I5 MP 170

17:47: Order violation, 800 block S. 1st St.

18:14: Fraud, 1900 block S. 6th St.

18:14: Warrant service, 400 block E. Main St.

18:45: Disturbance, 600 block S. 3rd St.

20:27: Dog at large, 1100 block E. Harrison Ave.

21:44: Trespass, 1500 block Village Dr.

Two arrests follow month-long sex crimes investigation

The Lane County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) has released details of a month-long investigation into allegations of sex abuse involving a juvenile victim.

On June 25, LCSO deputies and detectives served a search warrant in the 82900 block of Scott Lane in Creswell connected to the case.

Following the search warrant, investigators arrested two subjects for numerous crimes. 28-year-old Aubry Siobhan Blaylock of Creswell and 32-year-old Erik Michael Maynes of Creswell were both taken into custody and lodged at the Lane County Jail.

Blaylock was arrested in LCSO Case 26-2521 for:

- Sex Abuse in the First Degree, 5 counts
- Unlawful Sexual Penetration in the Second Degree, 6 counts
- Sodomy in the Second Degree, 4 counts
- Using a Child in Display of Sexual Conduct.

Maynes was arrested in LCSO Case 26-2857 for:

- Rape in the First Degree
- Sex Abuse in the First Degree
- Rape in the Second Degree, 2 counts
- Unlawful Sexual Penetration in the Second Degree, 2 counts
- Sodomy in the second degree
- Using a Child in Display of Sexual Conduct.

Specific details of what led to the search warrant and arrests were not immediately available.

The LCSO said the case is still being actively investigated. Anyone with information is asked to contact Lane County Sheriff Office investigators at 541-682-3978.

Countdown to the Bohemia Mining Days

STAFF REPORT
Cottage Grove Sentinel

The 67th annual Bohemia Mining Days Festival is days away.

The annual event is a signature celebration in Cottage Grove.

Here are suggestions of what you can do now to make special memories and to enhance your experience in Bohemia City.

PARADES

Grand Miners Parade. Sign up now to be in the Saturday morning, July 18 parade that steps off at 10 a.m. The theme Honors the 100th Anniversary of Buster Keaton's "The General" so use your imagination regarding Oregon's film history, steam engine trains, and the beautiful rivers here in Cottage Grove.

Entry Fees: $50 Political/Political Non-Profit; $40 Organization (4 or more people), $20 Individual/Non-Profit (Any private individual or non-profit) Lineup will take place on South 5th Street. The new route will be on Main Street between 5th Street and Gateway Boulevard. Sign up on the website.

Kiddie Parade. Moves to Bohemia Park this year. There is no entry fee. Staging is in the south (graveled) parking lot. Sign up begins at 10:30 a.m. and parade begins at 11 a.m. All participants receive a souvenir participation ribbon and a frozen treat at the end. Small well-behaved pets welcome. No large animals or vehicles are permitted. Questions? Call Cindy at 541-915-0113.

CONTESTS

Plan to participate in one or more of our contests. Beard and Moustache, Cherry Pit-Spittin', Pie Eating, Costume (men, women and kids) Little Miss Bohemia City (open to children ages 4 to 12) and the competitive Slabtown vs. Lemati Feud Games. Festival organizers encourage attendees to set the old timey vibe in Bohemia City by wearing a costume (1800s-era, miners or Western wear) and enter the contest for cash prizes.

ORE CART RACES

Build a reusable, human-powered mining ore cart and race head-to-head through one of Bohemia Mining Days' loudest, rowdiest, most memorable traditions. Begins at noon Saturday, July 18, in front of the Bohemia Gold Mining Museum on 10th Street. Registration info is on the website.

ART SHOW

The Cottage Grove Art Collective seeks entries for the show. For more information visit its Facebook page.

BMD GOLD RUSH 5K RUN/WALK

Register now for this lovely twilight run/walk through Historic Downtown and along the Coast Fork Willamette River. Begins/Ends at Coast Fork Brewing, 106 S. 6th St. Friday, July 17 at 8 p.m. Register online or at South Valley Athletics office in the Community Center, 700 E. Gibbs Ave. For more info: www.runcgrun.org Fundraiser for the Friends of the Cottage Grove Library

BMD MELODRAMA

Get your tickets now for Cottage Theatre Youth Summer Camp production: The Legend Grows Round the Mystery Mine … OR The Villains were Schooled by the Marm. An original melodrama by Keith Kessler featuring 18 young actors, ages 12 to 15. Friday and Saturday performances (July 17-18) begin at 7 p.m. and all seats are $10. www.cottagetheatre.org

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

To produce The Grove's largest event of the year it takes lots of people power doing many different things that result in "Bohemia City" existing for three days each summer in Coiner Park. Sign up with a favorite person for a 2-or 4-hour shift, meet new people and enjoy volunteer perks. Sign up on the website.

For additional information and to sign up for events visit www.spiritofbmd.com. See previous BMD coverage and follow the celebration online at cgsentinel.com and in the Wednesday print editions of The Sentinel.

