

PANDEMIC

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surfaces like doorknobs, chair backs, kitchen knobs and others. “We’re also making sure our guests are handed their food, rather than serving themselves. “We’re not passing around the condiment bottles, for example,” he said.

Libraries

The Dalles-Wasco County Library will remain open through the coming week, and most programs will continue as planned, District Librarian Jeff Wavrunek said Friday, March 13, 2020. “If we get confirmed cases in the area, we would strongly consider closing,” he said. Some events have been canceled, including a visiting musician and a 4-H event. “They are limiting face-to-face contact,” he said.

Wavrunek said library staff are sanitizing all computers, chairs, tables and doorknobs daily.

It’s been quiet, he added. A recent raptor program with Columbia Gorge Discovery Center that regularly brings in 150 patrons brought in half that number. “It’s definitely quieter, although with school closed the children’s room was pretty active today.”

The branch library in Maupin is also currently staying open. The Dufur branch, which is located in the school building, will be closed until the school reopens April 1.

Wavrunek said the library board will be meeting in the coming week and evaluate things. “It’s all pretty fluid,” he said.

The Sherman Public Library also plans to remain open in the coming week, said Librarian Michael Miller.

All locations and branches of the Hood River Library closed Saturday and will remain closed through at least Tuesday, March 31, 2020, according to a press release.

“Based on scientific evidence that early social distancing can help stop the coronavirus from exponentially spreading, Library District leadership is making the difficult decision to close,” said Library Director Rachael Fox.

The district has been monitoring information and advice from the Center for Disease Control, Oregon Health Authority, Governor Kate Brown and Hood River County public health officials, she said. The closures will remain in effect until at least Tuesday, March 31.

“This decision is consistent with the governor’s executive order for all K-12 schools to close until April to slow the spread of the virus,” she said. “The best way we can serve our patrons and community

right now is to aid in slowing the spread of the virus, especially as our patrons include many seniors and others at high risk.”

Over the next few weeks, locations will be cleaned and prepared for reopening.

During the closure, patrons are encouraged to use Hood River County Library District online resources and services. Residents in the service area can sign up for website access to eBooks and eAudio-books; streaming movies and kid’s educational programming; online databases and more.

Due dates for all checked-out materials will extend through the due date and fines will be waived during the closure. Please return your materials when the library reopens. Drop boxes will be closed.

“If you have an item on a hold shelf it will be waiting for you when we reopen.

If you have a hold, you will maintain your place in line,” said Fox.

Patrons can follow the Library on social media (Facebook), learn more at www.hoodriverlibrary.org and/or sign up for their e-newsletter for the latest updates.

One Community Health

One Community Health (OCH) is offering virtual visits and rapid screening to patients to help fight the spread of COVID-19 and will waive patient out-of-pocket costs on virtual visits for the next 30 days.

In an effort to reduce community exposure to COVID-19 and protect vulnerable populations, One Community Health (OCH) announced today that they will begin offering patients virtual (video-based) visits along with rapid in-person screening. Virtual visits can be used as a first line option to assess patients experiencing symptoms that are common to COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath), can help vulnerable patients continue to receive care, and give patients a convenient way to receive care from home.

In addition to virtual visits, patients with symptoms common to COVID-19 also have the option for rapid screening at OCH’s main clinics in Hood River and The Dalles. At rapid screening stations, OCH can perform a rapid flu test, quick physical examinations (e.g., listen to lungs, check ears, nose and throat), and if appropriate test or coordinate testing for COVID-19. OCH asks that patients schedule an appointment for this rapid screening.

“We were planning to offer Virtual Visits later in the year, but our teams have

been working around the clock to accelerate the launch of virtual visits and expand care choices for our patients,” said Max Janasik, CEO of One Community Health. “Given how fast we’re moving, we will have some bumps along the way, but this new option can help reduce community exposure. To remove any financial barriers to access and encourage patients to try virtual visits we will also be waiving patient out-of-pocket costs for the next 30 days, March 16 through April 16.”

Virtual visits will be used to quickly assess whether symptoms appear to require additional testing or can likely be managed at home. Virtual visits also allow patients to connect with OCH’s behavioral health consultants for help with COVID-19 related anxiety, social isolation and a variety of other behavioral conditions.

“We understand that COVID-19 is creating a lot of stress, anxiety and loneliness. We will be available to help patients through this, in addition to supporting patients with many other common challenges. Our behavioral health consultants will be available through virtual visits and out-of-pocket fees will also be waived for behavioral health virtual visits for the next 30 days,” said Lucas O’Laughlin, Director of Behavioral Health Services for OCH.

Patients should call or text OCH at 541.386.6380 to schedule a virtual visit or a rapid screening.

