

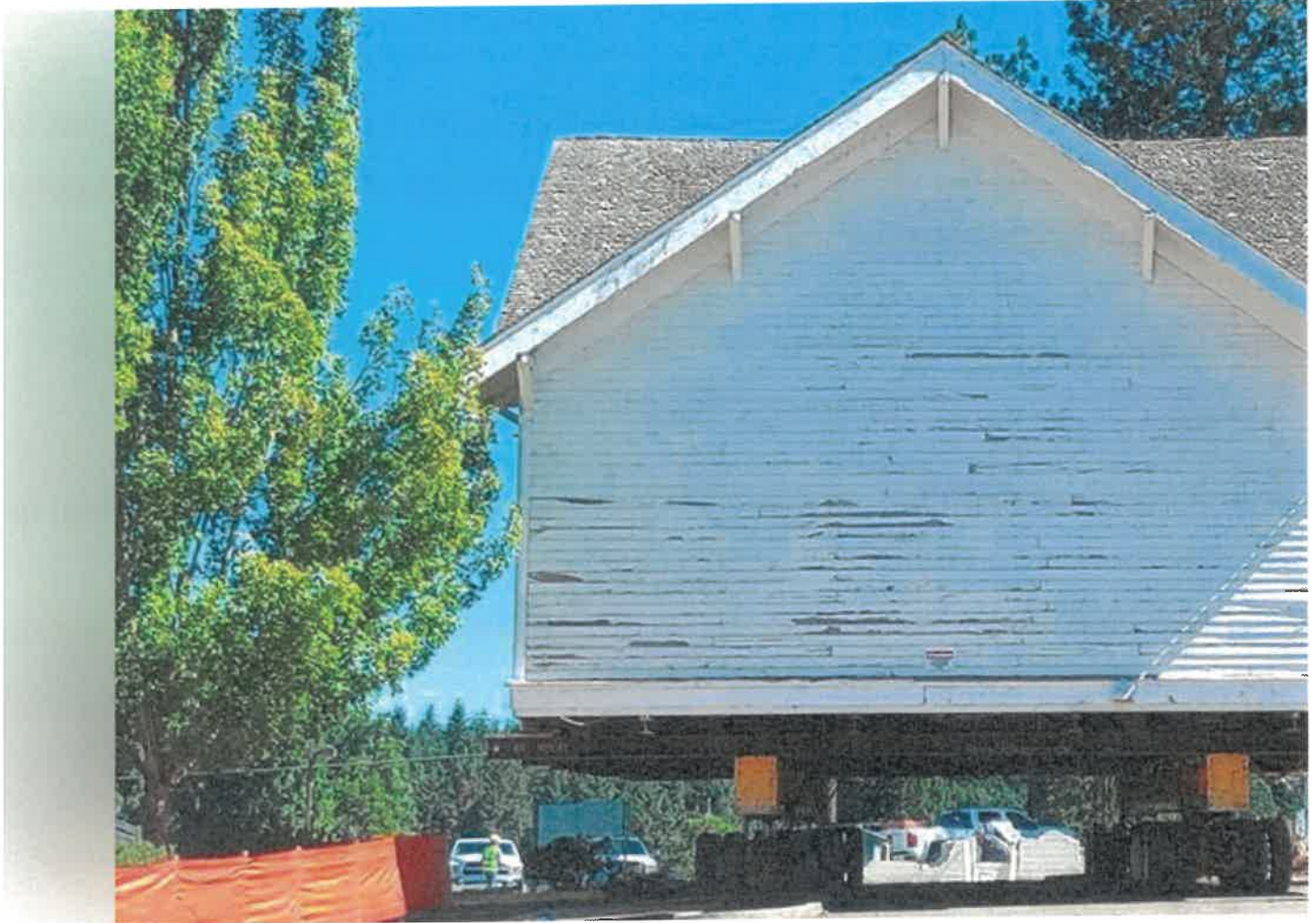
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FEATURED

Carus schoolhouse move hits bumps, keeps rolling

John Baker
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1 of 3



The Historic Carus Schoolhouse starts its journey, which will hopefully end at the Evans Farm down the road in mid-August.
Courtesy Photo: Friends of the Carus Historic Schoolhouse

If you have driven down Highway 213 this summer, you may have seen the 1926 Carus schoolhouse on blocks in the south parking lot of the school.

The short journey to that spot is part of a larger journey the schoolhouse, and the people behind saving it, hope to complete soon.

To save the building, known to locals as the “White Building,” from demolition, a local nonprofit, The Friends of the Carus Historic Schoolhouse, contracted with Wolfe House & Building Movers to move the building, eventually relocating it to nearby Evans Farms.

However, the move, which got off to a smooth start, recently got more complicated.

On June 30, the day the schoolhouse was relocated from its original foundation to the other end of the Carus School parking lot, supporters of the project had a good feeling about where things stood.

The Friends of the Carus Historic Schoolhouse and Canby School District staff watched enthusiastically as the building slowly made its 300-foot trek.

By moving the schoolhouse to the other end of the lot, construction work slated to improve parking and traffic flow at the school could commence while the extensive coordination of details to move the building down Highway 213 could be finalized.

Those plans, however, would change. After three weeks of planning the second phase of the move to Evans Farms, the Friends received some unfortunate news – the schoolhouse could not be moved down Highway 213.

Fortunately, Wolfe House & Building Movers came up with another idea, one that would save the day. What if the schoolhouse building was moved across the fields to Evans Farms?

Trying to coordinate a move down a highway had already proven to be a challenge, and now the situation just got harder – and more expensive. And all this work still needed to happen before the Aug. 11 deadline given by Canby School District to remove the building from their property so parking lot construction could wrap up prior to the start of the new school year.

This new challenge included determining the best route through the fields (so far, there have been three proposed routes), getting permission from property owners, moving the schoolhouse around the back of the current school so it can exit from the west entrance near the play shed, building multiple gravel ramps to get it on and off the schoolyard, removing a light pole, and coordinating with PGE and various communication line companies to drop wires twice – once at Carus Road and a few days later at Mueller Road.

Organizers say that all these additional steps have increased the cost of saving the building by at least \$35,000.

However, plans are solidifying. The schoolhouse made its trek through the field to the school's west entrance on Monday, Aug. 7, and the move across Carus Road is slated for Monday, Aug. 14.

Many community members have been incredibly supportive.

The Canby School District has been flexible in allowing the building to stay a few extra days on the property, and Larry Burich, director of facilities at Canby School District, along with Kevin Knudson of Canby Excavation, have given much of their time and efforts to coordinate with the Friends and the Wolfe team to make this move happen.

Now comes the final piece to make saving the White Building a success — fundraising. The Friends report they have secured \$75,000 in donations, which covers half the cost of moving the building.

Chris Ritter, president of the Friends nonprofit, said, “So many in the community have already generously donated, and we are hopeful that as more people learn about the work we’re doing, they will pitch in to save this local landmark and be part of the efforts to turn the schoolhouse into a community space for all to enjoy.”

To learn more, make a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer services, donors and members of the community are asked to go to carushistoricschoolhouse.org.

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