Rain slows attendance, not enthusiasm at Wings and Wheels

CINDY WEELDREYER
Cottage Grove Sentinel

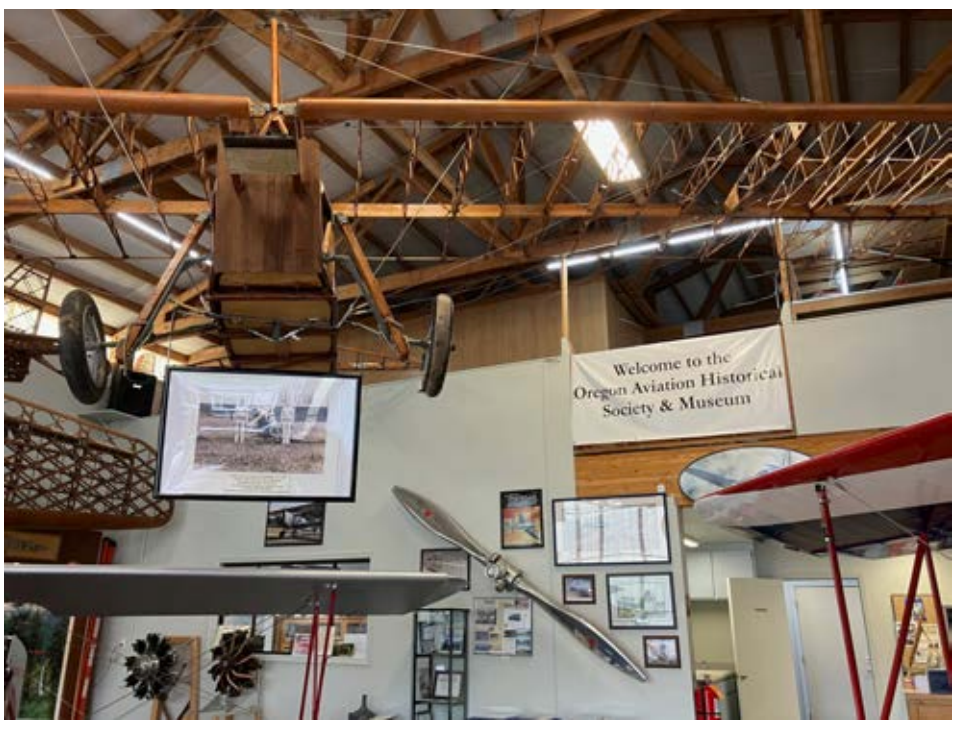
Dark clouds and scattered showers put a damper on the 12th annual Wings and Wheels Show at Jim Wright Field in Cottage Grove this year, but the Oregon Aviation Historical Society still welcomed visitors who braved the weather to support the museum's restoration work.

Nineteen classic vehicles lined the field, representing models from the 1930s through the 1990s. Only two local planes made it to the ramp, and the soggy conditions kept antique aircraft grounded this year. Inside the hangar, guests viewed restored planes including the 1931 Cadet, Tex Rankin's iconic air show aircraft, and a 1920s U.S. Air Mail plane.

The beloved "Wimpy" returned to Cottage Grove after spending the past year at the Oregon Historical Society in Portland. Built in 1935, the Oregon homebuilt aircraft helped shape the early movement of experimental aviation in the United States.

OAHS Board Member Annette Whittingham said organizers appreciated everyone who turned out for the June 27 event and made the best of a cool and rainy day.

More information is available at www.oregonaviation.org or by calling 541-543-1068. Museum hours are Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 2475 Jim Wright Way, across from Cottage Theatre



Cindy Weeldreyer / Cottage Grove Sentinel

A vintage restored plane hangs in the museum during the annual Wings and Wells event at Cottage Grove.

Cindy Weeldreyer / Cottage Grove Sentinel

Built in 1935, the home built "Wimpy" shaped the early movement of experimental aviation in the United States. More photos on page 8.

Cottage Grove Online For information about Cottage Grove 24/7 catch us Online cgsentinel.com

OBITUARY

William "Billy" Morris

April 18, 1967 - June 10, 2026

William "Billy" Morris, a lifelong resident of Cottage Grove, Oregon, passed away unexpectedly on June 10, 2026, at the age of 59.

Born on April 18, 1967, Billy graduated from Cottage Grove High School in 1985. Though his work took him to Alaska, Cottage Grove was always home. He spent many years as a logger until a logging accident resulted in the loss of his leg. Never one to quit, he continued working as a heavy equipment operator and, most recently, trimming trees throughout the community.

Billy was devoted to his family and proudly cared for his parents alongside his sisters. He was especially proud of his daughter, Autumn Baumgartner, and loved traveling to cheer her on during her basketball career.

Billy will be remembered for his ability to make others laugh and his love of practical jokes. He enjoyed trains, horseshoes, foosball, and animals.

Billy was preceded in death by his parents, Floretta and William Morris, and his nephew, Christopher Morris. He is survived by his daughter, Autumn; his sisters Gail Eveland, Laurie Morris, and Rita Barkemeyer; nieces, a nephew, extended family, and dear friends.

A celebration of life will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 1, at his family residence in Cottage Grove, Oregon.

SNAP clients offered free program to build skills, find jobs

More than half of SNAP participants who complete Oregon's SNAP Employment and Training (STEP) program are employed shortly afterward, according to data reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Administration.

The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) is highlighting the success of these services as more Oregonians seek support navigating federal changes to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) work or activity rules.

"Employment and training services can help people achieve more than compliance with a requirement," Oregon SNAP Director Jessica Amaya Hoffman said. "They help people build skills, connect with employers and create opportunities that can support them long after they leave SNAP."

Before connecting with WorkSource Oregon, Isla was facing uncertainty after becoming unemployed while caring for a family member. She had long dreamed of continuing her education but wasn't sure how she would make it happen. Through the SNAP Employment and Training (STEP) program, she received support, guidance and resources that helped her move forward. Today, she is continuing her education and working toward her goal of starting her own business.

"It has always been a dream of mine to better myself and show my kids you can always go to school and educate yourself no matter the age," said Isla. "My plans for the future are to have my own company and a great job of my choosing."

Stories like Isla's are common among participants in Oregon's STEP program. According to USDA Food and Nutrition Administration data, 57% of Oregon STEP participants are employed shortly after completing the program, one of the highest rates in the nation.

The STEP program connects SNAP participants with free employment and training services through partnerships between ODHS, STEP providers, the Oregon Employment Department, local workforce development boards and other community organizations throughout Oregon.

Services may include:

- Career coaching and employment planning
- Resume development and interview preparation
- Education and training opportunities
- Job search assistance
- Connections to local employers
- Help addressing barriers that can make it hard to find work or complete training

Many participants use these services to gain new skills, complete training programs, increase earnings or enter a new field.

Federal changes to SNAP work rules have increased the number of Oregonians who may need to meet work or activity rules to maintain food benefits. Employment and training services can help participants meet those requirements while building skills that support long-term employment success.

