

A farewell to Cottage Grove, Drain, Elkton and Yoncalla

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My favorite Cottage Grove story is one I have not told while working at *The Sentinel* for the past two years. But now as I am leaving this paper to work at *The World* in Coos Bay, it seems like the right time to tell it.

As a senior in high school at Marist, Cottage Grove came to town to play the Spartans in a non-league basketball

game. It was the latest edition of the Pollard Bowl that saw Don coaching against his son Bart. With the game just days before Christmas, I dressed up as a present and led the student section as we lightly heckled the visiting Lions.

“Lightly” may be doing a lot of work in that sentence. I mean, we didn’t do anything terrible but we – like any good student section – were certainly

straddling the line between obnoxious and impolite. We sang “Jessie’s Girl” to a Cottage Grove free throw shooter named Jesse (which is not impolite but just funny). I also used the power of social media to learn about everyone on the other team which led to us chiding them for their incessant shirtless mirror pics and gently reminding one that he failed his driver’s test.

FAREWELL see B3

Changes at local 1A schools

New athletic directors and coaches head to Elkton, Yoncalla and Drain

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Things are going to look a little different at the high schools in Elkton, Yoncalla and Drain next school year.

It has been a summer of change at the area small high schools as coaches and athletic directors have been jumbled around. Elkton and Yoncalla will both enter the year with new athletic directors while there are new coaches at both North Douglas and Elkton.

In Elkton, last year’s principal/athletic director James Ellis has gone to Days Creek. In his place steps Andy Boe who now holds the position of superintendent, principal (at both the high school and grade school) and athletic director.

“It will be a busy year. We did something a little bit different. We hired an athletic director secretary position. And so that position will handle most of the things that I’m not good at,” said Boe with a laugh. “Like organization and planning, those sort of things.”

Assisting Boe in his first time as AD will be Laurie Winslow as athletics secretary. The other big change for the Elks is the departure of football and baseball coach Bill Shaw who is headed to Reedsport. Replacing Shaw as football coach will be Jeremy Lockhart.

Over in Yoncalla, Peter James was recently named athletic director for Yoncalla High School. James was applying for the job as social studies teacher when he was asked if he would also consider taking the role of athletic director.

“Small schools, they like to combine something like that. At first I was blown away, I was like, ‘Oh wow, I would love to do that,’” said James in a phone interview last Thursday.

What stood out about Yoncalla to James is the small-town community that comes with the school. James attended the slightly larger Douglas High School and has most recently been working at Days Creek (while still living in Eugene).

While James is coming in brand new to the community and without prior experience as an AD, he is excited to be immersed in all things

Pool project stays on track



A worker installs tectum panels, to ensure there is little to no echo in the space, at the Warren H. Daugherty Aquatics Center last week. The center is undergoing a renovation process that will be completed in the coming weeks. PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

The upgrades to the Warren H. Daugherty Aquatic Center have the pool slated to open up by early September

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Nine months after construction began, the updated Warren H. Daugherty Pool remains on track to open in the coming weeks.

“The timeline says we should be at this point and be looking to finish this project up at the end of August, early September,” said South Lane School District communications coordinator Garrett Bridgens last Friday. “Our goal is to get the community in there and get our water polo and swim team and club programs back in there for the fall so they can be training. We are very excited.”

What has been dubbed a “modernization” of the pool space got off

the ground in 2016 with the passing of ballot Measure 20-240. The bulk of the \$36 million from this measure went to the new Harrison Elementary school while over \$6 million was set aside for the pool.

The 11-month construction project began last October on the pool space that first opened in 1955. Throughout the renovation the high school and local club swim teams practiced at the pool in Drain. Now the groups are swimming at the River Rd. pool in Eugene. During that time, the numerous faults of the previous pool began to be remedied.

“While our pool before served us in so many positive ways... there were many challenges with the pool. It wasn’t a traditional size pool, the locker room had issues, there were no stalls in the bathrooms, there were plumbing issues, the lighting was difficult, the humidity in there

was always really hard to control,” said Bridgens. “We’re taking care of all of those things and the school district is excited for the community to come in and see what we did as a community because this truly was a community effort.”

“The whole experience of being in here for any length of time is going to be so much better,” said South Lane School District maintenance and facilities supervisor Matt Allen during a tour of the facility last week. Allen added, “We’re on schedule. Right now, it’s finishing touches.”

There are changes across the entire space starting with the pool itself. Instead of the one 33-yard pool, now sits a 25-yard, eight-lane regulation pool which will allow meets to be hosted in Cottage Grove. Next to the main pool is a warm water therapy pool.

The previous therapy pool was

located at the community center. To make sure that this pool was added during this process, instead of being put in at a later date, the district spearheaded a fundraising effort that raised about \$500,000 for the space.

The other biggest changes in the facility include the lighting that just went in within the last month. Nineteen lights now hang in the pool and reflect up onto a white ceiling to bring in as much light as possible while not casting a glare on the water. Additionally, the windows are now located on the north and south sides of the building to ensure the sun will not shine on the water.

On the outside of the facility there are now 11 solar panels which, with the automated water system, will help more efficiently heat the pool.

POOL see B3

Gold Rush 5K celebrates running, community



A group of runners head out onto the course on Friday night. PHOTO BY NICK SNYDER/CG SENTINEL

Over 60 runners compete in annual event

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As the sun set on Cottage Grove Friday evening, the annual Gold Rush 5K twilight run got underway as part of the Bohemia Mining Days festival. Over 60 runners and walkers of all ages set off from the starting line in the center of town, completing two loops along Main Street to River Road and then following the Coast Fork of the Wil-

lamette River.

“Running and this time of year has been associated in this area back into the ‘70s,” said volunteer organizer Jim Settlemyer who, along with his wife and fellow volunteer Joyce, also coach the Cottage Grove High School cross country teams.

“There used to be a half-marathon and then there was a big gap, then a 5K emerged, went away, then came back ... this round it’s kind of taken hold and I think it’s here to stay for awhile,” Settlemyer

continued.

While festival-goers at other Bohemia Mining Days events went about their activities with smiles and laughter, the faces of the twilight racers had a decidedly more exasperated look as they attempted to conquer the course.

Put on by Run CG Run, a group of local running enthusiasts dedicated to promoting health and running in Cottage Grove, the annual race is a way to increase interest as well as help raise funds for local youth run-

BMD 5K see B2

Athletes of the Week



This week’s athletes of the week are those that ran last week’s Gold Rush 5K at Bohemia Mining Days. To see race results, check runcrun.com.



Runners and walkers speed out to a fast start at the Gold Rush 5K. PHOTO BY NICK SNYDER/CG SENTINEL