

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: REMOVAL

PROPERTY Eugene Civic Stadium
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OREGON, Lane

DATE RECEIVED: 1/28/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/14/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08000183

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3-8-16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

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from
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA Remove

REVIEWER Edson Beall

DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 3-8-16

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

Eugene, OR
(Lane Co.)
Eugene Register Guard
(Circ. D. 51,890)

JUL 1 2015

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

✓ 766/5015

CIVIC STADIUM FIRE

5015 Probe of stadium blaze underway

Fire officials want to talk with youngsters seen inside the structure just before the blaze began

BY CHELSEA GORROW
The Register-Guard

Waiting until the charred ruins of the Civic Stadium grandstands had cooled, arson investigators and fire marshals late Tuesday began sifting through the rubble to determine the cause and origin of the fire that destroyed the historic structure in a matter of minutes on Monday evening.

Authorities said Tuesday that they also hope to speak with three or four young people who were spotted in the stadium's press box just before the fire started. The young people may also have been seen crossing the Amazon Parkway pedestrian bridge with their bicycles after the blaze began, Eugene Police Chief Pete Kerns and Eugene Springfield Fire Deputy Chief Joe Zaludek said.

"Nobody is considered a suspect," Kerns said, "and we don't consider this to be a crime yet. There's no evidence yet that it's a crime. The investigation will determine that. Typically, in cases like this that have so much community interest, we learn who the people are who were seen leaving a scene like this, so we don't want anyone to be afraid to come to the police. There's nothing to be afraid of. If there were three or four young people who were here, they might be able to help us understand how the fire started."

Anyone with information is asked to call Eugene police at 541-682-8888 or email cri-

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INSIDE

- ◆ Former Emeralds GM Bob Beban, players remember Civic/**C1**
- ◆ New stadium owners had no full-time caretaker on the site/**A5**

Complete coverage online at registerguard.com

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CHRIS PIETSCH/The Register-Guar

Eugene Springfield Fire arson investigators begin the process of finding a cause of the Civic blaze

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Fire: Historic grandstands never had a sprinkler system

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metips@ci.eugene.or.us.

Once the rubble is cool, Kerns said police would first use a 3D scanner to preserve images of the scene, and then investigators would walk through the remains. Kerns said a fire-trained "arson dog" may also be brought in.

The fire — which eventually escalated from a two-alarm to general alarm fire — was reported just before 5:30 p.m. A huge plume of smoke could be seen from miles away.

More than 70 firefighters rotated in shifts to battle the fire, which was deemed under control at 7:02 p.m.

Tuesday morning, smoke was still visible from some parts of the structure, including the top of the men's restrooms.

Derek Johnson, with the Eugene Civic Alliance, said the grandstands had never had a sprinkler system and that was something that the nonprofit organization, which recently acquired the stadium property, had hoped to install in the near future.

The alliance had a \$3 million insurance policy on the structure, Johnson said. Eugene Springfield Fire Chief Randy Groves previously said that the stadium's dry, seasoned lumber contributed to how quickly the fire spread.

"The fire was advanced upon our arrival, significantly advanced, and a collapse (occurred) shortly thereafter, so the fire definitely had a head start on us," Zaludek said Tuesday.

In the midst of the blaze, some embers spread to the roof of the nearby Lane Blood Center building at 2211 Wilamette St., Zaludek said. The roof sustained some damage, but firefighters were able to put out the embers before fire could spread to the building's attic.

The blood center was evacuated as a precaution when the stadium caught fire. Donors were escorted safely from the main building and staff members quickly moved blood center vehicles from potential harm, blood center officials said. No blood inventory was damaged or lost as a result of the evacuation.

Some nearby trees were scorched, and some spot fires were reported in bark mulch at a nearby multi-family residen-



MARY JANE SCHULTZ/The Register-Guard

Firefighters watch the small outbreak of flames in the rubble of Civic Stadium on Tuesday, after Monday's fire.

tial complex, Zaludek said. But no other structures were damaged and no injuries were reported. Police officers were given fire extinguishers and buckets to put out small fires around them as debris and ashes carried through the wind.

