

Snowstorm adds week to Winter Break, school year

■ ADAM HOLMES

Staff Reporter

Students and staff alike were surprised the week of Dec. 15, when school was canceled due to a blanket of snow that fell on the city. The snow dumped around six inches on the ground, assuring that schools would be closed for the next few days and roads would be treacherous to travel. By Thursday, much of the snow had melted.

The snow returned that night, assuring that the remainder of the school week would be canceled and snow would continue for the next few days. The extra week of break means that another week will be added on to the school year.

While the week did offer a break from school and work for most people, for others it was a hassle. Many were stranded in their houses due to snow accumulation, ranging from a couple of inches to two and a half feet in areas. Driveways and roads were covered with layers of ice, and some sections of roads, such as Salamo and Hidden Springs, were closed because they were too risky to travel.

Even if people were not stranded, the city recommended avoiding driving if possible. Many students and families used the empty roads as

opportunities to go sledding, skiing, and in some cases snowboarding.

"I went sledding down the hill in front of my house. It was fun to just relax and play in the snow," Hannah Morton, freshman, said.

The worst part of the storm for some families was losing power. While some only lost electricity for a couple of hours, others lost it for a whole day, or in some cases, several days. Most of this was due to fallen tree limbs breaking power lines.

"I lost power for five days! My family couldn't get to my grandma's so I didn't get any presents," Josh Oltman, senior, said.

Portland General Electric worked around the clock to repair downed lines, but it was a slow battle, with more lines being damaged as new ones were being repaired.

"We lost power for five days. The power went out on December 22 around 5:30 am. There was a huge boom that woke my family up," Jennifer Wells, sophomore, said.

"Turns out our main power line, that is only shared with our neighbors, literally fell. We finally got power back on the 26th around 11 p.m. My family and I were invited by our neighbors to have Christmas Eve dinner with them. Christmas Day, we were able to go to my cousin's house for dinner," Wells said.

Despite all of this, the

snow days were a welcome break from school for many students.

"I wrote soliloquies in my spare time," Joel Callagan,

Alissa Greenburg, senior, said.

According to the National Weather Service, this snowstorm was the biggest

since 1968, which left 8-14 inches of snow. Though the snow is gone for now, there is a chance that it will eventually come back.



The snow covered the '00 Volkswagen Beetle of Bailee Schneider, senior. For an entire week, passersby snapped photos of the almost invisible car. Photo by Bailee Schneider

junior, said.

Some used the time to catch up on homework.

"Most of the classes I'm in had missing assignments," Kaitlin Andrus, freshman, said.

But some who used the time to relax.

"I read a few books that were lying around the house, took a lot of naps, and have now officially watched every single I Love Lucy episode,"

Winter break flooding causes minimal damage to building

■ ASHLEY WELP

Staff Reporter

On New Year's Day, boxes sat, sopping wet on the floor of the coaches' office which was immersed in 2" of water. Down the ramp in the lower level of the school, the flood water sat, waiting to be discovered. The foam undermatting in the Wrestling Room was bloated with the melted runoff which also soaked into the wood floor of the Dance Room.

"It took the entire District Maintenance Crew, and most of the day, to suck up all the water off the floor. Then the night crew did a more thorough cleaning," Claude Koch, custodian, said.

The harsh weather in December affected many homes and businesses. There have been multiple cases of flooding in Oregon as well as in Washington and there were still flood alerts out in certain communities.

The snow blast that came over break melted causing flooding around Oregon. By itself, this might have caused the floods, but to top it off, there was a substantial amount of rainfall shortly after. The combination of the two was what pushed most drainage systems over the top. The damage to WLHS was noticed the morning of Jan. 2 and was quickly cleaned up.

"We have a drainage system that failed due to the amount of runoff and a trailhead that was constructed outside of our fence that impacted its flow," Rob Holstrom, Assistant Principal, said.

According to Holstrom, the water came down the

hillside by the football field, around the track to the back of the school, where it entered behind the boys locker room. The drainage system was overwhelmed by the runoff, causing it to overflow.

The flood left 2-4" of water in the Wrestling Room, locker rooms, storage rooms, coaches' offices, Dance Room, Training Room and Weight Training Room. Luckily, according to Holstrom, only water entered the school and not debris.

The greatest damages sustained were to the foam undermatting in the wrestling room and the wood floor in the Dance Room. The mat of the wrestling room was removed. There was only minimal damage to the dance floor.