ODHS is also encouraging people to contact the ODHS ABAWD team (1-833-947-1694 or SNAP.ABAWDTeam@odhsoha.oregon.gov) if they have questions about SNAP work or activity rules. Some people may qualify for an exemption and not realize it. Others may benefit from employment and training services that can help them maintain benefits while working toward their career goals. ODHS provides the referral for people to access these supports.

Since January 2026, more than 25,600 people have lost benefits because they didn't meet work or activity rules.

"If you think SNAP work or activity rules may apply to you, your best next step is to contact ODHS," Hoffman said. "We can help you understand your options and connect you with services that support your goals."

For more information about SNAP work rules and exemptions:

- *English: Oregon.gov/snapworkrules*
- *Spanish: Oregon.gov/snapnormastrabajo*

ODHS ABAWD Team:

- *Call: 1-833-947-1694*
- *Email: SNAP.ABAWDTeam@odhsoha.oregon.gov*

For more information about SNAP benefits:

- *Online: benefits.oregon.gov*
- *Call the ONE Customer Service Center: 1-800-699-9075*
- *In person or by phone: at any ODHS office*

Oregon's minimum wage rises 50 cents per hour

ALEX BAUMHARDT
Oregon Capital Chronicle

Oregonians making minimum wage received a 50-cent bump per hour Wednesday, July 1, resulting in an average of $573 more per year for someone working full time.

In the Portland metro, the floor for hourly wages will rise to $16.80. In 15 counties and parts of three counties in the Willamette Valley, Northwest Coast and southern Oregon, the minimum wage rises to $15.55 per hour, and in 18 mostly rural eastern Oregon counties, the minimum hourly wage will be $14.55. The rural wage is always $1 less than the standard wage, and the Portland minimum wage is always $1.25 more due to the higher cost of living.

A 2016 Oregon law requires the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries to adjust statewide minimum wages annually for inflation. The bureau announced the 50-cent per hour increase in April, which reflects a 3.3% rate of inflation for the cost of food, energy, essential goods, housing and medical services between March 2025 and March 2026, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Inflation has since gone up, in large part due to the higher cost of fuels driven by the U.S. war in Iran. The most recent rate of inflation calculated between the end of May 2025 and the end of May 2026 was 4.2%, according to the federal labor statistics bureau.

Calculated at that rate, the average hourly minimum wage bump would be closer to 63 cents.

Oregon is one of more than three dozen states that pay higher minimum wages than the federal standard of $7.25, which has gone unchanged for 17 years. Over the past decade, Oregon's standard minimum wage has gone up by $6.30 per hour, or about 63 cents per year.

About 4% of Oregon workers earn minimum wage, according to state data. Among them, slightly more than half are women, more than 40% are Black or Hispanic and most — nearly 90% — are adults at least 20 years old, according to recent analysis from the left-leaning Washington, D.C.-based think tank Economic Policy Institute.

https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/briefs/oregons-minimum-wage-rises-50-cents-per-hour-this-week/

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Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

Workers fill food orders at a Chipotle restaurant. Minimum hourly wages for Oregon workers increased by 50 cents per hour on July 1, 2026, to keep up with inflation.

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EDUCATION

SMART Reading Lane County receives $5,000 grant

The Cow Creek Umpqua Indian Foundation has awarded a $5,000 grant to children's literacy nonprofit SMART Reading.

The grant, which reflects the foundation's enduring commitment to the well-being and education of local children and families, will be used to support SMART Reading's programs in Lane County.

SMART Reading will serve more than 650 kids and will give away over 4,500 brand new books in Lane County. The organization has openings for volunteers at sites in Lane County for the 2026-27 school year.

"We are grateful for the Cow Creek Foundation's commitment to ensuring children can realize their full potential through reading," says SMART Reading Regional Director Leona Westdahl. "Since 1997, the Cow Creek Foundation has been a key partner for community nonprofits supporting families in its homeland territory in Oregon. Their award to SMART will help us provide one-on-one reading support and book access to kids in Lane County."

Reading is an essential skill for kids, helping them start and stay on a path to success in school and beyond, according to Westdahl. SMART Reading provides young students with two critical components of reading success: regular practice time with an adult and access to books.

Now in its 35th year, SMART Reading will reach 21,000 students and give away over 140,000 books statewide during the 2026-27 school year. Data collected from teachers annually shows that ninety percent of students who participate in SMART improve in comprehension, vocabulary development, motivation, enjoyment, and other key metrics.

The award presentation took place on June 9, 2026, at the Seven Feathers Convention Center in Canyonville, and SMART Reading was one of 87 nonprofits that collectively received over $600,000 from the foundation.

To learn more about SMART Reading, or to sign up to volunteer, contact your local SMART office at 541-734-5628, or visit www.SMARTReading.org.

To learn more about the Cow Creek Foundation, visit https://www.cowcreekfoundation.org/.

About SMART Reading

SMART Reading is a statewide children's literacy nonprofit that serves kids in Oregon's highest need schools and communities with two ingredients critical for literacy and learning success: shared reading time and access to books.

We mobilize volunteers to read with preschool through third-grade children, building confidence, literacy skills and a love of reading. Since 1992, we have paired over 158,000 volunteers to read with 334,461 children, and have put over 5 million books in the homes of the children we serve.

