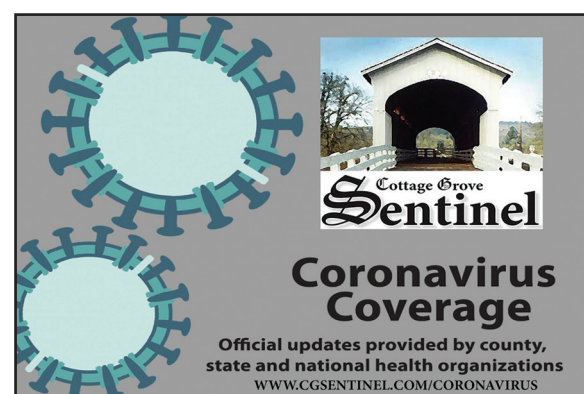


# Cottage Grove Est. 1889 Sentinel

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**WEATHER**



Partly cloudy with a high of 84 and a low tonight of 58.  
Full forecast on A5

**COMMUNITY**



Waving Old Glory  
A3

**COLUMNIST**



Mary Ellen's  
Pet Tips 'n' Tales  
B1

- **RECORDS**  
Obituaries  
Official releases  
A2
- **LORANE NEWS**  
A5
- **CLASSIFIEDS**  
Listings and public notices  
B5-B6

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## Chamber of Commerce relocates to heart of downtown

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD  
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The Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce has found a new home at the gateway to downtown and the heart of city activity, relocating to the northwest corner of Highway 99 and Main Street.

"This is the busiest intersection in southern Lane County," said Chamber of Commerce CEO/President Shauna Neigh. "So we figured this would be the best way to have all eyes on us."

Moving into the new space has

"We figured this would be the best way to have all eyes on us."

— Shauna Neigh, Chamber CEO/President

pulled the organization from the somewhat more obscure location of the Community Center and public library building to a place certain to generate more visits.

Though there is still unpacking to be done and Neigh hopes to

brighten the building's corner with more signage and displays, the chamber is currently open to the public and is already getting traffic.

The move has given the chamber more than just better public access — it now has space.

"It's increased our footprint quite a bit," said Neigh.

A dedicated visitor center located at the office entrance now provides a downtown welcome for visitors with information and, Neigh hopes, eventually more merchandise.

The new location will also allow a meeting space for business leaders to gather.

"So that's an added perk," Neigh said.

The chamber's board has been

See **MOVE 5A**



PHOTOS BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

## DevNW completes six new homes in CG



COURTESY PHOTO

The cluster of cottages off of Arthur Avenue provide affordable, long-term housing for homeowners.

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD  
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Nonprofit DevNW unveiled six new affordable homes in Cottage Grove on Monday, moving the city another step forward in its mission to increase housing availability in the area.

"Cottage Grove was really great in terms of all the permits and helping keep the project on track," said Erin Dey, DevNW director of real estate development. "We had a very good experience with the city."

DevNW was created last year when nonprofits Neighborhood for Economic Development Corporation and Corvallis-based Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services united to increase regional impact. The nonprofit aims to empower communities through a variety of methods such as financial counseling, revitalization projects and assistance programs.

The cluster of Cottage Grove cottages were developed just off Arthur Avenue and all six homes are scheduled to be closing deals by the end of the month with families ideally moving in soon thereafter.

See **HOMES 10A**

## Mailbox removal raises concerns

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD  
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Oregon residents expressed concern last week when U.S. Postal Service (USPS) mail collection boxes in Portland and Eugene were observed to be hauled off from residential streets.

Though reports of the removal of the iconic, blue mailboxes extended to other parts of the nation such as Montana and New York, Cottage Grove Postmaster Tamara Berry said there was no indication of such action locally.

"I haven't seen anything that says we're taking anything out here. And really that's all I know," she said, emphasizing that she could not represent the USPS on general policy.

Last Thursday (Aug. 13), *Willamette Week* reported that the USPS had confirmed the removal of four blue boxes from Portland and 27 from Eugene, citing USPS spokesperson Ernie Swanson's explanation that it was related to mail volume: "The reason we're doing it is because of declining mail volume. ... Ever since the pandemic came along, people are mailing less for some reason."

The removal of the boxes came amid backlash over President Donald Trump's recent comments about cutting USPS

See **MAIL 8A**

## New education program to bring living history to living rooms

*Singing Creek Educational Center is developing a unique approach to learning*

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD  
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Singing Creek Educational Center is exploring new models of teaching and learning for Cottage Grove kids — amid mandates for social distancing — by bringing its unique programs into families' homes.

The center develops historical-inspired educational programs which typically target an age range from 6 to 11.

"We provide hands-on living history education for children and families," said Karen Rainsong, executive director of the Singing Creek Educational Center. "We teach all about the native indig-

enous peoples as well as pioneer settlers and explorers such as Lewis and Clark and our own local folk such as Opal Whiteley here in town."

The center's interactive history programs (which include dressing in period costumes), field trips and crafts classes are designed to connect kids to history and nature in


meaningful ways.

Recently awarded general operating grants from the Cottage Grove Lions Club at \$1,250 and the Woodard Family Foundation at \$1,000 have helped keep the center afloat this summer.

"It really helps us," said


See **LEARN 6A**

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