

# Cottage Grove Est. 1889 Sentinel

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November Art Walk attracts variety of talent (A6)

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**WEATHER**

Cloudy with a high of 52 and a low tonight of 40

Full forecast on A5

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## Carousel holds open house

BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD  
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The long-awaited Cottage Grove Carousel passed another milestone on Friday (Nov. 26) when it opened its doors for eight hours to the public.

“We had an amazing turnout for the open house,” said Friends of the Cottage Grove Carousel President Alice Nowicki. “In fact that was the longest the carousel has ever run. So, it was really great to see that it works so well.”

Nowicki estimated between two and three hundred people came through the open house event, some even right up to closing time.

The event represented a bit of a public stress test for the system, though the carousel passed its inspection on April 16 this year. That stamp of approval verified the carousel’s safety as final touches wrapped up.

The carousel has been housed in the Cottage Grove Industrial Park in the King Estate warehouse

see **CAROUSEL** on A9



Friends of the Cottage Grove Carousel members Carmen Dowell and Alice Nowicki try the ride for themselves during the open house event.

PHOTO BY KENNETH MICHAEL ROBERTS



DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL  
The old Cottage Theatre, prior to remodeling, featured seating which wrapped 180 degrees around the thrust stage. “ACT III” will eliminate seating on the side, but increase capacity by 50 seats.

## Cottage Theatre announces April return

BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD  
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Cottage Theatre has announced it will at last pull back the curtain on its renovation project in April 2022. The project has endured several delays, but the theater’s Executive Director Susan Goes said the end is finally in sight.

“In terms of construction, we’re pretty confident,” she said.

Showing off brand new seats, improved sightlines and better sound quality, the theater will open with

“Mama Mia,” which was due for its first Cottage Grove production in spring 2020 until COVID-19 restrictions shut down operations.

If all goes according to plan, the theater will reopen in its 40th year as a local theatrical staple.

Cottage Theatre began construction on its “ACT III” remodeling project this spring, an effort that had been ten years in the making.

The theater considers its “ACT I” as occurring in 1998 when its current facility was first built. Next came

“ACT II” in 2006, which involved the expansion of its lobby and addition of a rehearsal hall.

The latest remodel will add 50 seats to the theater’s auditorium and make a variety of safety and technical upgrades to enhance audience and participant enjoyment.

Previously, the audience seats wrapped around 180 degrees of the thrust stage, but the renovation is eliminating the side seats and reducing the sections from five to three.

see **THEATRE** on A7

## Gowing announces run for state legislature

BY DAMIEN SHERWOOD  
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Cottage Grove Mayor Jeff Gowing announced on Tuesday (Nov. 30) he is seeking the office of state representative in Oregon House District 12 (HD 12) in the 2022 election.

“After support and encouragement from friends and family, I have decided to officially announce my intent to run,” he stated.

Gowing said a main motivator for his decision was his sense of Salem’s loss of focus on rural communities due to a lack of legislators coming from local governments.

“I feel the majority of Oregonians are wanting a change in Salem and I feel I will be the change they are looking for,” he said, adding that his own approach would include more interaction with constituents.

Regardless of the outcome of next year’s election, Gowing has said this next year will effectively be his last in public office in Cottage Grove.

Gowing’s bid for HD 12 will coincide with a recent remapping of Oregon’s district boundaries.

On Sept. 27, 2021, the



COURTESY PHOTO  
Cottage Grove Mayor Jeff Gowing

state legislature completed the adoption of new congressional and legislative redistricting maps for Oregon with the passage of Senate Bill 881 A and Senate Bill 882. The redistricting inserted a sixth U.S. House district based on the latest census.

Governor Kate Brown subsequently signed both measures.

The plan has been contested mainly by Oregon Republicans, however, with accusations of illegal gerrymandering.

Last week, a five-judge Special Judicial Panel upheld the congressional redistricting plan and the Oregon Supreme Court had just days previously rejected two other challenges.

see **GOWING** on A8

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