

Fall harvest helps with healthy habits

ROBIN BENDER
COMMENTARY

Fall is one of my favorite seasons of the year—the leaves turn color, and children are eager to romp through the pumpkin patch.

Along with the weather, researchers have found that seasonal changes influence our nutritional habits. We tend to eat fall foods like breads, vegetable soups, and apples, which are packed with beneficial nutrients but may lead to weight gain.

steps can make it easier.

Ask children to help with meal preparation including picking out new fruits and vegetables at the grocery store they wish to try. If students feel more invested in the process they are more likely to eat healthy foods. Plus preparing meals involves all sorts of learning including math, science, and reading.

Kids love snacks, so stock the fridge and cupboards with nutritious choices like carrot and celery sticks, raisins, and whole grain crackers. Look for brain foods in season to benefit cognitive and academic abilities, such as hazelnuts or even popcorn.

Finally, parents are important role models when it comes to the culinary choices students make. If children see mom and dad eating fruits and vegetables, their tastes in food are more likely to follow those of their parents.

If you're trying to make healthy eating become the new norm for your family, give it time and plenty of repetition. The benefits outweigh the occasional turned up noses.

Robin Bender of Pleasant Hill is a high school PE and health teacher with Oregon Connections Academy. She can be reached through the school at www.OregonConnectionsAcademy.com or by calling (800) 382-6010.

squash, cranberries and pears that can be easily incorporated into school time meals.

Farm to school activities encourage healthy eating behaviors. In fact, during National School Lunch Week October 9-13, the Oregon School Nutrition Association will be promoting the nutritionally balanced cafeteria meals provided to students, often with fresh farm ingredients.

This fall, families can try a DIY experience to bring nature's bounty straight from the farm to their forks. They can visit a farmer's market in their region (oregonfarmersmarkets.org), several of which also offer kid's clubs that empower children to make their own healthy food choices.

The Oregon Farm Bureau's website (oregonfb.org/oregonsbounty) helps families planning a trip to a U-pick farm or fruit stand, offering students a hands-

on experience to harvest their own produce. Planting a garden at home is another approach, even if it's a small one with herbs. Teaching children where food comes from and how it ends up on their plates nurtures a lifelong love of healthy eating.

One of the healthiest things parents can do for their children is enjoy meals together as a family. October has even been designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as "Eat Better, Eat Together Month" to remind families of the benefits of sharing mealtimes such as enhanced social skills and improved communication.

Research indicates children who share family meals three or more times a week, whether at home or at a restaurant, are more likely to have healthier dietary patterns than those who don't. Getting the family to eat nutritious meals might be challenging, but a few simple

the council completely understands the financial stress that some residents are feeling during this time, we are trying to catch up with long-deferred maintenance needs.

We are also continuously looking for ways to spread the burden for that maintenance more fairly.

Currently, only residents of the Silverton city limits contribute directly to street maintenance, while many, many others use our street systems every day. Obviously, a 2-cent gas tax hits us all equally, but for the first time, outside residents would share in your burden.

For the past two years, we have been aggressively protecting our "decent condition" streets by applying crack seal and slurry seal treatments through a partnership with Marion County. The proceeds from a 2 cent gas tax, in which every dime must be used for maintenance, construction, and preservation of streets, would allow us to double the slurry seal program or allow us to begin what will be an expensive process of fixing

McClaine Street, our number one priority.

For a single vehicle driver that drives 12,000 miles per year and gets 15 miles per gallon, this will cost \$16.00 per year. A gas tax is the ideal vehicle for funding street repair, construction and preservation in that it's consumption based, meaning that you only pay it if you buy gas, and it's proportionate to the amount of stress that one puts on our street network.

It provides a minor incentive to those who may consider alternative transportation and would allow us the option of transferring future increases in the city's per-dwelling street utility fee to our citizens.

Thank you for your consideration and support of this amazing community that we are fortunate to live in!

Kyle Palmer is the mayor of Silverton. He can be reached through the city at 503-873-5321 or kpalmer@silverton.or.us.

Consider Silverton ballot measures carefully

KYLE PALMER
COMMENTARY

Next month, Silverton residents will have the opportunity to consider two ballot measures that are very important to the community. On behalf of the Silverton City Council, I urge each of you to consider them carefully.

A five-year pool levy, first passed in November of 2012, will provide another five years of operations and maintenance of this important community asset. A citizen panel considered all options including a new pool and seasonal use of the current pool in 2012 and unanimously agreed that year-round operation of the current pool is vital to the community.

I'm very happy to report that the 2017 ballot measure, if approved, will reduce the rate being asked of voters. The rate passed in 2012 was \$0.45 per \$1,000 of assessed home value and the proposed rate

for the new levy is \$0.36 per \$1,000 of assessed home value. For a home with an assessed value of \$200,000, that amounted to \$90.00 per year in 2012, while the proposed new rate will amount to \$73.18 per year.

The partnership between the city and the Silver Falls YMCA, which operates the pool, has been a great success, and the pool is used for much more than recreation. It is the home of the Silverton High School swim team, it provides a vital resource for independent exercise as well as fitness classes and it is a great tool for rehabilitation.

The city ordered two comprehensive evaluations of the pool's condition in the past year and I'm happy to report that it has held up very well for a facility its age.

Even so, the proposed levy will include expanded maintenance in an effort to preserve this asset for years to come.

Perhaps more controversial, the council is also asking for consideration of a local 2 cent per gallon gas tax. While

1st round of marijuana revenue distributions to start

ABBY LUSCHEI
STATESMAN JOURNAL

Roughly \$85 million in marijuana tax revenue is about to be distributed to Oregon agencies, cities, and counties.

According to David Lacy, financial operations manager for Salem, the city will receive roughly \$400,000.

He said a portion of the city's share will go to the general fund and be used to pay administrative and enforcement

costs. Whatever is left will go to the police department.

The Department of Revenue collected more than \$108 million in state and local marijuana taxes between Jan. 4, 2016 and Aug. 31, 2017.

Around \$94 million of that revenue is eligible for distribution.

Of that revenue, \$9.56 million went to transfers to repay the Oregon Liquor Control Commission's start-up costs, and cover administrative costs for the De-

partment of Revenue. The remaining \$85 million will be distributed.

Joy Krawczyk, public information officer for the Oregon Department of Revenue, said moving forward, marijuana tax revenue will be distributed quarterly.

"We have worked closely with the recipients and other state agencies to get a solid plan in place," she said.

All distributions will be completed by Oct. 11.

By the numbers

- » \$34 million - State School Fund
- » \$17 million - Mental Health, Alcoholism, and Drug Services Account
- » \$12.75 million - Oregon State Police
- » \$4.25 million - Oregon Health Authority
- » \$17 million - Cities and counties (10 percent each)

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