

COVE

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The cafeteria building will also have a walk-in freezer and refrigerator for storage, neither of which the school district now has. Pettit said the storage space is so limited now that food is kept at sites throughout the campus, including a freezer in the high school shop area.

“(The increased storage space) will boost the efficiency of our kitchen staff,” Pettit said.

The space where the cafeteria is now will be converted into an office area where counseling services and specialized reading instruction for students can be provided. These services are currently provided in a modular building on campus. The modular will later be removed.

The construction of the building is being paid for with money the school district has been setting aside for capital projects for a number of years, Pettit said. The school district is not taking on any debt for the cafeteria building project.

This represents the Cove School District’s third construction project in the past 25 years. Two additional high school classrooms were built about 10 years ago, and a music room was con-



Dick Mason/The Observer

The Cove School District’s new cafeteria building is expected to be finished by Feb. 28. Framework for the building started last week.

structed in the early 1990s.

The school district will continue looking to make campus upgrades following completion of the cafeteria project. Pettit said the school board soon will vote on approving having an assessment conducted by professional organizations of the school district’s facilities and seismic upgrade needs.

Getting such assessments done would help the school district become eligible for state grants for renovation and upgrades, the superintendent said. It will also give the school district information it needs for planning for the future.

“We want to determine where we are going in the decades ahead,” Pettit said.

SCOUTS

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Declaration and Platform for Action. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was made in 1995 at the fourth annual World Conference on Women held in Beijing. The declaration outlined the steps that all nations can and should make toward gender equality, according to the United Nations website. Girl Scouts are invited to participate in this event at the U.N., as the organization is one

that helps in achieving the goals set out in the fight toward equality.

Girl Scouts is an opportunity for young women to learn about the world around them starting in kindergarten and ending with the 12th grade. The Service Unit for the area includes troops in Baker, Union and Wallowa counties.

“In a community this size and in this rural area Girl Scouts gives girls an opportunity they might not have otherwise had,” D’Angelo said.



Submitted photo

Sophia Thornburg presents to a group about stereotypes of women during a trip to the United Nations.

CONGRESS

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people in the state, bridge the rural-urban divide,” McLeod-Skinner said in September. “There’s excitement about the idea of a rural Democrat as secretary of state.”

Since then, Rep. Jennifer Williamson, D-Portland, the former House majority leader and Sen. Mark Hass, D-Beaverton, an Emmy-winning television reporter-turned-Salem political heavyweight, filed to run for secretary of state.

Then came Walden’s announcement Monday that he wouldn’t seek a 12th term.

Walden’s decision gave McLeod-Skinner pause. Asked Monday if she was considering a switch to the congressional race, McLeod-Skinner didn’t say no.

“Since his announcement, I’ve received a lot of calls, and I am in the process of returning them,” she said. But on Thursday, she said she is staying the course.

That leaves Walden’s seat up for grabs next year, with a scrum of veteran politicians vying to replicate Walden’s move from Salem to Washington, D.C. It’s a plum for Republicans — the closest thing to a sure bet in a state where Republicans have been shut out of top jobs in recent years. Both senators, the other four representatives of the House, the governor, attorney general and treasurer are Democrats.

Only Secretary of State Bev Clarno, the former House speaker from Redmond, is a Republican. She was appointed by Brown after the death early this year of the incumbent, Dennis Richardson. She says she will not run for the office in 2020.

Kevin Hoar, spokesman for the Oregon Republican Party, said the lack of a favored candidate to replace Walden is no mistake.

“GOP primaries tend to be more open and competitive than the insider, pre-arranged successions you tend to see on the Democrat side,” Hoar said.

Republicans have an 8% voter registration edge over Democrats in Walden’s district. District voters haven’t elected a Democratic representative since Al Ullman in 1980. The Cook Political Report rates the district as “solid Republican” for the 2020 election.

Despite the odds, 2020 is the best year in a generation for a Democrat to run, said Jim Moore, a political science



Associated Press file photo

Rep. Greg Walden participates in an interview in 2017 at The Washington Post. Walden, who comes from the far north-central part of his congressional district in Hood River, served a decade in the state Legislature before shifting to Congress. Over two decades, he’s become the GOP’s political glue that held together the vast district.

