

Seaside students challenge communities to be prepared

Student body leaders seeking new school facilities

By KATHERINE LACAZE
EO Media Group

SEASIDE — What they don't know can hurt them. That was the message Seaside High School's student leaders conveyed to the Seaside City Council last week.

Leaders of the Associated Student Body are concerned about how unprepared students and the community are for a catastrophic Cascadia Subduction Zone event. They organized "Don't Catch This Wave" to spread awareness about the issue and raise funds to help move the school district's at-risk campuses out of the tsunami inundation zone.

"We decided we wanted to stand up and work to make a change for ourselves, our peers and the students that sit below us in class and are too young to realize that their lives are in jeopardy every single day when they're at school," treasurer Jesse Trott told the City Council.

She and co-presidents Taylor Barnes and Whitney Westerholm shared a version of a presentation the officers prepared for Seaside High School and other schools across the state.



Katherine Lacaze/EO Media Group

Seaside High School Associated Student Body officers gave a presentation on their tsunami awareness and fundraising campaign, "Don't Catch This Wave," at the Seaside City Council meeting last week. Presenters included co-presidents Whitney Westerholm and Taylor Barnes and treasurer Jesse Trott (behind).

"Our project is all about tsunami preparedness, specifically focusing on the earthquake and tsunami that are supposed to hit our coastline from the very southern tip of Canada to the very northern tip of California," Trott said.

The hope is to raise funds to relocate Gearhart Elementary School, Seaside High School and Broadway Middle School, which all sit in the inundation zone. Seaside Heights Elementary School also could be remodeled and expanded in the process to house all the elementary students, but nothing is decided.

"Relocating our schools is definitely our top priority," Westerholm said.

Although it may be lofty, she added, "it's our goal this year, and even if we don't reach it, we want to keep this program going."

A safe place to be

High school students must walk about 1.6 miles to get to an evacuation site and cross bridges in the process. Broadway Middle School students have about 1 mile to walk. Gearhart Elementary students only have a quarter mile, but their route goes west to a site with an elevation of 46 feet at its highest point — likely not high enough.

"What these kids don't know, and a lot of our high schoolers don't know, is that they are evacuating to somewhere that

isn't going to keep them safe," said Westerholm, who has a younger brother at Gearhart Elementary. "That just breaks my heart, to be honest — that we could have had a safe place for these kids to be, and there isn't."

When the tsunami will hit is uncertain, but there will be hundreds of students at risk when it does, and that is Westerholm's main motivation for helping to spearhead the project, she said. Whether it is the current students or possibly their future children, "the fact of the matter is, it will be a group of 400 kids" that are impacted, she added.

The three at-risk schools are not built to withstand an earthquake, which will be the death of many students. For instance, Barnes said, the high school, built in the 1950s, will likely collapse on those who are unable to get out.

"They will essentially be trapped in the school," he added.

Superintendent Doug Dougherty said the schools do not qualify for any seismic retrofitting money nor can they access those funds to help move the schools because they are in the inundation zone.

The 24-minute presentation is accompanied by a silent video of approximately the same length that shows the high school students walking quickly to their evacuation site "in the best circumstances," Barnes said.

That means no earthquake damage, no debilitated or in-

jured students, and no devastated bridges. However, according to the students, research shows the community would have only about 15 minutes from the start of an earthquake before a tsunami hits.

"That's not very much time," Barnes said.

In the presentation, the students discussed the tsunami that hit Japan in 2011. It is predicted the event on the Pacific Northwest will be similar, Barnes said. The water will move swiftly, faster than a human can outrun, and rise to about 80 to 100 feet in elevation.

Fundraising for relocation

Besides footage and photos from the Japan event, the presentation also included a clip from Oregon Public Broadcasting's recent documentary, "Unprepared." In the documentary, Dougherty talked about the 2013 bond measure the school district sponsored to acquire funds to relocate the schools. The price tag was \$128 million, and the measure failed. Dougherty has said the district will sponsor a similar bond measure next year.

The students' fundraising campaign is primarily for contributing to that effort, but they also hope to put some money toward radio communication equipment, natural disaster preparedness kits, pre-assembled food and sup-

ply kits, advertising about tsunami evacuation routes and immediate disaster relief.

The student body officers are in the process of sending letters to Fortune 500 companies, politicians and celebrities asking for funds. The main goal, though, is to reach out to other students and schools.

In the past couple of weeks, they gave their "Don't Catch This Wave" presentation at Gresham and Scappoose high schools. Gresham High School will dedicate its annual Unity Week to raise funds for the Seaside project. Westerholm said they will go back to Gresham in a couple weeks to present during the kick-off assembly for Unity Week.

The Seaside students also are handing out blue ribbons and asking people to tie them in a visible place to show support and bring awareness to the cause. Additionally, they plan to hold a walk-a-thon, similar to Relay For Life, in the spring. Students will find people to sponsor them to run or walk 1.6 miles, the same distance of their evacuation route.

