On February 21, Michael Oaks was presented with the first Historic Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement. This award program was created in 2018 to recognize exceptional accomplishments that advance the historic preservation of our architectural and cultural heritage. The Lifetime Achievement Award is presented in recognition of an individual’s significant achievements or landmark efforts in support of historic preservation in Grants Pass.

Mr. Oaks has served on the Historical Buildings and Sites Commission, served as President of the Josephine County Historical Society, and authored numerous articles on the history of Grants Pass and Josephine County. His crowning achievement was the publication of *Artistry in Mortar & Brick: Early History of the Development of Josephine County and the City of Grants Pass from 1883-1912*. This work of love was researched and written starting in 1997 and was completed in 2006. The e-book is nearly 1,000 pages with photographs and early Sanborn Fire Maps. Much of the source material is from researching microfilm of the two early newspapers. Mr. Oaks remains active on social media sharing his knowledge and love of the history of Grants Pass and Josephine County.

### Committee to Address Housing Shortage

In 2017, the City Council created a Housing Advisory Committee to evaluate ways to help address the shortage of housing needed for people of all income levels in Grants Pass, and to make recommendations to the City Council. Through the annual strategic planning process, the Committee made several recommendations to the City Council. Council identified housing opportunities as one of their top priorities, and adopted several objectives and actions to address housing in the City’s 2018 Strategic Plan.

In March, the City conducted broad outreach to stakeholders and residents to help identify and prioritize specific barriers and solutions that would have the greatest impact to address a variety of housing needs. The outreach included interviews with people and organizations involved in the housing industry, an online survey, and a public forum. A report summarizing the feedback will be available for the Committee’s regular monthly meeting on April 20.
When a cross-connection of public and private water systems is possible, the City of Grants Pass requires the installation of a backflow prevention assembly. An example of a cross-connection is the piping between a public water system or the consumer’s potable water system and an auxiliary water system, source cooling system, or irrigation system.

Backflow can occur when a cross-connection is created and a pressure reversal (either backsiphonage or backpressure) takes place in the water piping. Lawn irrigation systems have the potential to be a backflow hazard. Fertilizers or pesticides could be drawn into your water supply plumbing from the sprinkler nozzles of the lawn irrigation system.

In addition to lawn irrigation systems, there are other common backflow hazards. For example, a garden hose submerged in a bucket of soapy water or other cleaning compounds, in a laundry basin, or in a swimming pool could backsiphon into your water supply.

Backflow prevention assemblies have internal seals, springs and moving parts that can deteriorate over time. Therefore, the law requires these assemblies be tested and passed annually by a certified backflow tester. The City operates a residential backflow testing program for single family residences and provides a reminder letter with a list of certified testers to commercial and multi-family properties.

The City’s backflow contractor tests these assemblies across the city. The tentative schedule is:

Northwest: March, April, and May
Northeast: May and June
Southeast: June, July, August, and September
Southwest: August, September, and October

If you need to make an appointment for the testing, please call Phil or Cynthia at S.O. Backflow Techs at (541)472-0280. For all other questions, please call the Public Works Department at 541-450-6115.

In 2015, the City of Grants Pass became a direct recipient of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and developed its first 5-year “Consolidated Plan” that guides the use of these funds. The City now receives a direct annual allocation of CDBG funds. Each year, the City must develop and adopt an Annual Action Plan to fund specific projects and activities for that year. These must be consistent with the priorities in the 5-year plan.

Before developing the annual plan, the City starts by holding meetings to obtain public input. This input is helpful in preparing the annual plan. Once the draft plan has been developed, there will be a public comment period and a public hearing before the plan is finalized and adopted later this year.

The City is holding the following meetings in April to obtain public input on these issues:

- **What are the most important needs and priorities for CDBG funds for 2018-2019?**
- **How did CDBG 2017-2018 activities address the needs of the City’s lower-income households?**

**Public Workshop and Open House**
Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.
Grants Pass City Council Chambers
101 NW A Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526

**City Council Public Hearing**
Wednesday, April 18, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.
Grants Pass City Council Chambers
101 NW A Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526

For more information, please see the CDBG page on the City's website at www.grantspassoregon.gov/CDBG
Volunteer of the Year

This award is given to an individual for making a broad and substantial impact on our community. It recognizes an individual’s leadership in promoting nonprofit causes and organizations. The nominee’s activities should be centered in the Grants Pass area. Recognition will be given for leadership and performance for work above and beyond his/her paid profession. The nominee should have participated in a broad scope of activities. Applications will be evaluated in the following areas: Demonstrating exceptional commitment to volunteerism by helping with a special project or ongoing activities; demonstrating exemplary leadership, creativity, cooperation and hard work in their service to others; and demonstrating outstanding contribution to the community through their volunteer service.

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Volunteer Group of the Year

This award recognizes a community group that has made a significant contribution to the overall health and livability of the City of Grants Pass. The winning group makes a significant impact by enabling and empowering individuals to improve their knowledge and skills toward greater quality of life; demonstrating exceptional commitment to volunteerism by helping with a special project or ongoing activities; demonstrating exemplary leadership, creativity, cooperation and hard work in their service to others; and demonstrating outstanding contribution to the community through their volunteer service.

Mayor’s Future Citizen of the Year Scholarship Program

This program is designed to recognize, honor and encourage community contributions and excellence in the young people of Grants Pass. Students are judged on the following initiatives: community, leadership, academic and career. High school seniors are invited to participate in this program. Although considered, academics are secondary to the student’s involvement in serving the Grants Pass community. The City knows there are several ways in which youth are involved in improving both themselves and the City of Grants Pass. The Future Citizen will be acknowledged with the award of a $500 scholarship.

Mayor Fowler is currently accepting nominations for these awards. Please contact the City Recorder at 541-450-6010 to get an application or visit our website at http://www.grantspassoregon.gov/329/Message-From-the-Mayor.
City Looking for a Few Great Seasonal Workers

Each year the City of Grants Pass hires temporary, seasonal employees to help accomplish the many extra tasks that the summer season brings. Seasonal employees are vital to our community during the peak travel and tourism season. They learn skills, contribute to the community, and fill a need in our Water Filtration, Streets, Water Distribution, Wastewater Collections, Property Management and Parks divisions, as well as in our Finance Department. Seasonal employees work alongside regular employees and learn basic meter service, curb painting, assist with sign replacement, trim overgrown shrubs and bushes, assist with park and building maintenance and learn the basic operations of the Water Filtration Plant. Seasonal employees learn to operate a variety of hand-held tools and, when appropriate, powered equipment. Assignments vary, so some seasonal employees may work in an office environment while others soak up the sunshine out in the community.

Positions involving the operation of a motor vehicle require employees be 18 years of age and possess a valid driver’s license.

The City’s seasonal recruitment process is currently open and will close on Friday, April 27, 2018. Candidates can apply online at www.grantspassoregon.gov. If you have any questions regarding the recruitment or need any assistance applying, please call Human Resources at 541-450-6050.

City Councilors are interested in your opinion. They would like you to join them at one of their sessions of Coffee Talk. Up to two City Councilors are available every Friday morning to answer questions or address concerns. Visit them at Rogue Roasters, 610 SW 6th Street, from 7:45 to 9:00 am.