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SPORTS

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New laws now in effect for 2019

By Caitlyn May
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During the last legislative session, lawmakers added a few new entries to the state's law books and now that the confetti has settled and Father Time has turned the clock ahead to 2019, those laws are in full effect.

The Roadkill Law:

Say you like to eat deer but heading to the store is such a chore. Now, in Oregon, residents can simply dine roadside — sort of.

Senate Bill 372 allows for "roadkill salvage" which basically means that roadkill can now be legally harvested for human consumption. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is responsible for issuing permits that allow the salvage with a catch — heads and antlers must be turned into authorities within five business days and residents cannot go hunting with their vehicles; meaning drivers cannot intentionally run down an animal to eat it.

Other restrictions include the type of animal that can be eaten — white tail deer can only be salvaged in Douglas County and east of the Cascade Mountains. Only deer and elk can be eaten around the rest of the state and the sale of the meat is prohibited.

Workplace laws:

A new pilot program is aimed at helping whistle-blowers by providing them additional protections under the law.

Senate Bill 1559 establishes a two-year program that allows employees in four state agencies — the Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Department of Human Services, Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality — to anonymously report concerns.

The effort will be paired with an online manual that details the proper procedures for whistleblowers and the protections they are afforded.

Under Senate Bill 828, employees can now sue or file a complaint with the state if their employers do not adhere to work scheduling laws which are outlined in the Fair Work Week Act. The legislation mandated that employers

See LAWS 9A

Board closes Latham School after 165 years

By Zach Silva
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Latham's fate has been sealed: the school that first opened in 1853 will close its doors in June for the final time.

After months, and years, of speculation about whether or not the school should stay open, the South Lane School District school board made the closing of the school official on Monday night with a 5-2 vote to close the school. Board members Taylor Wilhour and Merlene Martin cast the opposing votes.

"It's been a very difficult decision for us as a schoolboard. It's not easy for us to make this decision but it's what we feel is necessary for our school district," said board member Sherry Duerst-Higgins who was filling in as the

role of board chair after Alan Baas was absent due to a recent medical procedure.

The decision did not come as a surprise based on the board's previous conversations regarding the school district's "Latham School Report." The report, which was released in December, went over the logistics of the two possible board decisions: the school closing or the school remaining open for at least five more years.

If the school were to stay open, the report detailed that it would cost an estimated \$775,000 to repair and upgrade the building. While the board has set aside \$353,000 for maintenance for Latham, the rest of the funding would have had to come out of the district's deferred maintenance budget.

The report noted 19 different up-

grades that Latham would need ranging from upgrades in kitchen technology (an estimated \$26,500) all the way up to replacing the majority of the roofing (an estimated \$95,000). With Monday's decision, those funds will now go to various deferred maintenance projects across the district.

The official vote, that was made as a motion by board member Jerry Settlemeyer, took two attempts after Baas was initially not contacted via phone for the first vote. When the second vote rolled around, the outcome remained the same.

"I was on the side of the families and students and I think that Latham plays a really, really important part of the school district and we've now closed a small school that I think was really, really important," said Martin on her

decision to vote against the closure.

During the meeting, other board members offered various feelings on the closing.

"My son was a third grader when we closed Blue Mountain [in 1982] and it had very small classes. He went to Blue Mountain it was a community of teachers and the kids and he went in to Harrison and it prepared him so much better, I believe, to go into Lincoln and go into the high school," said Duerst-Higgins. "So as a parent, I just, I was disappointed but I did a positive on that. So as parents we need to tell them, this is good and what is good about it. Because I think he benefitted from a bigger school and the change. It's hard to close a school, it's very difficult to close a school."

Tammy Hodgkinson recalled a dif-

See LATHAM 7A

Oldest home in The Grove gets new life

New owner of the historic Lurch House hopes to reveal its past while assuring its future.

By Caitlyn May
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When Gerald Santana and his family stood in front of 412 Adams Ave. last summer it was on the tail end of a journey from California marked with divine intervention, coincidence and old fashioned luck.

The newly minted residents of Oregon had been house hunting from their rental in Eugene when they found the two-story house situated under an old Red Oak tree.

"It was actually difficult getting someone to get us into the house," Santana said from his new desk at *The Sentinel*, where he serves as one of the newspapers' multimedia specialist; a job he took, in part, to leaf through old bound volumes of the 130-year-old paper looking for clues about 412 Adams.

"When the realtor met us, they were holding a flashlight," he said. "And we thought, 'Why are they holding a flashlight?'"

That's because 412 Adams isn't just an old house with peeling paint. And it's not just a fixer-upper that saw its previous owners living in what amounted to the kitchen; it's been singled out as the oldest house still standing in Cottage Grove.