"There were some boxes that were sitting on floors in some rooms that had some damage, but mostly pretty minor stuff," Holstrom said.

The district had about 15 maintenance people working at the school most of Friday (Jan. 2) and even more returned that evening to assist in further clean up.

The school had the locker rooms and other areas needed for the basketball game cleaned up later that night. No cancellations were necessary due to the flooding.

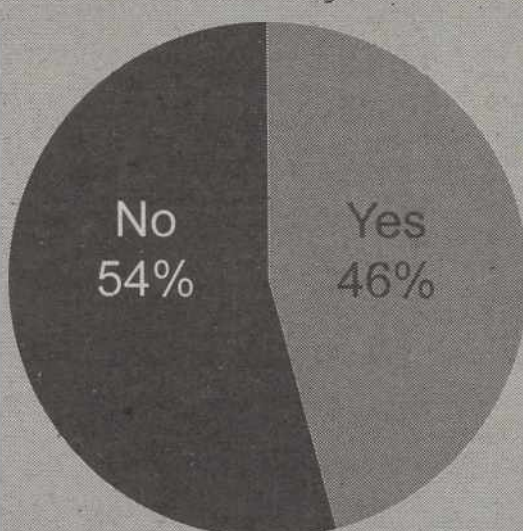
"The district staff has cleaned out all of the drains and pulled out the trailhead that was part of the cause of the diverted runoff," Holstrom said.

There is no fear of future flooding and the only large bill the school was left with was the payment required for the long hours it took to clean up.

Student Survey:

How were your snow days spent?

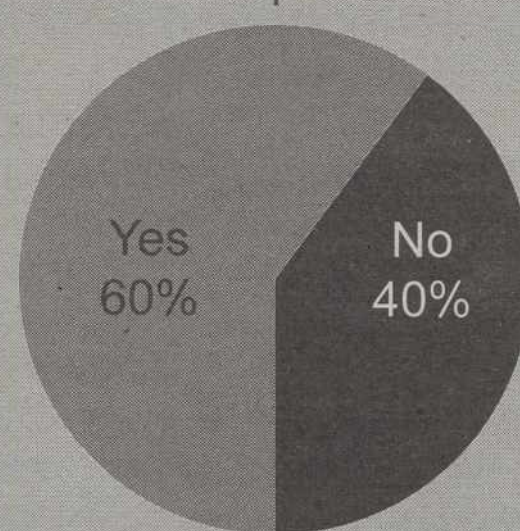
Did you lose power over the snow days?



Hannah Bradford, junior, practices her tradition of drawing hearts in the snow. The white powder provided an interesting medium for her artistic expression.

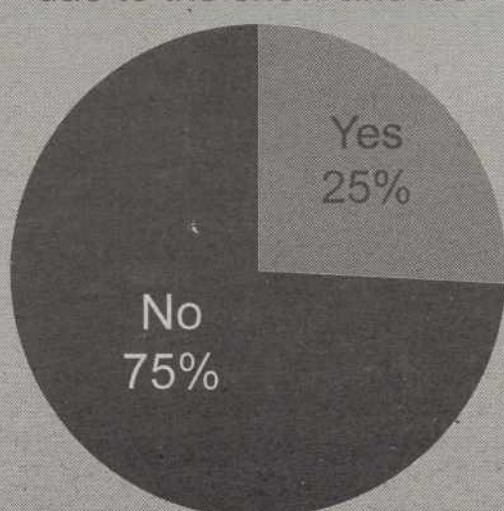
Photo by Hannah Bradford

Were you trapped in your house for an extended period of time?



In a survey asking students how they spent their snow days, 120 responses were received. When asked how power outages affected their holiday plans, Kellie Kawasaki, senior replied, "I lost power for three full days (I live up in Hidden Springs). Not only did I have to move my Cookie Exchange Christmas party, but I also had to have Christmas at my aunt's house in Portland." Students complained about close to freezing temperatures inside their homes, but enjoyed spending extra time with friends and family. When asked if the extra time was used to work on homework, Sam Anderson, junior, replied, "I probably could have used the time to my advantage, but I couldn't resist the allure of the winter wonderland outside."

Were you or an immediate family member in an accident due to the snow and ice?



Daniel Crooks, senior, captures a photo of a fox that was sitting in his backyard. The snow kept people inside, giving nature free reign. Photo by Daniel Crooks

Did you use the extra time off to work on homework?

