

CASO & Redwood Regions member Bob Lindberg's Pontiac *stars* in a "50's" celebration.



Grants Pass, OR. has a Back To The 50's celebration every year and they start it off with a concert in the park on a Tuesday of the week it all takes place. We had a Band come down from Portland, OR this year that played 50's & early 60's music. Two convertibles were used to transport the band members from behind the stage to the front while going through the crowd. I was the lead car with my 1955 Pontiac convertible and was lucky enough to be on the front page of our local newspaper 2 days in a row.

Thursday we have a poker run to different 50's style diners and local old car parts suppliers, Friday they have a free old car show at a parking lot and at night they line up about 60 cars on the main street of Old Town Grants Pass. Saturday is the main car show in a beautiful park on the river and at night we have a closed street cruise for 2 hr's.

Bob Lindberg

Weather

No relief in sight

The 90s may seem cool after tempers have cooled to triple digits over the week, but it's not over. See Page 2A.



Overnight low Thursday's high **61** **89**

What's inside



Critter care

A national grant puts science to work for a group of teen girls in College Dreams this summer.

UNDER 21 / Page 9A

Abdul out?

Paula Abdul may not be on the "American Idol" judging panel when a new round of hookups takes out for the fourth season.



ENTERTAINMENT / Page 10A

It's a wrap

The Grants Pass Nuggets' season ends at 11-10 and Tuesday night after the 11-10-08 completed a two-game American Legion playoff sweep of the Nuggets.

SPORTS / Page 1B

What's online

Four new videos

We've got four new videos for Wednesday, including the Nuggets' season-ending loss to Medford, a look at the start of Back to the '50s, a trip to the Jackson County Fair, and a look at some girls gaining work experience at Wildlife Images. See all of them and more at

thedailycourier.com

A look ahead



Feeling Moody

Debbie Edge, the last original Moody Blues member, talks about the band and its current four, which brings the group to the Rogue Valley this weekend.

THURSDAY

Where to find it

Arts	4B
Classified	B-10B1
Comics	4B
Entertainment	10A

Great hopes for Obama fade to reality

By Nancy Benac and Trevor Tompkins
Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON — That was fast. The hope and optimism that swayed over the country in the opening months of Barack Obama's presidency are giving way to harsh realism. An Associated Press-GFK Poll shows that a majority of Americans are back to thinking that the country is headed in the wrong direction after a fleeting period in which more thought it was on the right track. Obama still has a solid 60 percent approval rating — better than Bill Clinton and about even with George W. Bush six months into their presidencies — but there are growing doubts about whether he can succeed at some of the biggest issues on his to-do list. And there is a growing sense that he is trying to tackle too much too soon.

President meets the press

■ **WHAT:** Presidential news conference
■ **WHEN:** 2 p.m. Wednesday
■ **TELEVISION:** ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Comedy, Discovery, Fox News Channel, MSNBC and PBS
■ **HOT TOPIC:** President Obama is expected to push Congress to act on his plan to overhaul the nation's health care system.



The number of people who think Obama can improve the economy is down a sobering 18 percentage points from the euphoric days just before his inauguration. Dims for expectations about creating jobs. Also down significantly: the share of people who think he can reduce the deficit, remove troops from Iraq and improve respect for the U.S. around the world, all slipping 15 points.

On overhauling health care, a signature issue for Obama, hopes for success are down a lesser 6 points. Add it all up, and does it mean Obama has lost his momentum? Has you-see-can married into marriage? "I think it's just reality," said Nancy Smith, a 61-year-old public relations worker from Los Angeles. "He's not Superman, right?"

Turn to OBAMA, Page 2A

Back to the '50s arrives in style



BOOMER BAND/DAVID COOPER

Members of the Boomer Band arrive in style, above, at concerts in the Park Tuesday evening at Riverside Park. The concert marked the kickoff of a week's worth of activities as part of the Back to the '50s celebration in Grants Pass. Below, Tina Hoyt of The Boomer Band performs at the concert.

Festivities run through Saturday

Hundreds of people turned out to hear the Boomer Band Tuesday night at Riverside Park, as this week's installment of Concerts in the Park kicked off the annual Back to the '50s celebration.

Classic cars could be seen throughout the parking lot and dancers in joodle skirts gathered in front of the stage, singing hundreds of other concertgoers who enjoyed the music without the benefit of 50s-style costumes.

The festivities continue through Saturday and include:

Thursday

- 6 to 8 p.m. Dinner Night and Piker Run at Jimmy's Classic Drive-in, Seneca, with Deke Reproductions, He's Corvette Bar and Grill, Riverfront Auto and Dairy Queen's south. Banding at the Town Center Plaza. Participating cars start at any location.

Friday

- 7 to 8 p.m. Back to the Music. Featuring "Thirty Years of Art."
- 8 to 10 p.m. Classic Car Parade in Greenway. Classic parking lot downtown.
- 10 to 11 p.m. Live concert social at Grants



Pass Historical Society, Fifth and J streets.

