

# Opal Center stages new play



The king oversees his moat during a dress rehearsal for Opal's latest play.

By Caitlyn May  
cmay@cgsentinel.com

They built a boat, will it float? That's a question audiences will have to answer after seeing Opal Center's latest show, "The King Who Wanted a Boat."

The question, the main line of chorus in the "Whale Boat Launch Song" strikes at the

## Guns Continued from A1

at Cottage Grove High School (CGHS). His classroom is decorated with student work, family photos and camera tripods. It also has a box near the door that cannot be mistaken for anything other than an in-case-of-emergency tool. It's a night lock—paid for as a part of a \$35 million bond aimed at improving safety and security around the district—and in the case of an active shooter, will hold the door in place, giving Bridgens time to draw on the training he and 70 other teachers and staff at CGHS received from local law enforcement.

It's called ALICE (Alert Locate Inform Counter Evacuate) training. Teachers and administrators learn how to secure their doors, create barricades and fight back if necessary. They learn that the injuries sustained from jumping from a window are less severe than the dangers of being in a classroom with an armed individual. They learn how to look around their classrooms and assess what objects could be used as weapons if confronted by a shooter.

South Lane School District held its last training on Jan. 2.

"It's been fantastic (the training) it's not an easy topic," Bridgens said. "You are working with Lane County Sheriff's Department, Eugene Police Department, Cottage Grove Police Department, Springfield Police Department. They're all there. And they're in your classrooms with you as you're going through this training. There's a cou-

"We opened and it was great," said director Earl Ruttencutter. "We had pretty good crowd all weekend and it came off better than I thought it would." The company, made up of Opal regulars like Paul Von-Rotz and newcomers between the ages of 11 and 13, was struck by a stubborn illness days before opening night. During the show's last dress rehearsal, at least one lead actor was sick and another down for the count.

"To say we're all recovered, to use that word would be a lot," Ruttencutter said. "As best as can be, let's say that. That bug was a tough one."

Illness aside, the company planted its feet (and danced around a bit) and carried on through this kid-friendly production.

The show begins with the discovery of bundle of old papers and drawings that present a mystery to Paul Von-Rotz and

Maya Wilhauer who immediately launch into song to deal with their confusion.

For the next hour and 40 minutes, an array of animals (subjects?) fidget and fuss over how to get their beloved king (goat?) a whale to place in his moat.

Wilhauer delivers a stand-out performance as the king's messenger boy and ultimate solver of the royal gang's big problem: They can't catch a whale and if they could, they can't drag it to the castle and if they could, the moat wouldn't hold a whale and if it could, the water in the moat isn't salt water and if it was, the idea of a live whale in a moat is ridiculous.

To see how the animal kingdom satisfies its king's demands, check out "The King Who Wanted a Boat" at Opal Theatre Friday at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and 7 p.m.

ple officers with you and they're working through and talking through these scenarios with you."

Cottage Grove Police Officer Matthew Walker is a certified ALICE trainer and has led sessions at Cottage Grove High School. He has purposely stayed away from coverage of the Parkland shooting.

"But you can liken it to Virginia Tech," he said. "When he went into the main building, he barricaded the doors with chains and padlocks which was a deterrent to stop anyone from being able to respond and he set up booby traps so the response rate was slow because they couldn't get into the building."

Cottage Grove High School is located approximately one mile from the police station on Main St. Police Chief Scott Shepherd said the response time to an active shooting would be less than five minutes. Cruz was reported as actively shooting for an estimated five minutes.

"Teachers and students can have a tremendous impact," he said of those first few minutes of an incident. ALICE, provides training to make those minutes count.

"The old method of a lockdown means calmly get up, move to the corner of the room, turn off the lights, pull down the blinds and wait," Walker said. "That doesn't work. That has been catastrophic. That's when you end up with outcomes like Sandy Hook."

When he teaches ALICE, Walker goes through

several scenarios from blockading the door to create a time barrier before the shooter's potential entrance, to what happens when CGPD arrives.

"You're going to get guns pointed at you, you're going to be manhandled. Everyone is treated the same," he said. "Unfortunately, if you're wounded or in need of medical attention, I'm going right past you after I assess you're not a threat because I'm going to where the threat is."

"You can't take the chance that the active shooter is working alone and not with someone else. There could be fires, explosions, they could pull the fire alarm and you have that noise going on or sprinklers are activated," Shepherd added. "I mean, it'd be like a catastrophic movie scene."

On May 20, 1998, the scene outside Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon could be described as catastrophic. Teenagers emerged from the school, blood on their skin.

"There are details from that day that I can pick out," Cottage Grove High School Principal Mike Ingman said. At the time, he was in graduate school, studying to become a teacher.

"I remember (local reporter) Rick Dancer crying but honestly, it didn't deter me from wanting to be a teacher, from wanting to make a difference in young people's lives," he said. "As an administrator, I see these school shootings happening and I just believe that we're vigilant, we follow-up on every rumor. The bottom line is, we're doing everything possible to make sure kids are safe."

# School board rundown

By Zach Silva  
zsilva@cgsentinel.com

## Interim Titles Removed

At Monday's schoolboard meeting, director of human resources Brian McCasline announced that the interim titles for Cottage Grove's principal Mike Ingman and Kennedy's principal Haile Ketcher were removed as they both become permanent fixtures in their positions.

## London Update

London School's principal Bill Bechen presented about his school at Monday night's meeting. Bechen discussed the variety of activities the school offers ranging from playing ukulele to the artist in residence that will teach students about cartooning later this spring. Bechen attributed the success of the 98-student school to the parent's club that helps support it and urged the board to support small schools.

## Pool Update

The final cost of the renovation to Warren H. Daugherty Aquatic Center is still being worked out. The estimate is currently at \$5.7 million while the board has \$5.1 million for the project. The pool committee wants to assure the community that while the same building is being used for the project, the interior will be new.

Construction for the pool is set to begin in September and the pool will be closed for a year, according to South Lane Communications Coordinator Garrett Bridgens. The district will be working on transportation to another pool for students who participate in swimming and water polo.

In Elkton, the conversations are similar. Being a town of just 200 people with a charter school that has around 100 students, they, like every other school, are working to make sure they are prepared as best they could be for the worst to happen.

"I don't think we can ever be enough prepared for an event like that. If it would happen, the aftermath is always really worrisome," said Elkton High School Principal Andy Boe.

"We've thought about it but I don't think anyone can ever prepare for how it would be," he said.

When trainees in Walker's ALICE training tell him they're not "violent people" and don't wish to engage, he offers them other options because, he says, having a plan saves lives.

"I tell them do the right thing, do the wrong thing, at least you're doing something because more often than not, the one who does nothing, doesn't make it. The thing about ALICE is, it works."

Part of ALICE's effectiveness may be in its authenticity. Trainers act as shooters, teachers barricade doors and law enforcement storms the halls as if in pursuit of a shooter in an effort to prepare faculty for the real possibility of facing a school shooting.

"It's unfortunate that we have to do this and talk about this," Shepherd said, "but unless a big fluffy cloud goes over the entire country, I think this is, unfortunately, our reality for the time being."

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