

Japanese earthquake raises questions about local preparedness

CHARLIE CRAFT

Students crouched under desks, gripping the sides of tables, and squealing in mock fear during the earthquake drill in Room D102. For others it was less serious. "Nobody went under their desk," Meg Beckett, freshman, said of her earthquake drill experience. After the 9.0 magnitude earthquake in Japan on March 10 and the devastation it caused, serious concerns were raised about Oregon's earthquake readiness.

Naoki Tsuruta, sophomore, is from Japan and has previously gone back for

long stints to visit family. He said that he has experienced school wide and even town wide earthquake drills that he describes as "very intense" and says they "make me sweaty."

If Japan has this level of preparedness and suffered horrendously from the recent earthquake, it begs the question: is Oregon ready to take the threat of an earthquake seriously?

The Northwest coast of the United States also runs along the intersection of tectonic plates. In the 1700s there was a massive (8.7-9.2) earthquake in this area that caused

a tsunami that was recorded to have reached Japan.

The Northwest coast is due for another massive earthquake, and the release of pressure from the Japanese quake only puts more pressure on the region and the question now is not if, but when.

West Linn lies between the Butterfield and Canby-Mollala faults, areas of seismicological instability, where earthquakes channel their energy. The location of West Linn and many parts of the Portland metropolitan area make them sensitive to earthquakes.

Sarah Pass, daughter of Lynn Pass, art teacher, was

teaching in Japan when the earthquake hit.

"Almost everyone I have talked to has an earthquake preparedness kit with food, water, a change or two of clothes, a flashlight, money, etc.," Sarah Pass said.

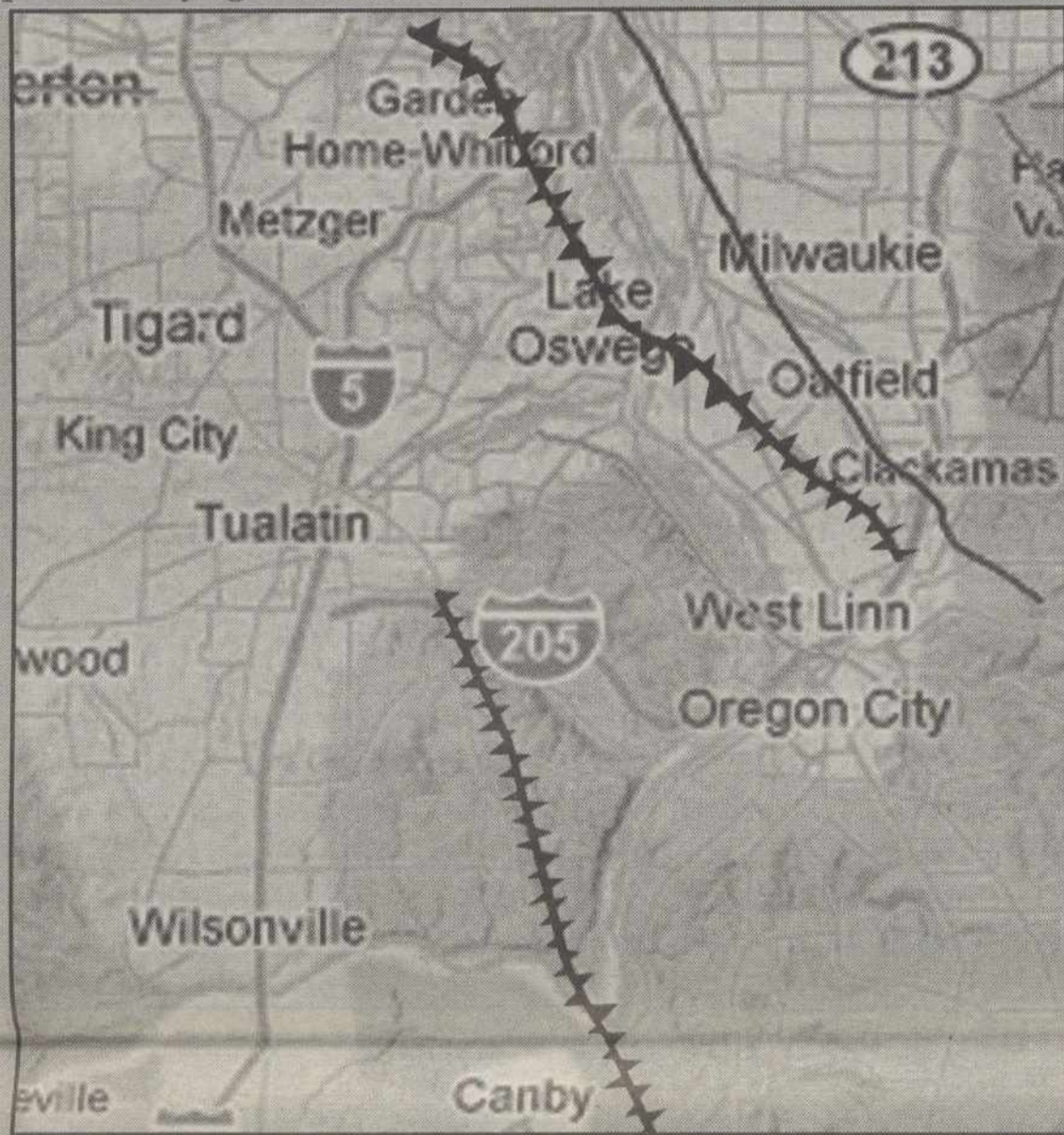
At WLHS the standard procedure for an earthquake is to allow it finish, evacuate the school and, if the students cannot return to school and the school district is unable to transport the students, the school joins efforts with the local emergency respondents.

