

YMCA *from A1*

expectations since opening the site last fall. “When our numbers didn’t get as high as we would’ve liked them to be, we approached the school district and asked about transportation from the other schools to Harrison,” said Kriz-Anderson.

The South Lane School District agreed and began the new service to bus students from the three schools to the Harrison site on Feb. 1.

“It’s going to be nice because the space at Harrison is so big, it will be able to accommodate however many kids are coming from each school,” said Kriz-Anderson.

The space has an enrollment capacity of 45 children though currently serves only 19 Harrison students.

Finding staff to fill positions was also a challenge when the program initially started up last fall.

“It is still an issue,” said Kriz-Anderson.

There are currently three staff members at the site.

“We would love to hire people from Cottage Grove who have worked with kids or who want to work with kids,” said Kriz-Anderson. “We want to hire young seniors or students who are going to Lane [Community College] who want to get youth experience or maybe want to get an education degree.

So we can give them that experience.”

Kriz-Anderson is hopeful the busing service will bring enrollment closer to capacity and thus more hiring opportunities, though the timing of the expansion is expected to effect a slow start.

“It’s going to be a nice space [that can] accomodate however many kids are coming from each school”

— Holly Kriz-Anderson, Youth Development Director

“Starting something mid-year isn’t ideal, but at least the information will be out there,” she said, “so when September comes around ... then it will be known and so when families are looking for care, they’ll know that the Y has an option.”

The program at Harrison makes use of the school’s cafeteria, gym, playground and project studio for an array of activities.

In meeting the non-profit’s stated goal of “strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility,” children are treated to fruit snacks, games, physical activities, cooking, art projects and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) activities.

In addition, the program offers homework assistance to students who need it.

“They also learn how to work with your friends if you’re hav-

ing a disagreement – problem-solving skills and social/emotional learning,” said Kriz-Anderson. “We have a service-learning component as well, which happens once a month, just showing how important it is to give back to our community or to help

puzzle for families,” said Eugene Family YMCA CEO Brian Steffen in a press release. “The Y’s mission is to provide services to all — regardless of ability to pay. This expansion helps us fulfill that mission in a place where the need is quite high.”

at school or to do something nice for somebody else.”

The program runs from the end of school until 6 p.m.

With a tuition set at \$295 per month, the cost can be prohibitive for some families, though the YMCA offers financial assistance to those who demonstrate need.

“One of the goals of the Y is to not turn any family away for financial need,” said Kriz-Anderson. “We ask for paperwork, but we also ask for people to tell us their story because sometimes what you put down on a piece of paper doesn’t tell us everything.”

The Eugene Family YMCA states that it awarded \$451,618 in financial assistance in 2018.

“Quality childcare is a high priority but often a financial and logistical

Kriz-Anderson added that local donations to the YMCA can be earmarked for specific community use as well.

Significant financial backing came in December when a Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund grant helped support the program.

“We are so grateful to the Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund for a \$29,800 grant to support the Y’s afterschool expansion into communities like Cottage Grove,” said Kriz-Anderson. “Weyerhaeuser is helping us fulfill our vision of a future where every working family has access to affordable safe enrichment programs that kids love.”

More information about the Eugene Family YMCA can be found online at www.eugeneyymca.org.

City to host tree giveaway

Cottage Grove’s maintenance crew picked up 60 young Redwood and 25 Ponderosa Pine trees last month that were gifted from the City of Eugene.

The crew is picking up a mix of 300 additional trees: Vine Maples, White Alder, Douglas Fir, Western Crabapple, Oregon White Oak, Casarea and Western Red Cedar.

The trees will be given away to local residents on Feb. 22, 29 and March 7, from 9 a.m. to noon at Coiner Park.

Cottage Grove residents that live in the city limits will be able to have up to three trees apiece.

The intent of the tree giveaway is to replace the trees city residents lost in the Feb. 25, 2019 “snow-mageddon.”

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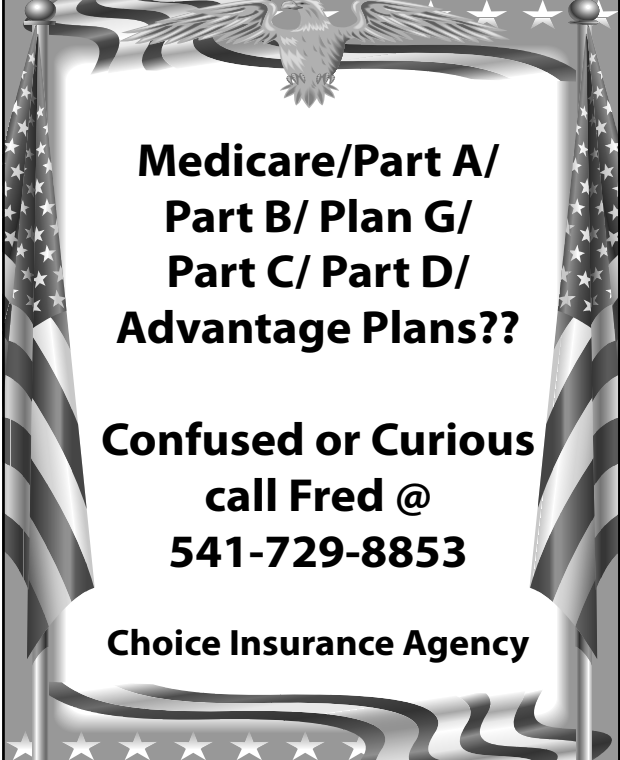
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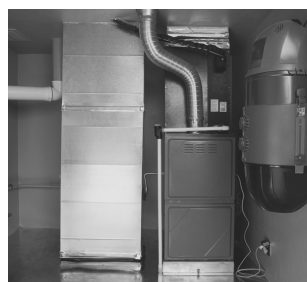
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