

POOL: Pendleton staff will begin filling the pool next week

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then like with a car you wax them and get them speed-racer ready.”

He said city employee Brian Fricke has done much of the work to get the pool ready for use.

The concessions stand also has to be readied. Fetter said this year the people who run the Tiki Hut outside the spray park will also run the pool's concessions stand, adding a selection of shaved ice to the stand's traditional fare.

Meanwhile Brandon Artz, the city's new recreation director, has been busy coordinating training for 33 new lifeguards and 15 returning ones. Employees must go through a 25-hour course of CPR, first aid and rescue techniques for unconscious and “active” victims, including being able to dive down to the bottom of the deep end and pull an unconscious adult to the surface.

“It's a pretty intensive four days,” Artz said.

This year most classes took place at Blue Mountain Community College's pool, but next year Hermiston is looking to move employee trainings over to Boardman's new pool set to open July 2,

since BMCC's pool may not reopen again after its summer maintenance closure on June 2.

Once the four-day training course is over, employees are constantly being tested through ongoing inservice training, including test drills during the work day where lifeguards have to jump in and rescue dummies thrown into the pool.

“It's not just a one-time training, it's an ongoing measure of their preparedness,” Artz said.

Some lifeguards are returning from college, but the majority are high school students. Either way, the pool can't open until they're done with school, which is why it opens on June 10 this year. There are still a few spots left for swim lessons, but they're filling up fast.

Pendleton

The pools at the Pendleton Family Aquatic Center were being repainted Thursday as the city of Pendleton's facilities staff worked to get the center in shape before it opens June 16.

“There's a lot of steps to opening,” parks and recreation manager Jeff Hamilton said. “We can't do it all in one week. It's probably a two month set-up.”

He said it can be busy to get everything done in the window between winter weather and pool season, especially with a harsh winter and rainy spring like this year brought. Everything must be assessed for damage, repaired, cleaned and whatever else is needed to getting the whole aquatic center ready for prime time.

Hamilton said the staff is almost there — they will begin filling the pool sometime next week, then spend several days getting it to the right temperature and the correct mix of chemicals.

“By probably the 12th of June, hopefully we will be up to temperature and chemical balance and everything will be looking awesome,” he said.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

Joe Humbert Family Aquatic Center

Open: June 10
Public Swim: 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 5:30-8 p.m.
Lap Swim: 9-11:15 a.m. and 4:15-5:15 p.m.

Rates: Youth \$3.50 and adults \$5
Season Passes: \$60 individual, \$135 family and \$50 senior/disabled for city residents
Additional information: In Milton-Free-water. Visit www.mfcity.com/community/page/joe-humbert-family-aquatic-center for details about swim lessons, rentals and other information.

Willow Creek Water Park

Open: June 10
Public swim: 1-8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1-5 p.m. on Sundays
Rates: \$2 for ages 0-4 and senior citizens, \$3 for ages 5-17, \$4 for adults, \$14 for families
Season Passes: \$75 for an individual and \$140 per family
Additional information: In Heppner. The pool will close on days cooler than 65 degrees or when there are fewer than 6 swimmers. Visit willowcreekpd.com/water-park for more information.

Boardman Pool & Recreation Center

Open: July 2
Hours: 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturdays and noon to 7 p.m. on Sundays
Rates: Toddlers free, ages 4-18 \$4, adults \$5, seniors \$4.50
Season Passes: Monthly and yearly passes to the pool and recreation center are available
Additional information: The pool and recreation center will have a grand opening celebration from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on July 1. Call Boardman parks and recreation at 541-481-7217 for more information.

Helix Community Pool

Open: June 10
Public Swim: 1-6 p.m. daily
Rates: Children under three are free, \$2 for children 3-17 and \$3 for adults
Season Passes: \$45 for youth, \$50 for adults, \$90 per family
Additional information: Visit the Helix Community Pool Facebook page for swim lesson schedules and other information.

BEARD: City will pay for the position with revenue from the convention center

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formal title, Beard still intends to recruit new events to Pendleton and the convention center.

The convention center hasn't had a full-time director since 2013, when Pat Kennedy retired from the position.

Although Kennedy continued to work on a contract basis, he left for good in 2016.

City Manager Robb Corbett assigned convention center duties to Steve Chrisman, the city's economic development director and airport manager, but due to new events like Pendleton Bike Week and Pendleton Whisky Fest, the city council voted to revive the convention center director as a full-time position.

Beard will make between \$60,564-\$80,892 to start and could earn as much as \$108,000 if he hits the top of

the pay scale.

The city plans to pay for the position with the revenue from the convention center. After running \$182,000 deficit in 2010, the convention center fund ended the 2016 fiscal year with a \$83,289 surplus and is on track to finish the current fiscal year with a \$200,000 surplus.

More events at the convention center also means more revenue from the room tax and the tourism promotion assessment charge, the city's two hotel room taxes.

Beard said Travel Pendleton will continue on without him after he starts his new job with the city July 1.

He intends to work closely with his old employer as well as the Round-Up, where his brother Casey works as the general manager.

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MEDICAID: Aug. 31 is OHA deadline to get 101,000 Oregonians double-checked

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every Oregonian on Medicaid — the Oregon Health Plan — meets the criteria.

Oregon's new system for managing its Medicaid enrollees, called ONE, has this capability, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

But since ONE was launched in late 2015, patients are still being entered into the system, due in part to disparate datasets and a laborious initial process that requires enrollees to complete a paper application more than 30 pages long.

And the 465 state workers assigned to the task of re-enrollment are not yet finished.

As a result of the problems with Cover Oregon, the state received a series of waivers from the federal government on performing redeterminations until mid-2016. OHA maintains the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are aware of and have approved the agency's ongoing efforts to resolve the backlog, despite the current lack of a formal waiver.

The governor has given OHA an Aug. 31 deadline to get about 101,000 Oregonians double-checked. Another 14,000 people are in the process of being removed from the Oregon Health Plan because they did not respond to the state's termination warnings.

Although the OHA emphasizes the process is now about 90 percent complete, the remaining 10 percent has come to the attention of the state's top auditor, who released a memo arguing

that the state could have spent millions of dollars on people who do not qualify for the program.

Secretary of State Dennis Richardson's memo riled up legislators on both sides of the aisle, who are busy hammering out healthcare budgets and a potential tax on providers to cover some of the costs of expanding Medicaid.

The possibility that the state could have lost money by paying for unqualified recipients — and to clean up the data — in its effort to provide coverage to more people has been highlighted as legislators attempt to close a \$1.4 billion budget gap.

Richardson's office released an audit Wednesday finding the new ONE system functions well when it comes to verifying people for Medicaid. However, auditors also found that manual entry poses a risk to the accuracy of eligibility determinations and payments to healthcare providers.

OHA says the enrollment and redetermination process will be simpler as time goes on because the system can do certain things automatically, such as verifying an applicant's income by comparing the application to existing datasets.

Asked whether the OHA was equipped to redetermine the eligibility of the approximately 1 million people on the Oregon Health Plan, the agency responded Wednesday that it has “taken aggressive action” to verify recipients' eligibility since the Cover Oregon failure.



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