The Lane Regional Air Protection Agency on Tuesday cautioned that fire debris may contain small amounts of asbestos. Debris samples taken by the agency came back negative for asbestos fibers. However, the agency urged the public to exercise caution when handling and disposing of any burned material.

Previous surveys done by the property's former owner, the Eugene School District, indicated non-friable asbestos existed in some of the stadium's roofing material. No other asbestos-containing material was identified in those reports. Roofing material debris is identifiable by its thin, flat shape, and is often white to grayish black in color.

It's safest for people to assume that any fire debris they may handle or dispose contains asbestos, the agency said. People can clean up safely by wearing gloves and using sealable plastic bags, the agency advised. Residents can first mist

down the material with a spray bottle. It is not advised to use a hose, since it could break down the material.

It is difficult for the asbestos fibers to be airborne when the material is wet and reduces the risk of exposure, the agency said. Residents can place the misted debris into a sealable plastic bag, then double-bag the debris and throw it in the trash.

Follow Chelsea on Twitter @chelseagorrorrow. Email chelsea.gorrorrow@register-guard.com.

Fire: Cause of sudden burst of flames under investigation

Continued from Page A1

Eugene police had to keep citizens back from powerlines earlier in the evening as firefighters continued to fight the flames. At least one transformer exploded, as hundreds of people gathered to get a closer look. At least three people were quickly turned away by officers as they tried to sneak under police tape that outlined a two-block perimeter around the stadium at 20th Avenue and Willamette Street.

"We're really heartbroken"

Among those in shock at the unfolding scene were Eugene Civic Alliance leaders, who worked for years to secure the stadium from the city of Eugene and Eugene School District. The alliance had plans to convert the stadium so it could be used for soccer and other sports.

"We're really heartbroken," said Derek Johnson, the alliance's co-founder, at the scene. "It's a hard day."

Johnson said several people called and told him what had happened. He said he arrived about 30 minutes after the fire was reported.

"When I first heard, I was desperately hoping that something could be saved of the stadium," he said. "It's a magnificent structure but it was wood, and that was one of the parts of it that was really beautiful. But that wood ... that's an impermanent structure."

Kidsports Executive Director Bev Smith, also a member of the alliance, thanked firefighters for their efforts to save the structure.

"All we can really say is, it's sad," she said at the scene.

Later in the evening, the alliance issued a statement indicating that the stadium was insured for up to \$3 million, and that renovation was to have begun next month.

"It is too early for us to know where we go from here," the statement said. "We ask for a bit of grace and patience as we come to grips with this loss to our community and to our effort. ... Civic is an important touchstone for our community, and today we mourn its loss."

Eugene School Board member Anne Marie Levis called the fire "profoundly sad. We worked so hard to save it for future gen-



ANDY NELSON/The Register-Guard

Firefighters battle the Civic Stadium fire Monday in south Eugene. They continued to put out hot spots well into the evening.



And then, "We watched an early Fourth of July fireworks show, I guess," he said.

Sales said he saw four boys on bikes riding in the stadium's parking lot, then carrying their bikes over the pedestrian bridge that spans Amazon Parkway between the stadium and the high school, as the fire spread.

"I'm not jumping to conclusions," he said of the four boys, whom he described as being of middle school age. "But we did see them over there."

A mother of one of the ball-players said her son also said that he and others saw four young people walk across the overpass.

Police said they are seeking the public's help as they continue to investigate the cause of the fire. Anyone with potentially relevant information, or who took photos or videos at the scene, is asked to call the police department's tipline at 541-682-8888.

Fire: Raging flames spread swiftly through structure

BY CHELSEA GORROW
The Register-Guard

A spectacular, two-alarm fire gutted Eugene's beloved Civic Stadium — and the dreams that went with it — on Monday.

Nearly 40 emergency personnel responded to the blaze, which was called in at 5:26 p.m. Upon arrival, firefighters found flames that were twice the height of the stadium. A huge plume of black smoke could be seen from across much of the city.

