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White Lake to celebrate new facility

Nov. 15, 2012

One year and 11 days after referendum voters resoundingly said yes to improved facilities, the White Lake school district will hold a grand opening ceremony for its new recreation center.

The project—which may have seemed improbable to some considering the obstacles facing tiny school districts—was approved by 60 percent of voters who said yes to a \$3 million referendum question on Nov. 8, 2011.

Since that time, the other 40 percent of the community—or at least the vast majority of them—have likely been won over as well, catching the enthusiasm of the school staff, contractors and community at-large.

Todd Lambert, who spearheaded a project that saw community members donate thousands of dollars of hard maple logs used in the new gymnasium floor, called it “an old-fashioned barn-raising,” and that phrase is on the front of the grand opening program.

The ceremony will begin Monday at 2 p.m. and will probably be as boisterous as the ground-breaking held in April.

There will be music by the high school band and everyone is expected to join in the singing of the school song.

Administrator Bill Fisher will offer a welcome followed by comments from Scott Popelka, school board president; Dan Wickersheim and Beth Castaldi representing the Community Advisory task Force; Jack Brayton of the Building Advisory Committee and Doc Smith, who guided the construction from design to finish in his role with EDS Builders.

There will need to be a long ribbon for the formal cutting ceremony. Representatives will include members of school board, the community advisory task force, the building committee, community leaders, students and staff.

Sandi Gallagher, the school board clerk, will give the closing remarks.

An open house will follow from 3:30 to 5 p.m. In the evening, the White Lake Lakers boys basketball team will inaugurate the new gymnasium floor in a 7:30 p.m. tilt against the Bowler Panthers.

The project, with a total price tag of \$3.58 million, includes a central recreational center, similar to a commons, an exercise room that may be used as a community space, men's and women's locker rooms and restrooms, team locker rooms, concession area as well as the stunning new gymnasium.

The project also included remodeling of existing classrooms and locker spaces into a new technical education area.

The school's tiny vintage gymnasium has also been retained.



The White Lake boys basketball team gathered around the Laker logo situated at center court in anticipation of its inaugural game in the new gymnasium Monday. Clockwise from bottom left are managers Gary Doemel and Chris Schewe, Tony Biggs, Jake Wegner, Travis Guy, head coach Shawn Wickersheim, Luke Wickersheim, Kris Gallagher, Austin Maddix, assistant coaches Sheridan Smith and Blaine Zinn, Matt Bowman, Brian Greengrass, Darius Clark and managers, Summit Wild and Bobby Strong. Missing are Angelo Barron, Patrick Piotrowski, Cameron Fredrick and Dan Lewis. Bowler will be the opposing team in the 7:30 p.m. tip-off.