

Harrison construction continues



Above, a Sentinel file photo shows progress at Harrison Elementary School as walls were going up. The school is currently a week behind schedule but expected to be completed by the start of the 2018-2019 school year.

By Caitlyn May
cmay@cgsentinel.com

South Lane School District Maintenance and Facilities Manager Matt Allen told the school board Monday night that things at the new Harrison Elementary construction site were “really flying.”

The new school, funded by the lion’s share of a \$35 million bond aimed at improving secu-

rity and technology as well as adding infrastructure around the district, is expected to be completed by Fall 2018. It’s currently week behind schedule.

“A week behind is a great place to be,” Allen said.

The new school broke ground 10 months ago with an expected price tag of approximately \$19 million but construction costs have been driven up by the numerous infrastructure projects

around the state sending the price of the Harrison construction to around \$23 million.

On Monday, Allen detailed the progress crews have made, citing “cooperative weather.” Paving has taken place in the parking lot, classrooms on both the west and east end of the building have been fitted with cabinets and windows are in place in the reception area. He expects the building to have power by next week.

Board member Taylor Wilhour, via iPad, asked if the early learning center would be completed in time for the start of next year. Bundled with the construction of the new elementary school, the early learning center was scheduled to cost just over \$1 million but the price tag has since increased to \$1.8 million.

Allen batted down the rumor, informing the board that the early learning would be completed in time for the next school year.

Current Harrison staff is scheduled to take a tour of the building on March 16. Allen has extended the opportunity to tour the new building to the general public. To schedule a tour, please contact the district office at (541) 942-3381.

LIBRARY HOSTS NEW EXHIBIT

Architecture of Internment explores Japanese-American experience



An example of the panels being shown during the library’s latest exhibit opening March 10.

By Caitlyn May
cmay@cgsentinel.com

Between a Native-American teepee and the remnants of a display dedicated to Black History Month, the Cottage Grove Library has cleared a space.

On March 10, several panels will be erected housing old newspaper articles, letters and photographs detailing an ugly era in American history when Japanese-Americans were forced into camps and stripped of their civil rights. The exhibit, given by Graham Street Productions under the guide of the Rural Organizing Project, will run until March 31 and include special events but on March 1, the space was empty except for a picnic table where Beth Pool and Pete Burrell sat. The weekly ukulele group playing close by, a jam session circle strumming out the Young Bloods “Get Together,” as the pair detailed the event they say is aimed at raising awareness of present-day parallels.

“It’s weaving contemporary issues in. What’s going with Latinos, what’s going on with all kinds of groups who have been targeted because of their ancestry, color, orientation...etc.,” Burrell said.

The exhibit titled, “Architecture of Internment” is currently traveling around the state and made a stop at Cottage Grove High School Monday and Tuesday where classes were encouraged to view

the pieces dating back to the 1940s including letters sent by Japanese-Americans and propaganda published in the nation’s newspapers.

“It’s really about social injustices and when people come to see this exhibit and see these panels, they’ll see that it did not start with WWII but it was decades of build-up of discriminatory practices,” Pool said. “The same thing is happening. We have the same social injustices happening against Mexican-Americans and people of color. So, to bring awareness of that practice, the subtle practice, that’s what I’m hoping, to get that awareness out.”

To highlight the parallels between the internment of Japanese-Americans during WWII and the current state of politics surrounding immigration in America, the library has added several special events during the exhibit’s run.

On March 19, Jesus Narvaez will join Mansoor Shams for a discussion. Narvaez, a student at Lane Community College, has come out as a Dreamer—in the U.S. illegally after being brought to the country as a child by his parents. Shams is a U.S. Marine and practicing Muslim.

“Incidents seem to have been growing in the last year so it feels like this is an important time for this exhibit and it will, hopefully show what happens if you don’t speak up, people end up being thrown in prison because they look a certain way,” Burrell said.

The Pew Research Center (a non-profit, non-partisan organization that polls emerging trends and opinions on nationwide issues) released data on Jan. 19 of this year that reported 74 percent of Americans were in favor of granting undocumented immigrants, who were brought into the country as children, a path to citizenship and 60 percent oppose the expansion of a border wall between the U.S. and Mexico.

“Hopefully we’ll get some new folks,” Burrell said when asked if events like the exhibit may not reach residents who do not already agree with its premise. “We certainly do get a lot of regulars but we try to reach out and get a diversity of people. There are a lot of people in town that may see this as controversial. They may not come to a special event but they may stumble upon the exhibit while at the library.”

The Architecture of Internment exhibit is open during library hours, 10 a.m. to 7:45 p.m., and is self-guided. Special events related to the exhibit run from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on March 13 (Lawson Inadam, an internment camp survivor), March 19 (Narvaez and Shams) and March 29 when the library will show the film, “Never Give Up! Minoru Yasui and the Fight for Justice” and host a conversation with the director.

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The South Lane School Board is inviting the public to attend a meeting this Thursday, March 8 to discuss the qualities and qualifications of applicants for the superintendent's position. The meeting will be held at 5 p.m. at the district office.

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