

New school takes lessons from the great outdoors

'Nature's Mystery' plans open house this weekend

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

A Cottage Grove native has come home to teach the lessons he's learned in the great outdoors.

Nathaniel Nordin-Tuininga has followed a meandering path that's led him back to his hometown, and he's hoping that nature can be both playground and teacher at his new endeavor, Nature's Mystery Forest Kindergarten.

The program, Nordin-Tuininga explains, is "based on the time-tested and highly successful European models of outdoor education, where they have demonstrated the positive correlation between regular exposure to prolonged outdoor exploration and enhanced cognitive development, balanced emotional states, physical health, improved concentration and a general sense of well-being." The school will operate at an

area farm/homestead and is an all-day program designed to supplement other early childhood education.

"The vast majority of our time is spent exploring the forest, meadow, creek and farm surrounding the farmhouse," Nordin-Tuininga wrote. "Each day is set to follow a consistent rhythm that helps to keep the children feeling safe and secure."

The full-day program typically begins with a morning circle, followed by chores for adults and free play for kids. Snacks, nap and quiet time follow, and afternoons offer a chance to work in the garden, care for animals and for more exploration.

"We close our day together in gratitude for one another and all beings with whom we share our home," Nordin-Tuininga wrote.

In addition to the kindergarten program for ages 3-6, Nature's Mystery will also offer a program aimed at home-schooled children that offers one day a week to visit local forests, farms, permaculture homesteads, intentional communities and project sites.



courtesy photo

Nathaniel Nordin-Tuininga has started a school based on outdoor exploration designed to supplement other early childhood education programs.

"During this time we will have many opportunities to learn about the native flora and fauna and the practices of the indigenous people of this land," according to the school's brochure.

For Nordin-Tuininga, the school is the culmination of a journey that brought him from the University of Oregon, to Lost Valley Educational Center, where he made many of the connections that led to the school's founding, and to the Amazon, where his studies and interactions with native peoples fostered a desire to help enlighten children back home.

"The children there were very

interested in what I had to offer," he said. "I was teaching them what I was learning from their elders, and it seemed to make more sense to pass on the knowledge to kids in Oregon."

Nordin-Tuininga later started an after-school program in the area and a camp in Eugene, and he said he already has a few kids signed up for Nature's Mystery, which runs Fridays from 8:30-12:30 for children ages 3-6. The school is currently seeking more enrollees and volunteers; an open house is scheduled for Sept. 18, and those interested can call 541-521-8658 or visit naturesmystery.org for more information.

Passport to History winners announced

Cottage Grove's 2015 Passport to History – billed as a "fun, free, history-based activity aimed at encouraging youth age 17 and younger and their families to visit local history organizations" – recently announced its six prize winners drawn from the pool of participants who filled their passports by successfully completing history related activities at each of the five participating history organizations in Cottage Grove

this summer.

Piper Bomall won the grand prize of a tablet. Cheyenne Jensen and Steven Watts-Silcott each won Riverpacks – backpacks custom equipped for a trip to the river – and Tyeson Williams, Zoe Goings and Paige Watts each won third place prizes of \$15 gift certificates from Delight.

Passport to History activities included a scavenger hunt at the Bohemia Gold Mining Museum

and learning about family history at the Cottage Grove Genealogical Society.

Nearly 400 Passports to History were distributed to Cottage Grove area youth. The project was supported by a grant from the Cottage Grove Community Foundation, contributions from the Cottage Grove Museum, the Cottage Grove Historical Society, the Cottage Grove Genealogical Society, the Cottage Grove Library and the Bohemia

Gold Mining Museum, and sponsored by Lane Community College, Opal Center/Storybook Theatre, Apple Pie Antiques and Delight.

Those seeking more information on the program may contact Cottage Grove Historical Society President Holli Turpin at 541-520-1233 or turpinhol@gmail.com, or Tara Sue Hughart, Cottage Grove Museum Coordinator, at 541-968-2254 or tara-suehughart99@gmail.com.

LORANE COUNTRY NEWS

BY LIL THOMPSON
For the Sentinel

All in all, the Lorane Celebration 2015 was enjoyable for everyone. The outdoor movie was also a hit.

