

Cottage Grove Sentinel

Full-day K

Slew of adjustments precedes start of full-day kindergarten

BY JON STINNETT
The Cottage Grove Sentinel



photo by Jon Stinnett
Mina Christianson teaches a blended kindergarten/first-grade class at London Elementary. Kindergarten students will spend their entire day at school next fall.

Purchasing school supplies, meeting the new teacher, adapting to a new schedule — parents and area five-year olds are already eyeing the adjustments they'll need to make when a new group of kindergarteners arrives at area schools next fall. And when the new students get to school, they'll encounter a group of educators that is itself adjusting to a new format for their school day.

Back in 2011, Oregon's Senate Bill 248 mandated a full day of kindergarten for the state's students beginning with the 2015-16 school year, and while teachers and administrators with South Lane School District say they've been preparing for some time for the changes it entails and are excited about the opportunities full-day kindergarten can offer, there are still changes to be made and questions to be answered before the first day of school.

"It will be a great program," said Harrison Elementary Principal Ali Nice, "but there's a lot

to consider."

Adding kindergarten for a full day means twice as many kindergarten teachers for most schools, in addition to more help from educational assistants and the addition of curriculum materials and furniture for new teachers and their students. First, though, comes the task of finding the space for classrooms to keep the District's youngest students in class all day.

At Harrison and Bohemia Elementary, the District's largest elementary schools, adding full-day kindergarten means the shuffling of other groups and even the re-envisioning of spaces in buildings that have already reached their capacity

limits.

"We've been out of room for a while," said Bohemia Principal Jackie Lester, who explained that a plan to repurpose part of that school's beloved library has been scrapped due to the backlash it generated. Lester pointed out that Bohemia is home to many programs not housed at other district schools such as instruction in English as a second language, A Primary Connection and a behavior support class offered in conjunction with South Lane Mental Health. Bohemia's computer lab is also in high demand for state testing and other needs, but Lester said the school has elected to try out a mobile computer lab

in order to utilize that room as a kindergarten classroom. The other classroom the school must provide formerly housed three special education groups, which will also share space.

"It doesn't leave a closet unused," Lester said. "It's really tight; we still don't know exactly what it will look like."

Nice said that Harrison Elementary also needs to add a full classroom and will utilize a room that currently houses its reading specialist and special education teacher, who will move to the school's current music room. Harrison's music teacher will also go mobile, carrying what instruments and

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Council adopts Main Street plan

BY JON STINNETT
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A plan to remodel Main Street in downtown Cottage Grove that was developed over a year and a half and drew hours of impassioned testimony in the council chambers of City Hall was approved without a trace of fanfare at the City Council's Monday, April 13 meeting.

Over that time, the debate over many aspects of the Main Street Refinement Plan drew large crowds and led the leaders of the Cottage Grove Planning Commission and City Council to extend public hearings so all who wished could add their opinion to the record. The MSRP also put a spotlight on the condition and eventual fate of the two rows of trees lining Main Street, which became a hot topic in public hearings and in the public sphere beyond. And yet on Monday night, the crowds were gone, and but a few of the stalwart participants in the plan's public process remained to see the final approval.

Among its more notable impacts, the Main Street Refinement Plan calls for a narrowing of the width of travel lanes on Main Street from 16 to 12 ½ feet. It removes the pronounced crown or hump of Main Street itself and widens the sidewalks that line it; adds utilities outside and calls for the systematic replacement of the street trees. The remodel the plan lays out carries a price tag of about \$9 million, and it will be used by the City's planning department as the basis for efforts to garner grant funding to implement those changes.

The Council first voted 5-0 to adopt the plan on March 23 with two councilors absent. Councilor Jeff Gowing returned from a trip to New Zealand to provide the only 'Nay' vote Monday night. After the meeting, Gowing reiterated that he had spoken to about 20 downtown business owners and said the majority of them were not in favor of the Refinement Plan. He talked again of Main Street as the main corridor between the east and west sides of Cottage Grove and how narrowing Main Street would hamper that corridor and said that he was sticking to his guns and maintaining his opposition to the plan.

Maintenance, security prioritized for bond

BY JON STINNETT
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Deferred maintenance projects, safety and security upgrades, the renovation of the Warren H. Daugherty Aquatic Center — a committee charged with exploring a local bond levy to replace Harrison Elementary School in Cottage Grove had an additional list of projects to consider with potential funds left after the construction of a new school, and on Wednesday, April 8, the committee agreed nearly unanimously on five items.