- 5:30 to 10 p.m. Classic Car Line-up, with special parking on Fourth and G streets.

- 7 p.m. "Lost in the '80s," will feature a Best Dressed '80s competition, a Jukebox competition and a dance. Also, the movie "Jailhouse Rock" will be shown. Events at Town Center Plaza parking lot. Sponsored by Southern Oregon Audio-Visual and Jimmy's Classic Drive In.

Saturday

- 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Back to the Music, featuring "Thirty Years of Art."
- 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Classic Car Show, hosted by Rogue Valley Classic Chevy Club at Riverside Park.
- 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free children's games in the Daily Center parking lot at Seventh and J streets, inflatable games and a coloring wall. Sponsored by Rogue Valley Credit Union, Logan Design, Dutch Bros. Coffee, Active Club and Northwest Insurance Agency.
- 7 to 11 p.m. Classic Car Cruise in downtown Grants Pass, on South and Seventh streets.
- 8 p.m. Free Concert featuring James Rock & Neil Logsdon at Town Center Plaza.

Police seek boyfriend in slaying of woman

By Stacy D. Stumbo

of the Daily Courier

WOLF CREEK — Josephine County Sheriff's deputies are looking for a man who they think killed his 29-year-old girlfriend, Monday.

Joseph O'Dell, 34, dropped off his unconscious girlfriend at a home in the 7000 block of Lower Grove Creek Road and left before emergency crews arrived, according to Sheriff's Office reports.

Investigators were told Caitlyn C. Strasser drowned in Grove Creek about five miles from the Lower Grove Creek Road home, but an autopsy performed by a state medical examiner Tuesday determined the cause of death to be homicide.

"This is a terrible situation," Sheriff Gil Gilbertson said. "We don't know how far he's gone. He may still be in Wolf Creek. We're hoping that some of his friends will tell us if they see him, or that he'll come in and tell us his side of things."

Sheriff's detective Sgt. Ken Selig said investigators have gone door-to-door, but encountered people unwilling to help.

O'Dell, also known as "A-Jay," and "Little Joe," is a longtime resident of Wolf Creek with no known address. He and Strasser were involved in a year-and-a-half-long relationship, during which it is alleged O'Dell abused her, according to Gilbertson.

O'Dell is wanted on a statewide felony warrant for failing to appear in court on an original charge of possession of methamphetamine and unlawful use of a motor vehicle. Gilbertson said it is unclear if meth played a role in the homicide.

O'Dell is an stranger to personal tragedy. In 1998, his mother, Vera O'Dell, 64, was found dead near the railroad tracks on Lower Wolf Creek Road. Five years earlier, her estranged husband, Joseph O'Dell's father, was shot to death after breaking into Vera O'Dell's home.

Anthony Nordstrom of Wolf Creek is an acquaintance of O'Dell. He saw him several times last week and didn't notice anything odd about his behavior.

"Little Joe has always been a mild-mannered guy," Nordstrom said. "I've never known him to be violent. People can change, I guess, but him murdering his girlfriend doesn't fit with me."

O'Dell is 5 foot 2, 2 inches tall and weighing 130 pounds. He has brown eyes and brown hair. Anyone with information about his whereabouts is asked to call the Sheriff's Office at 874-0200.

Recall of five city councilors moving closer to ballot

Debbie Edge, the last original Moody Blues member, talks about the band and its current four, which brings the group to the Rogue Valley this weekend.

and Ward Wren on July 2.

"Recall of historic checks

50 cents

Weather

Even hotter

Temperatures will be in the mid-90s on Friday before hitting triple digits over the weekend. See Page 2A.



Overnight low
Friday's high

60
96

What's inside

Play time

Kiwanis volunteers are finishing the installation of a new play structure at Whitehorse Park.



Page 5A

Watering well

Many factors go into keeping plants healthy in a heat wave, but when the thermometer rises, having a good watering strategy is imperative for gardeners.

Page 7A

ee 'em up

Grants
s Golf
is
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Darcy Schmieder is way too young to remember the '50s, but she still goes all out for the annual Back to the '50s celebration in Grants Pass.

Back to the '50s a family affair

Schmieders selected to help run local celebration

Obama: Health care reform key to recovery

By Ben Feller
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama said Wednesday night that Medicare and Medicaid are the "biggest driving force behind" massive federal deficits, and must be tamed as part of any health care legislation.

At a prime-time news conference marking six months in office, Obama said health care legislation was key to a strong economic recovery, and he added, "If we do not control these costs, we will not be able to control our deficit."

The president noted he took office with the economy in the worst recession in half a century. "As a result of the action we took in those first weeks, we have been able to pull our economy back from the brink," he said.

The president stepped to the microphone as Congress labored over his call for sweeping legislation to expand health care to millions who lack it, as well as control the costs of medical care generally.

In his opening statement, he stressed the second of those two goals.

"In the past eight years,



OBAMA