



The Lillis Business Complex, pictured above in a cross-section rendering, will add approximately 600 new seats to the business school. Courtesy photo

Construction

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Lease Crutcher Lewis. "They'll grind up the concrete for base rock."

Rexius Forest By-Products Inc. workers used a powerful air hose to cover roots of the trees west of Deady Hall with an organic compost.

Larry Bolan, who's been with the Eugene-based company since 1977, said the area's irrigation system will remain shut off during construction. He said the compost, made from yard refuse, would help the trees retain precious water in the event of another dry summer. Bolan said the company will eventually lay the equivalent of about three football fields of mulch 4 inches thick.

Pearson said crews should begin excavating the basement in two weeks, after demolishing the remainder of the bridge. In the fall, the team will use a 211-foot tall

crane to erect the building's steel and concrete frame.

Onlookers gathered each day this week to watch the demolition, including architecture graduate student Jess Ellingson.

As crews exposed the skeleton of the bridge, Ellingson said she picked up many valuable lessons for an aspiring architect.

"I can see what the fate of one of my buildings might be," she said. "The construction system of reinforced concrete doesn't allow the building to adapt to future uses."

Contractors used concrete for the building's lateral bracing instead of a system of steel supports, Ellingson said. Steel-brace systems can be more easily adapted to meet structural changes, such as adding useable space to a building.

Wick and Hilgers originally built the bridge in the 1950s at a time when contractors were using more

open-web steel joists as cheap replacements for standard beams, architecture professor Don Peting said. Contractors ordered steel joists with specific, unchanging dimensions.

"They couldn't be extended or anything like that," he said.

Ironically, the removal of the Commonwealth Bridge brings the University's design more in line with what the school's first architecture dean had in mind, Peting said. Ellis Fuller Lawrence, who served as dean from 1914 until his death in 1946, wanted to create a clear line of sight from Knight Library to the fence lining 11th Avenue — Dad's Gate.

The Lillis Business Complex will be completed for the 2003-04 school year. The project will add 600 classroom seats and numerous media resources.

E-mail reporter Eric Martin at ericmartin@dailyemerald.com.

News brief

March of Dimes to host annual WalkAmerica

Three babies die every hour. Every two minutes, a baby is born at low birth weight. Every year, 2,500 babies are born with a birth defect of the brain or spinal cord. Every three-and-a-half minutes a baby is born with a birth defect.

We can help change these statistics. March of Dimes, a national voluntary health agency, is hosting the 32nd annual WalkAmerica on Saturday.

More than 500 local residents will take to the streets in either a 3K or 10K walk that begins at 9 a.m. at Alton Baker Park. Those who are not yet registered can still participate by

checking in for the walk at 8 a.m.

March of Dimes Southern Oregon Division Director Aimee Knabe said they anticipate raising more than \$60,000 from the event.

Money raised through WalkAmerica allows the March of Dimes to improve programs in Lane County, such as research in gene therapy and prevention of premature labor; community services to help women receive prenatal care; and public education to teach women about folic acid, the B vitamin that may help prevent serious birth defects.

For more information about WalkAmerica or March of Dimes call 686-2170, or visit them on the Web at www.modimes.org.

— Lisa Toth

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