

City funding allows Eugene library to add staff, hours

The City Council gave \$130,000 to the library after Measure 50 cuts left it with a deficit

By Michael Burnham
Community Editor

Beginning Monday, Feb. 23, the Eugene Public Library will expand its operational hours to a year-round schedule of 52 hours, six days a week, and will hire additional employees to fill previously cut staff positions.

The expansion comes after the library received \$130,000 in Measure 50 add-back funding from the City Council last December to increase circulation hours.

Library hours had originally been chopped to only 44 hours a week in October of last year because of the state-wide July implementation of Measure 50, which limited available tax dollars for the city to use on facilities such as the library. The cuts left the li-

brary with a \$200,000 deficit from the 1996 fiscal year.

However, when city officials were faced with a smaller deficit than predicted, the council added back funds to the library and other city programs in need of funding.

"I really do appreciate the patience people have shown, and we're delighted the short schedule lasted such a short time," said library services director Carol Hildebrand.

Although the funding will not restore all of the hours that had been cut, it will enable the library to have enough funding to operate six days a week and fill more full-time staff positions.

Hildebrand said although the money will be enough to hire back only a portion of the four staff positions that were cut in October, it is the best the library can do in order to operate during evening hours.

"This is as much of a figure we can cover with the staff we

added," she said. "People wanted to have the library open more than one evening a week."

But the added hours and staff positions will not entirely solve all of the library's problems.

In an October interview Phil Weiler, a spokesman for the city of Eugene, he said the library is one of the busiest libraries per capita in the western United States. He also added that the library has not been expanded since it was built in 1959, while coping with less space and a greater number of circulation materials.

According to Hildebrand, the City Council's Library Improvement Committee and representatives from A Better Library for Everyone are currently working on strategies to find solutions for the library.

She said the 12-member council committee was created by the mayor to get public input and information on what Eugene library patrons want from their facility.

Bill Sullivan, a convener for ABE, said the committee is working closely with the committee to aid in the decision-making process. He said ABE's top priorities for the library include remodeling or replacing the existing library, or building branch libraries throughout the city.

"There is a lot of interest in developing branch libraries, and most cities Eugene's size would have branch libraries," he said. "We've gotten to the point now where we haven't added one square inch in 39 years, and it has gone for so long and so far that we need to look at both branches and expansion."

Sullivan said ABE met with the council's committee Wednesday night to help the council create a ballot measure proposal for funding future changes to the library.

He said the measure would be based on feedback the committee receives and could be on the bal-

Library changes

■ **PREVIOUS HOURS:**
Sun. & Mon.: Closed
Tues. & Wed.: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Thurs. - Sat.: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

■ **NEW HOURS:**
Mon. & Tues.: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Wed. - Sat.: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

lot by May 1999.

Sullivan was in favor of this idea, and referred to library measures in recent years that have not garnered the support of the community.

"We want to make sure it's a plan everyone likes and will pass," he said. "The council has had a different view of what the voters want in the past."

The next meeting of the council's library committee will be held Feb. 18 at 7 p.m. at the Campbell Senior Center.

Honors college to host speaker

Students hope the event will help raise awareness of what the Robert D. Honors College is

By Teri Meeuwse
Higher Education Reporter

Howard University Professor Allison Blakely and three University panel members will be discussing the role of teaching western civilization in an age of multiculturalism on Saturday afternoon.

"He's a distinguished professor," said Paul Csonka, director of the Robert D. Clark Honors College. "I'm very happy he is coming."

The honors college is taking advantage of a chance to see Blakely while he's in the Pacific Northwest, said Louise Bishop, an honors college English professor.

"He's in Portland and Salem doing some work for Phi Beta Kappa, and since he's so nearby, we thought we'd take advantage of it," she said.

Blakely, whose specialty is Russian and European history, is a University alumnus who was a member of the honors college. He's written two books and articles about the cultural images of blacks in European history.

"His academics in European history will help with discussing Western civilization," she said, "and he will help embody multiculturalism."

The other panel members will include honors college history professor Erica Dukehart, ASUO Women's Center director Donna Albro and recent honors college history graduate Matthew Stone.

The honors college is using this event to help raise awareness of what the honors college is, English major Kirstin Hamilton said.

"The honors college sponsored the event to get the honors college voice heard on campus," she said. "I think that many honors college students participate in other events and organizations on campus as individuals, but participation as a group of honors college students the last few years, or as long as I've been here, has been low. It's good that we are planning something through the honors college that all [University] students can attend."

The event takes place Saturday at 4 p.m. in the Dement Lounge in Walton Hall. Students, professors and administrators are invited to attend and be involved in discussion afterwards.

Last suspect charged in '97 murder

By Jesse Sowa
Community Reporter

A fifth person was arrested Wednesday on charges in connection to the killing of a 21-year-old Salem man whose body was found near the Autzen Footbridge last Labor Day weekend, a police news release stated.

Kevin David Stephens, 20, was charged with one count of the intentional murder of Steven Leroy Johnson, which occurred Aug. 31, 1997, by the Willamette River. Stephens was lodged at the Lane County Jail.

The arrest ends the five-month investigation of the Johnson homicide.

Stephens was involved early in the investigation and later emerged as a suspect. He and the four other defendants were part of a larger group that spent time near the downtown mall and called themselves "The Pack."

During court proceedings for the first four defendants, Lane County prosecutor Paul Graebner said Johnson was killed in retaliation for an alleged rape of

a member of The Pack. Authorities said the rape was never proven.

Those included in the killing beat and kicked Johnson almost to death during a 10-hour period before two of the males in the group stabbed Johnson five times with a survival knife, police said.

Stephens was contacted by police on the downtown mall Wednesday afternoon and accompanied police to City Hall where he was questioned by detectives. After questioning and later a brief scuffle with officers, Stephens was arrested.

The reason police gave for the delayed action against Stephens is that detectives needed more time in gathering facts surrounding the murder and Stephens' involvement.

Currently, detectives do not believe any additional arrests will be made in connection with this case.

Stephens was to be arraigned on the charge Thursday afternoon at the Lane County Jail.

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