

Fire: Gym held many memories

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actually pretty shocked."

"It's weird to go see it. Rubbish is what it looks like," said Salman, who also graduated from Mohawk in 1995.

The fire destroyed some classrooms, labs, and the gym. Hoban and Salman both felt the loss of their high school's gymnasium.

"One of the first things I thought was the gym's gone and so is our banner," Hoban said.

The banner honors the Mohawk basketball team's Trico League championship. Hoban was a member of that team his senior year. The team went on to the

state competition in the 2A division.

Despite the destruction, Salman and Hoban are optimistic about the future of Mohawk High.

"It will be different because you won't have the building," Salman said, "but hopefully they can build a bigger gym."

"From what I understand, the building was fully [insured]," Hoban said. "After a while we'll realize that we'll get a new school and they'll move on, but it will be hard."

"There's generations of families that live [in Marcola] and the school is a central figure in the

"It's a terrible thing to lose a small community school. It means a lot to a lot of people in the area."

Jim Brooker
Marcola Fire Chief

town," Salman said. "It's one of the only things that's there."

Brooker agreed. "It's a terrible thing to lose a small community school," he said. "It means a lot to a lot of people in this area."

Expedition: Pathfinder operating well

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would have been out of reach of a stationary spacecraft.

They can also use the rover's wheels to scrape, mold and stir up the Martian dust, providing valuable information about its properties. During Sojourner's 6-foot journey Monday, it was to stop in a sandy spot to spin its wheels. Photos of the marks made during those maneuvers will help scientists understand the nature of the Martian soil, knowledge that could help in the design of future rovers.

By Monday, scientists had long forgotten the communications problems the rover experienced during the mission's first 24 hours. The mission began at 10:07 a.m. Friday, when Pathfinder bounced to a halt on a cushion of air bags.

"The spacecraft is operating perfectly, the rover is operating perfectly and all of the instruments are operating perfectly," project scientist Matthew Golombek reported.

Pathfinder provided a weather report for the next Mars day (beginning Monday afternoon California time): afternoon highs of 10 degrees Fahrenheit with variable light winds, with a low temperature overnight of minus 105 degrees.

Photos taken by the Pathfinder lander's camera, which popped up to its full height Saturday night, showed for the first time how the surrounding landscape would look to an adult standing on the Martian surface.

The lander's camera has taken hundreds of photographs, many of them in color and 3-D.

Scientists said they were astounded by the variety of colors, and thus rock types, they were seeing.

"This has been just an absolutely wonderful surprise. We hadn't anticipated the amount of color information that we're seeing," said James Bell, a planetary scientist at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y.

"I think we're fairly confident that there was liquid water on Mars. Could it have been warmer and wetter such that liquid water could just be sitting there?"

Matthew Golombek
Pathfinder project scientist

Because it bears directly on the issue of whether life ever existed on Mars, scientists said the evidence of past floods at the Pathfinder landing site will be investigated intensively in coming weeks.

Malin estimated that the flood happened between 1 billion and 3 billion years ago.

If, as some scientists contend, stable water — and not the rushing torrents described Monday — ever existed on the Martian surface, then life probably could have survived there.

"I think we're fairly confident that there was liquid water on Mars," Golombek said. "Could it have been warmer and wetter such that liquid water could just be sitting there?"

That's the big question. And it will be answered not by studying the Martian landscape, but by collecting and studying the rocks themselves in earth-bound laboratories, something that NASA plans to do in 2005.

When NASA scientists examined a Martian meteorite found in Antarctica, they concluded that microscopic clues they found in the rock were consistent with the existence of microbes. But when they announced their findings last summer, the scientists fell short of saying that they had found positive evidence of life on the red planet.

Listen to the music



KIRSTEN LAUSTERER/Emerald

Junior Kai Sturdavant sings and strums, leading the audience in a folk sing-along at the Art in the Vineyard celebration at Alton Baker Park Saturday afternoon. She was one of many to perform at the benefit for the Maude Kerns Art Center July 4-6.

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