Although it's clear that students need to be better prepared for a earthquake,

the state government is taking steps to improve safety drills. The current safety statute according to the state legislature will be implemented next year.

That means significant changes such as "At least 30 minutes in each school month shall be used to instruct students on fire, earthquake, and where appropriate, tsunami dangers and drills. At least two drills on earthquakes shall be conducted each year."

While this is clearly a step in a more serious direction it may not be enough to fend off what could strike at any minute.



Map courtesy of U.S. Geological Survey

The Canby-Mollala Fault (south of West Linn) and the Butterfield Fault (to the north) are areas where earthquakes can release their energy. That combined with the unstable soil in the lowlands of West Linn makes the threat of an earthquake like the recent one in Japan especially dangerous.

Art teacher's concerns for daughter exacerbated by recent earthquake in Japanese prefecture

CHARLIE CRAFT

"I knew what to do, but that didn't change the fact that it was frightening. The ground felt like it was rolling underneath my feet and it sounded like a Mack Truck," Sarah Pass, daughter of Lynn Pass, art teacher, said. Pass was teaching in Japan when the March 10 earthquake hit and devastated the country.

Meanwhile, in West Linn, Lynn received a message from Sarah on Facebook that she had just experienced a massive earthquake. Lynn followed up on the earthquake and watched the destruction of the subsequent tsunami on the news. Of the footage she saw she said it was "heart wrenching."

Sarah, who lives in Tokyo,

was not directly affected by the tsunami, but everyone in Japan has been touched by it.

"My co-worker's mother (who is in her 70's), was driving home from the dentist in Fukushima when the tsunami hit causing the river next to the road she was on to flood. Her car was spinning out of control in the water," Sarah said.

The woman managed to climb out the window and swim toward a house calling out for help. Strangers let down a ladder and pulled her up to safety. They provided her with dry clothes, food and shelter until things cleared a day or two later and they could get her home. When she left she saw her car on top of another car, according

to Sarah.

Although Sarah has been affected by the earthquake and the country stricken by the deadly tsunami, Lynn said that her biggest concern for her daughter now is the radiation leakage from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

"I will not rest easy until she's back," Lynn said. However, she said her daughter is committed to her career in Japan. At first she was very concerned about radiation, but a former student who is now a physicist helped explain the situation to her and ease some of her fears.

"However," Lynn said, "As a parent, you never stop being concerned."

Symphonic Band beats Lake Oswego, placing first at TRL Competition

Band TRL

continued from page 1

"You are judged on tone quality which includes balance, blend, and intonation, technique-accuracy of rhythm, and musicality, or the expression on the music," Egan said.

To prepare for the competition the band went on a weekend retreat at "Resort at the Mountain" in Welches. While on the retreat the members played for another clinician to get another point of view on their pieces.

"It gives us a different point of view and is really fun to work with someone different for a change," Brittney Peterson, junior trumpet player, said. Agreeing with Peterson, Myre said, "The clinician really helped us clean everything up and give us the confidence we needed going into TRL."

Besides performing the prepared pieces, the band is scored on the ability to sight-read music. "The hardest part about sight reading is that if you make mistakes you have to make them confidently,"

Peterson, said.

According to Peterson, it is better to make a mistake with confidence than without because it shows you can own your mistakes as well as your successes. To prepare for this task, the band practices reading music by counting out measures and beats.

"I expose [the band] to a lot of different music and bring in clinicians to augment their sight-reading skills," Egan said. In the competition, students get a maximum five minutes to observe and discuss the music, but then must play promptly.

Although the sight-reading portion of the competition is not public, the prepared musical pieces normally receive audiences of 300-400 people and are judged by three or four college band directors. Ultimately, Egan hopes only for a great performance.

"It sounds trite but I just want the band to play relaxed and with confidence, if we do that I think we will have a lot of success," Egan said.

Winning the TRL band competition meant a lot to

the band. "The first thing that my friend, Peter, said on the bus was Mr. (Jeff) Cumpston (former band director who

died in 2009) would be proud," said Myre. "I think a lot of us dedicated this performance to him."

Thespians at State chosen to perform at Elsinore

EMILY REED

Five West Linn Thespians performed at the Elsinore Theater in



Salem in front of 1,000 drama students and advisers from around the state. Anna Stapleton, Lisa Wang, Sophie Starks-Madsen, Sammie Forsey, seniors, and Caroline Hitesman, junior, performed "Mama Who Bore Me" from the play *Spring Awakening*. All five qualified for Nationals, which will be held in June.

On April 29, they will perform this scene during the May Day assembly.

Stapleton not only qualified in the group performance, but with her solo performance as well.

Photo courtesy of Lisa Wang. Sammie Forsey and Patricia Palczewska, seniors, participate in the "Project Runway" workshop at the Thespian State Conference. Of the 18 actors that advanced to state, five qualified for Nationals.

With their success, the band will be continuing on to the State competition in May at Oregon State University.

Her pieces were Juliet from *Romeo and Juliet* and Mae from Sam Shepard's *Fool For Love*.

"Performing at the Elsinore was incredible," Stapleton said.

Thursday, the first day of the conference, competitions were held in the distinctive categories—acting, play writing and stage management. About half of the troupe participated in a stage management competition where they made dresses out of newspaper.

Friday and Saturday, the Thespians had the opportunity to spend the day at workshops and auditions with various professionals. Stapleton taught an auditioning workshop.

Thespians

continued on page 7