

Pickleball, peace and volunteering

If you have driven by Coiner Park recently, you have probably seen a flash of bright green and blue jump out at you. The City of Cottage Grove is using the conditions forced upon it by the Coronavirus to do some projects it normally doesn't have the time to get around to.

Case in point has been the resurfacing of the tennis/pickleball and basketball courts. Since the courts and the other park amenities have had to be shut down due to social distancing restrictions, the Public Works have been able to move on a number of projects that regular use of these popular facilities has prevented. Make lemonade when life gives you lemons.

Some noted improvements will enable the tennis courts to be more usable for the growing number of pickleball enthusiasts in the Grove.

Contractors installed new post sleeves for permanent pickleball nets at the four courts on the east end of the tennis courts in Coiner Park.

Up until now pickleballers have been using portable nets that they set up and take down each day. The new permanent posts will save setup time and allow for more use of the courts throughout the season. The new striping will be added soon and when reopening allows, it will be a very inviting playing experience that awaits the local tennis, pickleball, and basketball players.

Getting out of the isolation and into the parks is a good idea for both physical and mental health. There are a few common sense guidelines that will allow you to keep yourself and others to do this activity safely. Here is the official city protocol. If you plan to visit a park, strict adherence to physical distancing and equipment closures are mandatory:

- * Maintain a physical distance of at least six feet between anyone not of the same household.

- * Stay home if you are feeling sick.

- * Avoid crowds by going early.

- * Visit parks close to home to minimize your travel.



DANA MERRYDAY

- * Do not use any playground equipment, sports courts or skateparks.

- * Wash your hands immediately upon returning home.

- * The Centers for Disease Control recommends using a face covering when in public.

One new feature at Coiner Park gave me particular joy. On Feb. 17, the Hiroshima Peace Tree was planted. Fresh vigorous growth seems to indicate

that this green ambassador has put its roots down in Cottage Grove to stay. It is planted where there used to be a grand Douglas Fir that stood long before there was a park or even a town here. Sadly it had to be taken down for safety.

An old injury had led to internal rot and two independent arborists regrettably concluded that the tree couldn't be saved.

Almost 75 years ago a horrific event ended another horrific event. Aug. 6, 1945, a single atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, instantly taking 70,000 lives and incinerating the city center. This led to the end of WWII, but surprisingly something miraculous also occurred. Six ginkgo trees that were within a mile of the bomb's epicenter, and despite a heavy charring, sprouted out buds the following spring. This became a symbol of hope for the ravaged city and all of Japan. They gave these trees a special name, "Hibaku Jumoku", or nuclear survivor tree.

The thermonuclear blast was not the ginkgo's first brush with survival. The family history goes back 200 million years.

Despite flourishing in large parts of what is now Asia in the Jurassic period and diversifying into many branches, the Ginkgoae family began to disappear from the fossil record over the passage of millions of years. After the last major ice age ginkgoes were down to a single species in a few isolated valleys in China. All the ginkgoes now found worldwide come from these survivors.

Having medicinal qualities as well as being a naturally beautiful tree, caused them to be cultivated and spread by the hand of man. The tree has interesting fan-shaped leaves



The multi-purpose courts at Coiner Park aren't getting much use these days.

which turn bright yellow in the fall, giving it a distinctive look.

The Ginkgoes came to Japan between the years 1300 and 1400. It was noted that some survived the earthquakes and the firestorms which followed, such as the great Kanto Quake in 1923 near Tokyo. Surprisingly many of the burned ginkgoes sprouted back to life while other types of burned trees did not.

The ginkgo tree's deep roots and inner core of living material seem to give the tree the ability to withstand such intense heat and even radiation with little lasting effect. Seeds collected from the six famous and named survivor trees have been sprouted and sent out as a message of peace from the people of Hiroshima.

In addition to the one planted in a ceremony in Cottage Grove, Creswell received its own Hiroshima Peace Tree, planted on March 30. You can visit this peace messenger

on South 2nd Street, behind the New Hope Baptist Church, representing indeed a new hope that something like that blast will not happen again.

There will be a walk-by tribute to the life of Susan "Sujo" Tryk in the windows of The Bookmine on Main Street. Besides examples of her art, there will be printed stories, and photos. Social distancing prevents coming together to remember her so this is something very appropriate and fitting considering all she did to promote art and downtown gallery space for displaying work of local artists.

She will be on display, and while we can't have our Art Walks right now you can take your own and remember the life and work of a great lady.

Remember that burning is discouraged due to people with respiratory issues, but don't despair, the City of Cottage Grove

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'Social hour' turns into 'Take-and-Paint'

BY ALIYA HALL
THE CHRONICLE

COTTAGE GROVE — Sands Cupany is more than a pottery shop, "it's a social hour," co-owner Denise Sands said.

The shop regularly hosts painting night events and for the past five years, Sands Cupany has drawn customers from the Eugene-Springfield area all the way to Drain and Sweet Home.

COVID-19 has forced the shop to change its focus.

Sands received a message from a customer asking about the possibility of paying for a project to paint at home. She brought up the idea with husband and co-owner Robert Sands, as well as their daughter-in-law, and created the "Take-and-Paint" projects.

"With everyone staying home, it's important to find things for kids to do to keep them in a creative mind and give them something else to do," Sands said. "You can only read, puzzle or watch TV for so long before you need something else to do. With ceramics, it gives one more avenue to be creative and have something different that you don't do all the time."

With this option, Sands Cupany can interact with its customers safely, which is crucial to Sands' health because she had hip replacement surgery in March.

Their online page has photos of the pieces and glaze paint for purchase.



Co-owners Denise and Robert Sands, seen with a portion of their large inventory behind them, have owned Sands Cupany in Cottage Grove for five years.

The Sands will put the package together and call the customer to pick it up from an outgoing bin outside of their house. Payment is inserted into the mail slot, and when the projects are finished and painted, they can be

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