



# Cottage Grove Sentinel

VOL. 131, NO. 27

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## WEATHER



Mostly cloudy with a high of 78 and a low tonight of 60.

Full forecast on A5

## COMMUNITY



Public Piano provides 'keys' to city  
A3

## SPORTS — B



ECEC offers more than just butterflies  
B1

## • RECORDS

Obituaries  
Police Logs  
Births  
A2

## • LORANE NEWS

A5

## • CLASSIFIEDS

Listings and public notices  
B6-B7

## Skill center could offer 'Rock Solid' opportunities

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD  
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Al Gaines wants to get young people off the streets and into the work force.

"I've had this vision for a while," he said.

Using Cottage Grove as a base, Gaines hopes to establish the Solid Rock Skill Center, a facility which will equip troubled youth in Lane

County with trade skills and set them on a path for success.

Cottage Grove isn't ground zero for the project, however. Gaines made his first attempt when he was living in Springfield, hoping to make an impact on the ongoing problem of homelessness in the area.

"There are 1,500 kids just in Eugene that are homeless," he said. "And they're just surviving day to

day."

A count of the homeless in Lane County this January tallied a rise of 32 percent from the previous year, according to Lane County Human Services.

Providing young people with skills, Gaines felt, could redirect their trajectory off the streets.

"If these kids wanted to get off the street and learn a trade, they could get on with their lives," he

said.

The project began when Gaines was contacted by the city managers of Eugene and Springfield to work on solutions to the homeless issue. As a journeyman welder/fabricator, design engineer and having experience in process control systems, Gaines was hopeful his own skills could be passed on to

See **SKILLS 7A**

## 'Freedom on the Fourth'



PHOTOS BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Residents of Cottage Grove, Yoncalla and London took time to celebrate the nation's Independence Day last Thursday on July Fourth with parades, fireworks and special events. (see more photos on page 8A and 9A)



## Row River clean-up yields hundreds of pounds of trash

By SOPHIA EDELBLUTE  
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Volunteers hauled more than 500 pounds of garbage from the Row and Coast Fork Willamette Rivers during this year's Water Ouzel Clean-Up Float, which was held by the Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council. The float, which took place June 29, included eight volunteers who brought their own boats and supplies to

help out during the more than seven-hour clean-up project.

In past years, there has been a larger turnout of volunteers. But the original date of the clean-up had to be pushed back about a month due to storm damage along part of the river. While the number of volunteers declined, the amount of garbage in the river increased. According to Amanda

See **ROW 7A**

## CG Airport to receive funding for security improvements

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD  
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Security enhancements are coming to the Cottage Grove State Airport as \$120,000 in Airport Improvement Grants have been announced through Rep. Peter DeFazio's office.

"It's imperative that we continue to invest in Oregon's rural airports in order to keep local economies moving," DeFazio

announced in a press release July 2. "I will continue to push for funds like these to keep air travel in our communities safe and efficient."

The funds will go toward the installation of fencing on the airport's western perimeter, a length of land with no discernable division between properties stretching from Taylor's

See **FUNDS 6A**

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