City Councilor Dana Phillips said she was impressed by what the Associated Student Body officers are doing "on behalf of the safety of the students."

Councilor Jay Barber agreed. "What we're seeing here is that our young people really are leading the way for us to wake up to the reality that we live in," he said.

State lawmaker pushes for student threat assessment system

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — A state representative on the Oregon Task Force on School Safety says he will push for legislation next year to establish a statewide student threat assessment system.

State Rep. Jeff Barker, D-Aloha, the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, already submitted a bill for February's short session that would fund a statewide student threat tip line, where anonymous reports could be made.

The threat assessment system and tip line both come from a list of legislative recommendations the task force made in November to help prevent mass killings at schools, such as the shooting at Umpqua Community College in October.

"Without the threat assessment, the tip line system would not be as strong," said task force member Dave Novotney, superintendent of Willamette Education Service District.

"The way the subcommittee envisioned the tip line and threat

assessment system is it will work like a hand and glove go together, a system of giving information to school officials early and allowing them to interact in a very effective way and have a multidisciplinary, multiagency response," Novotney said. "That is the best practice to deal with threats of violence."

School representatives on the task force said Friday the tip line would spawn an influx of tips to which school staff have no additional capacity or training to respond.

"The data doesn't speak well that we are handling tips as well as we should. Shootings and suicide are happening at (an) accelerated rate," Novotney said. "Getting additional tips and handling the exact same way we always have been is probably going to be ineffective."

"I think we are setting up our schools and districts for failure if we don't empower them to know about how to assess those tips," said Susan Graves, safety coordi-

nator for Lincoln County School District. "The consequences can be enormous."

Exact costs unknown

Barker's bill asks for about \$300,000 per biennium for a tip line, but an exact cost has yet to be determined. Oregon State Police just put out a request for proposals Wednesday for the tip line, said Capt. Tom Worthy.

Initial estimates for the threat assessment system are about \$1 million, Novotney said.

Worthy said the actual cost could exceed that amount, depending whether officials decide to use existing record systems at the Oregon State Police or state Department of Education or buy a new record system.

WANTED

Alder and Maple Saw Logs & Standing Timber

Northwest Hardwoods • Longview, WA

Contact: Steve Axtell • 360-430-0885 or John Anderson • 360-269-2500

"A record system will not come cheap," Worthy said. "That would be a big dollar amount and complicated."

The tip line would have voice, text and mobile application capabilities and might be modeled after a system used in Colorado.

The threat assessment system involves first tier school-based teams to respond to initial threats and second tier community-based threat assessment teams to respond to more serious threats.



The teams would provide interventions to students at risk of committing violence against others or themselves. Interventions could include mental health counseling, mentors and additional supervision, among other measures.

The task force is set to sunset in 2017. Members on Friday

agreed to ask lawmakers to extend the group's expiration until 2019. Task force members said they would like to continue their work with a focus on prevention.

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

'Deadliest Catch' spinoff set for Newport

Associated Press

Makers of the popular Discovery network series "Deadliest Catch" are heading south to a fishing village in Oregon for a spinoff.

The new series, called "Deadliest Catch: Dungeon Cove," is set to premiere next fall. It will focus on families involved in the Dungeness crab fishing industry in Newport, the network said Friday.

The announcement doesn't mean that the original series, which is set to begin its 12th season in the spring, is winding down, said Joseph Boyle, Discovery's executive producer for the show. Discovery executives were intrigued by the spinoff proposal from Original Productions, which makes "Deadliest Catch," he said. The original series, about fishing boats in Alaska's Bering Sea, is one of the network's signature programs.

The industry around Newport was interesting to Discovery because fishermen race to catch as many fish as they can during a season, as opposed to working with a quota, he said.

"It's every man for yourself," Boyle said. "They go out there and fish their hearts out."

The Daily Astorian

WILL BE CLOSED

AT NOON
DECEMBER 24
& ALL DAY
DECEMBER 25

We will not be publishing a paper on December 25th so that all of our employees and carriers can spend the holidays with their families.

Happy Holidays

L&D RACETECH

We are your one-stop bike and ATV horsepower shop

SALES • SERVICE • PARTS • APPAREL • ACCESSORIES
ATV'S • MOTORCYCLES NEW & USED

Try our **layaway** program and **FREE Christmas Eve delivery** on all recreational vehicles

Customer Appreciation Event

Stop by Tuesday, Dec. 22 • 5-9pm

20% off

ALL IN-STOCK RIDING GEAR, CLOTHING & APPAREL

HYOSUNG

thor

KTM

Husqvarna

ARCTIC CAT

SPY+

1035 Marlin Ave., SE Warrenton
503-861-2636 | LandDRaceTech.com
Mon - Sat: 9am-6pm | Sunday: 9am-3pm

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Thanks to all of our wonderful customers for a great year!

EL COMPADRE

Mexican Food



119 S. Main St. • Warrenton 503-861-2906

1900 Pacific Ave. N. • Long Beach, Wash. 360-642-8280