

# Oregon Historic Site Record

## LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME

<b>address:</b>	8295 Spring Valley Rd NW Zena, Polk County	<b>historic name:</b>	Spring Valley School
<b>assoc addresses:</b>	8295 Brush College Road NW	<b>current/other names:</b>	Spring Valley Community Center
<b>location descr:</b>	Spring Valley Road and Bethel Heights Road NW. 8115 Spring Valley Road. 8295 Brush College Road NW.	<b>block/lot/tax lot:</b>	
		<b>twtnshp/rng/sect/qtr sect:</b>	6S 4W 25

## PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS

<b>resource type:</b>	Building	<b>height (stories):</b>	1.0	<b>total elig resources:</b>	1	<b>total inelig resources:</b>	0
<b>elig evaluation:</b>	eligible/significant			<b>NR Status:</b>	Individually Listed		
<b>prim constr date:</b>	1907	<b>second date:</b>	1930	<b>date indiv listed:</b>	02/09/2018		
<b>primary orig use:</b>	School	<b>orig use comments:</b>					
<b>second orig use:</b>	SOCIAL: General						
<b>primary style:</b>	Vernacular	<b>prim style comments:</b>	One-room school house				
<b>secondary style:</b>		<b>sec style comments:</b>					
<b>primary siding:</b>	Horizontal Board	<b>siding comments:</b>					
<b>secondary siding:</b>							
<b>plan type:</b>	School (General)	<b>architect:</b>	Unknown				
		<b>builder:</b>	Unknown				

### comments/notes:

Mapquest has the address as 8115 Spring Valley Road; Polk County Assessor has the situs address as 8295 Spring Valley Road; Geocoding has the address as 8295 Brush College Road 3/11/14 HRR Completed 3/17/2014

## GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS

Not associated with any surveys or groupings.

## SHPO INFORMATION FOR THIS PROPERTY

<b>NR date listed:</b>	02/09/2018	<b>106 Project(s):</b>	None
<b>ILS survey date:</b>		<b>Special Assess Project(s):</b>	None
<b>RLS survey date:</b>		<b>Federal Tax Project(s):</b>	None

## ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

*(Includes expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings and alterations)*

One-room school houses were often one of the first public buildings constructed in pioneer settlements. They were treasured by the local residents not only for their educational value but many times also for providing a gathering place for the entire community, children and adults. The Spring Valley School/Community Center has served both of these historic needs for over 100 years, from the original source of education beginning in 1907 to 1952 and then as a neighborhood gathering location up to the current time. Very few alterations have occurred since it ceased being used as a school house. The building is still largely a showcase of the original purpose and for the architectural style that was common at the time it was built. The Spring Valley School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its role in the history of pre-consolidation rural education in the mid-Willamette Valley. It is also eligible under Criterion C as an excellent and well-preserved example of early twentieth century one-room, "third generation" schoolhouses and the materials and architecture of that era.

## HISTORY

*(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period - preferably to the present)*

The Spring Valley School was built in 1907, replacing an earlier school built in 1868 to serve the children of farming families in rural northeastern Polk County, north of the community of Zena. The school was built on land donated by John Childers and L.A. Davis, though the land was not officially transferred to the school district (District No. 35) until 1913, six years after the school was built. The school served the surrounding families from 1907 until 1952, when it was closed as a result of consolidation efforts, which began in the 1920s and 1930s, and expanded in the late 1940s. The Spring Valley School survived early 20th century consolidation efforts, possibly due to its location in far northeastern Polk County, distant from other districts in the county to which students could otherwise be sent. Nevertheless, in 1952, consolidation with Salem School District took place. After closure, the school was made available for sale and was purchased by Spring Valley community for use as a community meeting and event space. Children who went to school in Spring Valley encountered an education similar to that of many rural areas in Oregon and, in fact, the nation. Eight grades were taught by one teacher. That teacher's salary was generally about \$40 a month but could be more if the teacher also did the janitorial work. That paid an additional \$5 a month. From this amount the teacher might have to pay her board and room in one of the student's home. Also typical was that the children walked to school, sometimes several miles, or would ride a horse to school that was tied to a long, iron pipe set between two of the oak trees. In addition to the three "R's" students also were taught to sew as the school superintendent was eager they learn things that would be of value around the house. In 1910 the District was one of the first in Polk County to organize a 4-H Club. A.L. O'Reilly was the teacher and organizer and later became club leader. There were typically between 20-30 students attending the school. The culture of the community and America itself is told in the story of the ordinary events in the lives of average Americans who were living, working, and going to school in Spring Valley, with their schoolhouse as the gathering place. Newspaper articles from the Salem Statesman Journal chronicle a variety of school and community activities taking place at the schoolhouse. (No newspaper references appeared for the very early years, but by 1912, Spring Valley School news appeared regularly). An April 18, 1912 article told of a visit by the Assistant State Superintendent of Schools E. F. Carlton (and others) to the "famous Spring Valley School" to study the "home credit for school work" program. This idea, then called Industrial Club work, originated with the State Superintendent of Schools, L.R. Alderman, and became the foundation for today's 4-H program. 4-H is still active in Polk County. A May 1, 1912 article announced an Annual Picnic for June 1 at Spring Valley School and noted that the school had attracted attention because of its system of home credits, its thorough and systematic work, and because it was the first standard school in Polk County. The picnic took place at the school on June 1. Industrial Club contests included bread and cake baking, hand-made dresses and aprons, "fancy work", and bird house building. On November 22, 1915, Parents' Visiting Day was held at the Spring Valley School, with a number of parents attending, who brought their lunches and spent a "pleasant day observing their children at their school work." In February, 1916, socials were held both at Spring Valley and Lincoln Schools. The article announced that "good programs have been prepared in anticipation of pleasant evenings." The school house also served as a community gathering spot and the school students performed plays on a small temporary stage at the back of the room. Ball games were played in competition with other small Districts and each school had its own pennant. Dances were also held with neighboring Districts. The state-wide changes came gradually to the Spring Valley area. A map shows that a handful of small Districts still existed in the 1950s when the majority of the consolidation had already occurred. Although only approximately 10 miles from the state capital, the Spring Valley District remained a one-room school house District until consolidation with the Salem School District in 1952. At that time many of the small Districts were part of the move to consolidate. In Polk County Mennonite, Spring Valley, Lincoln, Zena, Bethel, Popcorn and Mountain View were still independent Districts. In 1952 Bethel voted to consolidate with Salem 24CJ, followed by Spring Valley. Zena became a primary school with grades one, two and three. Lincoln took the intermediate grades. The children from all three of those Districts were transported by station wagon to Zena or Lincoln,

