

Volunteers sought for Cremona School playground build

Society has raised almost \$80,000 for new equipment

BY PATRICIA RILEY
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The Cremona School Enhancement Society has almost reached its goal of \$80,000 for new playground equipment after just one year of fundraising.

Jon Olfert, treasurer of the society, said members are looking for volunteers to help assemble the new equipment at the school from April 14 to 16.

"One of the things that we do to offset the cost of the playground build is to recruit volunteers to come and help each day," said Olfert, adding the build will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day.

The society was formed about four years ago to raise money for projects at Cremona School. Staff members at the school proposed new playground equipment to the committee about a year and a half ago.

"We have a small playground there, but pieces of it have been getting taken off for years because they just get old and worn out and broken," said Olfert.

"And it's an older style playground, so a lot of it's made out of wood, which isn't as acceptable anymore," he added.

"Basically we just don't have much of a playground left anymore."

The project will add new equipment to the existing playground at the school while keeping some of the original structures. The addition will be made out of metal and will include a slide, monkey bars and a merry-go-round.

The society raised money for the project through donations and fundraiser events. It also received a provincial grant and a Mountain View County grant, he said.

The society's annual Puddle Party event held in April each year raised more than \$20,000 for the project last year.

The leadership club at the school also organized a family dance on Feb. 26, which

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raised \$2,100 for the project.

Olfert has been on the society since its inception and said although members are currently only working on the playground project, they always welcome new project ideas from staff members at the school.

"We got together with teachers many years ago and said we want to support our school, what do you need to help, what ideas do you have that would improve the school," said Olfert.

"And all the ideas that came up were 'well, we'd love to do this, but there's no money'," he said.

"So as a group of parents we decided that the key was to try and find financial resources so that a lot of these dreams could be realized."

The society has purchased equipment for physical education programs and has paid for students to attend leadership conventions. It also spends a lot of money on subsidizing busing for field trips.

"Any vision that teachers have we try really hard to approve and support," said Olfert.

If people are interested in volunteering for the playground build they are asked to contact the school at 403-637-3856.