The cause and origin of the fire was not immediately known, but the wooden structure's dry, seasoned lumber caused the fire to spread quickly, Eugene Springfield Fire Chief Randy Groves said at the scene.

He said the stadium is a total loss.

The fire was declared contained just after 7 p.m. and was no longer deemed in danger of spreading to neighboring fields or other property as initially feared.

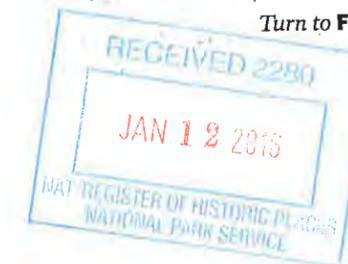
Firefighters were putting out spot fires in nearby bushes as late as 8 p.m., however, and some planned to remain at the scene throughout the night, working any hot spots.

Groves said there were no injuries related to the fire, but as a precaution, residents within two blocks of the stadium were ordered evacuated.

The evacuation was lifted at 9 p.m., but traffic surrounding the stadium remained blocked.

Fire officials advised residents whose homes are downwind or near the fire to check for smoldering embers in any bark areas, in dry vegetation around the house, or gutters and roofs.

Turn to FIRE, Page A5



JUN 30 2015

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Civic: Prospects for survival at times seemed doubtful

Continued from Page A1

"Today, we regrettably face an all-new prospect. We thank all those who have tried so hard to keep Civic for Eugene. It mattered."

Eugene School Board Chairman Jim Torrey said Monday night that he and other board members are "very sorry that this happened. Having the opportunity to hear hours of testimony, during public hearings relating to saving Civic Stadium, I know how strongly the community felt about Civic and the tradition it represented in the Eugene-Springfield area."

Long history

The stadium's story began in 1938, during the Great Depression.

Eugene voters approved a city charter amendment and property tax levy to pay off debt on what was then a proposed 17-acre recreation site. The city then gave the land to the school district for \$1.

Designed as a football and baseball stadium, Civic was built later that year, after the school district and the Chamber of Commerce led a campaign that raised \$6,000. The federal Works Progress Administration provided labor. Local lumbermen donated old-growth timber for the grandstand.

For years, the wooden grandstand and athletic field provided a venue for a variety of sports and activities, including high school football, semi-professional and minor league baseball, high school graduations and rodeos.

During 40 years at the ballpark, more than 1 million people watched the Eugene Emeralds minor league baseball team play there.

Attempts to save Civic

Yet for the past dozen years, the future of the stadium was uncertain.

The Eugene School Board declared the property surplus in 2002. In 2009, the stadium's tenant, the Emeralds, played its least season at Civic before moving over to the University of Ore-



ANDY NELSON/The Register-Guard

Passers-by watch from a distance as fire burns through the Civic Stadium in south Eugene on Monday.

gon's new PK Park.

Twice in the past five years, the school district received lucrative offers from developers who wanted to raze the stadium to put up a Fred Meyer-anchored shopping center, or a Eugene Family YMCA with apartments or houses on the site.

The prospects for the stadium's survival seemed doubtful until Johnson and his father, Art, and others who eventually formed the alliance began raising money to acquire the property.

In April, the alliance acquired the stadium in a \$4.5 million, multi-party deal involving the school district, the city and Market of Choice owner Rick Wright, who is on the al-

liance board.

The alliance paid \$4.088 million, with the city contributing about \$412,000 to buy land for a small park on the site, plus a bike path easement.

The alliance financed a portion of the purchase by immediately selling a little more than a half-acre of the property to Wright and two other investors for \$400,000.

Since the purchase, the alliance had been working on organizing and fundraising plans to renovate the wooden grandstand and install an artificial turf athletic field for soccer and other sports.

Ausland, an engineer with expertise in historic wooden structures, had estimated that

renovating the wooden grandstand would cost about \$2.8 million, with the installation of an artificial turf field costing another \$1 million or so.

That estimate did not include the cost of constructing new locker rooms and other accessory buildings at the stadium.

