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Theft from Child's Way school impacts Tiny House project

By Caitlyn May
cmay@cgsentinel.com

The students at Child's Way charter school has intended on "going slow" in building a tiny house in their wood shop class. But after a break-in last week, the project has come to a grinding halt.

"A sad thing happened last weekend," said principal Mike Kerns. "Our gym was broken into and 18 new rolls of insu-

lation and two Makita drill kits were stolen."

Kerns placed the value of the items taken at approximately \$800. Located in Dorena, Child's Way is part of the South Lane School District and focuses on a small-school environment, experimental learning and hands-on education. The tiny house was meant to teach students how to use tools and the value of embracing green technology. The project uti-

lized some donated wood but most of the material was purchased out of the school's budget including the smart water heater, sink and flooring. The plan was to finish the house, sell it and purchase material to make another tiny house.

"(We) didn't file a police report because previous times they have said there is nothing they can really do," Kerns said, noting that Child's Way falls under the county sheriff's ju-

risdiction.

The school has notified stores in Eugene that may buy insulation that the rolls were stolen and made posters of the stolen items, posting them around the area and on the school's social media.

Kerns said he will purchase additional insulation so the project can be completed but is asking if anyone has information about the thefts to contact Child's Way at 541-946-1821.

Fire *from A1*

property. The cause of the fire has not yet been determined.

"Well, it's kind of approached the same way as any other fire," Division Fire Chief Joe Raade said of the process into determining the cause of the blaze, which starts from the outside and works its way in toward the source of ignition. "There's scientific phenomena that kind of point to the fire. The way things are heated up. The

way things may lay over in a fire. All those types of things usually help lead you to at least a location of where it started."

SLFR is asking witnesses to submit pictures they took of the blaze to them.

"People were getting photos way before we got there and so there are things they saw that we didn't get to see. With this modern day of technology, you can get a lot recorded," said Raade.

As different areas on the property continued to smoke, SLFR assures area residents that the fire is contained and that

they do not need to call in to report the smoke. In the meantime, Whitsell is currently working with the insurance company to determine the amount of damage and how best to move forward.

"We have people coming in to estimate and everything, you know. You're never going to recover what you lost. And you really can't in a situation like this," he said. "There's 40 years of equipment and parts. You could never recover that — just the information and all that. I don't even know how you put a number on that stuff."

Kennedy *from A10*

state and federal level. Kennedy currently receives funds from OYCC, Army Corps of Engineers, Umpqua National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management and WOIA. Kennedy administration applies for those grants, which fund payment for students who work on campus throughout the year, as well as a portion of teacher Matt Hall's salary. The money, with the exception of WOIA, does not fund educational resources.

"I mean, Kennedy is a vital spoke in our wheel for the entire school district," Bridgens said, noting that the lack of Kennedy presence on the district's social media pages, including the school's events and efforts in sustainability, is a result of the limitations of

having only a part-time communications coordinator.

"We help all kids. I think that there is no 'bad kid,' and we don't believe that as a school district. Nobody does," said Bridgens. "I think we have this fundamental belief that, in a lot of ways, all of our kids are our kids. We're there to support all of our kids. And no matter the different challenges or things they're facing in their life, we want to make sure that we're supporting all those kids."

Bridgens said that includes helping them find the resources or services they need to be successful — and part of breaking the stereotype of being a "bad kid."

"That is not the way we work with Kennedy. [Our mindset] is that Kennedy is a vital part of our school district in helping all of our kids succeed."

Star Posthumus will graduate in three days. She'll have made up two-years-worth of missing credits and walk across the new Kennedy gym on June 9 with the rest of her classmates.

"It's going to be really difficult," she said of not being around the school anymore.

But she's ready. After gaining inspiration from a field trip in Portland to a Women In Trades career fair, she is ready to get to work. Knowing she's not afraid of manual labor and with a couple other options in mind, she values the experience of doing something a little different.

"It's really cool because when you start to know how to do things that aren't mainstream, or aren't considered normal, you realize that not everybody's normal and not

everybody's that definition of what people think is normal," she said. "To me, normal is different because everybody is different. It's really been a big learning experience. Kennedy has taught me that you need to be more accepting of people."

"Some of us are 'delinquents.' We've messed up at CGHS, but we're learning from that," she added. "We still deserve a chance. There's a reason you have erasers on pencils. Everybody gets dealt different cards and life throws different things at us."

Her critique doesn't stop there as she offers firm words for the school district as a whole.

"Step up your game. Seriously. Give Kennedy the recognition it deserves because we definitely need it. We are so not getting recognized enough."

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