

# Forum

## District purchases lunch tables; they remain unused

CHRISANN KIM

It's lunchtime and students flood the hallways, desperate to eat. The two commons are full of students gorging food. The new lunch counters sit deserted—white, clean and shiny new.

With recent budget cuts, there have been reductions such as losing teachers and additions, such as the brand new lunch counters that have been placed in the Old Commons. When I passed by on the first day of school, I noticed the tables and found them highly unnecessary.

With 1,550 students, the two lunch rooms together can accommodate around 275 students. With optional classrooms to eat lunch in and upperclassmen driving to local restaurants, students have enough space during lunch. So, why the new tables?

"Since the weather has been turning really cold and rainy, we wanted to provide more eating places. The tables are for standing," Rob Holstrom, assistant principal, said. "There aren't any stools yet because we want to see how the tables play out before purchasing any stools. If stools were put in, we would have to take out tables because they would not fit. The possibility still exists, we just haven't done it yet."

These tables are not round, moveable, or even attractive. They are long, white and resemble bar-like countertops. Moreover, there aren't chairs high enough to sit at them comfortably—or at all. Students who have fully loaded backpacks probably will not want to stand up and eat lunch.

Lunchtime is used to eat and rest after three hours of



Photo by Rachael Woolley

During lunch, students eat at the round tables in the Old Commons. The countertop tables that were recently added are not used by students.

learning and walking around between classes with a heavy backpack. The original tables in the Old Commons serve that purpose; the taller ones do not.

Budget cuts are self-explanatory. When there are budget cuts, a lot of things are sacrificed such as teachers, classes and school days. Many

people ask why, with our recent budget cuts, we refurbished the main gym and added new lunch tables. The money for this and the new tables derived from the capital construction bond, which is entirely separate from the money used to fund operations.

If our standard lunch chairs

can't reach the table tops or if standing to eat at them does not seem to work for people, are the tables even necessary?

"I don't like them because they're long and you can't see all your friends," Tiffany Lee, freshman, said. "And they give you side cramps." Highly agreed.

Every time I pass the Old Commons, there are students everywhere EXCEPT at the new tables. No student uses them, not even to place backpacks on top of them. Those tables remain clean and unused each day.

If there was an actual benefit of the tables for students, the tables would be filled every day at lunch. If students don't like them, they should go ahead and just use the round tables. Or, perhaps stools would go along nicely with the new tables.



## ELISE'S SOAPBOX

## LAIRSON SHOWS LEADERSHIP

John Kovash was elected West Linn Mayor on Sept. 21 after serving as interim mayor since April. I think Kathy Lairson would have been the best choice. Her record and her reputation make her more than qualified to run the city. Even though she lost the mayoral election this year, she still deserves a powerful role in West Linn's leadership like she's had in the past.

Lairson was already mayor on the City Council as its president. On her watch, from 1981 to 1989, a new library, a new recycling system and a water tower came to fruition. She was even on the first team that designed West

Linn's Comprehensive Plan, which have plans for housing, land use and transportation. As a mayor and a councilor, Lairson was productive and responsive to the citizens of her city. We need that again.

Remember why we had a special election in the first place: our previous mayor was not the leader she was elected to be. Before her term as mayor, according to a 2008 editorial for the West Linn Tidings by Mark Buser, Patti Galle was a community organizer who helped get the local police more funding. As a mayor, she was much different.



During her term, Galle blocked the beginnings of a solar panel project for incomplete or fictional reasons, demanded a recall of the whole city council, and eventually revealed that she lied about her education in the Voter's Pamphlet, a class C felony that led to her resignation. Even as a candidate she was questionable; she refused to participate in the mayoral

debate because she disagreed with a member of the board of directors who was sponsoring it.

Lairson is what this city needs following that disgraceful period. She is willing to listen. She is a leader—she's even written a master's thesis on the subject. Lairson didn't run her campaign attacking the other guy. She ran her campaign on what she plans to do for the city; on improving what she's already done.

Gary Eppelsheimer, photography teacher, noted that she is a person of "intellect and integrity. Kathy is good at listening, which is something we need right now," Eppelsheimer said.

Though Kovash was elected, Lairson would

have been a spectacular choice for occupying that position again. She has big ideas which she works hard to make reality with transparency and experience.

Lairson's ability to listen and get things done is still needed in this city. Galle's term was filled with bickering and division and prevention of progress.

Kovash has promised to keep our water safe, keep Stafford rural and work towards a West Linn aquatics center. Perhaps, if Kovash needs to fill a position in his cabinet, Lairson should be his first choice in order to make some of these goals happen.

## Amplifier

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## Alex's ASB WELCOME BACK

Hello, West Linn High School, I'm Alex Nelson, the student relations director for the Associated Student Body. This year, ASB has a goal that it's never tried to achieve before on this level. We want everyone to get involved in school events. Everything is being changed, including the assemblies. We're making involvement in the school easier than ever!

We want everyone to be a leader, not just the people who are in leadership and who have a title, but every student at the school. Everyone has potential to do so, it's just up to you whether you want to unlock and use that potential.

I'll be writing this column

for each issue of *Amplifier* to help spread school news and spirit. For this fine piece of literature, I'll be explaining a few things about leadership functions in which students can get involved. First, our student senate is where students come to meet ASB and give their thoughts on how we can improve the school. The student senate was designed to give a voice to representatives of groups throughout the school, whether they be Kaleidoscope or the football team.

If you want to start a club to get involved, go see Butch Self, ASB adviser, in Room A101 to pick up a form and gain approval.

During our first class assemblies, Drake Edwards, ASB

historian, introduced a class point system which is similar to the class points you would receive at Hogwarts if you were a witch or a wizard. Basically, we will add up points earned by each class and at the end of the year, the class with the most points will win a prize. We will not release information about the prize on the account of it being too epic to comprehend this early in the year.

Finally, we just had Homecoming and it was a huge success! Spirit Week, the dance, as well as the homecoming football game against the Oregon City Pioneers brought out our school spirit. Keep it up West Linn!