In the 1870s, Cottage Grove looked a little different. The roads weren't paved; downtown Main Street wasn't yet historic and houses sat in empty fields instead of neat rows of other houses.



The Lurch House, at 412 Adams Ave., in the late 1870s.

Except for Ben Lurch's house.

The Lurch brothers owned a shop on Main Street and, eventually, a house as well which they situated directly beside the store.

"People would come off the railroad and walk down and visit in that house, like a community center," Santana said. "I was reading things of people just hanging out at the Lurch house."

Before 1880, there weren't any commercial buildings on the east side of the river in Cottage Grove. The only public structures were the Union Church/Good Templar Hall that was built due to demand in 1873. The Ira Conner residence — since destroyed — and the Lurch house were the only houses on the south side of east Main Street in 1880. When the Lurches lost their store to a fire on the west side in 1880, they decided to rebuild the general store next to their home — on the east side, making it the first business located east of the river. Shortly after, a wooden plank sidewalk was constructed that led travelers from the railroad depot right past the Lurch store and house. History books and newspaper articles detail parties and gatherings at the house through the late 1800s until, in 1914, the party stopped.

Benjamin Lurch's wife, Lena, grew ill. She traveled to Oakridge to see a doctor and returned home with every expectation of recovering. But in 1914, she passed away leaving her husband and two daughters behind.

"When Benjamin Lurch died in 1930, there was an article in *The Sentinel* about it," Santana said, "It

See HOUSE 9A

Homebirths a part of the rural reality, debate on safety continues

By Caitlyn May
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The house was small.

Two windows flanked the front door that anchored a petite white porch. It would look like any other ordinary house except for the brightly colored twists and turns that gave way to flower buds painted on the porch pillars and around the door and around the windows.

While it sits empty now, in the 1970s, the little house near the post office was full of life.

Literally.

"When I went to Cottage Grove, it was with the idea of being a country doctor and that included things like home birth," said Dr. Tom Duncan. Duncan founded the Birth Home in Cottage Grove in 1975 as an alterna-

tive to the city's hospital maternity ward. But 44 years later, both the Birth Home and the hospital have stopped welcoming babies. In fact, the only way to have a baby in the city limits of Cottage Grove is to purposefully give birth at home or accidentally give birth on the freeway on the way to Eugene or Springfield — the cities closest to Cottage Grove that offer a maternity ward.

According to local administration at PeaceHealth, the hospital's decision not to include a maternity ward when it was being conceived is a monetary decision; it costs money to adhere to the strict standards of welcoming new life. The hospital does, however, have the ability to deliver a child if a mother cannot make it to a hospital outside the city or transport the mother in labor via ambulance. However, a child has not been born in the hospital under

those circumstances for at least a decade.

Jody Rolnick's child wasn't born at the Cottage Grove Hospital either.

"I don't like medical things," she said. Rolnick, the previous publisher for *The Sentinel*, wrote about her birth experience for the paper more than 20 years ago.

When her daughter Phoebe was born in 1998, it was in a pool of water — a 150 gallon Rubbermaid horse trough. Rolnick, who suffers from a fear of hospitals, had settled on a home birth. And while she and her midwife Chris Heritage had a practice run at the Cottage Grove Hospital, when the time to have the baby grew closer, they were unable to complete their birth plan there. Rolnick says it may have had to do with insurance, but eventually she landed in a bedroom of her home, in a

trough, giving birth.

In 2016, 20 years after Phoebe was born, Amy Tuteur wrote an article for the *New York Times*, "Why is American Home Birth So Dangerous?" At the time, home births accounted for just 2 percent of births in the developed world. In the Netherlands, the number was much higher at 16 percent.

At the time, Oregon provided the best data in the nation for a side-by-side comparison for home births versus hospital births because, in 2012, the state began requiring that birth and death certificates include where the birth took place and who attended the birth.

The stats were grim, placing the death rate for home births that year at seven times the rate of hospital births.

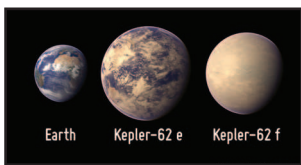
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EDUCATION

Search for planets

The Discover Exoplanets display begins Jan. 30 at the CG Lib rary

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Offbeat Oregon

How the 'worst western ever' was filmed in Oregon.

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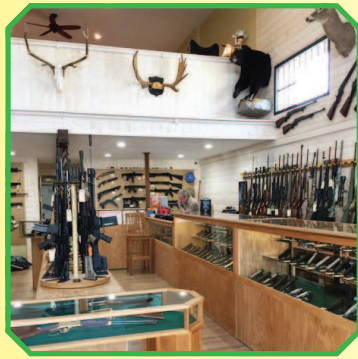
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