

INDEX	
Classifieds	B6
Kid Scoop	B1
Medical Directory	B8
Obituaries	A7
Opinion	A4
Police, Sheriff Logs	B2
Public Notices	B4
Senior Living	B3
Worship Directory	A6

WEATHER
HIGH 90S IN THE DALLES,
COOLER BY MONDAY



Powerful Pickleball: Fundraiser spurs competition. Page B1

Smoke and fire plague Gorge over the Labor Day holiday weekend.
Page A8

Columbia Gorge News

HOOD RIVER | THE DALLES | WHITE SALMON

Wednesday, September 9, 2020 Volume 1, Issue 23

\$1.00

Rangers focus on water safety

Rangers at Bonneville Dam and Locks emphasize simple safety guidelines

By **Jacob Bertram**
Columbia Gorge News

The Columbia River Gorge is known to be an attractive site for visitors. Beyond the recent holiday weekend, the area is expected to remain busy, with parks open during the pandemic.

Because of this, government agencies, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Bonneville Lock and Dam, are asking visitors to public parks and recreation areas to follow a small set of tips for safety at recreation areas and especially on the water.

Park rangers with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are reminding the public to be aware of these important tips for water safety:

- **Plan ahead.** With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing shutdowns, parks around the area are providing different level of services to the public. This may include restrooms, play structures, swim beaches, and life jacket loaner boards. Call ahead and look up your destination online to confirm your access to services at different parks.

- **Bring your own supplies,** including hand sanitizer and face masks.

- **Overcrowding is a concern** some weekends because not all parks have reopened.

- **Wear a life jacket.** "Life jackets save lives. Wear if for your family, for your kids, for your dog! Go home safe!"

- If someone is drowning and needs help: **Reach, Throw, Row,**



Don't Go.

- **Respect active burn bans** (and plan ahead by researching if there is an active burn ban in the area you are visiting).

- **Leave it better than you found it** and pick up your trash.

- **Respect park closures.**

"We're fortunate here in Oregon to have all sorts of beautiful resources, not least of which is the Columbia River. It's a great place for friends and folks to have fun, enjoy it with their friends and family but unfortunately there's some risks associated with enjoying that resource and so we want to make sure that people come out and have a good time and not have anything

See **SAFETY**, page 11



Above top, natural resource specialist Mason Scharpfe shows how to use a life jacket, and says there are many different life jackets that suits your needs. Above, KOIN 6 video journalist Karl Petersen frames a shot aboard the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers patrol boat. Jacob Bertram photos

Skyline levy on ballot

By **Jacob Bertram**
Columbia Gorge News

Voters will be deciding once again whether to increase the maximum amount Hospital District No. 2, consisting of Skyline Health's facilities, can levy at the General Election in November. According to the proposition filed with the Klickitat County Auditor, it would further fund upgrades to Skyline Health's infrastructure, equipment, and services if approved by voters. The proposal is identical to the one which failed by a slim margin in the election last year.

The bid proposes a lift on maximum allowable property taxes levied by the district in 2021, from \$.30 per \$1,000 of assessed value, to \$.68 per \$1,000 of assessed value. For a house in the district with an assessed value of \$350,000, the levy increase of approximately

See **LEVY**, page 8

Long-time auto dealer dies

Bob Stone, long-time owner of Freeway Autocenter in The Dalles, has died.

Stone retired and sold the Subaru dealership in 2014. The dealership received more awards and honors from Subaru of America than any other dealership in the region. In 2007, the dealership was honored by Subaru for being the "Best Place in America" to buy a new Subaru based on customer surveys done by the company. In 2010, Stone's dealership was honored by Subaru for being first in market penetration in the continental U.S.

"This staff has gone above and beyond expected industry standards to deliver personal attention and service to each customer," Stone told a The Dalles Chronicle reporter at the time of his retirement.

Stone was also the first dealership in Oregon to achieve Subaru Stellar Care Award status in 2012 and went on to repeat that distinction again 2013 and 2014.