Visit www.SMARTReading.org or call 541-734-5628 to learn more

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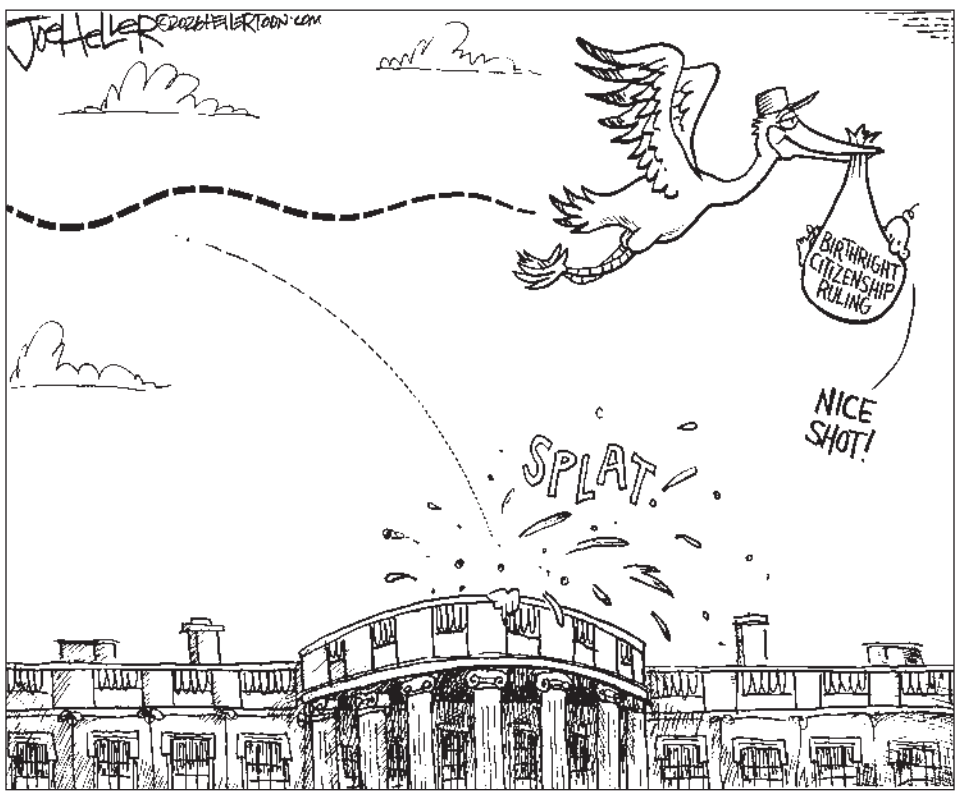

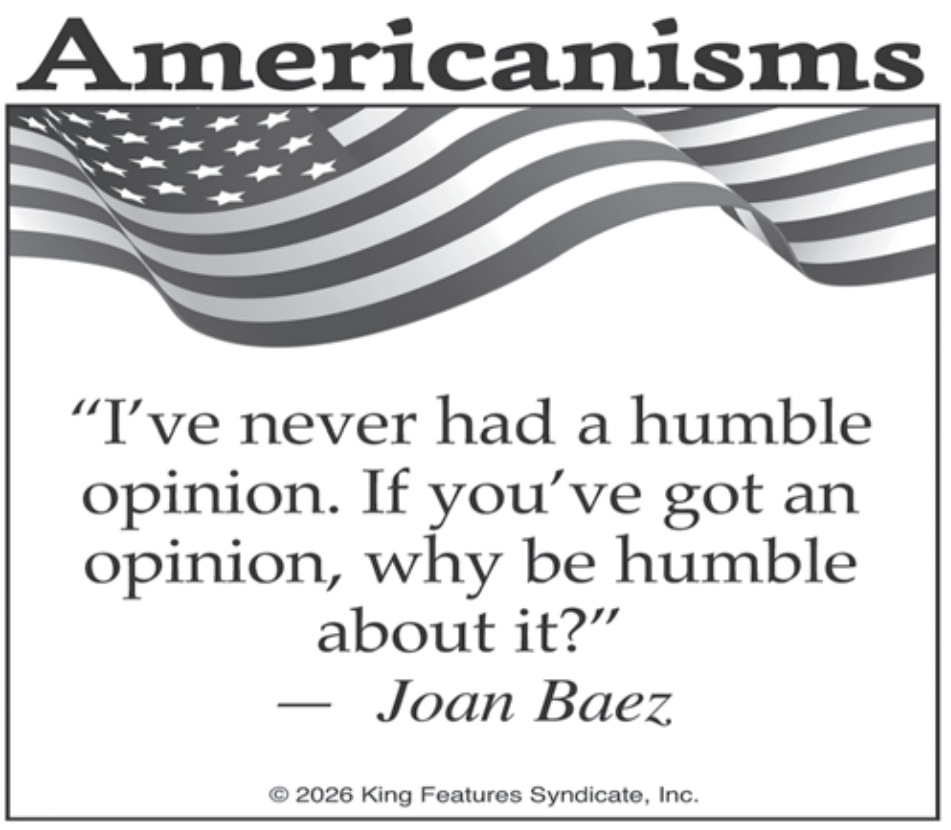

COMMENTARY

Can AI help Oregon prepare for wildfires?

RANDY STAPILUS
Oregon Capital Chronicle

Oregon and the Northwest generally have gotten off light so far this year when it comes to wildfires. That can change and probably will, because wildfires tend to take a worsening turn in the month or so ahead.

But starting this year, we may have some new tools for planning for their arrival.

As of June 25, the National Interagency Fire Center has reported a total 35,118 fires nationwide burning 2.9 million acres — both numbers considerably higher for this point in the year than any year in the last decade and well above the average this century. The northwest, with its fire-friendly weather and other conditions this year, is unlikely to escape for much longer.

In fact, the Oregon Department of Forestry said June 15 that all of its forestry districts are now considered to be in fire season. Fire Protection Division Chief Michael Curran said that "Looking at the current conditions and projections for the summer, ODF is prepared to have another busy fire season."

Apart from the usual preparation efforts of assembling firefighters, equipment and supplies, is there anything Oregon can do to get ready?

Might this, in part, be a job for artificial intelligence?

An April 10 report from Oregon State University and the Nature Conservancy offers what amount to predictive tools about wildfire probabilities, including some factors wildfire analysts may have missed in the past.

Their model breaks wildfire risk into three groups of factors. One of them, wildfire hazard, includes the probability and intensity of burns, and researchers over the years ordinarily have considered them. Relative dryness, availability of burnable material, climate changes and other environmental considerations are all readily reduced to numbers.

But the new study also includes two more major areas: Infrastructure vulnerability (structural and neighborhood characteristics and defensible space) and social vulnerability (demographics, socioeconomics and types of housing and transportation), both of which seem a little less obvious.

