

LARSEN

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In addition to teaching jazz and concert band and choir classes at CGHS, Larsen has also directed the annual Rhythm and Blues Revue and the yearly six-week summer band camp.

Bob Dill, who founded the band camp and has worked closely with Larsen in directing it since 2010, knows that the local music community is about to lose quite an asset.

"David is a superior performer," said Dill. "He can play all

of the woodwind instruments, and he's very skilled at the saxophone, clarinet and flute. He's also brought a great energy to many students. I've seen him put together fine programs at the high school as well as at the band camp."

Dill, a retired music teacher, said he has seen every edition of the Rhythm and Blues Revue, and that he has noticed an increasing community support for the show since Larsen began to take over.

Larsen has also directed many

award-winning music groups during his tenure at CGHS. At the Heritage Festival in Seattle this past May, the jazz band and jazz choir won silver medals. Cottage Grove students also won three out of six solo awards. But as Larsen looks back on his accomplishments, he says it's not the hardware that stands out.

"I'm not the first award-winning musical director at Cottage Grove," he said. "It has always been an active and interested musical community that seeks to learn and do better. I'd like

to think that I helped keep that transition alive. The accomplishments that I look back on are helping students succeed. Some of them have gone on to major in music in college or even have adult careers in music. For them it wasn't just a passing fancy, and I was happy to help them find those opportunities."

Devin Wright, class of '07, played guitar in Larsen's jazz band and the saxophone in the concert band. He went on to earn an undergraduate degree in jazz studies from the University

of Oregon, and he is currently working towards a Masters in jazz studies with a focus on composition and arrangement.

"When I first met David, I was already touring and recording music with a band, but he introduced me to the academic world of music. I remember I took his class music history, and he played a recording of Charlie Parker; it really stuck my interest," Wright said.

Rust said that the school has completed its interview process and has made a job offer to

one of the candidates; however, nothing will not be official without the school board's approval.

"David really built the music program up again. And he raised the bar for the music department, especially for the jazz band, and that I hope that continues," Rust said.

A farewell concert for Larsen will be held on Aug. 8 at the Brewstation beginning at 6 p.m. The event will feature past and present students, as well as community musicians.

WILDWOOD

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attempting to rescue his younger brother, who eventually resurfaced. The assistance of a tow truck was eventually required to remove the downed log from the falls that had trapped Smith, who was honored with a Carnegie Hero Fund Commission award for his lifesaving efforts last week. Past drownings have reportedly occurred at the falls in 1996 and 1999.

Last week, Lane County Parks Department Mike Russell said the department is working in tandem with the Lane County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue department to craft signage that can "make people aware of the danger" at Wildwood Falls, danger that can include rocks, debris and cold, fast water.

"We can't really put up specific signage saying, 'Hey, be careful, this is a waterfall,'" Russell said. "But we think it's appropriate to let people know

that there have been incidents there in the past and they should watch out for themselves."

Russell said the parks department took the initiative to explore the possibility of signage on its own, though several local residents have put forth the notion of warning signs at Wildwood following the most recent drowning, and some have suggested a memorial sign there to commemorate the loss of life over the years.

"It's a publicly accessible park, so we're not in a position to enforce anything or kick people off the falls in dangerous conditions," Russell said. "We're likely going to put up a statement that references ORS 105, the 'Recreational Use Immunity Law,' which states that the County is not liable for injury or death resulting from recreation in the area."

Russell said that Director Tim Chase of Lane County Search and Rescue is also currently working to compile a list of fatalities at Wildwood to

be placed on the sign as a memorial and a warning, but Chase said the effort to compile that list has been more difficult than he envisioned.

"I expected a simple procedure to figure out how many people have perished there, and we're working with the Medical Examiner's office to look through its records, but it's been more difficult than I thought," Chase said. He said that Search and Rescue reports of the last 12 years are geo-located, which means they should be easily accessible by pinpointing the location of the falls, though only the two most recent drownings are currently listed.