The alliance also planned to give a portion of the site to Kidsports. The youth sports organization had plans to build a 44,000-square-foot fieldhouse for volleyball, basketball and other activities on the land, next to Amazon Parkway.

Kidsports estimated the building could cost \$4 million to \$8 million, depending on features.

Deed restrictions on the

property are meant to ensure that the land can only be used as a sports and recreation complex. The fire and destruction of the grandstand doesn't change that.

Unless the restrictions are lifted by the school district, the property can't be used for a housing development, shopping center or some other purpose.

Since the purchase, the alliance's first renovation priority had been to install a new roof over the grandstand, and to replace three massive structural wooden columns damaged by dry rot.

Follow Ed on Twitter @edwardrusso. Email ed.russo@registerguard.com.

Aftermath: Group plans to continue youth sports effort

By EDWARD RUSSO
The Register-Guard

In the end, Civic Stadium couldn't be saved. The massive fire on Monday that destroyed the 77-year-old wooden grandstand ruined the plan of its new, nonprofit owner to convert the mothballed historic ballpark into a lively soccer and youth sports complex.

Yet, even with the destruction of the grandstand, the Eugene Civic Alliance said it will continue its efforts to create a community-based sports venue on much of the 10-acre property near South Eugene High School.

"The vision to serve children remains the same," said Jenny Ulum, an alliance board member. "We will work even harder to fulfill that vision now."

The alliance acquired the property just two months ago in a transaction involving its longtime owner, the Eugene School District, and the city of Eugene.

Other alliance members include Derek Johnson, an attorney; Bev Smith, director of Kidsports; Dave Galas, managing director of Lane United Football Club; and engineer Greg Ausland.

The group had spent the past year raising more than \$4 million from 120 private donors, including its own members.

Mayor Kitty Piercy on Monday, after speaking by phone to Eugene Springfield Fire Chief Randy Groves, said she was still in a "bit of shock."

"Like the alliance, we had dreams to hold onto our past while building our future," she said.

Turn to **CIVIC**, Page A8



Eugene, OR
(Lane Co.)
Eugene Weekly
(Circ. 2xM. 39,850)

JUN 11 2015

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

PRESERVING HISTORY

An open letter to the Eugene City Council: On behalf of the city of Eugene's Historic Review Board, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude for your support through this year's purchase of Civic Stadium by the Eugene Civic Alliance. We truly appreciate the efforts of you, Mayor Piercy and the individuals and groups involved with the alliance on the successful purchase of the stadium property from 4J School District! 5015 For over 40 years the seven-member Historic Review Board has been involved in setting preservation goals for the city of

Eugene. Many of us on the current board feel the council took great strides forward in helping the city meet the preservation goals advanced by the board with the advocacy of Eugene Civic Alliance purchasing Civic Stadium. Civic Stadium is a positive example of a local, historic resource that will continue to provide a positive and meaningful service within our community. It is for this reason that we are so grateful for your partnership and financial support in preserving Civic Stadium for use by the Eugene Civic Alliance.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the historic preservation of our community.

Heather Kliever, Chair, Historic Review Board
Eugene

5015

Portland, OR
(Multnomah Co.)
The Oregonian
(Circ. D. 247,833)

JUL 1 2015

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

Fire at Eugene's stadium leaves fans 'stunned and saddened'

By Jim Ryan 5015
The Oregonian/OregonLive

EUGENE — Maria Gutoski had just returned from an evening shopping trip Monday when her husband told her what had happened: Civic Stadium in Eugene, where he had proposed to her in August 1997, burned that night.

"You could say I was stunned by the news," she said. "Stunned and saddened."

Many who patronized the historic ballpark over the years share her feelings. A steady stream of people stopped by the stadium to watch its remains smolder Tuesday, either skirting the perimeter of the property or glancing out vehicle windows while passing by.

Traffic slowed along Wilamette Street, which runs parallel to the first-base side of the park, and passers-by pointed phones and cameras toward what was left of the Eugene institution.

"There was just so much history and ambiance in that stadium," said Gutoski, a Corvallis resident who attended games there after graduating from the University of Oregon. "It was just such an Oregon icon."

