

Sheridan tech ed center honors former governor

New facility named for 'treasure' Barbara Roberts, town's favorite daughter

By PAUL DAQUILANTE
Of the News-Register

Barbara Roberts, Oregon governor from 1991 to 1995, rode with State Rep. David Gomberg, to a special occasion Monday afternoon in Sheridan.

The Sheridan School District CTEC (Career Technical Education

Center) West building was named in her honor.

Gomberg told a large audience that March is Women in History Month, and he reminded everyone of the significant impact Roberts has had on Oregon and Sheridan.

"When I met her in 1980, we knew she was someone special," Gomberg said. "She was secretary of state for six years. Then the governor. You would have thought when she retired that she would have just faded into the Oregon

rain. No. She taught at Harvard. She's written three books."

Gomberg called Roberts the most respected and revered elder stateswoman in Oregon. "She's an Oregon treasure," he said.

Sheridan residents consider her that way, as evidenced by the standing ovation she received when the hour-long ceremony wrapped up.

Proposed career pathways for CTEC West include ag business,

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Former Oregon Gov. Barbara Roberts, who attended Sheridan High School, said future students will have more post-graduate opportunities than she and her classmates had as a result of the CTEC program.

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diesel mechanics, fire service, hospitality and tourism, residential construction and truck driving. Curricula will be driven by regional and economic employment data that is compiled.

"I'm so honored to have my name linked to the CTEC program," Roberts said. She recalled the "typing, shorthand and home economics" classes she took at Sheridan High as a student in 1951-1955. "We could never have thought in the 1950s of the kind of programs that are going to be taught here. This district is a role model for other districts on how to get it done.

"When things need to be done, people step up," Roberts said. That's the Sheridan way, she said.

"I never drive past Sheridan," said Roberts, a 1955 Sheridan High School graduate, whenever her travels take her through the West Valley. "I drive through. It's home."

Gomberg, whose 10th House District ranges from Tillamook to Yachats and inland to Sheridan, was behind the wheel when Roberts made the trip from her Lake Oswego home to Yamhill County.

Roberts wasn't going to let Gomberg skirt around town by getting off Highway 18 at the South Bridge Street exit, and from there, take Bridge to the west end of Jefferson Street, where CTEC West is located.

They took a route through town that took them past the home on Sheridan Road where Roberts had lived. She made certain Gomberg saw some other sights she remembers well. He didn't mind a trip down memory lane at all.

"Now I'll have a new incentive (to visit)," Roberts told the large gathering of attendees at the ceremony. "I'll be looking for a sign on Jefferson Street."

Her suggested a sign would mark where CTEC West is to be located, with the target opening date of fall 2022. It's the former site of Construction Equipment Company, a rock crushing and screen equipment manufacturer headquartered in Tualatin. Owner Roger Smith was in the audience Monday.

Roberts looked over at Sheridan School Board Chair Samantha Bagby, a woodworker, whose craftsmanship was responsible for the podium used during the

ceremony; it appears that sign could be a new order for Bagby to fill.

Monday's event also celebrated the first funding pieces that will make the project possible.

Dorie Vickery, Sheridan Superintendent in June 2020, described the origins of the idea of the Sheridan district developing a CTE program; the longest-tenured school board member, Larry Deibel, approached Vickery in 2020 and told her, "we need to buy that building," she said.

Gomberg, who serves as co-vice chair of the Ways and Means Budgeting Committee, then took a call from Vickery.

"She said, 'we want to build this CTE program in Sheridan,'" Gomberg said. "I told her, 'I'm in.' She said, 'we need \$2 million.' Well, at the Capitol, that's what we call a heavy lift."

A request for \$1.9 million was made through the legislative budget that covers various state expenses, according to Gomberg.

"Each year the budget also allocates money for infrastructure projects around the state," he said. "That's done through the Capitol Construction Process Committee. All of the requests (for funding) wind up in front of that committee."

The pool of money includes lottery bonds, Gomberg said. Each year, 53 percent of lottery profits are allocated to school districts across the state to help with school projects and infrastructure, as well as academic scholarships and intercollegiate athletics, according to the Oregon lottery.

The general fund includes income tax revenue, according to Gomberg, who said this year it also included federal government funding for one-time expenditures.