With his success, Stone made significant contributions in support of the community, including financial support to local military families, emergency first responders, local schools and sponsorships of numerous community events including The Cherry Festival Parade, the Hood 2 River Relay, Kiteboarding 4 Cancer, the Hood River Hops and Harvest Festivals.

See **STONE**, page 8



Chamber has closed its visitors center. Sept. 30. Online visitor services will continue. October's Harvest Festival has been canceled — details on page 3. Kirby Neumann-Rea photo

HR County Chamber announces major changes

Visitor center at port has closed

By **Kirby Neumann-Rea**
Columbia Gorge News

The Hood River County Chamber of Commerce has closed its physical location and is in the process of extensive reorganization in the face of a major decline in revenue.

The chamber (HRCCC) and the Visit Hood River Council (VHR) have conducted a multi-month review of the vision, mission, business model, strategic plan, structure and governance of the organization to address the reality of economic challenges facing the business stakeholders and community as a result of COVID-19

impacts, the organization announced in a press release. In developing a clear path for continued success, the board has approved a revised operations plan to manage resources efficiently and effectively, according to Grant Polson, Hood River County Chamber of Commerce chairman of the board.

The organization has named Ashley Huckaby May, former director of Visit Hood River, to serve as the interim director. May said, "HRCCC and VHR have undertaken a detailed review over multiple months to ensure the organization will remain proactive in continuing to deliver upon its vision and mission for Hood River."

With the decline in key revenue

See **CHAMBER**, page 3

TD council tentatively denies 'The Grove'

Safety concerns are primary reason; council to make formal decision next week

By **Emily Fitzgerald**
Columbia Gorge News

The Dalles City Council has tentatively voted to uphold an appeal against "The Grove" subdivision but will wait until their regular Sept. 14 City Council meeting to make a final decision.

The appeal hearing centers around The Dalles Community Development Department's decision to approve Legacy Development Group LLC's application to build 69 "dwelling parcels" and a 11,724 square-foot community park on a 6.92 acre lot located at 2845 E. 12th St. City Council was to determine whether or not the application fulfills all of the City's code requirements, and decide whether to uphold the appeal — meaning that the City would rescind its approval of Legacy Development's application — or to deny the appeal, which would mean that the application maintains its City approval.

While the tentative decision to uphold the appeal was unanimous, Council Member Darcy Long-Curtiss stated that she was in favor of denying the appeal.

"I believe the (application) criteria has been met, but in the interest of not rushing this motion, I will vote in favor of this motion," said Long-Curtiss during the City Council's Aug. 31 appeal hearing. The meeting was the City Council's second on the appeal; the first took place on Aug. 24 and was continued to a later date.

During the public comment section of the appeal hearing, 18 The Dalles residents gave verbal testimony against the proposed subdivision, and two residents gave testimony in favor.



The Grove development has been proposed for The Dalles property above, viewed from 12th and Richmond streets. Mark B. Gibson photo

"It's always a problem when you have public sentiment in this regard," said Mayor Rich Mays at the end of the public comment section of the hearing. "The public sentiment on this particular subdivision is running probably 100 to 1. Many people are against it. Unfortunately with a quasi-judicial hearing ... popularity is not a valid or an appropriate reason for upholding an appeal — nor should it be."

Comments in favor of "The Grove" centered around the need for affordable housing in The Dalles; most who spoke out against The Grove cited concerns about pedestrian safety on the surrounding streets — particularly the intersections of Richmond St. with 10th St., 12th St. and Old Dufur Road — and overcrowding at the nearby Dry Hollow Elementary School, as well as concerns that the high-density development would be incompatible with the surrounding rural neighborhood.

"It would be irresponsible in my mind to allow developments without severe infrastructure

See **GROVE**, page 2

CONTACT US AT
541-386-1234
541-296-2141

DELIVERY/Subscribe@gorgeneews.com
NEWS TIPS/ORnews@gorgeneews.com or
WAnews@gorgeneews.com
PLACE AN AD/Sales@gorgeneews.com

STAY CONNECTED
FACEBOOK.COM/
TWITTER.COM/
INSTAGRAM.COM/



0 88267 02331 4