depending on their grade. Earlier (beginning in 1947) a group of community leaders in the Spring Valley community had joined together to raise money to build a community center. They purchased land on Zena Road adjacent to the Lincoln School. That community center had still not been built when, after the consolidation in 1952 the Spring Valley School was closed and the building was put up for sale as surplus. The community group abandoned its plan to build at Lincoln and instead purchased the Spring Valley School and land for \$1000 when it went up for auction on the Dallas courthouse steps. The former school house continued its role as a community gathering spot up until the current time. The Spring Valley Community Center now hosts weddings, social gatherings, and even road runs. It continues providing a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history from 1907-today.

## RESEARCH INFORMATION

Title Records	Census Records	Property Tax Records	✓ Local Histories
Sanborn Maps	Biographical Sources	✓ SHPO Files	✓ Interviews
Obituaries	✓ Newspapers	State Archives	✓ Historic Photographs
City Directories	Building Permits	State Library	

### Local Library:

**Historical Society:** Polk County Historical Society

### University Library:

**Other Respository:**

## Bibliography:

Anonymous 1952 "Spring Valley School District to Vote Again," Statesman Journal (Salem, OR.), October 13. 1954a "Consolidation of Schools Rejected," Statesman Journal (Salem, OR.), October 15. 1954b "School District Annexation Vote Plan Protested," Statesman Journal (Salem, OR.), May 2. 1954c "Spring Valley Vote on May 7," Daily Capital Journal (Salem, OR.), May 3. 1954d "Boost in Budget, Merger Okayed," Statesman Journal (Salem, OR.), May 8. 1954e "Lower Cost Per Pupil Cited in School Consolidation Case," Statesman Journal (Salem, OR.), September 30. 1954f "School Consolidation Election Not Valid," Daily Capital Journal (Salem, OR.), September 29. 1954g "Board to Call New Auburn School Bids," Statesman Journal (Salem, OR.), November 24. 1954h "Spring Valley Schoolhouse Will be Sold," Statesman Journal (Salem, OR.), December 2. 1954i "Spring Valley School for Sale Soon," Daily Capital Journal (Salem, OR.), October 13. 1955a "Spring Valley Loses School, Gains Center," Statesman Journal (Salem, OR.), January 8. Barnard, Henry. School Architecture: Contributions to the Improvement of School Houses in the United States, 5th ed. New York: Charles B. Norton, 1854. Cram, Lauren Briedwell School nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Salem OR 1987. Eagleton, Lois. "English Settlement School", nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Salem, OR 2007. Early Schools of Marion County. A Resource Handbook for the Bicentennial. Marion Intermediate Education District, 1976. Guiliford, Andres. America's Country Schools. Washington DC. The Preservation Press. 1984. Hendricks, R.J. "Bits for Breakfast", Salem, Oregon Statesman-Journal Archives, 1937. Ireland, Charles. "Our Valley," Statesman Journal (Salem, OR.), January 9, 1955. Mack, Lynn, Debra Meaghers, Kimberli Fitzgerald, Images of America: West Salem. Arcadia Publishing. Charleston, South Carolina, 2011. McKinney, Grace. "Grace McKinney Recalls Attending Spring Valley School". Spring Valley School and Community Center, Centennial Publication, 2007. Nelson, Joni and Rosalind Keeney, Mary Gallagher, May Dasch, "Rock Hill School, nomination to the National Register of Historic Place. Salem, OR, 1992. Oregon Inventory of Historic Properties, State Historic Preservation Office, 1976. Polk County Historical Society. <http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/pages/records/local/county/polk/hist.html> Purvine, Paul, "Purvine Family History," 1974 Robinson, Ruth Carleson, "Ruth Carleson Robinson On Attending Spring Valley School in the 1940s. Spring Valley School and Community Center, Centennial Publication, 2007. Rocheleau, Paul, The One-Room Schoolhouse. New York: Universe, 2003. Schroeder, Fred E.H., Schoolhouse Reading: What You Can Learn from Your Rural School. History News, April 1981. Smith, Ed. "Ed Smith Remembers 1920s Spring Valley School". Spring Valley School and Community Center. Centennial Publication, 2007. Walker, Carol and Bruce Duerst. "Victor Point School" nomination to National Register of Historic Places. Salem OR 1996.