The ability of an area to resist major fires can be broken down into specific physical factors (access to water, materials to block fire, easily burnable buildings or other materials). And detailed information about those factors can be developed at a hyperlocal level using Census and other other data.

In other words, the relative fire risk of the places we live based on elements ranging from building materials to how development is concentrated or scattered can be reduced to a specific number — and implicitly, more factors besides those. The study found large degrees of social vulnerability around the Cascade and Coastal ranges and across much of eastern Oregon, though the most vulnerable tracts were widely scattered.

The writers made the point that they weren't trying to establish specific cause-and-effect relationships between fires and community statistics, but simply that certain of these things tended to go together. From that, over time, researchers could start to focus in on risk factors.

In the new study, all these things were developed for about 400 communities in Oregon and Washington.

For example, co-author Chris Dunn from the OSU College of Forestry said, "Warm Springs and Goldendale have slightly lower wildfire exposure than some nearby, better-resourced communities like Bend and Leavenworth, but they experience greater social vulnerability and therefore are likely to experience greater impacts if a fire occurred. By blending a mix of factors, our assessment method is a path toward more equitable investments in community wildfire risk reduction."

The manipulation of vast amounts of information and assessment of new patterns and sets of probabilities is very much in the wheelhouse of AI, artificial intelligence. Its use in wildfire analysis has not been central yet, but could become more so.

For example: An extensive September 2025 academic study based in Switzerland titled AI for Wildfire Management: From Prediction to Detection, Simulation, and Impact Analysis looked into the uses even at that point, and existing limits, for AI in fire prediction and planning for containment.

It said "the main domains of wildfire management where AI has been applied — susceptibility mapping, prediction, detection, simulation, and impact assessment — and highlight critical limitations that hinder practical adoption. These include challenges with dataset

See STAPILUS Page 6

Weekly Online Poll

Are you saving more or spending more with the current economy?

Saving more
Spending more
Both

Previous Poll Results

What is your favorite summer pastime?

Camping 25%
Hiking 0%
Swimming 25%
Road trips 0%
Quiet time at home 50%

Quote of the Week

"Liberty cannot be preserved without a general knowledge among the people."

John Adams

The Cottage Grove Sentinel

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Very involved with local schools, politics, community matters 42.9%

Involved in specific groups, but not connected to most

Wildlife crossing projects gain momentum across Oregon

Every year, thousands of deer, elk, bear, and other wildlife attempt to cross busy roadways in search of food, water, and mates.

Too often, those crossings end in tragedy for wildlife and sometimes for motorists, according to the Oregon Wildlife Foundation.

Improving habitat connectivity is one of Oregon Wildlife Foundation's conservation priorities. Proceeds from the sale and renewal of the Watch for Wildlife specialty license plate are allocated to habitat connectivity and wildlife passage projects throughout Oregon.

The Foundation also serves as the fiscal sponsor for multiple passage projects - providing fiscal administration and fundraising support to these initiatives throughout their development.

"Our participation in wildlife passage work began in 2017 with an undercrossing on Highway 97 in Central Oregon" Oregon Wildlife Foundation Executive director Tim Greseth said. "This experience deepened our understanding of the impact that wildlife-vehicle collisions are having on many different species and led us to adopt habitat connectivity as an organizational priority."

Assessing Existing Bridges and Culverts Across Oregon Statewide

Oregon Wildlife Foundation has retained a consulting team to evaluate existing bridges and culverts throughout Oregon that may already be in use by wildlife or, with modifications, can be improved or made ready for wildlife to use - all in service of keeping animals off busy roads by providing them with safe alternatives.

The consulting team is evaluating existing conditions at culverts and bridges large enough to accommodate deer and elk, documenting evidence of wildlife activity, and recommending cost-effective modifications that may increase use by wildlife.

"Building new wildlife overcrossings and undercrossings can be expensive, so we're enthusiastic for opportunities to provide safe passage for animals through simpler modifications to the areas around existing bridges and culverts wherever and whenever possible," Greseth said.

Most Project milestones include:

Bend to Suttle Lake Wildlife Passage Initiative in Central Oregon

This section of Highway 20 experiences the highest frequency of deer and elk collisions in Oregon. The Bend to Suttle Lake Wildlife Passage coalition has completed a Phase I wildlife crossing mitigation study and developed conceptual crossing designs for multiple locations along the corridor.

Following that work, four wildlife overcrossings were identified as the highest priorities for Phase II design and engineering. The coalition has raised more than $850,000 in non-federal matching funds in preparation for the Federal Highway Administration's Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program, which is slated to open for applications sometime in July or August.

Wallowa County Wildlife Crossing Project in Northeast Oregon

The Wallowa County Wildlife Crossing Coalition has completed a Phase I study of Highway 82 between Enterprise and Wallowa to determine priority crossing locations and develop conceptual designs to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions and improve habitat connectivity within this high-risk corridor.

Interstate 84 Wildlife Crossing Project in Northeast Oregon

Interstate 84 is an almost permanent barrier to wildlife movement. The focus of this project is the completion of a wildlife crossing study and conceptual design for the highest priority locations on I-84 between Pendleton and La Grande. The funding needed to begin this project has been raised, marking an important step in its development.

Wanaket Wildlife Area Wildlife Crossing Project in Northeast Oregon

In partnership with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla, Oregon Wildlife Foundation is providing funding support and serving as the fiscal sponsor for a wildlife crossing study on the Wanaket Wildlife area, which is located along the Columbia River, just east of McNary in northeast Oregon. The wildlife area is bisected by Highway 730 and the incidence of vehicle strikes is high within this section of road.

To learn more about Oregon Wildlife Foundation's wildlife crossing initiatives or to support this work through the Wildlife Movement and Migration fund, visit www.myOWF.org/wildlifemoves. Or donate directly via https://secure.givelively.org/donate/oregon-wildlife-foundation/wildlife-migration-and-movement-fund-formerly-

STAPILUS

From Page 5

imbalance and accessibility, the inadequacy of commonly used metrics, the choice of prediction formats, and the computational costs of large-scale models, all of which reduce model trustworthiness and applicability."

