



Photos by Jimmi Harris

The West University Neighborhood has a new park, built by a unique combination of volunteer student and resident laborers. The park, funded by federal grants, will open Saturday at 1 p.m. with a cornerstone ceremony, games, a puppet show and other festivities.

Park celebrates volunteer efforts

By DAGMAR OBEREIGNER
Of the Emerald

The first park in Eugene built by the efforts of community and student volunteers will hold an opening celebration this Saturday.

Ceremonies are set at 1 p.m. for the West University Park, located between Hilyard and Patterson Streets on E. 14th Avenue. The new park is being built by neighborhood residents and University architecture and landscape architecture students.

Its one-third of an acre plot includes an arbor, fireplace, fruit trees, play areas, flower boxes, a bulletin board, a shelter and a brick walkway.

Saturday's celebration will start with the placing of the cornerstone brick in the walkway and will feature games, a puppet show, a footrace, folk dancing, other entertainment and exhibits of neighborhood projects.

A federal Community Development Block Grant has funded the park, and volunteers' efforts have stretched the dollars.

Purchase of the vacant lot and its clearing also were funded by a federal community development grant, allocated through the city of Eugene to the neighborhood.

The West University Neighborhood Association last year chose the architectural firm of

Jerome Diethelm and Eugene Bressler to design the park. Diethelm, who also is the head of the University's landscape architecture department, has drawn his students into the project and is teaching a class in park design and construction that complements the park project.

Diethelm also has worked on the park's design with the West Neighborhood Association and the city.

Harold Lannom, a member of the neighborhood group, credits him with the park's success. "Jerry Diethelm is the one who made it happen."

Neighborhood resident participation was "a little low" throughout the project, says Lannom, who notes that most of the residents are students or older persons who couldn't spend as much time on the facility.

The architecture students did most of the work, says Brad Perkins, a member of the neighborhood's planning team.

"Their efforts as a team of dedicated landscape architecture students have been more than enough. I can't express our gratitude as a neighborhood group."

Lannom says he is pleased with the result. "It's remarkable what they have been able to do." Virtually everything that was originally planned for the park is completed or near completion.

A park sundial, however, was not constructed

because of lack of time. Lannom says more community development funds have been awarded for the next fiscal year, and will be used to put more things into the park.

The neighborhood planned the park because of a lack of recreation facilities in the area. "We had no park for recreation, or just a picnic," says Lannom. "Yet we had high density in the area, and felt this was an important item." The group initially considered building vest pocket parks throughout the neighborhood, Lannom says, and still may enlarge the park. "We need more open space."

The neighborhood group also plans to begin a feasibility study of pedestrian lighting for the neighborhood's streets.

The study, scheduled to begin next July, will test and demonstrate the placement of ornamental lights on one or two residential properties in the middle of each block. The lights would increase pedestrian safety and decrease vandalism. Residents would be responsible for the upkeep, and would be reimbursed for electricity costs.

New games, volleyball, and basketball will be held from 11 a.m. to noon; from noon to 12:30, a run beginning at 19th Avenue and Ferry Street and continuing onto the park is planned. A potluck lunch will be held in the park at noon, and from 1:30 p.m. wandering minstrels, musicians, jugglers and a puppet show will entertain. Folk dancing is scheduled for 4 p.m.

West University resident seeks new neighbors

By LORRAINE NELSON
Of the Emerald



First a neighborhood center and now a park highlight the attempts of the less mobile residents of the West University Neighborhood to remedy the alienation that exists among residents of a transient neighborhood.

Brad Perkins, a member of the neighborhood's planning team, wants to take it all even one step further.

Perkins is on the lookout for people who want to buy housing in the neighborhood, and he is willing to spend the time bringing buyers and sellers together.

As a resident of the neighborhood for seven years, Perkins stresses the advantages of living close to both campus and downtown, particularly with the current gas crunch.

In the next two years, the neighborhood will receive several thousand dollars in Community Development Block Grant Funds for

improvements, and residents in the neighborhood will decide how that money should be spent. If the Emerald Canal, connecting the Millrace with Amazon Creek, becomes a reality, the attractiveness of the neighborhood will increase and people who are interested in guiding the growth of the neighborhood will be needed, Perkins says.

Perkins knows of four houses available in the neighborhood for less than \$60,000 each and is willing to show those houses to prospective buyers. Additionally, he will advise buyers about the city's low-interest loan rehabilitation program.

"The problem is that 98 percent of the houses are investor-owned," he says.

"It's partly my own interest in that I would like to raise my kids where there are other kids. . . . I'm sick and tired of seeing buildings torn down for substandard housing."

Interested buyers can reach Perkins at 343-9997.