Chase said that when he began his job with Search and Rescue in January, outgoing director John Miller drove him to Wildwood Falls, specifically stating that "this is where somebody is going to drown shortly." Miller's warning would prove prophetic a few months later.

"The patrol captains say it's something that

happens every year, and there's got to be some validity to that, though I'm having a hard time finding evidence of it," Chase said.

There have been discussions about preventative measures at Wildwood Falls in the past, Chase said, though he's unsure why the possibility of signage didn't come up sooner.

"None of the possibilities have been feasible," he said. "Fencing, rails, etc. have been talked about, but they wouldn't stop people anyway. I don't know why it hasn't happened in the past, but we're hoping that basic signage can help."

Chase said Search and Rescue welcomes information about past drownings at Wildwood Falls and encouraged those with such knowledge to call 541-682-4369. Russell said the County would like to have the sign in place by the "end of July, for sure."

OFFBEAT

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on the way to the rescue, and then the engine throttle broke; it would run at full throttle only. Then, while they were trying to persuade the men in the rigging to jump, the boat got into a run of heavy breakers that somersaulted the boat, pitching the crew into the drink, stopping the engine and tearing up the steering gear.

"After a few moments we all managed by the greatest effort to get on board again," Rimer said, "but found the boat and engine room full of water. ... As we were in a seething cauldron and unable to handle our boat with oars, I wigwagged to the Point Adams boat to tow us into quieter water."

Wicklund responded quickly and towed the other lifeboat out of the breakers, where the tugboat Fearless just happened — by a life-saving bit of luck — to be standing by. Then he returned to the men on the mast for one more try at getting them to jump.

Perhaps encouraged by the relative ease with which the lifeboat crew had gathered up its own castaways, or maybe fearful that their lack of nerve could cost these rescuers their lives, the men on the mast hesitated no more. Two of them leaped into the drink and were hauled triumphantly aboard; the third, who was badly injured, dropped lifelessly into the water, and when they pulled him aboard the boat they found him dead.

The ebb tide had started again, and now Wicklund's lifeboat was having trouble too; they were pretty sure it would not survive an attempt to cross the bar. So instead, Wicklund headed out to sea, to the Columbia River Lightship. There they all climbed aboard — safe at last.

It wasn't until two days later that the seas moderated enough for rescuers and rescued to be brought back across the bar to shore. In the meantime, the gale had increased to hurricane force and torn the damaged motor lifeboat loose from its tether. Neither it, nor the body of the dead sailor they'd picked up in it, was ever seen again.

As for Rimer's motor lifeboat, the tugboat Fearless was heading toward the bar with it at

the end of a four-inch tow line when the tug's skipper, Captain E.D. Parsons, suddenly started worrying about its crew. Stopping short of the bar, he ordered every man off the lifeboat and onto his tug. There was some reluctance to comply — at least one life station crewman asked to be allowed to stay on the lifeboat; but Parsons was the captain, and Parsons' answer was a very firm "no."

Then they set out to cross the bar.

A few minutes later, as the two boats were carefully threading their way between the breakers on each side of the channel, the four-inch towing line to the now-empty motor lifeboat snapped. The lifeboat, wallowing free, promptly drifted into

the breakers and was picked up and tumbled — over and over and over, like a piece of driftwood.

Had anyone remained aboard the lifeboat, he would have been a sure-fire goner. But the Fearless would have had to turn around and try to rescue him anyway — which would have involved letting the tugboat take the mountainous incoming seas full on the beam, at extreme danger of a rollover.

Thanks to Parsons' good decision, he never had to make that call. All that lay behind him was a heavily damaged empty boat. So on chugged the tugboat, crossing the bar without further incident. The lifeboat was never seen again; but every member of its crew made it home.

Unfair though it is to make a comparison like this, it's hard not to speculate on how things might have turned out had Captain Parsons been the skipper of the Rosecrans.

(Sources: U.S. Coast Guard Historian's office; Gibbs, James Jr. Pacific Graveyard. Portland: Binford, 1950; Fore 'n' Aft magazine, June 1906)

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