

Cottage Theatre gears up for 2018 season

By Caitlyn May
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Every year, Cottage Theatre plays a game with the community in an effort to keep a secret. Last year, it was a guessing game of hats. A prior year saw a game of scrabble. It happens in August, just a few months prior to when decisions about casting and costumes have to be made. Just before volunteer organizers get down to organizing and weeks before show scheduling takes place. All of these activities involve volunteers, cast, crew and

people in general. People, who may or may not be able to keep a secret and so, the theatre invites sponsors and donors to the theatre after hours for a cocktail hour and a game so they can be the first in the community to find out what shows are on tap for the following season.

"We work on a calendar year, not a school year," said Susan Goes, executive director of the Cottage Theatre who said season ticket renewals begin on October 1 and it's helpful if theater-goers know what shows they're buying tickets for, hence

the early announcement last Wednesday.

The 2018 season will kick-off on February 2 with "Noises Off." "It's a farce within a farce," Goes said. The plot has a troupe of actors backstage handling one crisis of stage after another. It's set to run until February 18.

From April 6 through April 29, contemporary theatre lovers will be happy to know, Elle is coming to town. Cottage Theatre will put on "Legally Blonde: the Musical."

For the more traditional the-

atre lovers, the season's third show, Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" delivers. "It's a still relevant drama I wish wasn't still relevant," Goes said. A traditional assignment in high school, "The Crucible" focuses on the Salem witch trials and the accusations and betrayals that came along with it. It will run June 8 through June 24.

August will see the world premiere of "Treehouse," the winner of the American Association of Community Theatre's contest. It was chosen from 300 entries that were eventually

whittled down to six winning plays. The play, written by Joe Musso of Alabama, focuses on 17-year-old Johnny between his junior and senior year of high school when he suddenly exclaims he has the mind of a 53 year old, turns around his grades and develops a love of the Bard. "It's one of those plays where the plot unfolding is part of the fun," Goes said.

Following "Treehouse," musical lovers will get another shot to see a production in Cottage Grove when the theatre puts on "Shrek: the musical." A family

friendly show, Goes describes the Pixar adaptation as full of bright colors and fun. It begins October 5 through the 28.

Lastly, Cottage Theatre will put on "The Fantasticks" a 1960 musical classic beginning November 30 and running through December 16.

The formula for this year follows that of years passed: three musicals, three straight plays.

For more information, or to purchase tickets for the season, please contact the Cottage Theatre at (541) 942-8801 or visit them at cottagetheatre.org.

Airport

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Community leaders gathered on Tuesday, August 16 to open the airport welcome center.

three years and eight months later," said Nadine.

While there is a bathroom and a place for pilots to relax after a flight, Nadine sees the building, that is replacing the outhouse that once stood in its place as a gateway for pilots to come and explore the city of Cottage Grove.

"Pilots fly to eat, play and stay," said Nadine. "I'm excited for the people to come in and experience Cottage Grove. Cottage Grove has a lot to offer aviation."

Travis Palmer, the executive director of the Cottage Grove Area Chamber of Commerce, believes that getting pilots to land in town will have a significant economic impact.

"Let me run through a scenario: a pilot chooses to come to Cottage Grove. They fly in, they buy gas, there's a gas tax, they stay at a hotel, often, because they'll make an overnight out of it. So that's a room tax for Cottage Grove.

"They'll go into town and shop and go to restaurants, there's an immediate economic impact from that, and then they go back and tell their friends. We have events that are being hosted here now because we have better facilities to welcome them. It's just full circle," said Palmer.

Palmer is excited about the opportunities that this will bring and about its historic nature. This is the first time in Oregon that a community has raised the entirety of the money for a building like this. Another group of people that are excited about the opportunities are those from Travel Lane County. Natalie Inouye, the Vice President of tourism marketing at the organization is excited for what is to come.

"Aviation tourism is really important to us and it is a county wide thing. But what they've done here is really special," said Inouye. She noted that she thinks that this can become not just a place to enjoy a "\$100 dollar lunch." This is a common phrase in the aviation community that is when a pilot flies to a city for lunch but does not stay and so they are paying for the gas and the meal.

"That's a nice way to introduce somebody to your community but it's not really helping the economy in the same way as when they are flying in and staying for awhile and that's what we want," she said.

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