

MASKS

Continued from Page 1A

explained, and added they provide another way to help reduce the spread of the virus.

The task was called the 500 Mask Project. Though the production has already surpassed the number in its name, Anderson said there is no intention of slowing down.

“We’ll keep doing them. We just picked that as an arbitrary number, honestly,” she said.

While the Quilt Shop staff is assembling and cutting the kits, local residents are coming by to pick up the kits to make the masks at home. They then bring the completed masks back to the business at 1107 Washington Ave.

“We probably have about 50 different people in the community who are working on them. I would (actually) say more than 50,” Anderson said. “We have tons of people out there.”

Those who they give masks to are washing them before putting them to use, either because care facilities have to wash them a specific way or Anderson’s requests they do so.

Susan LePage is among those who have been mass assembling masks. The La Grande resident has made between 40 and 50 masks, many of which she has given to Anderson to distribute. She also has given some to family and has made a batch —



Contributed photo by Patti Anderson

These are a few of the more than 500 masks citizens have made and delivered to the La Grande Quilt Shop for its 500 Mask Project. The shop, owned by Patti Anderson, is making kits that residents can pick up to assemble into masks and return for Anderson to distribute.

off different specifications — to give to the hospital.

“I started to talk to Patti because I’m a regular there,” LePage said.

“She made it public she was in touch with other providers and they had a certain pattern. We started making masks for these other folks. It has evolved organically, I guess.”

The project, in fact, has become an obsession for LePage.

SHARE

Continued from Page 1A

with no spectators.

Newport said he continued to commute to his job for a while wearing a mask, but last week he began teleworking.

“Various cities are also banning picnics under the sakura cherry trees just beginning to bloom,” he wrote in a Facebook message. “Governors are starting to request reductions in unnecessary travel between some prefectures (mine included).”

Newport said American friends ask why Japan seems to be experiencing a milder outbreak.

“I can think of a few reasons. First, health care is very convenient and easy to get here ... so I think Japan has done a good job at tracking clusters and catching sick people early. Second, Japan has been facing a population crisis for years due to an aging society — the “Gray Wave” — so we tend to recognize it as our duty to care for the elderly.”

People also ask him if he thinks Japan has purposefully kept test numbers low to keep a good image as the Olympics approached.

“I can’t say, but I haven’t felt like the country is dragging its feet or working to keep things quiet,” he said. “Nightly news is still focused on COVID-19, and talk of more drastic measures are still taking place. At this point, though, I can only hope we’ve flattened the curve enough. I’d like to think we have.”

Ana Oliveira, Ploaghe, Italy

Italians know the terror of COVID-19 even more than most. Almost 14,000 people have died there since the virus started rampaging the country in late February. Funerals are prohibited and bodies go to crematoriums. The mortality rate of 10.2 percent is higher than elsewhere maybe owing to Italy’s large elderly population or possibly because low rates of testing means the real number of cases simply aren’t known.

Ana Oliveira, an agricultural researcher who lives in Italy, felt safe at first since she, husband Michele Salis and their two children live on the island of Sardinia, giving them some separation from the rest of the country. For a while the couple lived life as usual, then things changed fast as the virus spread, finally reaching Sardinia. She and Michele, a research scientist with Italy’s National Research Council, now work from home.

In a Facebook message, she said outside criticism of the Italian gov-



Contributed photo

David Newport takes a photo with his youngest daughter.

ernment for reacting too slowly to the pandemic seems unfair.

“I felt glad that the Italian government acted quite rapidly, closing the schools and isolating the most affected areas for quarantine,” Oliveira wrote. “However, too many people acted like this new disease was not a matter of concern and kept their living standards and priorities unchanged.”

The virus continues to spread in Sardinia and finally arrived in their small village of Ploaghe. To help keep people home, a group of volunteers delivers weekly grocery orders to each house for free.

“I miss going for a ride or to the sea with my family in the weekend. I miss field working with my team, I miss open air,” she wrote, “but I know I have all that really counts at home. I think we can win this war by behaving conscientiously and being respectful of our community and our country.”

Nick’ii Scott, Antananarivo, Madagascar

Nick’ii Scott works as tour guide, showing tourists around the island nation of Madagascar.

Scott has more time on his hands these days. Numbers of tourists dwindled after the government announced a suspension of all international air travel on March 20. The country recently went into lockdown and as of Friday, has 59 confirmed cases.

A week and a half ago, Scott started feeling ill with a fever and checked into a quarantine center in the capital city of Antananarivo where he lives.

“I was out of breath. I was extremely anxious about myself and

“I feel such a sense of urgency,” she said. “People need these, and I believe they’re necessary right now. A lot of people don’t sew or know what to do, (and) materials that are good for mask making are getting hard to find right now. A lot of people are just winging it with whatever they can find. I feel a sense of urgency to get them out there.”

So far, Anderson said, the shop has distributed more than 500 masks.

