

# Anniversary of the high school: Now can we move?



R.J. MARX/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Seaside High School students participate in a tsunami evacuation drill.

There were eight students in the graduating class of 1915. The school budget totaled \$12,650. Today that number would just about pay for a season's worth of volleyballs. Of the 1916-17 budget, the lion's share —\$4,000 —was for teacher's salaries, \$1,275 for maps, apparatus, stoves, curtains and other necessities."

"After the first year of school the levy will not be as high as it is this season as the building is new and must be equipped with all that is necessary to make a modern school and one that every voter and taxpayer in the district may be proud of," the Signal wrote.

**SEEN FROM SEASIDE**

R.J. MARX



**A half century**

In 1966, the district consolidated three districts: Seaside, Gearhart and Cannon Beach. "All of the districts are growing and additional facilities will be needed," wrote the Signal. The unified district debuted in September 1967 with 1,475 students, 501 at the high school. In decades to come, with increased enrollment, buildings past their projected life span and evidence of a mortal seismic threat, the need for a new school building became a perennial topic of conversation.

In 1970, 400 voters in the school district filled out building questionnaires.

"Construct a Clatsop County High School," was the suggestion in one reply.

"Replace Central and remodel Broadway," "Consolidate with Warrenton-Lewis and Clark area" and "build a new high school in Clatsop Plains," were others.

Only 20 of 400 respondents voted for a "do nothing" plan. Throughout the next two decades successions administration, board members and the community sought solutions.

In 1986-87 voters had the chance to approve a plan that would allow the district to develop plans for a new high school.

Plans for a 25-year bond issue included purchase of a new site and building of an 800-student high school.

That year's \$12.33 million plan would have alleviated space problems at the elementary level as well, particularly in Gearhart and Cannon Beach. That was a lot of money — a "rib-eye" purchase, the Signal wrote.

The verdict from the voters was crushing — 2,913 to 570. It was at about this time that Oregon State University marine biologist Curt Peterson and researcher Mark Darienzo began piecing together the links between the Juan de Fuca plate and seismic activity along the coast, referred to then as "tectonic subsidence."

"The Juan de Fuca plate, moving eastward onshore, collides with the North American plate, moving westward," they explained. They also began collecting rock cores accumulated over centuries and determining the frequency of "possible subsidence," that is, earthquakes.

This information was to have a profound influence on all efforts to replace at-risk schools.

In 2013, with declining enrollment, Cannon Beach Elementary School closed after two engineering consultants found that its gym was likely to collapse in a quake.

Compelling research brought the realization Gearhart Elementary School, Seaside High School and Broadway Elementary School were potential death traps for kids in a disaster scenario.

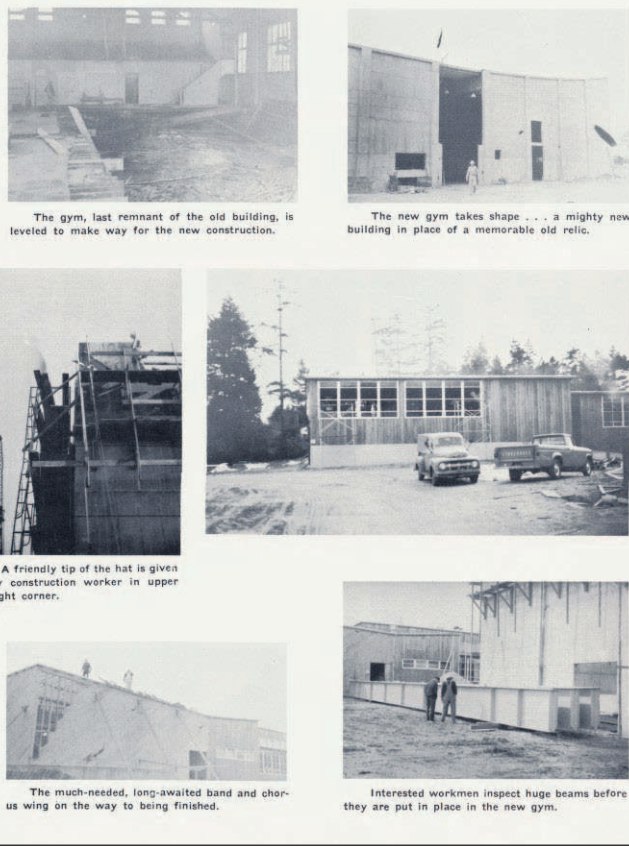
Led by Superintendent Doug Dougherty, the district brought a \$128.8 million bond measure to fund construction of a new consolidated school campus above the tsunami inundation zone.

Supporters of the bond measure focused their campaign on children's safe, high-tech classrooms, wrote Bonnie Henderson in her recounting of the campaign in "The Next Tsunami: Living on a Restless Coast."

"But the bottom line for many no voters seemed to be the cost," Henderson wrote. "Even some supporters were having a hard time swallowing the increase in property taxes that the construction of the new campus would have required."

The defeat sent Dougherty and the school board back to the drawing board, according to Henderson, to consider other options, such as building a smaller campus on the hill or one to house just elementary school students.

**New Additions**



The gym, last remnant of the old building, is leveled to make way for the new construction. The new gym takes shape . . . a mighty new building in place of a memorable old relic. A friendly tip of the hat is given by construction worker in upper right corner. The much-needed, long-awaited band and chorus wing on the way to being finished. Interested workmen inspect huge beams before they are put in place in the new gym.

SEASIDE SIGNAL/SUBMITTED PHOTO

New additions to the high school are highlighted in the 1971 yearbook.



R.J. MARX/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Students, staff and community members hope to move Seaside High School out of the tsunami zone.