Mark your calendars for Friday, Sept. 25 for the return of the spaghetti dinner and bingo nights at Lorane Grange with dinner at 5:30 p.m. Due to Duck and Beaver games, it is Friday night if there is a Saturday game

through November. Anyone interested in rug hooking classes can contact either BJ or Lisa Livelybrooks. They had a beautiful display of hooking at the Grange during Saturday's crafts/sales.

Rural Arts Council Movie Nights return to Lorane Grange on Saturday, Oct. 10 with soup dinner at 6 p.m. Lorane Grange

will be serving.

Be sure to come out and enjoy the coffee hour at the Rebekah Lodge every Wednesday morning with coffee, muffins and great visiting! Again, be aware of students waiting for school buses and the buses stopping. We have been experiencing some early-morning fog, and daylight is growing shorter.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Help with divorce

DivorceCare divorce recovery seminar and support group meets at the Sixth and Gibbs Church of Christ in Cottage Grove each Sunday night starting on Sept. 20, and running through Dec.

20 from 6-8 p.m. The church is located at 195 N. 6th St. DivorceCare features nationally recognized experts on divorce and recovery topics. Seminar sessions include "Facing My Anger", "Facing My Loneliness," "New Relationships," "KidCare" and "Forgiveness".

Participants are encouraged to join at any time during the class. For more information, call Andrew Schrenk at 541-214-1288.

Cub Scout Launch Party

Pack 140 invites all first through fifth-grade boys to join a Rocket Launching Party at Bohemia Park on Wednesday, Sept. 23 at 6:30 p.m. The boys and their parents will have an opportunity to learn about the Cub Scout program and launch their own rockets made from two-liter soda bottles. For information and to RSVP, contact Christie Johnson at christiewel-lerjohnson@gmail.com.

Science Pub

On Tuesday, Sept. 22, the Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council welcomes Marjory House, Agronomist and Soil Nutrition Consultant, to Cottage Grove for its Science Pub presentation. Her talk, entitled "Soil Nutrition: How It Relates to Your Food and Health," will share resources on how to achieve sustainable agriculture for a prosperous future on both an individual and community level.

The Watershed Council hosts

a free monthly public meeting series called the Coast Fork Science Pub on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 5-7 p.m. at the Axe & Fiddle, 657 E. Main Street in Cottage Grove.

912 Project

State Representative Cedric Hayden of House District 7 will be the guest speaker at the next meeting of the Cottage Grove 912 Project on Monday, Sept. 21 at 6:30 p.m. at Stacy's Covered Bridge Restaurant, 401 E. Main St. Hayden will speak about this year's legislative session.

The meeting is open to the public and there is no cost to attend.

Auditions for "The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe"

Cottage Theatre will hold auditions for The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe on Sunday, Oct. 4 and Monday, Oct. 5 at 6:30 p.m. This play, dramatized by Joseph Robinette from the story by C.S. Lewis, will be the final offering in Cottage Theatre's 2015 season. Auditions will be held at the theatre, located at 700 Village Drive in Cottage Grove.

This magical dramatization of the C.S. Lewis classic faithfully recreates the adventures of four children who wander, quite by accident, from an old wardrobe into the exciting and unusual land of Narnia. A large cast of approximately 30 actors is needed for this production, directed by Kory Weimer. There are two roles for children ages 9 to 12; the remaining roles are for teens and adults ages 14 to 70. "The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe" will run for 11 performances from Dec. 4-20.

These auditions are open to any interested actors, and no appointment is necessary.

Additional details are available at www.cottagetheatre.org or by calling Cottage Theatre at 541-942-8001.

St. Vinny golf tournament

A golf fundraiser for St. Vincent de Paul will be held at Middlefield Golf Course on Sunday, Sept. 27 at 1 p.m. The local Knights of Columbus is putting on this event for \$25 per person, which includes a barbecue lunch. Be there prior to 1 p.m. to register. For more information, go to: <http://kofcknights.org/CouncilSite/event-detail.asp?ID=85749&CNO=3154&F ROM=U>

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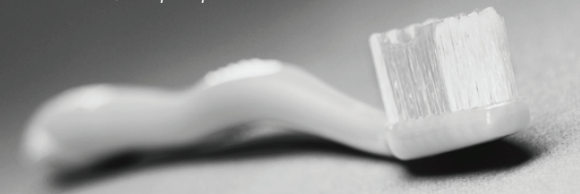


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