“We were giving them out as fast as we were bringing them in,” Anderson said.

Several masks, which take about 20 minutes to make and are washable — and thus reusable — have been donated to care facilities, such as La Grande Post Acute Rehab and Grande Ronde Retirement Center.

“Our goal was to get these masks to people who are taking care of the frail and elderly on a regular basis,” Anderson said.

Masks also have gone to Market Place Family Foods and Nature’s Pantry, as well as to the post office and Oregon Youth Authority.

Anderson said her shop also is collecting for the Center for Human Development and Meals on Wheels.

Anderson added anyone who wants to join the project can come by the shop to get materials and patterns and learn the process.

“They’re more than welcome to come in and we’ll help them through it,” she said, “at the correct social distance, of course.”

my little family,” he wrote in a Facebook message. “It seems rather difficult for us to get to know whether it is a simple cold or COVID symptoms. Fortunately a cargo from China came on the 25th of March and brought sophisticated stuff for COVID-19 testing.”

Scott, who was allowed to leave the hospital and spend the rest of his quarantine in a hotel, still doesn’t know whether he actually had the virus, but feels better.

He said Madagascar appears to be among the last countries affected by COVID-19 and that “the first case was detected on the 20th of March, brought by three passengers from the same flight coming from France on the 17th.”

Scott said he feels frustrated about about some residents’ cavalier attitudes toward the virus.

“In general, some people do not really care about it, as we can still see a bunch of people here and there, whereas others follow the instruction to stay home,” he wrote. “The decision was quite late for the state to close down the airport and the border, but Malagasy people are sometimes rather stubborn. The more they are informed, the closer they get to the danger.”

Susan Lavender Kelley, Alto Boquete, Panama

Susan Lavender Kelley, formerly of Pendleton, lives in the Central American country of Panama, where coronavirus has radically changed residents’ daily lives.

“COVID-19 has reared its ugly head in Panama,” Kelley wrote in an email. “The danger of COVID-19 has brought the country to a standstill. Only pharmacies and grocery stores remain open and with shortened hours.”

Kelley said the South Carolina-sized nation is home to 4 million people, half of whom live in Panama City. As of Friday, Panama had 37 coronavirus deaths.

“People have been practicing social distancing,” she said. “We aren’t even doing the elbow bump any longer. But there apparently are problems in the city with people out on the streets in defiance of the directives.”

A curfew keeps people at home between 9 p.m. and 5 a.m. Women can go out in two-hour time slots on Monday, Wednesday and Friday to purchase necessities. Men may venture out on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Out on the street, people wear masks. The government even sent out a directive about how to safely walk one’s dog during the dog owner’s assigned time slot.

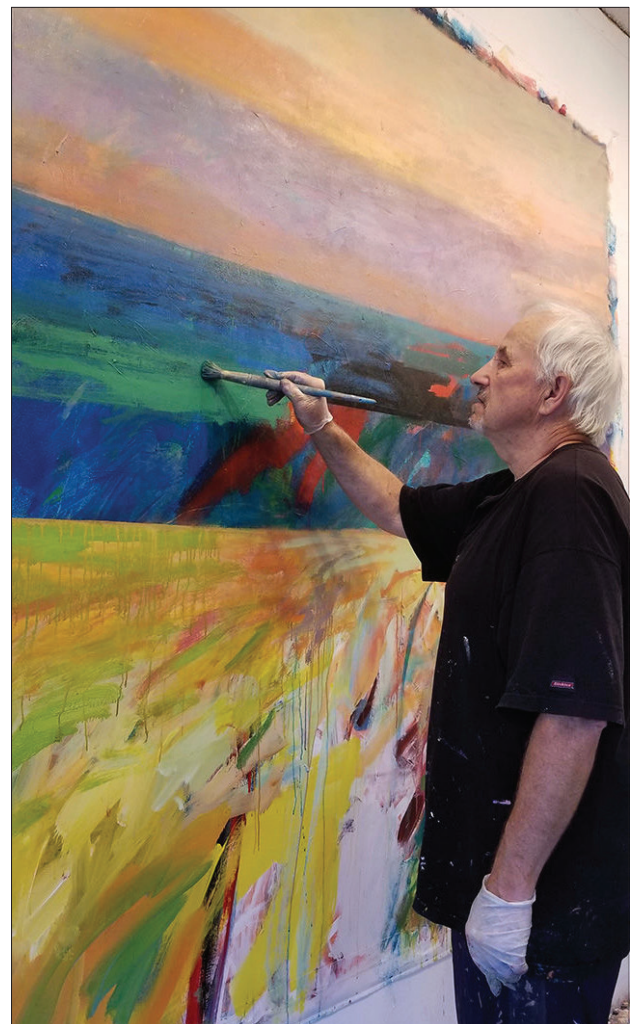


Photo contributed by Don Gray

Don Gray works on a painting. He told 30 paintings to raise more than \$10,000 for Arts Center East, La Grande.