Some of these constraints could be eased as the technology progresses.

Whether the OSU and Nature Conservancy used AI in developing their reports didn't seem entirely clear, but going forward AI looks like exactly the sort of tool that might be useful in working our areas of risk from wildfire.

Oregon may need all the help it can get.

https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2026/06/25/can-ai-help-oregon-prepare-for-wildfires/

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OREGON

From Page 1

considered "rules" subject to congressional review under the law. Agencies have issued well over 100 such plans since 1996 without ever submitting one to Congress. Those documents guide the work of agency officials who oversee specific areas of land, often covering millions of acres.

Created after years of public meetings and local feedback, they determine which landscapes will be leased for oil and gas drilling, protected for endangered species or open for off-road vehicles, along with a multitude of other uses.

But last year, Republicans asked the Government Accountability Office, a nonpartisan advisory agency for Congress, to affirm a sweeping new view of the Congressional Review Act. The office found that certain management plans were subject to review because their land use decisions "prescribed policy," and determined that lawmakers' queries about those plans had opened the 60-day review "clock" in each instance.

Using this new interpretation, Republicans in the past two years have revoked plans that restricted mining and oil production on federal lands in Alaska, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota and Wyoming.

But the repercussions could go well beyond those specific plans.

None of the plans issued by federal land managers over the past 30 years was ever submitted for review, because no one at the time considered them to be rules. In other words, hundreds of plans covering millions of acres of land could be deemed invalid under the new congressional interpretation.

Oregon lawsuit

Now, a lawsuit in Oregon will put that argument to the test. Cascadia Wildlands, a conservation group in the Pacific Northwest, has filed a complaint challenging a timber harvest on Bureau of Land Management land in western Oregon. That logging project was approved under a management plan that was issued in 2016.

Since Congress now considers such plans to be rules, the plaintiffs argue, the 2016 plan never took effect because it was never submitted to Congress.

Cascadia Wildlands has fought numerous legal battles over logging projects approved by the Bureau of Land Management. If the lawsuit over the management plan is successful, said Nick Cady, the group's legal director, the same theory would give them leverage to block any logging project issued under the 2016 plan.

"They let the genie out of the bottle," Cady said. "Instead of just letting [the Congressional Review Act] move forward with whatever Republicans choose to select, it's worth curbing that by pointing out that it can point both ways."

If the plan is struck down, activists of all types could use that precedent to challenge any activity on public land governed by a management plan that hasn't been reviewed by Congress.

"It is a target-rich environment if our lawsuit is successful, and even if it's not successful we've already demonstrated that there's a lot of interest here," Brown said. "This is what happens when you overturn long-standing precedent and throw spaghetti at the wall."

Cady and Brown said they hope their case compels Congress to revise the Congressional Review Act to exempt public land management plans.

Stateline reporter Alex Brown can be reached at abrown@stateline.org.

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https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2026/06/30/repub/oregon-lawsuit-could-upend-federal-management-of-public-lands/

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RODEO

From Page 1

(6-13) $8, Ages 5 and younger get in for free.

HISTORY

In 1947, the Cottage Grove Riding Club presented its first amateur rodeo at the Purdy Ranch in Lorane under the leadership of "Stub" Mosby.

On the heels of their successful event, the club approached Mrs. Hattie Sharp about leasing 40 acres of her property about a mile south of town. The five-year lease agreement allowed the CGRC to pay $500 per year with an option to buy. Enthusiasm was high as they spent $16,000 to build chutes, corrals, fences and the grandstand to stage a more professional show and allow more citizens to attend.

Adina Mosby was the first Cottage Grove Rodeo Queen. However, the anticipated revenue was less than expected and it took club members several years to pay off the debt.

In 1955, with a $5,000 down payment, the property was purchased by the CGRC for $18,000. Other improvements followed that included a watering system and lighting that made nighttime events possible. The local Stardusters Square Dance Club leased some of the land and built a dance barn with 60' x 80' hardwood floor that later served as the local roller skating rink.

The purpose of the CGRC has remained constant: to provide healthy recreation for local youth that encourages horseback riding and good sportsmanship.

The Rodeo Queen's Court is the face of the Cottage Grove Rodeo. The court consists of one queen, a junior princess and a senior princess. They stay busy attending rodeos and appearing in parades in other communities. They visit Doernbecher Children's Hospital and elementary schools to get younger children involved with horses.

Cave said anticipation is building as the weekend approaches.

"I really want to encourage all ages to come out and not only enjoy the rodeo but all the events we have coming up during the rest of the year also," he said.

The Cottage grove Rodeo is held at the Cottage Grove Riding Club and Rodeo Grounds, at 77958 Highway 99S in Cottage Grove.

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Weekly SUDOKU

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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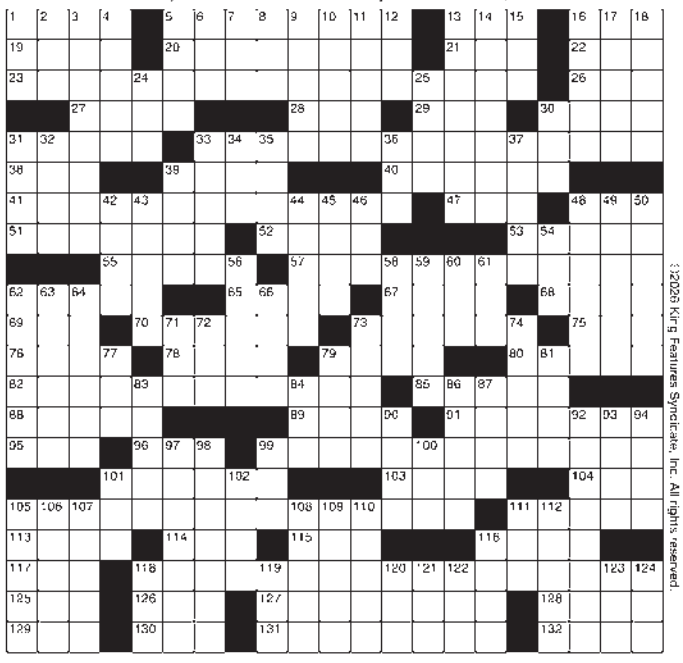
Super Crossword — Q2 REPORT

