

One of my great passions, the Springfield Education Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, not private foundation, is in its 21st year of investing in educational opportunities for the 11,000 students in the Springfield School District.

Twenty-one years ago, things were not looking good for public school funding...and being Springfield—a community where we get together to get things done—that's what we did. We wanted to make sure kids in the future would have some of the same opportunities we had in Springfield when we grew up. So, we stepped up and the Springfield Education Foundation was formed.

And, we've been working hard ever since.

SEF is now at 21 years and getting stronger. In the last six years.... We've been able to invest \$796,000 in student programs. Since 1994, we've invested close to \$70,000 in two great literacy programs, the Gift of Literacy and Oregon Battle of the Books. These programs are turning our kids into lifelong readers.

It's amazing to see the look on our first graders faces as we present them a book of their own each year. We've helped present 9,000 books since 2005. And last year alone, 1,350 students participated on Oregon Battle of the Books Team.

We also have relationships with volunteer entities that support our students, like Belly-full, that has created a food pantry for Hamlin families and are helping to feed our hungry students.

Yet one of our mainstays continues to be our Innovative Educator Grants. We've given 243 to date. These innovative

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MEETING CALENDAR

November 5, 2015

Skip Sangren – The Shoppes at Gateway

The conversion of Gateway Mall from an enclosed center to an open-air regional power center with a modernized shopping environment and a higher quality merchandise mix is nearing completion. Learn about future shopping and entertainment opportunities for area residents. Skip Sangren, the General Manager of the Mall, will come to update us on progress and what we might expect when the renovation is complete.

November 19, 2015

Franklin Boulevard Update

The first phase of the Franklin Boulevard upgrade is funded and construction will begin in the Spring. At any moment City staff will hear if its application for TIGER funding to pay for the cost of Phase II will be awarded. City staff will provide updates and a description of the new Franklin Boulevard.

PUBLIC CALENDAR

All items are tentative and subject to change

Springfield City Council

November 2, 2015

Regular Session – 7:00 PM

November 9, 2015

Work Session – 5:30 PM

Mobile home Park Update

Marijuana Regulations Update

November 16, 2015

Work session – 6:00 PM

FY 17 Budget Discussion

Regular Session – 8:00 PM

November 23, 2015

Work session – 5:30 PM

Street Fund discussion

Grass and Weeds Discussion

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Lane County Commissioners

November 3, 2015 – 9:00 am
 November 10, 2015 – 9:00 am
 November 17, 2015 – No Meeting
 November 24, 2015 – No Meeting

Lane Transit District

November 18, 2015 – 5:30 PM

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

November 10, 2015 – 6:30 PM

School District 19

November 9, 2015 – 7:00 PM

**Work sessions generally do not offer an opportunity
for public comment.**

OCTOBER MEETINGS**OCTOBER 1, PATRICIA PERLOW**

Patricia Perlow comes from a long history with the Lane County District Attorney’s office. She has served in every part of the office and done almost everything. As the first female District Attorney in Lane county she inherits an office that continues to be in crisis. The budget situation has not improved and, she reports, the office survives by relying on grants from other governments. Most recently, the office received a grant to study sexual abuse on the University of Oregon campus.

For some time, she reports, the office had not been filing complaints in low level felony cases, because of a lack of staff to prosecute the cases once filed. Ms. Perlow has ended that practice, but now relies on diverting those cases into alternative dispute mechanisms, like diversion programs. The benefits of this approach, she reports, are twofold. One on hand, it increases the likelihood of accountability for the offenders, albeit through some mechanism other than incarceration. On the other hand, it increases the financial resources of the agency by making the office eligible for additional correction funds from the state, which are not available when cases are not filed.

The diversion programs allow for dismissal of charges if the offender successfully completes the program. Ms. Perlow said she is convinced that these diversion programs are the best approach to dealing with drug crimes. She noted that the departure of the previous District Attorney and several retirements have eased the budget situation because those employees can be replaced with less experienced employees whose salaries and benefits are less. In response to questions from the audience, Ms. Perlow said she believed that current substance abuse and mental health facilities are completely inadequate to the task, and urged the creation of a psychiatric hospital to deal with those in a mental health crisis.

She responded that there are less than 400 sexual abuse kits in the testing backlog (older than one year). She said the office is committed to completing testing of all of those kits where there is a name by using a private lab to conducting the testing.

She also noted that the existence of the Springfield jail is associated with a large reduction in public order crimes and lower level felonies.

OCTOBER 15, VONNIE MIKKELSEN

Vonnie Mikkelsen has finished her first 90 days as Executive Director of the Springfield Chamber of Commerce. Originally raised in Junction City, she has taken a circuitous route to coming some 15 miles down the road. After college, she took a one year post teaching English in Japan. That brief assignment turned out to be a 16 year career which led her to work for the City of Tokyo government in planning and organizing the 1970 World’s Fair and to the Japanese Cartoon Network. There she discovered an important message about learning what is your niche, as she helped shift the focus away from the anime for which Japan is famous, to the staples of American cartoons, which is what the audience wanted.

That position led her back to the US, first with the cartoon Network and then as Director of the Zephyr Hills Chamber of Commerce, a position she gained although she is not a “Chamber” professional.

Vonnie describes her primary character attribute as “authentic” –

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Her approach to problem solving involves what she describes as the OODA loop, a technique she learned from an USAF officer – Observe, Orient, Decide and Act.

She sees the greatest challenge in her position as dealing with the fragmentation of business and economic development, and hopes to take on a larger role in economic development as she settles in to her role at the Chamber.

teachers have reported that they have seen

attendance increase, participation rise and test scores positively affected from these grants.

These grants are helping to change students’ lives. Take Tyler, who discovered his gift of writing through an innovative program SEF helped fund. Spurred by the confidence he found through this class and his teacher, Tyler graduated last year and is now studying environmental leadership at the University of Oregon.

SEF, with the support of the community, school district staff, and educators, are helping our students reach their highest potential! If you are interested in learning more or volunteering, check out our website springfieldeducationfoundation.org or contact me terrybeyer@comcast.net .

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President	Michael Eyster	meyster@uoregon.edu	(541) 346-8393
President-Elect	Michell Bixler	Michelle.s.bixler@ci.eugene.or.us	(541) 682-8330
Pat President	Len Goodwin	localcitizenor@gmail.com	(541) 915-8956
Treasurer	John Tamulonis	J13tam@aol.com	(541) 954-4819
Secretary	Vacant		
Director	Terry Beyer	terrybeyer@comcast.net	(541) 746-5889
Director	Kaye Hyde-Patton	khp@emeraldldlaw.com	(541) 746-9621
Director	Meryln Hough	merlyn@lrapa.org	(541) 735-1056
Director	Chris Kline	chris.kline@summitbankonline.com	(541) 684-7523