ACE

Continued from Page 1A

— including employees — can be in the building.

The center will spend April continuing to fundraise, applying for emergency grants and exploring additional revenue options, such as online classes, gallery shopping and take-and-make-art care packages.

“The board hopes to have public programs for staff to manage in May and to support our home-bound community with the joy and power of the arts,” the news release stated.

Options to continue to help ACE include donating at <https://artcentereast.org/support/donate/>, becoming a member and purchasing artwork sold at the gallery (by appointment only).

Wyden presses treasury on access to paycheck protection

Observer staff

WASHINGTON — Oregon U.S. Senator Ron Wyden has urged the U.S. Department of the Treasury to do everything in its power to reassure U.S. banks and lenders they are prepared to provide relief to America’s small businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Democrat in a news release reported while businesses are eligible to apply for emergency loans through the Payment Protection Program under the recent Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security

Act, large and small banks and lenders in Oregon and across the country have stated they are not yet able to issue the loans to implement the Payment Protection Program due to uncertainties regarding the lending program and a lack of clarity from the Small Business Administration and the Treasury Department.

Banks and lenders, however, are concerned they could be held liable for a borrower that obtained a loan by presenting misleading or inaccurate certification information.

Red Cross Drug Store offers Delivery in Union County

Making sure you are cared for, we always offer delivery to La Grande, Union and Elgin or mailed anywhere. Contact us today to make the easy switch. Let us do our part to keep you safe in this time of uncertainty



1123 Adams Ave., La Grande
541-963-5741 redcrossdrugstore.com



306 W North St, Enterprise
(541) 426-7455 olivebranchpharmacy.com

DON'T JUST KINDA TV. DIRECTV.
Where sports fans call home.

SELECTSM ALL INCLUDED PACKAGE

\$39.99 mo.

Over 155 Channels

Don't settle for cable. Call now!
1-877-441-1933

AT&T Preferred Dealer

Imagine The Difference You Can Make

DONATE YOUR CAR

1-844-533-9173

FREE TOWING
TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Help Prevent Blindness
Get A Vision Screening Annually

Heritage for the Blind

Ask About A FREE 3 Day Vacation Voucher To Over 20 Destinations!!!

KIDS

Continued from Page 1A

only people cleared to work with children are bringing them meals.

Restaurants also get a boost. KIDS is paying establishments \$5 for each meal they prepare for the program. The assistance, Odai said, is richly deserved.

“They have done so much for the community and now it is time for us to help them,” Odai said.

One or two local restaurants cook the dinners each weekday. So far, Side A Brewing, Raul’s Taqueria, Cinco de Mayo Family Mexican Restaurant, Thai

Fresh Gardens, Dusty Spur Cafe, Local Harvest Eatery and Pub and Mamacitas International Grill, all in La Grande, are participating, as is Cowboys and Angel’s Place, Elgin.

These restaurants, although they closed their interiors because COVID-19, are offering curbside pickup, delivery or both.

Emergency Equipment Solutions has no corporate financial support so it is focusing on locally owned restaurants and corporate owned. Odai also said corporate-owned restaurants “are not hurting as much.”

Roberts said although KIDS is benefiting local restaurants, it would not be possible without their help

and cooperation.

KIDS provided 224 free meals to children last week, during an unadvertised soft launch. Odai expects the number of meals to increase to possibly 1,000 per week as word gets out.

Copies Plus, La Grande, is helping with that. The business printed hundreds of copies of fliers about the program for no charge. La Grande Main Street and Women, Infants and Children also is supporting the program.

“I expect it to grow astronomically,” Odai said.

Anyone 12 and older in the households receiving a meal purchase the same meals for \$5. Roberts said if enough funding is raised,

older youths could be delivered free meals.

“We would love to expand it to those age 18 and under,” she said.

Odai has been moved by how quickly people throughout the county have stepped forward to help the program. However, she said the program needs more donations to keep going. For information on making donations, text Odai at 541-663-6050.

Roberts said she has been heartened by how people have rallied together to support KIDS and its cause.

“At the end of the day it is about saving lives and spreading hope,” Roberts said.

BRING EVERYTHING YOU LOVE TOGETHER!

Blazing Fast Internet!
ADD TO YOUR PACKAGE FOR ONLY \$19.99/mo. (where available)

2-YEAR TV PRICE GUARANTEE

America's Top 120 Package
\$59.99 MO.
for 12 Mos.
Including Local Channels!

CALL TODAY - For \$100 Gift Card Promo Code: DISH100

1-866-373-9175 Offer ends 7/15/20. d.ish ALLIANCE

All offers require credit qualification. 24-month term contracts with early termination fee and eRatePay. Prices include Hopper Duo for qualifying customers. Hopper, Hopper w/Storage or Hopper 3.5/mo. more. Upfront fees may apply based on credit qualification.