

Joseph Charter School gym restoration moves ahead

Gym was damaged during Jan. 16 fire

By ELLEN MORRIS BISHOP
EO Media Group

JOSEPH — With no students on campus, the post-fire rejuvenation of Joseph Charter School’s gym — and other smoke- and water-damaged portions of the school, is moving right along.

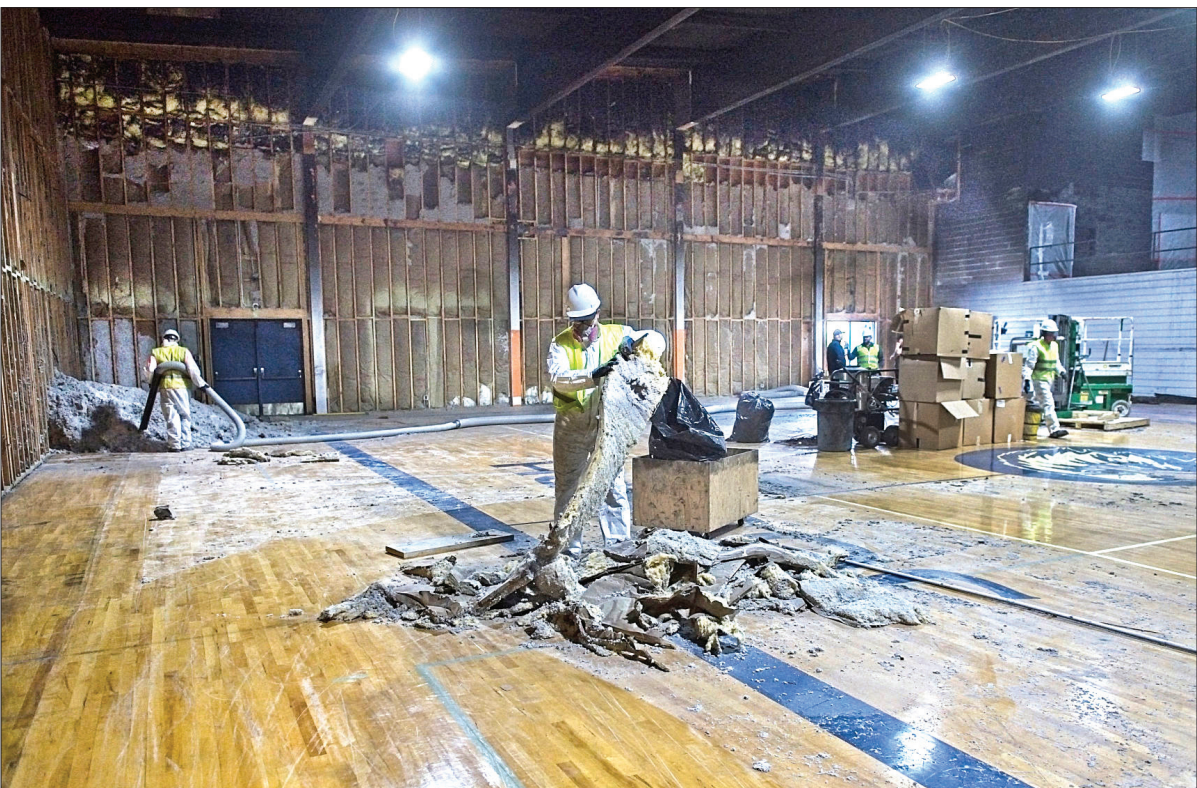
Better yet, the repairs are providing much-needed upgrades and updates to buildings and classrooms. Those include installation of new, brighter LED lights in hallways, a new fire sprinkler system that is up to current codes, new ceiling tiles, freshly painted classrooms and new carpet in the music room. Work on the classroom areas should be complete by the end of April.

“If we were in session, everything would be open then,” JCS Superintendent Lance Homan said.

The blaze started during the school’s lunch break on Jan. 16 and firefighters got the fire under control in about 45 minutes.

