

# Kennedy school preps for 'Delight-ful' move

By Caitlyn May  
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Fifty percent of students at Kennedy Alternative High School are homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. They couch surf, stay with friends, live in shelters but the common thread is the same: they have nowhere to call home. Until now.

Kennedy has taken up residence in several places including modular buildings but this summer it will be making a more permanent stand and giving students a sense of stability.

"This move gives us the opportunity for a permanent home and allows us to expand our programs," said Kennedy Principal Tom Horn. "But for so long Kennedy had a non-permanent feeling the kids didn't deserve."

The move to Delight Valley will come over the

summer and for the first year, Kennedy will share the space with Head Start.

"When the whole bond process was going on I think the conversation for staff and students turned to 'how do we get a new school too?'" Horn said.

In November of last year, voters approved a \$36 million bond with the majority of the money slated for a new elementary school. Harrison has already begun going through the city's planning department and a groundbreaking ceremony marked the start of the project in April. It's expected to be open for students by Fall, 2018.

"And so, Delight Valley seemed like the perfect opportunity," Horn said. "It's a total win-win for us and Head Start."

While the building will provide Kennedy students with more opportunities that range from a new greenhouse to a new gym floor for students who have never had their own gym, the move

raises some concerns.

"The community might be concerned with transportation," Horn said. Delight Valley is just outside of Cottage Grove.

However, Horn said the handful of miles is worth it for the new facility. "We will work with transportation," he said. "We'll have multiple bus runs and locations. If they miss the first bus, there will still be an opportunity for them to get to school."

Additionally, the district will fund a cook at Kennedy for the first time, rather than having food transported from one of the other South Lane schools. An important step for a school that serves 100 percent free lunch, a service that will not be effected by the current budget crunch facing South Lane School District. According to superintendent Krista Parent, that program utilizes federal funds and is not subject to the diminished budget coming from the Oregon Legislature.

"They're going to grow their own food," Horn

said. "We're known for growing stuff."

They may already have the reputation but this summer, Kennedy will also have the tools to grow its own food.

The Talbot Foundation and the Healing Matrix have donated money and grants in the amount of \$40,000 to purchase a kit green house.

"It's state of the art," Horn said. "The top opens up, it's beautiful and the students are going to build that this summer."

That's not to say there isn't still use for the old greenhouse. Several pieces of that structure have been utilized in the new construction at Delight Valley that will soon house the 90 students attending Kennedy.

"We're experiential learning," Horn said. "And now it's nice the kids will have a permanent place. It gets a guy verklempt."

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# Yoncalla asks voters for \$4 million

By Caitlyn May  
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No one can say for sure when Yoncalla's

high school will see its last day. At least not according to Yoncalla School Board Chair Carl Van Loon.

"It can be some unforeseen thing a few years from now or that school could last 15 more years but the truth is, it's still deteriorating and its days are kind of numbered unless we do a number of repairs," he said. Architects have estimated the cost of repairing the school completely at \$9 to \$10 million.

Yoncalla voters will have the chance to fund some of those repairs by approving a \$3.95 million bond on the ballot for the

May 16 special election. Voters would pay 83 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. For a home assessed at \$100,000, residents would pay \$83 per year.

"It comes out to \$6.92 per month which we think is affordable," Van Loon said.

Aside from repairs Van Loon describes as "critical," the school would also need to be seismically fitted and brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. However, Yoncalla has already received \$2.8 million in grant funding to address the seismic improvements.

"Voting yes on the bond is the cheapest option. What happens when the school fails and we have to bus our students to North

Douglas?" Van Loon noted. North Douglas High School is 13 years older than Yoncalla's facility.

"There's an economic impact when a community closes schools," Van Loon said. "It's not good. Home values drops, people gravitate to the community that has a high school and so losing this school would do damage to our community."

Residents should have received their ballots. If you believe you have not received your ballot and are a resident of Douglas County, please contact the Douglas County Clerk at (541) 440-4252.

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### 912 Project meeting

We will learn about an effort to educate public officials on how to take back control of public lands at the next meeting of the Cottage Grove 912 Project on May 15th, 6:30 PM, at Stacy's Covered Bridge Restaurant, 401 E Main. The meeting is open to the public.

### United Way volunteers

Kids in Transition to School (KITS) is a free twelve-week program that provides a boost to incoming kindergartener's literacy, social and self-regulation skills. Turn

a young life around by joining neighbors as we hang door hangers with information about KITS. This is a great "boots on the ground" opportunity to get some exercise, help the community and work directly with non-profit impact teams. Volunteers will do routes in small teams and will cover different neighborhoods depending on school boundaries. United Way will provide walking maps, snacks, a water bottle and a brief training at the beginning of each shift. For more information, dates, and to register contact Julie at 541-741-6000 or email jdibiase@unitedwaylane.org

### Human Society sale

The Cottage Grove Humane Society is having a plant sale on Friday from 9 to 4 and on Saturday from 9 to 3 at the American Legion Hall at 826 W. Main St.

### Household hazardous round-up

Properly dispose of cleaning and gardening supplies by bringing them to the Harrison Ave. Fire Station on Saturday, May 13 from 8 to 2. If improperly disposed of, many household items can cause significant harm to drinking water and the environment.

# THANK YOU



The Staff and Board of Community Sharing would like to thank the following Sponsors and Cooks for their support in making the 2017 Helping Hands Souper a great success.

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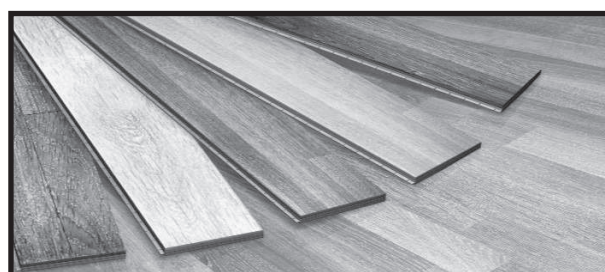
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