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A walk through a ‘Garden of People’

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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Local artist Uyen-thi Nguyen has found a unique way to get to know her community – and is inviting others to “walk through the garden” she’s cultivated. Her book, “Garden of People, A Portrait of Cottage Grove,” is an artist’s perspective on society, using Cottage Grove as the basis for exploration. A Kickstarter supporting her project is currently live and

runs until May 31, 2021. The art book and the planned exhibition are designed to be experiential, allowing viewers to formulate their own views of society through words and experiences of the subjects and through expression of the art. Nguyen’s solo show is slated to be on exhibit this summer in Eugene during Visual Arts Week, in Cottage Grove and Springfield. The project found its feet financially when the Lane Arts

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DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Uyen-thi Nguyen displays two portraits of Cottage Grove locals included in her project.

Remembering Pete



DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Around 30 community and family members turned out on May 15 to remember Peter “Pete” Dale Anderson in All-America City Park. Anderson, born Oct. 18, 1962, passed away last year on May 17. As a person living with mental illness who frequently strolled about town, his constant presence and frequent interactions with others in the community built a network of support for his condition and garnered a roster of friends who would help see to his needs. Coronavirus restrictions prevented the family from holding the service last year at the time of Anderson’s death, but family and friends took turns on Saturday to share memories of their experiences with him. Pastor Karen Hill of the First Presbyterian Church officiated the memorial service. (To read Hill’s tribute, see page A7)

Community garden plans move ahead

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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In partnership with South Lane School District, nonprofit Huerto de la Familia is making strides to complete its planning phase in the development of a Cottage Grove Community Garden in the wetlands at Bohemia Elementary School. “Our vision is to create a vibrant community space where families will have access to the land and resources needed to successfully cultivate their own fresh, organically grown, culturally specific produce,” said Huerto de la Familia Executive Director Marissa Zarate. Huerto de la Familia (The Family Garden) is a Eugene-based nonprofit focusing on providing Latino and immigrant families in Lane County opportunities to grow their own organic food.

The group takes particular aim at providing culturally relevant foods which are otherwise hard to find in local stores. Cottage Grove’s sizeable Latino population is partially what attracted the nonprofit to the area. Zarate said she has been grateful for a partnership with local First Citizen awardee Ana-Maria Dudley, who has dedicated herself to developing secure networks for Cottage Grove’s Latino community. But while there is a focus on providing help to Latino and immigrant families, the gardens and services are open to all community members and the Cottage Grove project in particular will be connected deeply with South Lane School District. “Our main goal will be to provide services to families with kids in the school districts,” said Zarate. “So

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see **PLANS** on A9

McFarland Cemetery cleaned for Memorial Day opening

By DAMIEN SHERWOOD
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The McFarland Cemetery got a much-needed makeover last weekend as volunteers weeded, mowed and raked the overgrown plot of land ahead of a planned Memorial Day opening to the public. “It was in bad shape,” said Cottage Grove City Councilor Kenneth Roberts, who organized the cleanup. “It hadn’t been cleaned in a couple years from what I know,” he said, describing the plot as a tangled jungle of weeds, tree limbs and litter. Roberts is a newly-appointed member of the Cottage Grove Historical Society board and adopted the cemetery cleanup as one of his first tasks. The cleanup has prepped the land for a Memorial Day opening on May 31, when the McFarland Cemetery will open its gates to the public from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Visitors are encouraged to bring flowers and will be treated to historical stories from members of the Cottage Grove Historical Society, said Roberts. Several members of E Clampus Vitus, a fraternal organization dedicated to heritage preservation, joined the cleanup on Saturday as well. “Doing work parties in historical pioneer cemeteries is important to us because those pioneers are the ones that sacrificed everything to make their lives and their families’ lives better,” said Keith Spangle, an E Clampus Vitus member who volunteered on Saturday. “If it wasn’t for those brave, hard-working individuals, none of what we do would be possible.” E Clampus Vitus was formed in 1845 in West

Virginia and moved west with the California Gold Rush of 1849. Membership ballooned during this time through the thousands of mining camps and towns which sprang up. As the life of a miner was often fraught with hardship, members of E Clampus Vitus earned a reputation for embracing life’s absurdities by highly valuing entertainment and fun-loving practical jokes. Members would also regularly provide assistance to their communities, especially the widows and orphans of fallen miners. Today, the group holds itself to these historical characteristics while focusing on preserving history pertaining to the gold rush. E Clampus Vitus also has connections with the mining community through the annual Breakfast on the Mountain gathering and is honored with a plaque on

the Bohemian Gold Mining Museum in Cottage Grove. The McFarland Cemetery, established in 1853, is a magnetic spot for such history-oriented groups. At the corner of Holly Avenue and Kalapuya Way, the cemetery’s trail entrance creeps up the hillside to a plot of fenced-off land overlooking the town. Several raised headstones and grave markers line the site, at least four of which are determined to be Native Americans. Historical records point to these four as being either somehow related to or friends of the McFarland family. Old newspaper articles and other accounts provide small windows into the lives of the Native people who lived among the settlers. A tale of one famous local chief, Fisherman Bristow,

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