

Here to help

Nonprofit spotlight




BOB WILLIAMS / THE CHRONICLE

Sneakers, prom dresses, and Dolly Parton
 SPRINGFIELD — Lance Casey and Jess Coonfare are winners of the Springfield Twin Rivers Rotary Prom 5K held over the weekend at Island Park. Proceeds benefit the Springfield Young Readers Dolly Parton Imagination Library Program, and a life-sized cut out of Parton was on display as a photo prop at the event. Below, participants Paul and Brandy Selby pose with a cardboard Parton. Her literacy project provides a free book every month for all Springfield children from birth to age 5. More photos: Chronicle1909.com



Art talk about the Cottage Grove Art Walk

COTTAGE GROVE — With the sun finally shining but the summer heat not fully bearing down on us, it is the most inviting time of year to go to the Cottage Grove Art Walk on the last Friday of the month. All one needs to do is look for the flags in Historic Downtown to find the participating venues.

Laurel Gravem Alvarez is displaying original watercolor paintings as well as reproductions and cards at The Crafty Mercantile. Her intricate details and vivid colors capture the energy of the birds she paints. The gold leaf in her works make her paintings feel like they are glowing.

“My father was a falconer and amateur (but serious) ornithologist. We had aviaries filled with exotic finches and falcons ... He would bring home abandoned baby birds that we’d keep in heated aviaries and hand-feed around the clock until ready to release,” she said. “This was a time before wildlife rescues.”

Alvarez has participated in art leagues and galleries in her previous locations of North Bend and South Texas. Now that she has returned to Cottage Grove, she said she is “enjoying exploring all the art-friendly events and venues in this area as well as meeting local artists and patrons.”

Recently, Alvarez had a show at Opal Art Center and will also be showing at Apple Pie Antiques in August. She is a member of the Cottage Grove Art Collective and will be participating in its Paint a Suitcase event at Cottage Grove Bohemian Mining Days in July. She is a resident artist at the New Zone Art Gallery and belongs to the Maude Kerns Art Center in Eugene.

Jasen Szczepaniak has his first official show at Opal Center for Arts and Education, where he will be selling photos on canvas, framed prints, photos on metal, and cards.

“I find inspiration in a flower or a butterfly, the way light hits a building, how the sun shimmers on the river. But my biggest inspiration is the beauty of the Pacific Northwest,” Szczepaniak said.

This can be seen in the brilliant colors and evocative framing of his photographs of a rainbow, sunset, or earthy woodland scenes. These photographs feel like home while simultaneously making the viewer feel like they want to get up and go to these places.

Szczepaniak started photography as a hobby, taking photos of local attractions, and posting them on the Facebook page, “What’s Going on in Cottage Grove.” He received such positive responses from local businesses like Coast Fork Brewing, Gift Basket, Kalapuya Books, Opal Center for the Arts, and Axe and Fiddle, that he asked if he could sell his art in their stores. Now he is showing at events like Art in the Vineyard.

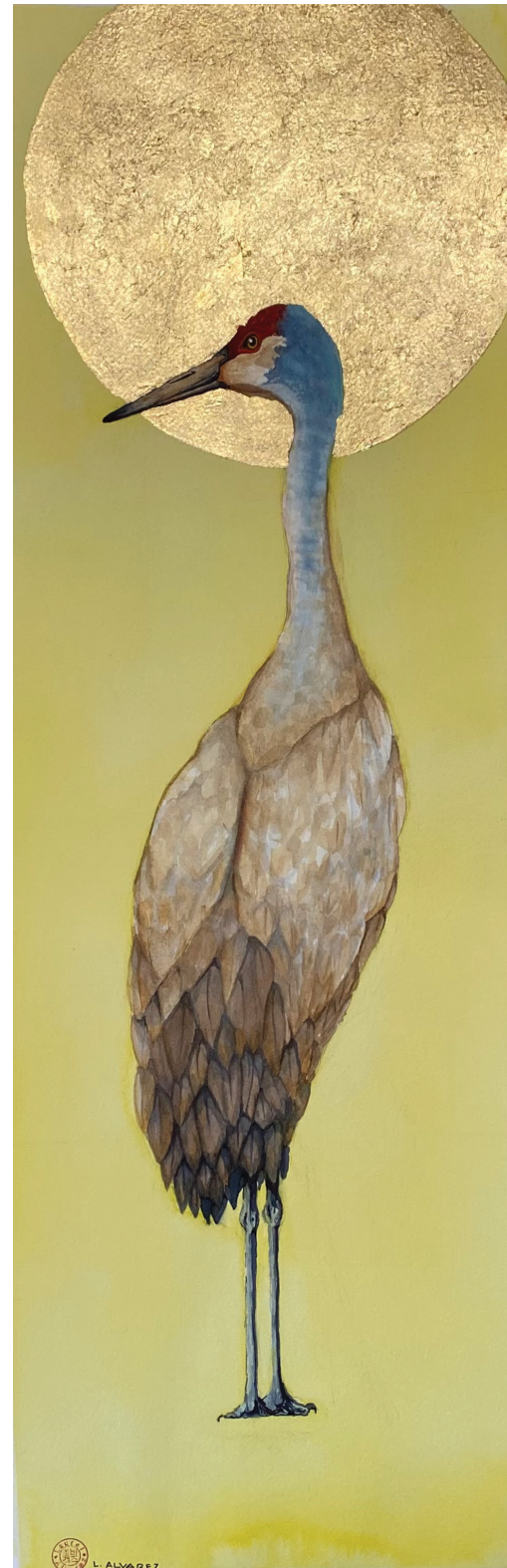
The artist is hopeful he will be able to get out and take more photos soon. His mobility is affected by osteoarthritis. For that reason, his artwork is his only source of income. The Art Walk is a place that helps artists like Szczepaniak make a living.

Apple Pie Antiques is showcasing the still-life paintings of Melissa Sikes. This artist loves painting on wood panels because the wood creates another textural element in the paintings. Acrylics allow her to work quickly and rework things when necessary.

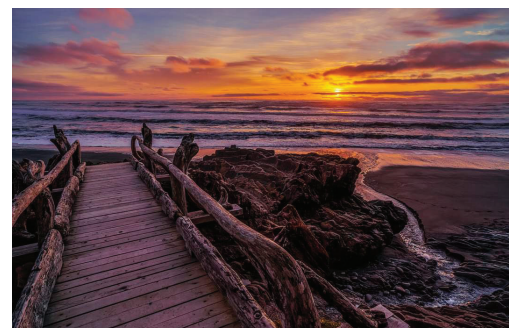
Alix Mosier is displaying paintings at The Bookmine. Other participating venues for May are 541 Exchange, Flying Monkeys, Ambrose Collectibles, Kalapuya Books, The Brewstation, T&K Creations, and Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce. Buskers include William Stotts on saxophone and Ron Thomas singing and guitar.



Sarina Dorie
Springfield arts



“Sand-crane,” watercolor and gold leaf by Laurel Alvarez.



“Tranquility,” photograph of the Northern California coast by Jasen Szczepaniak.

IFYOUGO:
WHAT: Cottage Grove Art Walk
WHEN: Friday, May 26, 6-8 p.m.
WHERE: Downtown Cottage Grove
MORE INFO: Operates under Another Way Enterprises, a nonprofit organization that supports local community projects. The CG Art Walk Committee is composed of a group of volunteers who connect with local artists and businesses, organize entertainment and events, and write grants.



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