

Habitat *from A1*

one speaker. Oxley, however, thanked the city of Cottage Grove for its support throughout the years.

Hutchinson's house, which was gifted a new fire extinguisher from South Lane County Fire and Rescue Division Chief Joe Raade, is the first since organization underwent a restructuring. In a statement released last year, the Springfield/Eugene and Cottage Grove Habitat for Humanity announced the two would be merging to form Habitat for Humanity of Central Lane.

"The cost of rent is increasing faster than wages, housing stock is scarce and homeownership is increasingly out of reach for local families," the release read. "We believe that by combining our administrative costs



CAITLYN MAY/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL

Misty Hutchinson speaks to the crowd gathered for her home dedication on Saturday, Dec. 15.

and deploying our resources more effectively to where they are needed, we will provide safe, decent, affordable homes for more families and complete more repair projects on a local level."

The local Restore also closed its doors citing a lack of profit and a need to redirect funds toward projects rather than keeping the store open.

Hutchinson doesn't have a move in date yet but said she is blessed to have had the experience of helping to build her own home.

"It's amazing. I've gotten to spend the most quality time with my mother," she said. "I never thought this was possible. It still feels surreal to me."

Latham *from A1*

from other schools around South Lane.

"That's the only place that we have funds at this point," Sullivan told the board. Adding, "This is what discourages me, to be honest with you. We don't have the funds to continue to do the deferred maintenance without bond funds at this point."

The deferred maintenance at other schools covers an array of improvements including roofing at five schools around the district (which will cost \$886,000) and other improvements such as heating and various upgrades.

If Latham were to close, that \$353,000 sum could fund projects at other schools such as classroom lighting at Bohemia, a gym floor at Dorena and a kitchen upgrade at London.

"An ugly little facet to [this] is comparing the worth of different schools feels very, very wrong. It's not like one school is better or one school is worse, they are

all valuable," said board member Tammy Hodgkins during the board's final comments.

Throughout the meeting, board members grappled with the reality of what appears to be an impending decision to close the school.

"It really feels like, when you look at deferred maintenance, it's just like putting the entire district on an all-starch diet: it keeps you alive but everything starts to break down," said board member Gary Mort. "The whole thing gets less and less healthy."

Continuing to discuss each section of the "Latham School Report" and board broke into groups of two or three and shared their findings. They discussed general details of where students and staff could possibly go if the school were to close and what that would look like across the district. The group also returned to the idea that this decision has been looming over staff, students and parents at Latham off and on for the past decade if not longer.

"I'm really sorry for what Latham has gone through. The

people there are going through or may still be going through," said Mort. Adding, "I'm actually just sorry. Even if we come in, in January and miraculously some angel donated \$2 million to us and said, 'Only for Latham,' that would be amazing, but you still would have gone through all of this and suffering and horrible-ness which is just not okay."

One Latham parent who was feeling the effects of that pain was Andrea Griffith who has a third grader at the school. Griffith chose Latham for the size of the school in addition to the community it provides and noted that if the district closes the school, she plans to take her child out of the district.

"It sounds to me, as a parent, that they've already made their decision. And my kid is going to lose out because they didn't do their jobs and put the money where it should have been and it makes me mad," said Griffith. "And very sad because there are a lot of kids who are going to miss out on a lot of stuff at Latham."

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CHRISTMAS services

<p>CHURCH OF CHRIST 6th & Gibbs Christmas Eve Service 5:00pm</p>	<p>LIVING FAITH ASSEMBLY 467 10th St Christmas Eve Candlelight Services: 9am & 11am</p>
<p>COTTAGE GROVE BIBLE CHURCH 1200 East Quincy Ave Christmas Eve 10:30am • Christmas Drama & Music Candlelight service: 6pm</p>	<p>OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP 1025 N. 19th St Cottage Grove Christmas Eve, December 24th – Mass 6:30 PM & 12 Midnight Christmas Day December 25th – Mass at 10:30 am</p>
<p>COTTAGE GROVE FAITH CENTER 33761 Row River Rd Christmas Eve Service: 10am Candlelight service: 5pm</p>	<p>ST. PHILIP BENIZI MISSION 552 Holbrook Ln, Creswell Christmas Day – December 25th, 8:30 am</p>
<p>DELIGHT VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST 33087 Saginaw Rd East Christmas Eve breakfast: 9am Service: 10:30am Candlelight service: 7pm</p>	<p>UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 334 Washington St Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: 5pm</p>
<p>FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 3rd & Adams St Christmas Eve Service: 7am Candlelight Service: 7pm</p>	

CHRISTMAS services