The work began immediately post-fire, and focused on the elementary school and school office areas where the damage was minimal. Then, in February, attention turned to the more heavily damaged portions of the high school and the gym.

“Our insurance company called me, I think while the fire was still going,” Homan said. “They put us in touch with a restoration company



EO Media Group Photo/Ellen Morris Bishop

One Call worker Riley Grove and others clean up insulation from the Joseph Charter School gym. The material is suspected of containing asbestos. Restoration of the gym probably won’t be completed until after September.

called One Call, and that company is doing an outstanding job. They do everything.”

That even includes gathering and restoring smoke- and water-damaged photographs and memorabilia that decorated hallways — and rehanging them exactly were they were before the fire.

The gym is another matter. “We are thinking it will be done by September when school, hope-

fully, opens,” Homan said.

Fortunately, the gym was not structurally damaged by the fire.

“All the beams and supporting studs came through the fire OK,” Homan said.

But beyond the building’s skeletal structure, much of the gym interior is being torn out and replaced. That includes the gym’s interior wallboard and the insulation, which is suspected of having an asbestos

component. A new floor. A new heating system. New lights. New bleachers. A new scoreboard. A new weight room.

The gym will get a new roof.

“They’re tearing off the roof right now. There were some things that were charred that will be replaced,” Homan said. “In the middle of August, we’re hoping to put down a new floor.”

Although Homan and every-

one hoped that the gym renovations would be complete by September and the start of classes, he learned Thursday afternoon that the work would take longer.

The locker rooms are also getting major repairs.

“The damage there came mostly from water,” Homan said. “It got under the tiles. You could just run your hand over the tiles and they’d fall off the walls.”

Along with the new tiles comes some new, upgraded plumbing, and also replacement of insulation suspected of harboring asbestos.

“There are a lot of unanticipated good things that have come out of this fire,” Homan said. “It seemed really difficult going from fire damage to no students on campus (because of the state-mandated school closure.) In a way, it’s good that we don’t have students on the campus now. It would be hard to do work around them with all the construction going on. It keeps the students safe, and construction can go on a little easier and faster.”

With bids for work still coming in, Homan does not yet have an estimate of the cost of all the work, but says it will be covered by JCS insurance. While the major projects, including the gym cleanup and roof, have gone to larger or more specialized firms, Homan still hopes to award some contracts to local contractors.

“We’re looking forward to getting things back to normal,” he said. “It’s going to be a new normal, and maybe a better one.”

Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY

Sun mixing with high clouds

WEDNESDAY

Intervals of clouds and sunshine

THURSDAY

Not as warm with a shower

FRIDAY

Times of clouds and sun

SATURDAY

Turning cloudy

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
75°	51°	77°	53°	66°
40°	71°	46°	72°	47°

HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
79°	51°	82°	56°	71°
43°	75°	45°	76°	50°

OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2020

ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	74°	55°
Normals	66°	41°
Records	95° (1926)	29° (1935)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.

0.00"

Month to date

0.11"

Normal month to date

1.04"

Year to date

5.06"

Last year to date

7.76"

Normal year to date

5.04"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	76°	54°
Normals	68°	42°
Records	88° (1947)	28° (1970)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m.

0.00"

Month to date

0.03"

Normal month to date

0.78"

Year to date

0.51"

Last year to date

3.88"

Normal year to date

3.92"

WINDS (in mph)

	Today	Wed.
Boardman	WSW 4-8	W 6-12
Pendleton	W 4-8	WNW 6-12

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today

5:47 a.m.

Sunset tonight

7:59 p.m.

Moonrise today

9:33 a.m.

Moonset today

12:49 a.m.

