

## HEALTH

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did a clean environment, strong sense of community and access to affordable and healthy food. Access to healthcare, affordable and healthy food, good jobs and a healthy economy, affordable housing and good schools were listed as most important for healthy communities, while problems with alcohol and drug abuse, lack of affordable housing and homelessness and poverty were deemed

the County's biggest obstacles.

A total of 50 focus groups were asked what were the most important ingredients for a healthy and thriving community, and many listed services for vulnerable populations, housing options, mental healthcare and wellness and quality education. The most critical health and quality of life issues in Lane County, according to 53 "key informants," were services

for vulnerable populations, mental healthcare, alcohol and drug addiction treatment, access to housing and healthcare access and affordability.

Statistics from the assessment show that the percentage of the population over the age of 65 continues to rise, that 15 percent of the County's population has a disability, that the median household income in the County lags with regard to the state and nation and

about 20 percent of the County's population lives below poverty level. (The assessment uses data from 2013). Lane County has a much higher prevalence of obesity and high blood pressure than the rest of Oregon. Suicide rates have slowly increased over the last decade, and suicides are reportedly more common than vehicle accidents for those between 15 and 44 years of age.

## BOND

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community and other groups by the end of last week, and the bond's outreach committee has also been busy getting the word out. Bridgens said supporters will begin canvassing area neighborhoods on Feb. 27.

At its last meeting, the School Board heard about South Lane's chances of receiving matching grant funds for its proposed construction due to the passage of Senate Bill 447, which earmarked \$125 million in two installments for districts attempting to pass bonds. Parent told the Board that the pot of money available in May will be split into two portions, with

one portion based on a District's percentage of students that receive free and reduced lunches and the other in a random allotment. She said South Lane appears fourth on the waiting list for the prioritized portion and is eligible to receive \$4 million toward the bond if it passes.

"Looking at some of the districts on this list, it seems that some of them may not be very prepared," she said. "It's more than likely that we would move up on this list."

Parent said the Feb. 22 meeting, which begins at 5:30 p.m. at the School District office, will mostly concern the Harrison bond.

## GRANGE

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Founded nationally in 1867, the Grange, officially known as the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, was begun to promote agriculture and the needs of America's farmers. It features a hierarchical organization from the national down to the Pomona, or county, level, then on to community Grange Halls, and it prides itself on its inclusiveness.

Members of Dorena Grange say that, prior to a fire that destroyed their hall, their Grange boasted upwards of 250 members, many of whom took advantage of insurance provided by the organization. These days,

however, Snook said the Grange only has about 16 members, and those who are responsible for much of its work are advancing in age.

"I've been the Master here since 2006," Snook said. "But I'll be 87 next week, and I'm running out of gas. A lot of us are. We need help."

The Grange has 17 offices at the community level, Snook said, and as such Dorena Grange does not have enough members to fill them all. The drop-off in membership, which has led to fewer membership contributions, has also put less people into contact with the Grange and led to diminishing rentals of the Grange Hall, another key

source of income.

"We used to have a nice procession at each meeting where we'd march in from outside," said Jean Snook, who has served as chaplain at Dorena for 15 years. "But now we just don't have enough people."

Joe Snook said that Dorena Grange has found it necessary to file for consolidation with another Grange Hall, likely London Grange, but the group still hopes it doesn't have to happen. They've been given three months to recruit new members, and on Friday Snook surmised that they'd still need at least five more to not only keep the Grange alive but revitalize its efforts in the community.

The Grange's new members heard about its deep involvement with the Western Oregon Exposition on Friday, in addition to many of the finer points of its organization and the plays each Grange puts on for its neighbors in the springtime.

"The Grange works to better the community," Snook said. "We have opportunities for both young and old to interact in a spirit of fellowship."

There are currently Grange Halls in Lorane, Creswell, Dorena and London, and Alice Nowicki, a member of London Grange who also serves as the Grange secretary on the state level, said many of them are struggling to recruit new mem-

bers. "As the population gets older, we're not attracting a lot of younger members," Nowicki said. "It becomes difficult to manage the day-to-day operations, and monetary support is important, too."

The Grange hopes that hosting meetings of local 4-H clubs will attract youth and, in turn, their parents to the Grange. Local organization cgFEAST, which examines and promotes the local food system in South Lane County, has also endeavored to help, and cgFEAST member Wendy Kelsh said many of the members inducted on Friday come from the cgFEAST ranks.

"We felt it was a doable goal

to help out the Grange," Kelsh said.

So why does the Grange have trouble attracting younger members? For Snook and others, it's a matter of new technology.

"People are too interested in those electronic gadgets," he said. "They can sit there and look at their hands and they don't have to communicate with the outside world. But you have to associate and learn to get along within the community. The Grange gets us off our butts. At my age, it's awful easy to just sit here in this recliner, but the Grange brings us together all the time."

## OFFBEAT

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— mere minutes, in a worst-case scenario — in which to take to the boats and hope for the best. And lifeboats did not fare very well in storms like the one then blowing the Challenger around.

In desperation, the Challenger headed north, trying to make Willapa Bay on the coast of Washington — where even if the seas proved impassable, the Challenger would have more of a chance if a last-ditch desperate beaching run were necessary.

At Willapa Bay, the tug Astoria, seeing the smoke and the distress signals, charged to the rescue. In crossing the bar, the doughty tug dug into a massive

comber that swept across her deck, knocking Captain Chris Olsen down and leaving him badly injured; but his tug managed to make it across the bar and get a line on the now-visibility-smoking Challenger.

Back across the bar the tug steamed, with its stricken rescuee wallowing behind, and up into the channel of the Willapa River to South Bend. And that's where Captain Nelson learned how close he and his crew had come to disaster:

"Two hours later, flames broke through the cabin," Nelson recounted, "and the schooner had to be scuttled."

The ship was sent to the bottom in 15 feet of river water, quenching the smoking lime

and extinguishing the blazing lumber in a spectacular cloud of smoky steam. Meanwhile, Captain Nelson and his exhausted crew had been hustled off to the local hospital to be treated for smoke inhalation, burns and other injuries sustained in their desperate race with time and fire. They also got a good drink for the first time since their freshwater tanks had been breached in the hurricane six days before.

As for the Challenger, the following day inspectors declared

her a loss. The storm had done enough damage that she wasn't worth refloating. So at low tide, when her decks were above the water, salvage crews scrambled over her stripping off everything of value; and the remains were then dynamited to prevent them from becoming a hazard to navigation.

(Sources: Gibbs, James Jr. Pacific Graveyard. Portland: Binford, 1950; Portland Morning Oregonian archives, 07-08 Nov 1904)

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