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WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 2018

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Sign of times, progress on Main St.

By Caitlyn May
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Craig Compiano got a call one day about a property in Cottage Grove. A musician had been in town scouting locations for a venue that would house a summer series concert when he stumbled upon 522 E. Main Street. The building, part of the city's downtown historic district and formally known as

the Stewart and Porter building, was vacant and had been for more than a year.

Compiano, who said he enjoys renovating historic buildings, said the building will house eight one-bedroom apartments upstairs while the downstairs space will be available for lease for a business.

While the grand opening is months away and the building is not currently taking appli-

cations for renters, one bit of activity has garnered attention: The old sign that used to hang on the building has been refurbished and was replaced earlier this month.

"The sign is the first step and most visible step in the project," Compiano said, noting that the windows on the building's exterior have also been repaired. He expects that once the exterior is finished, the property manage-

ment company can begin taking serious lease applications for the space downstairs.

"We want to retain the flavor of the building," Compiano said.

See **SIGN 9A**

Workers install the newly refurbished sign on the Stewart and Porter building on E. Main Street.



C/O KENNETH ROBERTS

BUILD Grant draws both concern, support

By Caitlyn May
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The Cottage Grove City Council heard more than 40 minutes of public comment during the June 9 meeting after city staff put an agenda item before the board requesting permission to apply for a \$10 million grant.

The meeting, which routinely draws single-digit audiences, saw a protest sign, passionate speeches and an extended public comment period; a first in at least two years.

The BUILD Grant (Better Utilization of Transportation to Leverage Development), and the question of whether or not Cottage Grove should apply for it, drew a line between those who felt the grant signified a possible change to down town Cottage Grove and those who believed the funds were needed for future projects that could be decided at a later date.

Both board members and city staff repeatedly reminded that audience that Monday night's vote was not an approval of the Main Street Refinement plan, but rather a vote that gave the city's staff permission to apply for the grant.

The refinement plan was approved two years ago and was conceptual, rather than detailed and lacked engineering specifics, according to City Manager Richard Meyers. The details, he said, would be ironed out by a committee made up of residents, city staff and the city council if Cottage Grove was selected as a grant recipient.

Currently the plan, located on the city's website, mentions the narrowing of

See **GRANT 10A**

Patriotic fly-by



Residents throughout the area celebrated our nation's Independence Day on July 4th. This photo, submitted by Enya McKinnon, is one of several submitted by readers of *The Sentinel* capturing the spirit of patriotism. See more photos on page A7.

City approves IGA with Creswell

By Caitlyn May
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Cottage Grove is in the building inspection business.

The result of a maze of mandates handed down by the state of Oregon and subsequently rescinded, the city formed an inspection department, sent employees to certification training and began making deals with neighboring cities to provide inspection services.

Monday night, the city council approved a slightly tweaked version of its intergovernmental agreement with Creswell, the first municipality to partner with Cottage Grove.

Earlier this year, the state argued that cities who contract building inspection services to a third party were violating the state's constitution.

According to the city manager's office, while the state and cities grappled over what exactly the decision meant, Cottage Grove opted to form its own in-house building inspection department.

City Manager Richard Meyers previously told the Sentinel that the move has

See **COUNCIL 9A**

59th annual Bohemia Mining Days coming to town next week

By Caitlyn May
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For the 59th time, Coiner Park on Highway 99 will transform into Bohemia City in a three-day festival meant to honor Cottage Grove's history and serve as the city's largest tourism draw of the year.

On Monday night, the Bohemia

Mining Days (BMD) board came before the council to give an update on the festival that relies on sponsors, carnival revenue and some help from the city to fund its \$52,000 budget.

Festival coordinator Cindy Weeldreyer, who has been involved in the festival for more than 30 years, introduced several board members

and gave a rundown of activities and events at this year's festival to a council that was sorely divided.

While all of its members supported BMD, lines were drawn between the residents of Slabtown and Lemati. A long-held tradition, BMD sees residents don buttons identifying them as a resident of either town and re-enacting the feud that saw a

very real fight break out in the 19th century that eventually split Cottage Grove into two; Slabtown and Lemati.

City councilors donned old-western gear and chided each other over the state of their respectful cities in-between updates from Weeldreyer

See **BMD 11A**

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