This century mark is bittersweet. While we welcome the 100th year of Seaside High School, we join in the enthusiasm and urgency for a new high school to take its place.

One hundred, 50, 25 years ago there was no hard evidence of the risk we face every day. Recognition for the New Yorker article "The Really Big One" with a Pulitzer Prize award for nonfiction magazine writing only validates the need to take action and get this school out of its present location. The way Seaside High School is situated now, it wouldn't take a "really big one," but even a little one.

The high school stands 14 to 18 feet above sea level, according to geologist Tom Horning. The likely tsunami will flood to elevations of about 40 to 50 feet, nearly to the top of the high school gymnasium roof.

"The wave will strike about 15 minutes after the inception of quaking," Horning said in an email. "It takes roughly 15 minutes to reach safety in the hills from the school, assuming that traffic doesn't block evacuation and that the weather is good for evacuating. The high school structure will be swept away, leaving only concrete foundations and steps. Anyone caught in the building by the tsunami will die. Anyone caught below 50 feet elevation will also likely die. Very dangerous place."

City Council Student Representative Taylor Barnes, a senior at Seaside High School, is among young leaders seeking to move the school. Their voices are reaching to Portland, Salem and points beyond.

"I think this is the year," Barnes said Monday after Seaside's council meeting. "Ultimately it's going to come down to the community members. They're ready. A lot of people are frustrated. The time is now because we can't wait. Whether we're ready or not, it needs to be now."

# A lousy place to put a fire hydrant

A former Astorian, Betty Munch, died in Portland on March 12. I didn't know her, but when I read in her obit that her grandfather was Peter Brach, plumber, I did feel a kinship of sorts. I was once married to Skip Hill. His first real job after we became a couple was as a guard at Tongue Point when it was a berth for many vessels left over from World War II. It was then we moved to Jeffers Gardens to be closer to the job. His first vehicle was Peter Brach's little panel truck he used for his plumbing business. Before we moved, it was transportation from Seaside to Astoria. Some people might have thought Skip was the plumber.

The article about the death of Jimmie Lunceford in last week's

Signal brought back lots of memories, but it wasn't totally accurate. Jimmie did not die at Callahan's Music Shop, which was just a little hole in the wall east of the Strand Theater. He died at Seaside Radio, 411 Broadway, owned by Edward (Skip) Hill who was my husband at the time. As far as I know, his business was the only one that had autographs of bandleaders on the east wall. Les Brown was one of them. In the repeated Astorian account, Seaside Radio is plainly listed in a copied news article as the place of Lunceford's demise. It was the subject of conversation for a long time at our house. The death, that is, which we were told was a heart attack.

With all the controversy regarding transgender types using the little girls' loo, I'd say that was an invasion of privates-y.

We learned from Leila Vernor that two tour buses had driven apparently from Roosevelt Drive westward on Third Avenue till they got to the barricades on Holladay and didn't know what to do. I imagine it was backing up but you'll have to ask Doug Barker. By the way, that's a lousy placement of the fire hydrant by the Methodist Church. Don't give God any tickets for handicapped parking. How will we celebrate when the street is finally paved? Certainly not by reading our tax bills. We'll need a block party of some sort.

Cinco De Mayo was also the National Day of Prayer. Not being of Spanish origin, I celebrated the latter with breakfast at Dooger's as I have every year since its inception — seven or eight years ago — I don't remember how long. There was a good crowd as always; fervent prayer on many facets of our lives; enthusiastic singing of patriotic songs. Since the death of Carroll Van Dyke, Darrin Dunn has been the NDP coordinator and does an excellent job. Erwin Boring of Rockaway Beach leads the singing and several other leading ministers and Christians take part. Attend next year and you'll learn all these names. Catherine Walgren sang a pretty solo, "It is Well With My Soul."

**Laugh line**

A priest was driving his car somewhat erratically when a policeman pulled him over. "What have you been drinking?" asked the officer. "Your operation of this vehicle looks a little off kilter."

"Just water," answered the priest, looking to the thermos on the seat.

"I'll take that," said the officer as he removed the cap and took a little sniff. "Smells like alcohol to me," he said. "I think you have wine in your thermos."

"Saints preserve us," remarked the priest. "Jesus has done it again." (Courtesy of Joel Osteen, pastor.)

# Flag-raising to honor Walker Lundberg

Former Seaside resident Walker Lundberg will be remembered at the Tides at a Memorial Day flag-raising in his honor. The ceremony will take place at 3 p.m.

When purchasing a unit at the Tides, Lundberg became enthralled with the idea of putting up a flagpole, his daughter Jani Gurash wrote in a remembrance. "He wanted it to be able to be a heartfelt symbol seen from the turnaround, flying proud for all to enjoy while walking south the end of the Prom."

During the summers, Lundberg could be seen taking down the flag in the evening. He would include the children staying at The Tides in the ceremony, saluting, honoring and folding "old faithful."

Lundberg was born in Seaside Jan. 8, 1925. He was active in high school on the track team, swim team and basketball team. He attended Oregon State University and graduated from the University of California in Berkeley.

Lundberg was a Navy pilot, playing on the Navy basketball team, flying in the South Pacific as well as the



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Walker Lundberg

Naval Reserves. He started his own insurance agency in Sanger, California, where he and his wife, Shirley, raised their three daughters, Emily Lundberg, Janis (Jani) Gurash and Susan (Susie) Cordene. He was a successful businessman, from a one-person office in Sanger to a large office in Fresno with satellite offices in the surrounding area. He was involved in the Independent Insurance Association, serving as president of the California Association as well as on national boards. He died in 2012.

Lundberg's daughter Jani Gurash remembers summers in Seaside and her father's desire to build a flagpole that could be seen all the way downtown.



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