

# Cottage Grove Sentinel

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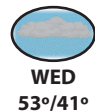
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## Community newspaper returns to Drain

By Caitlyn May  
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*The Community News will pick up where the Drain Enterprise left off.*

In 1950, the *Drain Enterprise* was established. It chronicled community events, deaths, births, reported on local issues and relayed the business of the government to Drain residents. But in 2015, when Drain Mayor and Enterprise publisher Sue Anderson grew ill, the newspaper office on First Street closed its doors, ending the only news source within a 20-mile radius.

"We don't do the Christmas tree lightings anymore because no one comes because we can't get the word out," said Patti Akins.

That's about to change. Akins, who owns a real estate business in Drain, is funding the majority of a new community newspaper. *The Community News* will be direct-mailed to every household in Drain and be made up of a combination of submissions and articles written by the small staff.

"It's based on articles and stories that come into us," Akins said. "We're not going out and looking because we don't have the staff."

The eight-page publication will



The cover of this month's first edition of the new monthly Drain newspaper *The Community News*.

mark the first newspaper specifically for Drain since the *Enterprise's* final publication some three years ago.

"I was out in the community and I heard over and over again, 'We don't know what's going on, we don't know what's going on.'" Akins said. "A lot of elderly don't use Facebook. Everyone said they wanted it but no one stepped up to the plate money-wise because we don't have money here. We're poor — it's a poor town."

And while Drain is on the cusp of regaining its local newspaper, it wasn't

alone in losing it to begin with.

A study released earlier this year by the University of North Carolina's School of Media and Journalism reported more than 1,300 communities have lost all of their local news coverage giving way to buy-outs, close-outs and mergers. Some, like the *Enterprise*, shut down due to lack of funds as traditional print business models continue to see declining revenue.

"Our sense of community and democracy at all levels suffers when journalism is lost or diminished," the study's researchers wrote. "In an age of fake news and divisive politics, the fate

See DRAIN 8A

## City explores options on homeless issue

By Caitlyn May  
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After the September ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals that labeled citations for individuals sleeping on the street as cruel and unusual, the city of Cottage Grove had been exploring its options to remain in compliance with the law.

Then, the rumors started. The most prevalent story circulating town had the

See HOMELESS 11A

## Local group works to reduce hate crimes

By Caitlyn May  
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Over the course of a few days in the summer of this year, community members kept running into each other at a Main Street business in Cottage Grove, all with something on their mind: Another Main Street business.

Wolfclan Armory, a survival store with family ties to white supremacy, had moved to Main Street and triggered protests, discussions at city council meetings and conversations at the Bookmine.

"It was a place to talk," said resident Tammy Hodgkinson. "That first meeting we were expecting 10 people and 40 people showed up."

"At that first meeting,"

See HATE 7A

## 'Fantasticks' set for CG Theater season finale



PHOTO BY EMILY BLY

Front row: El Gallo (Sam Anderson); middle row: Hucklebee (Mark Allen), Matt (Thomas Guastavino), Luisa (Ashlee Winkler) Bellomy (Larry Brown); back row: Mortimer (Keith Kessler), The Mute (Sophie Blades) and Henry (Dale Flynn) will take to the stage in Cottage Theatre's last show of the season, "The Fantasticks."

*"Fantasticks" director Korey Weimer sits down for a Q&A with The Sentinel.*

By Caitlyn May  
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"The Fantasticks" ran originally for more than 40 years. Did taking on such a long-running show present any issues creatively?

The temptation to do the show as it has been done for the sake of familiarity is always there. When you are dealing with such a well-known property, which has been seen so many times across the world, you want the audience to have something familiar to latch onto, something that will bring them into the world. But at the same time, you don't want to limit yourself. You don't want to just do a carbon copy of the Broadway version, same blocking, same costumes, same set. It was an interesting balancing act in designing

and rehearsing this show, but I feel we achieved a good balance in our version.

The Cottage Theatre creates its season by having directors pitch shows in the off-season. What was your pitch for "Fantasticks" and did you know there were other musicals being considered?

My pitch for "The Fantasticks" was quite simple. I wanted to do a small cast, well known show, but dress it in a sort of carnival / traveling caravan kind of way. This group of performers moving from town-to-town, performing this show, and moving onto the next. I wanted to capture the simple magic that makes this show work so very well, no matter what size theatre you put it in. I knew of some other musicals that were being submitted via chats with other directors. All of them had amazing ideas, and were submitting very strong shows.

How did you become involved at Cottage Theatre?

atre?

I became involved about eight years ago, with a show called "Sly Fox." I was working on a film in Eugene at the time, and the director for that show asked me to come audition for her play in Cottage Grove. I managed to get the part, and the first day I walked into rehearsal at CT, I was treated like a long-lost friend who had finally come home. It was such a positive experience, that I started to do more and more shows at CT, as well as volunteer behind the scenes. It is such an amazing company, and I feel honored to be a small part of it.

Bring us through the plot of "The Fantasticks."

It starts off as a standard love story really. Boy and girl fall in love against their father's wishes. A bandit comes and abducts the girl, the boy saves her, and "happy ending." Little do they know that the fathers arranged the entire thing, including the abduction, to

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