

Google street view even makes it to Coquille!



[Google Street View]

Not too long back Coquille was not significant enough to make the grade but finally Coquille has been Googlized. There is no turning back now, we are officially part of the information age. I noticed, however, that Google didn't bother to drive down my dead end street so for the moment the NSA will just have to guess what color my house is. You can, however, get a shot of the courthouse and the jail from almost every vantage point.

Coquille school bus driver files for commissioner

Commissioner Melissa Cribbins has some competition for the number three commission seat. Coquille resident Matt Rowe filed Friday to take a run at her in the upcoming May election which means he will have barely two months to present himself to the voters. The politically ambitious Rowe hasn't even finished his first term as Coquille's mayor and has been putting out feelers for months and was rumored to be considering a run for state representative. When incumbent Wayne Krieger decided not to retire, Rowe evidently decided to switch his attention to the county commission.



stacks of week old papers thrown
in shared dumpster at Rowe's
apartment

In addition to working for the school district as a school bus driver, Rowe also distributes papers for The Sentinel. According to his neighbors, however, all too many copies of The Sentinel wind up in the communal dumpster. May we ascertain that Rowe is just too busy for recycling? Considering her formal educational background, Cribbins performance as a commissioner has been underwhelming, in my opinion. Rowe, however, would not be an improvement and lacks the maturity necessary for any job requiring critical thinking and cool deliberation. Nevertheless, I am looking forward to the first debates or public forums, they should be pretty entertaining.

Voting on the Ballot Measures and local races

Just some suggestions regarding measures 70 – 76

70 (R) Expands availability of home ownership to veterans through Oregon War Veterans Fund – YES

71 (R) Convert to annual legislative sessions – YES

72 (R) Allows exception to current \$50K limit on state borrowing for State property projects – YES

73 Requires increased minimum sentences, removes judicial discretion and moves Oregon to prison economy – NO

74 Establishes medical marijuana supply system, research systems and limited selling to medical card holders – YES


75 Authorizes a Multnomah County casino and writes a legal monopoly into law for the benefit of one company – NO

76 Extends 15% allocation of lottery funding to parks, beaches, wildlife habitat and watershed protection – YES

Coquille City Council – Only one new and YOUNG face on the ballot Timothy F Spanberger. He has my vote and for every other position, including mayor, I will write in Dian Courtright.

Commissioner – NO incumbents!

More details on Leah Freeman case and prosecution

The World has two good pieces up, [the first reveals](#) more specifics about the process of bringing charges against Nicholas McGuffin and moving forward. 

Although McGuffin hopes to be released while he awaits trial, Frasier said he can't recall a single case in his 26 years in prosecution in which a judge released a homicide suspect on his own recognizance.

He also said a motion for a change of venue from the defense would be expected in such a case. However, he has withheld information – including Leah's cause of death – to improve prospects of gathering an impartial and fair jury.

"The more I talk about the facts – the more people learn – it becomes harder to pick a fair and impartial jury," Frasier said.

The [second article](#) also takes note of the exchange between McGuffin's mother and Cory Courtright, mother of the victim.


On Tuesday prior to McGuffin's arraignment, Courtright was waiting outside Judge Michael Gillespie's courtroom when she saw corrections officers lead McGuffin to the defendant's table. She began to shake and cry.

From behind her, Kathleen McGuffin – the defendant's mother – said, "Cry all you want, Cory, he's innocent," in front of family members and some reporters.

"Don't talk to me ever," Courtright recalled responding.

Thank goodness I am not the only person writing about or recording the arraignment to witness it. This makes three different references to the exchange besides [this blog](#) so clearly I am not alone in questioning the conduct of Kathleen McGuffin.

Charges in Leah Freeman murder case stir many emotions

Coquille is spinning with the news of the arrest, ten years  later, of Nicholas McGuffin for the murder of fifteen year old Leah Freeman. Emotions ran high today as McGuffin [plead not guilty](#) and requested a hearing to reduce the \$2M bail and possibly be let out on his own recognizance.

Cory Courtright, having kept her daughter's long cold murder case alive by sheer will these last ten years alternated back and forth between tears and relief and tears again.

Nicholas McGuffin, the former boyfriend charged with Leah's

murder, shook uncontrollably and his eyes were red with crying and he sniffled throughout the hearing.

Some members of both families cried during the proceeding.

All of these emotions displayed were natural and to be expected but the one display of emotion I can't get my head around is that of McGuffin's mother. Before entering the courtroom she spoke to Cory's back saying, "Cry all you want, Cory. Nick is innocent".

Honestly, what was that? Cory didn't indict or charge her son with murder. Why confront the grieving mother of a long dead child? Why make it personal, like it was between the two of them? What was that?

Does McGuffin blame Cory for not letting the case go cold? Does she believe Cory influenced the grand jury?

Hours later I am still chilled by that act. As pitiful as Nicholas McGuffin appeared today in court, after witnessing his mother's behavior I could almost imagine her spawn being capable of disregarding another human life enough to take it.

Having said all that I, of course, can only speculate upon how I might behave in the same situation and hope it wouldn't be the same.

**Coquille
suffering**

Public

**Works
another**

infrastructure failure UPDATE

Have zero details to report except that everyone within a block north of the court house has almost no water pressure...

Spoke with Kim in the police department and the water leaked to both reservoirs (gravity feed back?) and they are trying to build up enough pressure to allow limited usage by early this afternoon.

Leah Freeman murder close to resolution?

Gosh, let's all cross our fingers and pray for justice. Leah and her family most certainly deserve it. Read this [update at KCBY](#)


Lab results expected by the end of April could help solve the decade-old murder of 15-year-old Leah Freeman, law enforcement officials said.

Coquille Police Chief Mark Dannels on Wednesday said evidence discovered during the current investigation into the murder was sent to crime labs in the Midwest and in Oregon.

Possible break in Leah Freeman case

Press conference to be held at Coquille City Council chambers 2:30PM today!

Jayne Sue Austin memorial draws a crowd

As a testament to the impact this murder had on the friends and family of Jayme Austin and the community the Lone Pine Fire Hall in Fairview was packed to the gills and the doors opened to allow participation from outside. 

It was a moving and emotional service and afterward, as befitting the rural farm area and Jayme's upbringing riding horses and carousing in the neighborhood, the stories were earthy and funny. My sons traveled up from California and I rushed over from an event I was participating in in Cottage Grove and I learned a lot about Jayme's feisty spirit and how much her family will miss her.

To her family I hope they will hold themselves for better times. To Jayme, peace be upon you.

Jayme Sue Austin strangled to death

What we all feared, especially with the broken necklace, is that Jayme was [strangled](#). Dominick Dunne, who wrote a book about the murder of his daughter, Dominique, noted the prosecution highlighted for the jury the intense effort required by one human to strangle another. Horath would have had to maintain the pressure on Jayme's neck for six full minutes. During the trial for Dunne's killer, the prosecution set a timer and told the courtroom to be silent for six full minutes... the illustration successfully ended the defense argument the murder was an accident, or sudden crime of passion.

My heart aches for the family, the unimaginable pain of losing a loved one to another member of the family in such a vicious manner will tear them to pieces for a long time to come.

Jayme was a frequent visitor here, when my son, Chris, lived in Coquille. She last visited in September when my kids were up for my birthday. We all just feel so awful and Chris cannot believe he worked with her alleged killer, it has given him a very uncomfortable feeling.