

Cottage Grove Est. 1889 Sentinel

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WEATHER

Chance of showers with a high of 47 and a low tonight of 38.
Full forecast on A5

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Community gathers to remember local 'Rosie'

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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Pews of the United Methodist Church filled Feb. 8 as the community gathered to honor and remember Opal Marie Nelson, who passed away Jan. 15.

Nelson, a decades-long resident of the area, was recognized as an energetic community organizer and one of few remaining "Rosie the Riveter" members in Cottage Grove.

"She could captivate an audience of any age with her energy and

sense of humor," said Yvonne Falsold, past national president of the American Rosie the Riveter Association (ARRA).

Saturday's service, officiated by Pastor James Markus of the Trinity Lutheran Church, incorporated prayer, scriptural readings and music separately performed by Cascade Chorus and bagpiper Steve Allely.

"Opal was a neighbor of mine as well as a friend," said Markus. "She was a blessing to me every time I saw her. She always brought me joy."

Opal's Story

Born July 1, 1922, in Roanoke, Ind., Nelson grew up in the Great Depression and, at 16, was job-seeking straight out of high school. Jobs were scarce at the time and, with the outbreak of World War II, Nelson and a friend journeyed across the United States looking for work before settling in Santa Monica, Calif.

As U.S. aircraft production increased in the lead up to the war, Nelson found work on an assembly line. Despite her lack of train-

ing, Nelson was hired as a riveter on the graveyard shift to help assemble fuselages for Douglas A-20 Havocs, a medium bomber/attack aircraft.

There, Nelson would end up marrying her boss, James Nelson, in 1944.

Besides the need to make a living, Nelson said she was heavily motivated to do her work as she knew that men overseas were counting on a steady stream of supplies.

See **ROSIE 6A**

The Grove shows its heart



Clockwise from left: the Hearts on Main fundraiser features local expressions of love and appreciation on Main Street; Creative Chaos hosted its first Sweethearts Dance at Opal Center for Arts & Education; and a heart sculpture produced by local artist Tinica Ossman-Steier hangs in the Cottage Grove Library.

No ticket needed for 'Coffee with a Cop'

Ever want to sit down with a Cottage Grove Police Officer and chat? On Thursday, Feb. 20, from 9 to 10 a.m. at McDonald's restaurant, 1520 Gateway Blvd. in Cottage Grove, come enjoy free coffee and cookies courtesy of McDonald's and attend "Coffee With a Cop."

Like last year's event, it's an opportunity to interact with Cottage Grove Police officers and citizens in a more casual way.

"Our last event was successful.

However, we'd like to encourage even more local citizens to come and share their concerns with us," said Chief of Police Scott Shepherd.

Coffee with a Cop was originally launched in Hawthorne, Calif., in 2011, when officers from that department were looking for ways to interact more successfully with citizens.

The program is now held in all 50 states.

According to the Coffee with a

Cop National Program, "Community policing has long been considered a framework for establishing trust between community and the police and Coffee with a Cop is one of the most successful community oriented policing programs across the country,"

For more information, contact Janice Cramer, Public Information Representative at 541-942-9145.

City discusses potential for parklets

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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Citizens, business owners and city councilors discussed the possibility of installing parklets in downtown Cottage Grove Monday night during a city council meeting.

Parklets are extensions of sidewalks into parking spaces and provide a small space for people to dine or relax, often outside dining or retail establishments.

Civil Engineer Ryan Sisson delivered an informational presentation on parklets and sought community and city council feedback on whether to move forward with the project.

Local businesses the Axe & Fiddle and Jack Sprats were pointed to as potential sites for parklets as both businesses feature outside seating on the sidewalk.

"One of our goals here is to maximize the pedestrian route through the sidewalk," said Sisson.

During feedback, citizens, downtown business owners and councilors expressed high interest in the idea, citing the aesthetic appeal and potential for tourism.

"I believe it would make our downtown more attractive and inviting for people visiting Cottage Grove," said downtown business owner Bart Caridio.

Owner of Jack Sprats Chloe Beckes expressed her support for the idea.

"Our seating outside is real limited as it is," she said. "This would give us an opportunity to have seating that is not in people's way."

Councilor Candace Solesbee commented on

See **CITY 3A**

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