

Salem Boys and Girls Club completes multi-million dollar makeover

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SALEM - A couple of years ago, the roof inside the gymnasium at the Salem Boys and Girls Club leaked water every time it rained.

The club was built in the late 1960s and had grown in popularity over the decades, and soon was in need of costly repairs.

The numerous programs offered by the club, many which had waiting lists due to lack of space and no room to house a teen center, prompted several community leaders to take action.

The fundraising project was headed by State Sen. Charles "Chuck" Morse, R-Salem, with a goal of \$3.5 million to pay for an extensive renovation and expansion project.

Earlier this year, the doors at the club closed and construction got under way. The club officially reopened last month.



The new upstairs teen center offers a handful of games as well as a big screen television complete with a set of leather couches.
(JANINE GILBERTSON)

The new club barely resembles the structure that sat across from the Kelly Library for decades.

A modern facade and plenty of windows gives the new club plenty of curb appeal, while bright colors and gleaming floors welcome members inside.

General Manager Mike Goodwin said the original club was 29,000 square feet. It has now been expanded to 43,000 square feet.

Goodwin said the gym was updated and the pool remains, but everything else was torn down and rebuilt.



The Salem Boys and Girls Club underwent a massive remodel. The updated two-story facility now features a new teen center.

One key addition is the upstairs teen center, which includes a big-screen television, arcade-style video games, storage space for backpacks and jackets, an exercise room and a few classrooms.

The downstairs features a new kitchen with an adjacent snack area with plenty of seating, a computer room, new offices and classrooms, including more space for kindergarten.

Morse said so far, fundraising efforts have brought in \$2.5 million, and the club will continue to raise money until they reach their goal.