

From the desk of the mayor: Mayor Meadow Martell

It has been a busy two weeks. After Governor Kate Brown announced her draft of the Reopening Oregon plan in Week 6, On May 1, Week 7, Governor Brown held a press conference to introduce the key steps for reopening.

Oregon's strategies include testing and contact tracing for Oregonians displaying any symptoms of the Corona virus and randomized testing to monitor where the disease is hiding. Testing guidelines are changing. Along with high risk populations like health care workers, farm workers, and people on the front lines like first responders, grocery workers and bus drivers, everyone who needs a test, gets a test. Anyone who displays even mild corona virus symptoms, as determined by their doctor, will be tested. The COVID-19 symptoms are cough, shortness

of breath, difficulty breathing, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, sore throat and new loss of taste or smell.

All hospitals in Oregon have agreed to unified testing statewide in every region of the state. Shortages are easing up. It is estimated that Oregon has the capacity, using a variety of different platforms and commercial lab partners, to do 15,000 test per week

In addition to ramping up testing, the State is adding 600+ staffing to increase contact tracing. Staff will also include bilingual and culturally specific people who can reach communities of color and those populations especially vulnerable.

In order to reopen and stay open, randomized widespread testing across the state will be implemented

In partnership with Oregon Health Sciences University, the program, called "Be the Key", will give us a more accurate understanding of the true rate of the infection in Oregon and have ongoing monitoring of any new outbreaks. This tool is a critical piece of the testing puzzle to keep Oregon open. A random sampling of 100,000 volunteers will be invited to participate in this program for one year. Invitation letters will be mailed out May 11. If you receive a letter, please consider volunteering.

We are truly all in this together. We have flattened the curve and lives have been saved. This has been an incredible effort with significant impacts on all sectors of our personal lives and local businesses. We are expecting that opening Oregon may

increase the number of infections. We will not be able to eliminate this virus, but we hope to control the infection rate. This will not be back to business as usual and it will probably be a slower process than any of us would like. That is why we all need to continuing doing our part. Wear face masks, practice physical distancing, stay home, and hold off on trips.

Governor Brown requested that all Oregon counties submit a plan for reopening by May 1st. These plans will be evaluated for meeting the "Reopening Oregon" requirements and the Governor, in consultation with her teams of experts, will make the decisions of when. Some counties could begin the Phase 1 opening process as soon as 5/15.

Josephine County Public Health

Director, Michael Weber, presented a seventeen page document to the County Commissioners. The reopening criteria have been met and the document was approved by the Commissioners and submitted to the Governor's office. Cross your fingers! I am hopeful that Josephine County could be in the first wave to move to Phase 1.

This has been a lot of technical detail and there are other important things in our lives to remember. During these stressful times, let us not forget how essential it is to be kind and thoughtful, to go outside and get fresh air, to do something nice for ourselves daily, and tell our families and friends how much we love and appreciate them. Especially remember to appreciate and honor those heroes who are out on the coronavirus front lines every day.

Letters to the editor

Illinois Valley News welcomes letters to the editor. Please e-mail them to dan@illinois-valley-news.com

POLICY ON LETTERS: 'Illinois Valley News' encourages letters to the editor provided they are legible and not libelous or scurrilous. All letters must be signed, including name, address and telephone number. The latter need not be published, but will be used to verify authenticity. The "News" reserves the right to edit letters. Letters are used at the discretion of the publisher.

(Editor's Note: Views and commentary, including statements made as fact are strictly those of the letter writers.)

A fresh perspective on COVID from our local newspaper

I want to thank Laura Mancuso for her excellent article last week, "Wholesome Foods."

For all the "news" about COVID resounding through the media waves, her article is the first time I have read or heard an honest response to the public health threat. Thank you, Laura, for writing so clearly.

The message is simple. Everyone: "Take responsibility for your personal health." Drink enough clean water, breathe deeply and often, rest more/ enough, exercise in moderation, choose to eat wholesome foods that nourish one's body. These are

actions that any breathing person can take every day. In fact, these actions are known to improve the quality of life as well, very cost-effectively.

Each and every one of us Americans (not the doctors) have the ultimate responsibility for staying well, getting well (and not causing injury to others). It's only the individual person who can make and live with decisions to live in a way that supports good health.

The job of government is to protect public health and the public water supply. When have you heard an agency direct people to drink more water, rest more and eat sensibly? Why is our government not telling people how to stay well? Because improving public health is only cost-effective and beneficial for the People.

Healthy people who don't get sick don't generate corporate profits. It's my belief that the really lethal parasite of 2020 is not some new corona virus: the Threat is 'for-profit corporate medicine', banking on the sick state of

American public health. Did you know that America not only leads the world in COVID cases, but by every measure including USA-funded studies that show, the USA has the least healthy population in the world while we pay more for 'health care' than any other nation on earth?