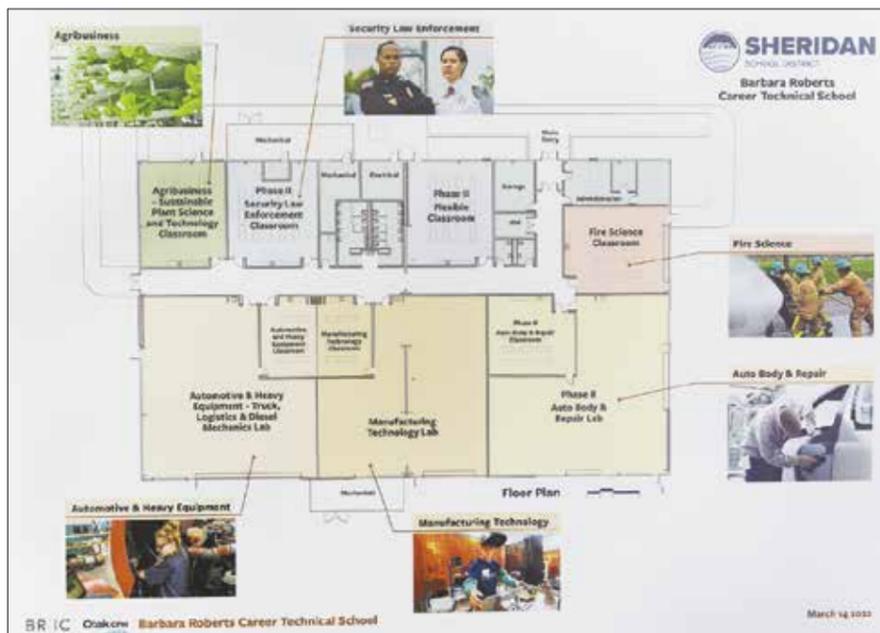
"We submitted the request," he said. "For 2020-21, and requests were submitted across the district. We worked with people to testify before the committee. Dorie came (on behalf of CTEC West) and made her two-minute pitch to the committee."

She was coached regarding what to say and it was important not to mince words about the importance of the money being requested.

"You don't want to spend a minute talking about yourself," Gomberg said.

Following the hearing, he and the district worked with legislative leadership that advocated for various funding requests that were made for 2020-21.

"We were in the capitol for six months," Gomberg said.



Above: A large gathering turned out for the CTEC West building dedication ceremony Monday afternoon in Sheridan. The crowd included District 10 Legislator David Gomberg, who represents Sheridan, in addition to the Yamhill County Commissioners and commissioners from Marion and Polk counties.

Left: A display showed how the Sheridan School District CTEC West building will look when completed. While the Jefferson Street building has been purchased, funding must now be sought to complete interior and exterior work, so it's ready to welcome students who will pursue pathway courses of study.

Marcus Larson/News-Register

"That bill is more than 100 pages long. It's one of the last pieces of legislation we deal with."

Vickery said she and her husband were at a COSA (Coalition of Oregon School Administrators) Conference in Seaside in late June 2021 when she received a call from Gomberg telling her that the \$1.9 million was being allocated to the district for purchase of the CTEC West building.

Her reaction would have made Charles Schulz proud: "I was doing the Snoopy happy dance," she said.

"School board members have had our back," Vickery said of support for the project. "Many people are behind this project."

Four months later, purchase of the 24,000-square foot building was completed and the district took ownership.

In addition to the \$1.9 million, the district received a CTE Revitalization Grant check in the amount of \$125,000 and a check for \$74,000 from the United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley at Monday's dedication ceremony.

Gomberg characterized the dedication to Roberts as a "historic event" which demonstrated that anyone graduating from Sheridan High in the future can do anything they want to do when entering the workforce.

"I'm so glad we got it here," he said of the CTEC West building. "It'll make such a huge difference for families and students."

Sheridan Mayor Aaron Baer thanked the city council for its support of the project. "It's exciting to have something new in the city," he said. "This is something

that strengthens and helps build a city up. It will set the students up for future success. We want to retain local talent."

Speakers Monday included Alyssa Stone, a Salem-Keizer School District CTEC graduate in residential construction, who said her time spent at another high school did very little to interest her. Opportunities did not exist there compared to what she discovered at CTEC. Fast forward, and she's now teaching at the center on Portland Road.

"This will be amazing for all of these students," she said at the dedication.

The district will address electrical, plumbing, HVAC and reconfiguration of the space to accommodate the

programs and ADA requirements, in addition to walls, restrooms, office space, technology and a security system.

Exterior improvements include multiple outdoor classrooms, an outdoor covered area, bus drop off and pick up, paving the parking lot, installing electronic and irrigation systems, and signage.

The property will also need to meet all fire and safety codes required for public education facilities.

Vickery said the cost for completing the building could run as high as \$14 million. The district will look to county and state support for funding.

"People are committed," she said.