First	Full	Last	New
Apr 30	May 7	May 14	May 22

Deadline to register to vote is Tuesday

By BETSY HAMMOND
The Oregonian

PORTLAND — Tuesday, April 28, is the deadline to register to vote in Oregon’s May primary. It’s also your last chance to switch from being an unaffiliated voter to registering with one of the major parties, even temporarily. That’s a must-do if you have an itch to vote for Joe Biden, the all-around-endorsed Democrat, one of his opponents who have quit the race, or Donald Trump, the Republicans’ triumphant re-nominee.

Oregonians who register to vote as members of minor parties or no party at all still can vote in city and county elections and on ballot measures. But they won’t see Trump or Biden’s names on their ballot, nor the names of candidates for the Legislature or Oregon secretary

of state or other statewide offices.

The purpose of a primary is to nominate each party’s top choice for the general election contest in the fall, so voters who aren’t registered with a party don’t get a say at this stage.

Voters who are independent of any party get no say in Oregon’s partisan primary races, said Andrea Chiapella, legislative and communications director for the Oregon Secretary of State’s Office. Minor parties have their own systems of voting that aren’t run through the state elections office, she said, such as this one for the Independent Party of Oregon.

For registered Democrats, the primary ballot could offer interesting choices in the presidential race as well as for many legislative seats and Ore-

gon secretary of state. Even though Biden’s challengers have all conceded he’s clinched the Democratic nomination and endorsed him, Oregon Democrats will still see multiple candidates on their ballot. Listed as choices in the race for president will be Biden, Tulsi Gabbard, Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, all of whom qualified at Oregon’s deadline to print ballots and begin getting them to overseas voters.

As with so many other aspects of Oregon’s vote-by-mail system, you can register to vote or change your party registration safely from the comfort of your own home, as long as you are at least 16 years old, have access to the internet and possess a valid Oregon driver’s license, driver permit or ID card that indicates you are a citizen.

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 102° in Presidio, Texas Low 18° in Stonington, Mich.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

-10s	-0s	0s	10s	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	70s	80s	90s	100s	110s
showers	t-storms	rain	flurries	snow	ice	cold front	warm front	stationary front	high	low			

BRIEFLY

Environmental group seeks protection for rare bumblebee

SALEM — An environmental advocacy group has petitioned the federal government to grant protection to a rare parasitic bumblebee under the Endangered Species Act.

Populations of the Suckley’s cuckoo bumblebee have seen declines of more than 90% over historical figures, according to the Center for Biological Diversity, the group pushing to protect the insect. Only a few have been spotted in the wild over the past 20 years. The last sighting was in Oregon in 2017.

“Without immediate protections, this unique native bee could be lost forever,” Tara Cornelisse, an entomologist and senior scientist at the Center, said in a statement. “By saving this cuckoo bumblebee, we can restore a vital species and help protect these disappearing ecosystems.”

At nearly an inch long, the Suckley’s cuckoo bumblebee is a social parasite, taking over the nests of other bee species, subduing their queen and making the worker bees care for its own young.

The bees were once common on prairies, meadows and grasslands across the West, but more than half of their habitat has been lost to grazing, pesticides and climate change. As other bee species decline, the Suckley’s cuckoo is also suffering from

a loss of its main host species, the western bumblebee, according to the Center for Biological Diversity. Western bumblebees have declined by nearly 60% over historic estimates.

Governor apologizes for unemployment delays

PORTLAND — Oregon Gov. Kate Brown apologized Sunday to people who have encountered problems trying to apply for unemployment during the coronavirus crisis.

A record number of people have applied for benefits, but many have been stymied by breakdowns in the system. A total of 334,000 people have lost their jobs in the past few weeks as the state’s economy shut down to try and stop the spread of the virus, *The Oregonian*/OregonLive reported.

“If you’re waiting on an unemployment claim: I hear your frustration,” Brown, a Democrat, wrote on Twitter. “I’m sorry for the delays.”

Reports of errors in the system weren’t as widespread Sunday as they have been over the past three weeks, the outlet reported.

Authorities in Oregon have reported more than 2,300 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 91 deaths, including four announced Sunday.

— *The Oregonian and Associated Press*

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