Maryhill Museum

Maryhill Museum of Art will be closed until further notice in an effort to further stem the spread of COVID-19, according to Executive Director Colleen Schafroth.

The official reopening date of the museum will be determined according to recommendations from federal, state, and local health authorities, Schafroth said Saturday.

The museum had canceled events, but planned to remain open, last week.

Agencies & Clubs

The NORCOR Budget meeting scheduled for Thursday has been canceled

until further notice.

The Port of The Dalles commission meeting scheduled March 18 has been canceled due to virus concerns. The agency will be reviewing the possibilities of holding the meetings via phone or online, said executive assistant Jennifer Toepke.

The Dalles Rotary Club has canceled this week’s meeting to avoid any risk to members as a precautionary measure due to the pandemic threat, and are looking into live streaming and other options, according to a press release.

Confluence Project

Confluence Project has postponed Sense of Place lectures and other events.

The Confluence Story gathering event on March 18, in collaboration with the Sense of Place Lecture Series, has been postponed due to coronavirus concerns, according to an emailed statement from Confluence Project Executive Director Colin Fogarty. Purchased tickets will be valid for the rescheduled event, to be announced at a later date.

Also postponed are the April 11 Confluence gathering at Whitman College and the April 25 Design Week hike at Sandy River delta in Troutdale.

In a press release, Fogarty issued this statement: “Like many of you, we at Confluence have been closely monitoring the rapidly changing situation across the globe and in our communities in response to the COVID-19 coronavirus.

“We had hoped that our relatively small cultural gatherings could be spared from the tidal wave of cancellations and postponements we are all seeing. But circumstances have changed so rapidly and we have heard concern from some of our event participants. The last thing we want is to put anyone at risk.”

Fogarty added, “We remain hopeful that our Earth Day Work Party at the Confluence Land Bridge in Vancouver will still go on as planned on Saturday, April 18. But in collaboration with our partners, we will make that call as the date nears.”

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College open, taking precautions

Columbia Gorge Community College is taking several precautionary measures as the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) prompts concern among students, staff and community.

“Our college is committed to providing a safe and healthy educational environment, but we recognize the way we provide service may need to shift for a time in response to recommendations from the Governor, Oregon Health Authority, and the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention to help slow the rate of exposure and potential illness,” said Dr. Marta Yera Cronin, president of Columbia Gorge Community College.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown does not recommend that Oregon’s colleges close at this time. Likewise, Washington State’s community colleges remain open currently.

Columbia Gorge Community College will stay open, but is expanding its on-line instructional capacity so that students can access their classes remotely.

CGCC is also abiding by Gov. Brown’s ban on large public events of more than 250 people through April 8, 2020.

This may affect some

activities over the next four weeks.

“This situation is changing day by day, so we ask constituents to check the CGCC website for status updates,” Dr. Cronin emphasized.

Information resources and updates are posted through the college’s social media and on the college’s website, www.cgcc.edu/coronavirus-information.

Hands-on career-technical programs and labs will continue in person, but CGCC will implement social distancing measures to maintain a distance of at least three feet between individuals.

The College will also cancel college-associated gatherings and group activities that do not allow for individuals to maintain a distance of three feet or more from one another.

Non-essential travel meetings above 20 people will be cut. Zoom video conferencing will be used as an alternative.

Administrators are reviewing which positions may work remotely from home.

All operational changes will remain in place through at least April 8.

The college will continue to evaluate the situation based on recommendations from federal, state and local health authorities, and make updates as appropriate.



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TRASH TALK



Q. Can I recycle my plastic shopping bags in the blue bin? Dan, Parkdale

A. Dan, Great question. Please don't put plastic bags in your recycling. Bags cause major problems with machinery at the recycling facility in Portland. Good news though- Return plastic bags and film packaging (if clean and dry) to your supermarket. That includes bags that cover produce, bread, paper towels, drycleaning, and case wraps.

questions to:

Tri-County
Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program
(541)-506-2636 www.tricountyrecycle.com



WEATHER FOR THE DALLES, OR | MARCH 18 - 24, 2020

Today



57°
/30°
Times of sun and clouds

Thursday



61°
/32°
Mostly sunny

Friday



57°
/32°
Times of clouds and sun

Saturday



59°
/32°
Times of clouds and sun

Sunday



60°
/35°
Sunny intervals

Monday



57°
/36°
Cloudy

Tuesday



57°
/36°
A couple of showers possible

Actual High/Low
March 9 - 15

Monday

60/27

Tuesday

64/28

Wednesday

57/42

Thursday

58/32

Friday

48/36

Saturday

39/30

Sunday

37/29

Updated 3.16.20, 8:27 AM PDT
Data from Accuweather.com

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