A nonprofit called the Eugene Civic Alliance, formed by Derek Johnson, bought the property in April for almost \$4.1 million, Johnson said. The nonprofit purchased the property in coordination with the city, which had bought it from the Eugene School District that same day for \$4.5 million, he said.

The city retained a portion of the property for a small park and bike path, Johnson said.

The stadium was built in 1938 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was last home to the minor league Eugene Emeralds in 2009 and had hosted myriad events over the years.

Johnson said his heart sank when he heard about the fire.

"It's hard to understand how much a part of the fabric of this community that stadium was," he said. "I mean, it's not just that baseball games were played there. Kids played there and they recreated — it was made from what this town was built on: Douglas fir from the old-growth forest. It was an incredible structure."

That structure is no longer. Joe Zaludek, deputy chief of the Eugene Springfield Fire

Department, said authorities are not yet aware of the fire's point of origin or cause.

"The configuration of the stadium, with the heat and the winds at the time, was very conducive to fast fire spread," he said.

Eugene Chief of Police Pete Kerns said the department heard three or four young people were seen around the stadium's press box before the fire. Three or four young people were also seen walking their bikes across a pedestrian bridge near the stadium, he said.

The department hopes to identify and speak with them, he said, but no suspects have been identified. The case remains under investigation.

A sizable contingent of spectators watched firefighters attempt to quell the fire Monday night.

Dennis Hebert, president of the nonprofit Friends of Civic Stadium, said he watched the blaze in awe and disbelief.

"It's like a parent," he said of the stadium, "you always imagine it to be there. You never think that someday it's not going to be here."

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503-221-8005

Eugene, OR
(Lane Co.)
Eugene Weekly
(Circ. 2xM. 39,850)

AUG 13 2015

Allen's P.C.B. Est. 1888

ARTISTIC LOSS 5015

Many lament recently losing the old city hall (tear down), Civic Stadium (fire) and Southtowne Lanes (fire), yet those losses were more sentimental than aesthetic. We might soon suffer a more artistic loss.

The former downtown Eugene Public

has been leased (with an option to buy) by the huge medical firm Kaiser Permanente. As the ground floor and basement are being revamped for its clinic (the second floor remains on short lease to other tenants), let us hope Kaiser maintains one of the few gems of Eugene classic-modernist architecture. Our aesthetic environment is, after all, a factor in our personal and social health.

The 1959 building combines elements of Frank Lloyd Wright in its warm colors and use of brick and wood, with the stark lines of the "international style" (Wright himself created the greatest such hybrid with the Kaufmann house "Fallingwater" in Pennsylvania). The lobby, stairwell, streamlined reception desk, lighting details and pillars of green metal in the main room (in debt to Wright's "lotus pad" columns in the Johnson Wax complex in Racine, Wisconsin) deserve preservation. So do the cleaned-line, handsome facades facing 13th and Olive, without adding gaudy signage.

Let us encourage Kaiser and the city to safeguard this excellent thread in our urban fabric. After all, some things should be "permanente." And the structure is even more appealing since a massively dull pile, basically a storage stack for rent housing, was built across the street.

6015 D.C. Elliott
Eugene



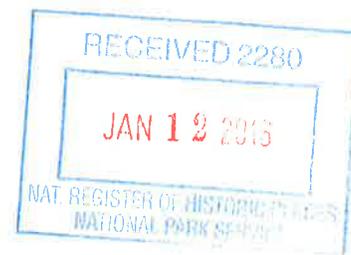
Google Maps 2044 Willamette St



Image capture: Aug 2015 © 2015 Google

Eugene, Oregon

Street View - Aug 2015






THUMBNAILS


MORE GALLERIES

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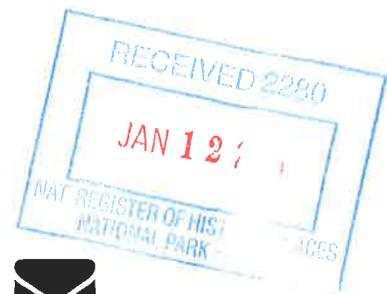

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