ACROSS
1 Pet plaguers
5 Keg party dispensers
13 Iranian city with a 1,200,000+ population
16 Brainpower stats
19 Cries of awe
20 Having hay fever, say
21 Italian "a"
22 Bring to court
23 More proficient than anybody else
26 Tchr.'s union
27 Figure skating leap
28 Sauna setting
29 Photo lab blowup: Abbr.
30 Barbie or Ken
31 "He wouldn't hurt ___"
33 Fairly often
38 Kung ___ chicken
39 Extremist sect
40 Female graduates
41 Ball hitter in a certain court
47 Center or globus lead-in
48 Old JFK jet
51 Tallinn locale
52 — Christian Anderson
53 She sang "Skyfall"
55 Grandma, in Italy
57 Sri Lankan monkey with a hatlike whorl of hair
62 Nosy sort
65 Yuletide poem opener
67 Skip out (on)
68 Business attire
69 French "the"
70 Dental buildup
73 Joked around
75 Cooler cubes
76 Competent
78 Gallivant
79 Doubt-free
80 Deep-seated
82 Cartoon short featuring a bird who was a precursor to Tweety
85 Lamp cover
88 Sheer
89 Gooey cheese
91 Designer with the fragrance Lucky Wish
95 Quaint suffix with poet
96 Reply to "Are you?"
99 Dropping extra work and "acting your wage"
101 Wicca's realm
103 Jethro — (rock band)
104 Excavate
105 NHL team that became the Colorado Avalanche
111 Saintliness
113 Draws upon
114 Nutrition fig.
115 Debt memo
116 Tear apart
117 — Lady of Fatima
118 Algebraic statement graphed as a parabola
125 Bi- plus one
126 Poet's dusk
127 Counterpart of digital (Var.)
128 Norway port
129 Kong, for one
130 1950s prez
131 Actor Clint
132 "Sheesh, close call!"

DOWN
1 Hitler Gehrig
2 Tiny particle
3 "Calm down!"
4 Suffix similar to "-ish"
5 Joan of folk
6 Letter after kay
7 English cathedral city
8 Necessary: Abbr.
9 Have faith in
10 Visibly awed
11 Relative of risotto
12 — -fi
13 Latin for "five"
14 A single block of sugar, say
15 Irate
16 Playground comeback
17 Subdue
18 Serta rival
24 Stage actress Hagen
25 Have a hunch
30 Genetic stuff
31 Vaulted church area
32 E-help pages
33 Sacred book of Islam
34 Suffix with form
35 Hanker (for)
36 Disloyal type
37 Seminal '40s computer
39 Goalee spot
42 Top-shelf
43 Pig's noise
44 Doha locale
45 Pizza chain, informally
46 Atty.'s bills
48 Costume spangle
49 Channel for excess water
50 Move like a seesaw
54 Govt. lawyers
58 "Shaq —!" (O'Neal memoir)
59 Makes lighter
60 Sch. close to Harvard
61 Heady drink
62 Dental buildup
63 D sprees
64 Land specks in the sea
66 Bank bought by Chase in 2008, in brief
71 Financier Onassis
72 "Ape to 13" director Howard
73 Andrews of "Mary Poppins"
74 Failed to
77 Dallas-to-Nashville dir.
79 Assistant on iDevices
81 Uncluttered
83 In a — (very quickly)
84 — Dhabi (emirate)
86 Schlops
87 Deep blue dye
90 Dying rebuke from Caesar
92 Course part, in an eatery
93 Course part, in school
94 Azalea ("Fancy" rapper)
97 Like bullup interest
98 Ordinary
99 Div. of an NBA game
100 "— Sera, Sera"
101 Drs. who deliver babies
102 Wasteful
105 Sales target number
106 Seize illegally
107 Hair-raising
108 Pop diva Ross
109 Teensy bits
110 Thick cover
111 Item in a pod
112 Being pulled
116 Regretted greatly
118 End-of-proof abbr.
119 TV actress Charlotte
120 Dairy beast
121 Psyche part
122 Status —
123 Comda cry
124 This minute



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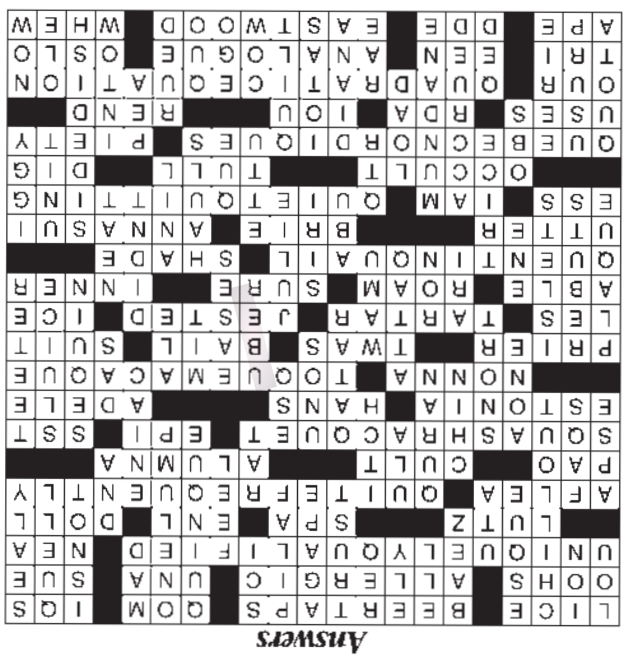
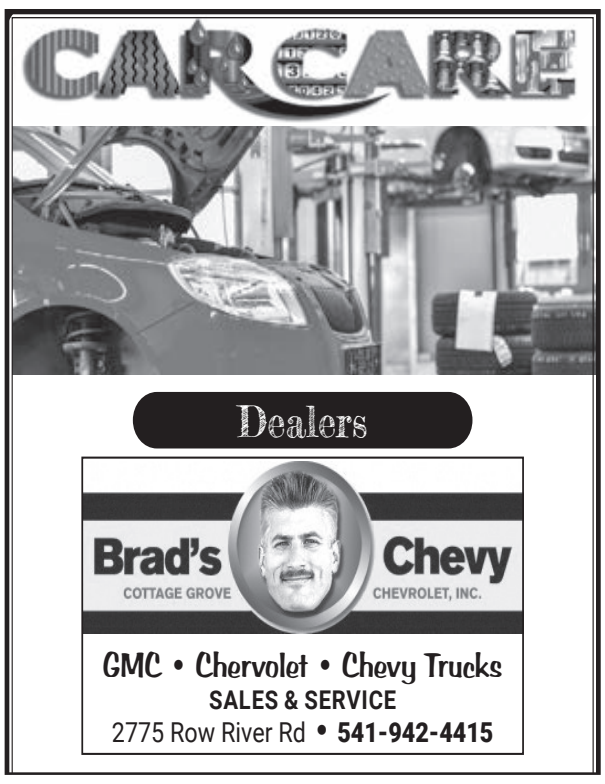
Answers