Oregon 2nd Congressional District

Size: 69,491 square miles
Population: 831,343
Median age: 42.4 years
Race: 90% white, 2% Native American, 8% all others
Hispanic ethnicity (all races): 14.2%
Unemployment: 6.2%
Median household income: \$56,358
High school graduation rate: 88.8%
College graduation rate: 26%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau’s 2018 American Community Survey

professor at Pacific University who specializes in Oregon politics.

“Incumbency is the single strongest factor in determining favorites in elections,” Moore said. “Walden’s retirement removes that factor.”

Moore said it will be tough for any candidate to have the name recognition and drawing power throughout a district that covers two thirds of the state in the east, central and southern parts of Oregon. It’s just under 70,000 square miles with 831,000 residents. The biggest city is Bend with about 98,000 people.

Walden, who comes from the far north-central part of the district in Hood River, served a decade in the state Legislature before shifting to Congress.

Over two decades, he’s become the GOP’s political glue that held together the vast district.

Republicans running or likely running for the seat are best known in only one compass point within the district.

Sen. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, has officially announced he wants the seat.

Much of the eastern and central portions of state Senate District 30 that he represents overlap Walden’s turf. But the congressional district’s biggest population centers, Jackson County (Medford, Ashland) and Deschutes County (Bend, Redmond), are outside of Bentz’s district.

Rep. Daniel Bonham, R-The Dalles, widely mentioned as a candidate, has a northern slice of Walden’s district. He’s the new House deputy minority leader in Salem.

Jason Atkinson told the Medford Mail-Tribune this week that he is considering a run.

Born in Ashland, Atkinson represented southern Oregon districts in the House and Senate for 14 years, opting not to seek reelection in 2012.

He finished third in the 2006 GOP primary for governor. Since leaving office, he’s been active in Klamath River water issues and attempts to bring big league baseball to Portland.

In the center is Knute Buehler, of Bend, the former state representative and 2018 GOP nominee for governor. He said this week he is looking into the race, but has no timetable of when he would decide.



Dick Mason/The Observer

This is what a portion of Brush Creek’s new channel looks like in Ladd Canyon. The channel was created so that a portion of the creek could be diverted to allow work on the Oregon Department of Transportation’s Ladd Canyon Freight Improvement Project to be done.

PROJECT

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closed in the westbound lanes of Ladd Canyon from milepost 271 to 273 because of work being done to install a channel for Brush Creek. The new channel is needed to make way for the addition of a third eastbound I-84 lane in 2020 that will run from the west entrance of Ladd Canyon east for 1.5 miles.

Brush Creek has been an obstacle for ODOT because a portion of it ran along the area where the new lane will be built. ODOT is thus taking steps to move the lower part of Brush Creek’s channel to the north side of I-84’s two eastbound lanes.

Remily said that one westbound lane between mileposts 271 and 273 will remain closed through Nov. 27 to allow for last-minute modifications to the new Brush Creek channel.

Major portions of phase I of the Ladd Canyon Freight Improvement Project included the removal of the eastbound lane bridge near the entrance into Ladd Canyon and the replacement of it with a concrete box culvert. The culvert is large enough to accommodate log trucks and semi trucks.

Replacing the bridge with a culvert is a big plus because the bridge tended to get icy, Remily said. Now the roadway where the bridge once was will be no more icy than the stretches

of freeway running on either side of it.

“It will no longer be icy there and not anywhere else,” Remily said on Friday.

Bridges usually freeze first in cold conditions because they are sandwiched between cold air, Remily said. The adjacent roadway by contrast freezes later since only its top surface is exposed to frigid air and its bottom is insulated by soil. The new culvert will not get as icy as quickly because it has ground insulation.

Phase II of the Ladd Canyon Freight Improvement Project, which will involve installation of the third eastbound lane between mileposts 271 and 273, is set to begin in April 2020.

The expanded space the new lane will provide should reduce the number of times Ladd Canyon has to be closed due to trucks blocking lanes.

In a previous Observer interview, ODOT spokesman Tom Strandberg explained that if a truck crashes in the future three-lane roadway, traffic will be able to move around it while it is being cleared. Truck drivers will be allowed to use only the inner and middle lanes while automobile drivers will be permitted to drive in all three, Strandberg said. The three-lane stretch will be similar to a westbound one near Spring Creek on I-84, which has been in place since 2015.

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