Isn't it good to know that for-profit medicine is optional? We do have the choice. So-called "socialized medicine" prioritizes the medical needs of people before paying corporate profits. This approach is also called "Patient-Centered Medicine." What a good idea!

Folks, if you're reading this paper, please take out your subscription to I.V. News today. Our rural, isolated community depends on I.V. News as a vital source of relevant information. I.V. News needs and deserves your support. In a world of corporate-dominated media, think how lucky we are that we have a locally-owned news paper! It can only survive if enough local people support this local paper.

of the planet. We must reform our priorities, and besides teaching the basics, Math, Language Arts, Histories (whose?) and Sciences, we must present the honest and unedited truth of the causes which brought us to this health crises and future, predicted pandemics if we do not change our hearts and minds toward the treatment of our home. Environmental & Earth Science, Sustainable Practices, Social and Economic Equity, Nutrition and Environmental Health must become essential and mandatory curriculum throughout our K-12 classrooms. Grade appropriate curriculum which delivers in honest terms these crucial classes must be developed, written and integrated into our daily lessons if we are to ever begin the healing. We as educators must stand united and demand our Department of Education fully fund this creation of new and exciting curriculum, rehire laid off and retired educators to research, develop and write this new curriculum, much of which is already available but NOT offered in public schools.

We must teach our children through example and story, the attributes of gratitude, reciprocity, compassion, empathy and most of all, love, for all life and the earth. If we do not step up and deliver, I see little hope that we will not keep repeating our downward spiral to extinction.

**Christine Perala Gardiner
Cave Junction**

Reader says new curriculum is needed

In this critical time in World history, in Earth History and in the history of this country, we must step forward as educators and be Bold. We must truthfully and accurately teach knowledge which will enhance and contribute to healing and regaining the health

**Len Greenwood
Selma**



(Photo by TL Pickens, Illinois Valley News)

School is closed for the remainder of the school year but meals are provided at designated bus stops in the Three Rivers School District, call 541-476-4183 to sign-up.

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NEEDS OUR HELP!

Like us and follow us on Facebook **Laurel Cemetery Association-LCA @justlaurelcemetery**

Let's pitch in and help preserve and maintain the historical integrity and beauty of the Laurel Cemetery.

Donations can be made outright, a bequest, or in the honor or memory of a friend or family members.

Call 541-415-5294 or email just.laurel.cemetery@gmail.com

Save the date

Local forums via phone conferencing are taking place Sundays and Thursdays from 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.. Dial in number is: 712-775-7035, Access Code: 932589# follow prompts. Purpose: review current COVID and Fire Season information, relate local experience, and share support. Governor's plan for Phase one, relaxing of restrictions, is scheduled for May 15. Our local governments request input from businesses to assist in organizing protocols sensibly to work for them. What is your plan? How's it working? We'll end sessions covering Fire Season, which started May 1. Guenter Ambron @ 541-415-1929 or ivwatch541@gmail.com

May 21 - 24
Boatnik CANCELED due to COVID-19

June 17

CEEN has scheduled the Helicopter Survey for Alyssum for June 17. We will be searching in areas where Alyssum has been found or suspected, and following Rough & Ready Creek and the Illinois River. The survey is scheduled when Alyssum will be in peak bloom so it can be seen from the air. Alyssum murale and Alyssum corsicum were planted in the Illinois Valley by Viridian, a company from Texas, in a failed experiment to pull nickle out of the soil. Plants escaped the fields and is now listed as a A rated weed in Oregon. Alyssum is toxic to wildlife and livestock due to the accumulation of heavy metals. The survey is funded by a grant from the Oregon State Weed Board.

Through May 31

Cobra Lily: a review of southwest Oregon literature and art is a print journal celebrating our region. Consider sending your fiction, poetry, memoir, essays, history, interviews with interesting locals, photography, paintings, and more (i.e. don't feel limited to these genre suggestions). Work should focus on the nature and culture of Southwest Oregon, or at least be the work of people who live in and love our region. The submission deadline for Volume 6 is May 31, with publication planned for late summer 2020. Work can be emailed to co-bralilyreview@gmail.com. Contributors receive 1 free copy and a discount on additional copies. More information at CobraLily.org.

Ongoing

***The Food Bank at Doug Hoskins' Re-**

source Center/ Assembly of God Church is still open at 481 S. Junction Ave. in Cave Junction Mondays from 2-4 p.m. The new procedure is to line up in your car and a box will be brought out to you. (Directions are available on site.) If you are vegetarian or other special needs a specific box will be brought out to you in your car.

***The Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance** is excited to announce the launch of our after-hours Crisis Line which can be reached at 541-415-9367. The new local crisis line will be answered any hours the Safe House is closed. The line will be answered by an advocate who will be able to respond locally, also recognizing the barriers that may come up due to our rural location. For more information contact the Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance 541-592-2515.

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