



# Cottage Grove Sentinel

SOUTH LANE AND DOUGLAS COUNTY'S MOST AWARD-WINNING NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1889



SPORTS

Lions' track teams take home back-to-back championships

**PayneWest**  
INSURANCE

PERSONAL • BUSINESS • BENEFITS • SURETY  
(541) 942-0555  
PayneWest.com/Cottage-Grove



WED 62°/41° For a complete six-day forecast turn to page 5.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2017

FACEBOOK.COM/CGSENTINEL • TWITTER.COM/CGSENTINEL

CGSENTINEL.COM

## BACKSTAGE LEGACY



By Caitlyn May  
cmay@cg sentinel.com

On April 23, patrons of Backstage Bakery who arrived to sip coffee over conversation, chat with the regulars who buoy between ambassadors and food critics, and stop by the neighboring book nook had a change of plans. A sign greeted anyone tugging on the normally wide-open screen door. "Backstage Bakery will be closed." Alex and his younger brother couldn't report to work to open the door by 6 a.m. per usual. They were saying goodbye to their mother.

"She ended up getting a blood infection and they wanted her to get this crazy heart surgery," Alex said of his mother's illness. "She ended up refusing the surgery and she came home."

Alex and his siblings got three days with

their mother that he describes as "amazing" and now, he'll fill the rest of the days by honoring her memory.

Nancy Affinito-Semenov came to Cottage Grove in 2006. When she first started cooking, the smell of her cinnamon rolls would fill the PeaceHealth medical center in town. It was just a hole in the wall cafe but it had Grovers turning out in crowds.

"People were coming to the hospital for breakfast and lunch, it was crazy," Alex said.

Nancy was making a profit at the hospital but when the opportunity to partner with another resident sprang up, she took it.

"Our family moved down here and she taught us how to cook," Alex said. "And this space, we're so lucky to have this space."

The space sits just around the corner of Main St. and 7th. Nancy's bakery made its

home in the shadow of the Axe and Fiddle and to the side of Kalapuya Books. The breakfast crowd mingles with early book browsers and by lunch, streams of people flow between the shared hallway grabbing water, menus, books and conversation before settling at one of the booths or tables that are almost constantly full.

It's been that way since Nancy first opened the doors. Partly, Alex says, because of who his mother was. She moved from state to state. After marrying her second husband, she one day just started speaking Russian as if fully taking on her new Semenov name. She cooked and taught and laughed and loved Cottage Grove.

And on April 25, Alex realized the culmination of all of those hours and years Nancy put into teaching him how to make the cinnamon rolls fill the bakery like they filled

Please see **BAKERY PG A9**

## Pool finances dominate city budget talks

By Caitlyn May  
cmay@cg sentinel.com

"It'd be nice to bring in some federal people and say, 'Watch this, this is how you do it,'" Cottage Grove City Manager Richard Meyers said in opening the 2017-2018 budget meeting on May 9. The city of Cottage Grove's budget committee approved a balanced after a marathon three-hour meeting but it wasn't without input from the community on the financial state and future of the Warren H. Daugherty Aquatic Center.

The city routinely submits \$50,000 to the operation of the pool but after the facility's manager Carrie McCasline addressed the city council earlier this month, residents learned that the pool has been depleting its reserve funds to continue paying the bills.

However, councilman Jake Boone noted that the \$50,000 the city gave to the pool had initially began as a "temporary" funding and while he understood the pool's purpose in the community, said the city may need to look into rolling back the payment in the future after receiving nearly one-quarter of a million dollars from the city over the years.

The notion came after McCasline informed present residents and the budget committee that if the city were to halt the \$50,000 pay-

Please see **POOL PG A9**

## UO's tuition hike rejected by state

By Caitlyn May  
cmay@cg sentinel.com

The University of Oregon's Board of Trustees voted in favor of increasing in-state tuition by 10.6 percent at the start of 2017. This week, the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission said not so fast.

The commission rejected the hike as well as Portland State University's plan to hike its student tuition as well.

Prior to the denial, the University of Oregon had announced its intention to cut \$8.5 million from the budget. The latest denial of funds could lead to more serious cuts for the university.

University of Oregon President Michael Schill released a statement to the university community on the decision to deny UO's

Please see **TUITION PG A8**

## Kennedy seniors prep for graduation

Hayden Walker details future plans



Please see **KENNEDY PG A9**

### COMMUNITY

#### Drain baseball

Drain welcomes the 1958 Black Sox back to town. **PAGE A10**



### COMMUNITY

#### Helmets for kids

The Rotary Club donates helmets to Lincoln Middle School. **PAGE A3**

### INDEX

- Calendar ..... B11
- Channel Guide ..... B5
- Classifieds ..... B7
- Obituaries ..... A2
- Opinion ..... A4
- Sports ..... B1

cgnews@cg sentinel.com  
(541) 942-3325 ph • (541) 942-3328 fax  
P.O. Box 35, Cottage Grove, OR 97424  
Corner of Sixth and Whiteaker, Cottage Grove

VOLUME 129 • NUMBER 44



**Coffee with the Editor**  
**Every Tuesday 12 pm**  
**@ Backstage Bakery**  
**Come chat about the community!**

