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Grove celebration brings down the 'House'

40th anniversary of film brings in possible record-breaking crowd

By Zach Silva
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While as of Monday it is still unknown if a world record was set in Cottage Grove over the weekend for the world's biggest toga party, it was clear that Bohemia Park was the place to be on Saturday night.

Donning their best white sheets, buying a toga on-site or rocking a specially crafted garment for the occasion, an estimated few thousand people made their way to the park to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the movie "Animal House" which had scenes filmed in town.

In addition to the party, event organizers and participants had their eye on bringing the world record back to Cottage Grove. The record was set in Cottage Grove in 2003 at the 25th celebration of the movie before being broken in 2012 when 3,700 individuals donned togas for a party at an Australian university.

"Regardless of whether or not we get the record — which we still don't know, we know it was close but we're still trying to certify that. But regardless of all that, we threw a heck of a party. The feedback has been phenomenal, the people that were there had a wonderful time," said Travis Palmer, executive director at the Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce.

Palmer noted that the event, which sold tickets for \$35 at the door, cost between \$65,000-\$75,000 to put on.

While no one from Guinness World Records was on hand at the event, Palmer and the Chamber of Commerce documented the number of people in togas via tickets, pictures, vid-



PHOTOS BY GREG LEE/FOR THE COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

A re-creation of the famed "Deathmobile" (above) rolls down Main Street during Saturday's parade; toga-wearing participants during the evening concert.

eos and clicker counters. Palmer feels that it is still too close to call at this point but has reason to believe they may have broken the record.

"Just looking across the crowd at various points of the day, I mean, that's the biggest event that's ever taken place in that park for sure. We've been doing the Eugene Symphony there for several years and estimates from the Eugene Symphony (at their events) were anywhere from 3,000 to 3,500 people.

"So, if those numbers are accurate, we know we blew that out and we got at least 4,000 because we easily eclipsed the symphony numbers," said Palmer.

Regardless of any records,



it was a day of celebration in Cottage Grove. The festivities started at noon with a parade on Main Street, where spectators and participants alike were wearing their best homemade togas. The parade followed the same route that was taken in the movie's climactic scene.

Mayor Jeff Gowing — who

officially proclaimed August 18, 2018 as Animal House Day with "Louie Louie" being the official song — kicked off the parade in full toga attire while riding his motorcycle.

There were the typical fixings of a normal parade with people passing out candy and local businesses with their own floats. This parade then added a re-creation of the iconic Deathmobile and a float from the movie. Actress Eliza Roberts who played the role of Brunella in "Animal House" was also in the parade.

"It's very emotional to be back in Cottage Grove. It really is. It brings to mind everything: just the passage of time, lifespan. Everything heavy like that and then it's also incredibly joyous,"

said Roberts who had not been back to the area since the filming of the movie.

What stands out to Roberts is the fact that despite the decades that have passed, there is still excitement around this movie.

"I think that the cream rises to the top. The movie is just a hotbed of talent and style. And it really is timeless," she said, adding: "For some reason, the stuff that was funny then is still hilarious."

Joining Roberts was her son, Keaton, who she was pregnant with during the filming of the movie. Coincidentally, Eliza picked Keaton as a name after watching, and subsequently loving, Buster Keaton's "The

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Drain couple loses home in potentially invalid foreclosure

By Caitlyn May
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Teresa and Rick Heib love pugs. If they came in more than three colors, Teresa says, they would be in trouble because there's little room in the trailer parked outside their daughter's house in Drain for their belongings, let alone a herd of pugs. The three they have now, a cranky grandmother who is missing an eye, a slightly more patient mother and rambunctious puppy, are the first things they grabbed when two sheriff's deputies knocked on their door on April 4 of this year.

See DRAIN 8A

Oregon Legislature sets goals for 2019

By Caitlyn May
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The League of Oregon Cities has announced its legislative priorities for the 2019 legislative session.

The announcement comes weeks after the league asked cities throughout the state to weigh-in with the Cottage Grove City Council compiling a list detailing what issues the city preferred lobbying efforts focused on.

The league has chosen six of the more than dozen issues it proposed to cities: third party building inspection preservation, right-of-way and franchise fee authority preservation and broadband investment, infrastructure finance and resilience investment, homelessness and housing improvements, property tax and PERS reform and mental health in-

vestment.

All three of the priorities the Cottage Grove City Council chose in July (broadband, mental health improvements and property tax reform) made the list.

According to a statement released by the league, the priorities were established after taking into account the cities' lists of priorities and focus on the theme, "Let Cities Work."

Mental Health was named the number one priority.

"While the state and Oregon's 36 counties serve as the direct providers of mental health services, service levels have not kept pace with demands. This has resulted in cities responding to an increasing number of situations in which people are in crisis," the statement read.

"In 2015, the legislature invested in crisis intervention services, expansion of emergency access to care, rental assistance for mental health clients, and specialized training for police. The league asks that the legislature recognize the power of these investments and continue to protect them through the challenging budget process in 2019."

Cottage Grove is currently served by South Lane Mental Health that extends its services to each of the schools in South Lane School District and has a relationship with the local police department in working to address mental health in the community.

Other stand outs on the list include revenue reform including property taxes and PERS reform. The league cites the need for a

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COMMUNITY

Books for Bikes

10 local youth get new bikes thanks to Cottage Grove Masons

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WOE

Heritage Fair

WOE Heritage Fair draws record crowd

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