Upgrades to South Lane School District's security systems and computer networks also made the list, and coming in fifth was a hybrid of upgrading some of the District's athletic fields and the theater currently in place in Cottage Grove High School's cafeteria.

The committee was formed early this year and charged with exploring the bond for a new Harrison, a 70-year old building tapped for replacement by district officials for some time. The District feels a recovering economy and the upcoming expiration of the bond used to replace Cottage Grove High School may make the timing right for the passage of the bond, with the likely target of either the May or November of 2016 election to put the issue before local voters.

Among the first questions facing the committee last week was whether to attempt a 20 or 25-year bond, with an overwhelming majority of those present seeking the 25-year option. This time frame means that, after the estimated \$21 million necessary to rebuild Harrison, the District would have some \$8.8 million in bond money remaining.

A list of five deferred maintenance projects that included replacing the roof at Lincoln Middle School and the heating and cooling system at Bohemia Elementary came in at an estimated cost of just over \$2.5 million. Security upgrades including the addition of cameras throughout the District totaled \$915,740, and network and computer upgrades are expected to cost about \$1.5 million.

Committee members seemed in agreement that something needed to be done about the aquatic center, with many expressing their desire for a new pool but ultimately choosing the renovation option at an estimated cost of almost \$2.8 million.

Members of the committee also liked several of the possibilities of a new recreation complex at the Cottage Grove High School site, which could include new turf fields, a fitness center and other amenities. Many also sought to respond to a recent survey indicating a

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Presentation honors local Rosie the Riveters

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For those who did not live through those times, it can be difficult to imagine the reality of a total worldwide war requiring the efforts of all of a nation's citizens to ensure victory. On Wednesday, April 8, a panel of four local ladies came to the Cottage Grove Community Center to share their stories of such times and the efforts each played in helping overcome the enemy during World War II.

America's Rosie the Riveters have since become a cultural icon, the symbol of the real-life women who entered the workforce or changed professions during the war to take positions vacated by men fighting overseas. The term was coined in 1942 with a song by Redd Evans and John Jacob Loeb that became a national hit, and the image of a woman in a red bandana operating a rivet gun is still recognizable to many today.

But much like their male counterparts, the real-life Rosie the Riveters are advancing past the age of 90 and are passing away at alarming rates, according to Yvonne Fasold, herself a



photo by Jon Stinnett
"It still fits!" — Rosie the Riveter Opal Nelson (left) and ARRA President Yvonne Fasold show off Nelson's Red Cross uniform.

"Rosebud," the descendant of a Rosie, who also serves as the President of the American Rosie the Riveters Association. Sisters Fasold and Corolene Corriea also spoke of their connection to the Rosies at last week's presentation, organized by the Cottage Grove Genealogical Society, which found a nice crowd on hand to hear the stories of local Rosies.

"Our two main ARRA goals are to honor the women and to preserve their legacy," Fasold said. "To do that, we need to spread the word and involve younger generations. When we talk to schools, it becomes 'living history.'"

Fasold pointed out that many local Rosie the Riveters have passed away recently, mentioning Betty Fisher and Maggie

Porter with a catch in her voice. Fasold credited Opal Nelson, one of Cottage Grove's most recognizable Rosies, with helping her decide to pursue the presidency of the national organization.

"Once I met this group, I knew I had to step up," she said.

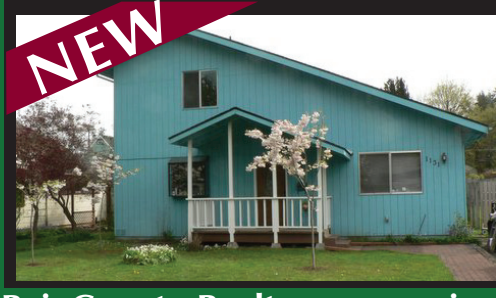
There are about 15 Rosies that remain active in the Eugene chapter of AARA, Fasold said, and three of the four Rosies with Cottage Grove ties were on hand to share their stories Wednesday, minus Arlene Williams. Cottage Grove's Alice Heiney is proud to be the oldest local Rosie at age 97, and Doris Graham and Nelson also shared their stories, in addition to Springfield's Lorette Wedlake.

Heiney brought along a cartridge of the type she inspected during the war. She and others would inspect the weight and gauge of each bullet before placing it in a big hopper bound for another part of the Denver-based factory. Heiney said that all those working there were a patriotic bunch. She added that it was difficult during those times to obtain housing for working mothers.

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