

Gifts for 258 come from Sharing Tree

JUNCTION CITY — The Sharing Tree, a traditional local Christmas charity, served 258 recipients this year — 25 more than a year ago.

The tree project aims at providing Christmas gifts for children from needy families, disabled adults and senior citizens. It is sponsored each year by the Junction City Business and Professional Women.

The tree, decorated with ornaments that carried information on gifts needed for individuals in the community, was stationed at The Acorn Tree. Local residents who wanted to help in the program selected an ornament, shopped for the listed gift and placed it under the tree. As an alternative, they could make a cash donation, and BPW volunteers would handle the shopping.

Nancy Hamilton, who chairs the project, said the 258 recipients of gifts from the tree represented 107 separate family units.

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eteria, with a bit of official ceremony scheduled for 7 p.m.

Shuttle buses will ferry visitors between the grade school-middle school complex and the high school.

The district's building program has included upgrades in all of its existing buildings, but the premier pieces of the effort are the three newly-erected structures to be unveiled at the open house:

- A kitchen-cafeteria building at Harrisburg Elementary, with two attached classrooms. The dining area of the building is expected to serve as a facility for community events, with the open house being the first.
- A four-classroom building adjacent to the middle school.
- An eight-classroom building at the high school campus.

Those buildings will be the highlight of the open house, which will be centered at the elementary school, with shuttle bus service to the other buildings. The open house will run from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

The school district's construction program also involved heating, ventilating, air conditioning and lighting improvements at Harrisburg Middle and Elementary Schools, a new roof at Wyatt Elementary and a new gym floor at Harrisburg High School.

The district hopes to construct two more classrooms with remaining bond issue money.

Long Tom Watershed Council

By **CINDY THIEMAN**

As the population grows and demands on our waterways become more complex so does attention to how land use affects water quality. A 1995 U.S. Geological Survey report on water quality in the Willamette Valley noted that streams running through urban and agricultural lands often have poor water quality. Specifically, these streams had nutrient and pesticide levels that exceeded federal water quality standards.

As a continuation of our series on agriculture and water quality, farming activities remain the focus of this article. Under certain conditions, organic or synthetic fertilizers and pesticides applied to farm fields can run off into streams or percolate down to groundwater. Whether this takes place depends on the timing and amount of application, subsequent rainfall, and soil type. Crops also vary in their efficiency of taking up nutrients. Annual and perennial rye grass, a common seed crop in the Long Tom Watershed is quite efficient, whereas mint and sweet corn are not. Another potential water quality problem associated with agriculture is sediment from fallow fields washing into streams. Finally, stream temperature can be elevated if streamside vegetation, which provides shade, is removed. It is important to realize that urban and rural residential land use activities can affect water quality in similar ways.

Advances in agricultural research are being used to improve water quality on agricultural lands. For example, vegetated buffers between fields and waterways provide shade and filter out sediment and nutrients. The use of cover crops reduces soil loss and controls weeds. Crop rotation reduces the amount of pesticides and fertilizers needed. In addition, precision agriculture uses global positioning system (GPS) technology to apply the fertilizer at variable rates across a field to correspond to soil fertility levels. This can reduce the total amount of fertilizer applied and lead to higher crop productivity. Finally, improved sprinkler systems provide more uniform distribution and thereby reduce soil compaction. This means less fertilizer and pesticides are washed below the rooting zone and into groundwater.

The use of these new methods and technologies has great potential to improve water quality. In partnership with local agricultural producers, the watershed council plans to continue measuring the long-term effectiveness of these practices through our water quality monitoring program. The next council meeting will be Tuesday, Jan. 29 in the Amazon sub-basin. For information contact Dana at 683-6578.

Public Notices

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
JUNCTION CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission of Junction City, Oregon, will hold a public hearing on the proposed

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