Super Crossword





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Wanna get active this summer? Step out onto the pickleball court!

WILL LOHRE
Cottage Grove Sentinel

Looking to get out and active in the sun this summer? Well, the Grover Pickleball Group in Cottage Grove can help not just up your game on the court, but give you a community with which to do it.

The Grover Pickleball Group began playing in 2015, well before the full-on pickleball craze of the last few years. Christine Payne is one of the volunteers who helps run the group and is the USA Pickleball Ambassador for Cottage Grove. She's been playing the sport for 10 years now, and she took over leadership responsibilities for the group in 2017.

As the game got more popular, she knew she needed a few extra hands to grow the group and get folks out to play.

"As the sport quickly grew, I invited several other players to help me manage the group. So now we have a team of volunteers who work together to organize play and teach new members the game," Payne said. "Though there are opportunities for competitive play, the Grover Pickleball Group's main purpose is to provide doubles open play for anyone of any skill level. We want people to know that they can come onto the courts, hang their paddle in the queue, and just play for fun, exercise, to meet new people, and become part of the pickleball community."

The group is a subsidiary of the Emerald Valley Pickleball Club, and while people don't have to be an EVPC member to play with us, Payne encourages them to do so because of the EVPC's support and the equipment the club provides to the Grover Pickleball Group.

To ensure that folks can play and there aren't barriers to joining, it's free to drop in with Grover Pickleball Group during the outdoor season. The group plays at Coiner Park, located at 1319 E Main St, and it has four permanent courts and two temporary ones. If you are interested in finding out the playing schedule or joining the group, contact Payne by phone or text at 541-914-5937, or text other leaders listed on our Facebook page, which can be found under Grover Pickleball - Cottage Grove.

While the weather is usually nice enough to play at Coiner all summer, the winter months are a bit different.

"During the indoor season, we are limited to three courts in the gym at Riverside Community Church," Payne said. "We ask anyone who wishes to play indoors with us to join our group and contribute what they can monthly to help pay for our reservations."

Courtesy photo from Christine Payne

The pickleball courts at Coiner Park in Cottage Grove are always teaming with action.

Currently, the group's email list is at 151 players. While Payne said it's hard to know how many of those people remain active, they often fill the courts and have people waiting to play. The group also has a wide range of ages and experience levels. Payne said the players' ages range from their teens into the 80s! The group is interested in getting more kids out on the courts and into the game, and they hope to see pickleball in more schools soon.

While it may feel intimidating to go out and try a new hobby or sport, Payne emphasized that there's no judgment when people join the Grover Pickleball Group to play.

"When I first started playing, I was encouraged to try out the Bob Keefer Center in Springfield to improve my game. Not exactly a social butterfly, I was terrified. A player saw me shaking in my shoes, invited me to step in, and said: 'Show me what you've got.' I had nothing, but everyone was so friendly and kind that I immediately became part of what felt like family," Payne said. "I told myself to always treat new players the way that I was treated. The EVPC banner on the Main Street fence says it all: 'You are welcome here.'"

If you are interested in finding out the playing schedule or joining the group, contact Payne by phone or text at 541-914-5937, or text other leaders listed on our Facebook page, which can be found under Grover Pickleball - Cottage Grove.

Officials needed for high school sports

OSAA

As more boys and girls turn out for their high school sports teams, the call for more officials always follows. That's the situation up and down the Willamette Valley. Top to bottom, the need for prep officials in all sports is great, according to a release fr5om the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA).

At the start of the new school year, there will be football games, volleyball matches, soccer matches and cross-country runs. All need officials. Eligibility begins at 18 but all you really need is a heart to give back to your prep sports community. Best part, you'll have a view of the unfolding action right before your eyes and get paid as well.

Veterans take note, using the Mike Pereira "Battlefields to Ballfields Program," all of your training, clothing and even the whistle, can be paid for.

"What started as a small pilot program in California has grown into a national movement, transforming the lives of over 2,500 veterans across 45 states," Pereira said. "Our mission remains unchanged – to honor military service by creating new opportunities for veterans to serve their communities."

For more information about being an OSAA Official, go to www.osaa.org/officials/registration.

Local study graduates from Pacific University

Kyle Reese, of Cottage Grove, has graduated in Spring 2026 from Pacific University with a Master of Arts in Teaching degree.

Founded in 1849, Pacific University is Washington County, Oregon's only comprehensive university, offering over 50 undergraduate majors and 28 graduate and professional degrees.

Pacific University is located in Washington County.

Wings and wheels

Cindy Weeldreyer / Cottage Grove Sentinel

The 1931 Springfield Cadet was the first registered home built plane in Lane County.

Cindy Weeldreyer / Cottage Grove Sentinel

OAHS Board Member Brad Champman (left) and fellow organizers said they are thankful to those who participated in this year's soggy event.

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