

ART STUDENTS COMPLETE CAROUSEL HORSES

By Caitlyn May
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The students in Erin Royce's advanced art class at Cottage Grove High School have been working on restoring animals for the antique carousel planned for Main St. since the first trimester of the school year. Now, as many in the class prepare to move on from their high school careers, the animals are days away from completion as well and have earned another notch of community support.

"It's been a great experience for the kids," Royce said, noting that the process to restoring the carousel animals was a professional one. Students had to submit proposals to the Friends of the Cottage Grove Carousel before they were approved for work and have been held to deadlines.

There are six animals all together, five horses and a gazelle, each with names ranging from Harold to Sunny to Percy.

The Friends of the Cottage Grove Carousel have been behind the effort to bring the antique carousel to Main St. periodically for the last 20 years in one form of the group or another. The latest reincarnation is headed by Don Williams, Russ McGuire and carousel owner Judy Cash. Cash purchased the carousel after inheriting funds from a family friend and traveling across the country after deciding Cottage Grove was the perfect location for such a tourist attraction. After years of being stored in a barn and in need of restoration, the animals of the carousel were distributed throughout town at local shops and six found a temporary home in Royce's art class.

The process to making the animals presentable again has been a long one. Students first had to sand the animals down, apply filler to the damaged portions and then paint the animals in accordance to their proposed designs.

"It takes a long time," Royce said. "It's oil paint and it dries slow so you can't put a coat on one day and come back the next day for another coat." Each animal requires three coats of primer and three coats of paint.

"They're coming to the end," McGuire said. "A lot of those students won't be there next year."

According to Royce, McGuire is right. The students who did not finish their horses before graduation will leave the animals to next year's students. Some of the horses may also find themselves being worked on throughout the summer as Royce says the unfinished animals will be stored at the school for students to continue with over the school break.

"The great thing about my classes is they're like a family," Royce said, "and so some of the students who didn't finish, sophomores and juniors will pick up right where they left off."

Efforts to bring the carousel to Main St. are still underway with the board for Friends of the Cottage Grove Carousel working on adding local historical photos to the attractions sideboards and general fundraising ideas. The group is in need of funds to complete professional architectural drawings for the project, as well as a space to house the carousel on Main St. to provide an easy to access location for future tourists.



Students at Cottage Grove High School work to complete their restorations of animals that are part of an antique carousel headed to Main St. as a tourist attraction.

South Lane Mental Health reports to SLSD

By Caitlyn May
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South Lane Mental Health may be in the middle of a leadership change but it's business as usual for the staff which includes having a presence in South Lane schools.

South Lane Mental Health's Valeria Clarke presented to the South Lane School Board on Monday, June 5 to detail the organization's vast involvement in all but one school in the district.

"We're not in Child's Way but we have one or more counselors in every other school," Clarke said.

South Lane Mental Health was started in 1988 by a local group of concerned citizens hoping to respond to the community's growing mental health issues. It currently serves approximately 1,500 people per year offering counseling for a host of mental health related circumstances.

"We are putting in 99 hours per week in the school's," Clarke told the board. "I was surprised too when I did the math but we are there 99 hours

a week on average."

Counselors staff the high school, middle school and elementary schools throughout South Lane School District and have seen the fruits of their labor.

"I'm going to tell a story," Clarke said. "We got a call from the principal at the high school." Through staff and students, the high school administration had become aware of a student's plan to harm themselves. Through counseling from South Lane Mental Health staff on the premises and follow-up aid, they were able to find a solution. "He's changed his plan," Clarke said. "Having the resource on campus really is making a difference."

According to the American Psychological Association, one-third of college students in the U.S. have had trouble focusing over the last 12 months due to depression and anxiety. Of those who seek mental health help, 30 percent have seriously considered suicide. South Lane Mental Health reaches these students before they get to college but

youth.gov--a cohort of more than 20 federal agencies--notes children ages 6 through 17 also have staggering percentages of mental health needs. According to the data, 21 percent of low-income students between 6 and 17 years of age may be dealing with a mental health issue. Seventeen percent have experienced a mental, emotional or behavioral disorder that requires outside help and counseling. Children in the foster care system and juvenile justice system were more likely to experience a mental health episode and require the help of a mental health professional.

South Lane has also formed a partnership with the school district to offer parenting programs through Peggy's Primary Connection. Parents are brought through a 10-week course that aims to help couples better connect with their young children to form a bond that will last through the sometimes turbulent teenage years.

"You can see parents come in, you'll have a father come in and you can tell he's there because his wife is making him," Clarke said. "But you'll

see as he takes what he's learned home and practices it, he can see it's working and he now has a different relationship with his child. It gives me the chills."

Currently, South Lane Mental Health serves 135 children throughout the district with counselors and skills trainers who are called on to help children who would otherwise struggle with integration.

"Some kids that are high needs also get someone assigned to them to help them learn how to be in the community and give them the tools they need to be out in the community," Clarke said.

Services offered by South Lane Mental Health come free of charge to the school district. Currently, the organization is transitioning its leadership position after executive director Tom Wheeler announced his retirement that will become effective next year.

"We're hoping to increase services," Clarke said. "But this all started with one counselor in one school."



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•CLARIFICATION•

In the June 7 edition of The Sentinel, "We are a Village" identified Don Williams as a key contributor to the efforts of Karen Munsell in lobbying for reform concerning whip-its. The story also identified Commissioner Gary Williams in one instance. The story noted that Williams and Munsell still eat breakfast together nearly every morning. This reference was, in accordance to AP style, identifying Don Williams, not Commissioner Gary Williams.

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