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WEATHER



Sun and rain with a
high of 74 and a low
tonight of 50.

Full forecast on A5

COMMUNITY



Swinging Bridge
project continues
A3

SPORTS — B



Sky-Em season gets
underway
B1

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Obituaries
Police Logs
City Notices
A2

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Listings and public
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DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

The garden at Al Kennedy High School produces plants and vegetables which are shared with the community and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Giving Back: Kennedy School program preps youth for future

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD

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For more than a decade, the Kennedy Conservation Corps (KCC) at Al Kennedy High School (AKHS) has been putting students to work in capacities which prepare them for their transition into a post-graduation life.

Matt Hall is the school's transition specialist and crew leader for KCC.

"It's great resume material," said Hall. "It teaches them work ethic and they learn perseverance."

Moving teens from high school into the workforce or college is a key goal of the program and is accomplished with a wide variety of learning opportunities at its disposal.

Since its inception, the program has grown to include a summer work crew and even reimbursement to students for work hours. At its peak, the KCC had three crews doing projects for the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the local watershed council.

Hall also oversees the school's garden, which grows plants for Lane County and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The nurseries house plants which are transported to work sites which the Army Corp of Engineers uses to bring back native prairie environments in the Dorena and Fern Ridge areas.

The new school year may already be in full swing, but the KCC summer crew is

See GARDEN 6A



DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

More than 60 percent of the Rogers' house was burned in the fire on Aug. 17, meaning a residential house alone cannot be rebuilt on what is now commercial zone.

Reconstruction 'not in the cards' for iconic Main Street house

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD

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On Aug. 17, a fire took the house at 1324 E Main Street, and with it a slice of Cottage Grove history.

"It was a real pretty house," said owner Carol Rogers. "And nobody likes to lose a house like that – that

has some history to it."

On the morning of the fire, South Lane County Fire and Rescue had four alarms in 10 minutes, two of which were medical emergencies and had to be addressed before attending to the Rogers' fire.

"They did a great job, actually,"

Rogers said.

In a short time, however, the old wood of the house provided a fast fuel for the flames and nearly the entire structure was consumed. Fortunately, no one was injured and the owners' neighboring

See HOUSE 11A

Old fire truck has new role at Veterans Legacy

After 20 years in Springfield and another 20 years in Harrisburg, a fire truck that has served both fire departments has been deeded to a new home, with a new role. This past Saturday, Sept. 21, Lieutenant Michael Christensen of the Harrisburg Fire Department rolled the faithful fire apparatus onto the driveway of its new home at Veterans Legacy at Camp Alma, a therapeutic environment dedicated to healing veterans who suffer from the wounds of war. The ceremony held at the camp marked the new role the fire truck will be playing as the foundation of the camp's new firefighting program.

In the 1990s and spanning two decades when Camp Alma was the inmate work camp of the Lane County Sheriff's office, Dan Buckwald, former Deputy Sheriff and current Executive Director of Veterans Legacy, spearheaded a firefighting program as a way to not only combat the numerous fires that plagued the area but also give the inmates life-sustaining skills to use when they were released back into their community.

"The inmates got trained in firefighting by the State of Oregon," said Dan Buckwald. "They became so good at fighting fires, the state wanted to put them

See VETS 8A

The Last Resort: A look at mental health and suicide

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD

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In recognition of Suicide Prevention Awareness month, this is Part I in a two-part series looking at the link between suicide and mental health, the need for care

in Cottage Grove and availability of mental health care services.

On Oct. 3, 2016, 33-year-old Matthew Kegler of Cottage Grove fatally shot himself.

That morning, at about 3 a.m., Kegler called 911 because he was experiencing an "acute psychotic

episode" and told a responding Cottage Grove police officer that his dog was among those urging him to kill himself.

A neighbor and the officer escorted Kegler to the PeaceHealth Cottage Grove Community Medical Center.

By around 4 a.m., a doctor,

who was already familiar with Kegler because of a previous suicidal case, had placed Kegler on a 12-hour mental health hold after speaking with the officer.

Just after 5 a.m., a worker from South Lane Mental Health arrived

See SUICIDE 10A

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