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Weather
Intermittent showers on
Thurs. — Enjoy while it lasts.
Mostly sunny weather start-
ing Fri., Sun. to reach 89.



Center Market builds community with convenience — A11

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Hood River County to join City in affordable housing project — A6

Columbia Gorge News

HOOD RIVER | THE DALLES | WHITE SALMON

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\$1.00

The Dalles Public Library opens its doors once again

By Kelsie Cowart
Columbia Gorge News

THE DALLES — In mid-March of 2020, like thousands of other establishments, The Dalles Wasco County Public library shut its doors to the public, unable to offer more than curbside service in order to comply with statewide safety guidelines and help slow the spread of COVID-19. As of May 18, 2021, the library is open and welcoming the public once again.

Although Wasco County currently resides in the “moderate risk” category, the library has the opportunity to open for limited services. While there are currently state allowances for fully vaccinated individuals to go mask-less, all patrons who want to enter the library must be wearing facemasks that cover both their nose and their mouths at all times and allow for their temperature to be taken upon entry. Once inside, everyone must adhere to social distancing guidelines, as well as agree to an approximate one-hour visit. “(So far) the public’s been really excellent,” said District Librarian Jeff Wavrunek. “It’s been well posted outside that you have to wear a facemask ... it’s nothing unreasonable and the public has been really good about it ... we’re really pleased.”

For those uncomfortable entering the building or unable to participate in the required safety measures, curbside service is still



Tristan Stein of The Dalles, above, browses books in a nearly empty library the day it reopened to patrons May 18. She was there with her four children, who were looking for books and using the computers. At right, Aprile Keith adjusts her phone to leave her hands free so she can check a caller’s account. Clear barriers are now in place to reduce potential virus exposure.

Mark B. Gibson photos



See **LIBRARY**, page 2

COVID-19

Outbreak grows at Goldendale High School

Some White Salmon students quarantined

By Jacob Bertram
Columbia Gorge News

After receiving reports of three positive COVID-19 cases last weekend, Klickitat County Health Department announced notification of an additional 14 COVID-19 cases in individuals associated with Goldendale High School last Friday.

More than 60 students and staff were absent from school Friday due to the significant number of close contacts and individuals identified as positive cases, according to school administration officials. Of the individuals testing positive for COVID-19, there does not appear to be any evidence of classroom transmission between

See **OUTBREAK**, page 8

Memorial Day remembrances planned

White Salmon

White Salmon American Legion Post 87 and Carson Legion Post 137 will sponsor a veterans memorial ceremony on Memorial Day, May 31, at the White Salmon Cemetery. The event will honor the sacrifices and service of passed local veterans. Approximately two dozen deceased veterans will be inducted into the “Walk of Honor,” each having a personalized bronze plaque permanently installed on the walk. The approximately half-hour event will include a flag ceremony, guest speaker, and a possible flyover of vintage military aircraft from the Hood River Western Antique Aeroplane and Automobile Museum (WAAAM). Parking and chairs will be available. Public is welcome.

The Dalles

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2471 and Auxiliary will not hold a traditional wreath-laying ceremony on Memorial Day in The Dalles, but flags and flowers will be placed at the Veterans Monument near Sorosis Park and a prayer, followed by a time of silence and reflection, will be held at noon. No seating will be available. Large flags will be display, and the community is invited to add wreaths and flowers in honor of those who have died in service to their country.

Hood River

Idlewilde Cemetery will host a Memorial Day service on Monday, May 31 beginning at 11 a.m. There will be no seating available and

See **MEMORIAL**, page 3

'Kitemare' at the Waterfront

By Gail Oberst
For Columbia Gorge News

It’s 2 p.m. on a sunny Saturday. Do you know where your children are?

If you live near Hood River’s waterfront, they might be jumping into the cool waters of the Columbia River from the Nichols Boat Basin dock.

And that, according to Todd Anderson of the Gorge Paddling Center, is dangerously pitting young swimmers against his paddleboard and kayak guests. The center has leased a portion of the dock from the Port of Hood River since 2014.

On May 18, Anderson told the port’s Board of Commissioners that, until three years ago, signs had been posted designating the dock as a “no swimming” area, without conflict. But since the signs were removed, Anderson said, swimming activity from the dock has increased “exponentially.” Profanity, vulgar language, horseplay, drug use, and minors drinking pose liability and safety concerns, he said. He showed the commission pictures of teens jumping from the seawall, the



dock crowded with youths behind the jumpers.

“When the dock is full of people, it’s hard to navigate kayaks and paddleboards down to the water. Carrying large boards in windy conditions is challenging enough. Navigating through 20-plus young kids adds a significant extra challenge,” Anderson said.

The dock in the Nichols Boat Basin provides access to the calm water off the main Columbia River channel, just west of its confluence with Hood River. The tranquil water is a popular spot for watersport



Signage at the Hood River Waterfront. More signs have been requested to help prevent incompatible uses. Brian Towey photo / file photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

launching and swimmers.

The Nichols Basin dock is not the only place where crowding poses dangers to both watersport enthusiasts and visitors on land. Kiteboarders and picnicking families and tourists often congregate

on the waterfront lawn of the Event Center, resulting in “dangerously incompatible uses,” when unpredictable winds can cause accidents on shore.

See **KITEMARE**, page 5

SDS Lumber partners with international advisory firm ahead of sale

By Jacob Bertram
Columbia Gorge News

SDS Lumber Company is partnering with an international financial advisory firm to assist with the company’s plans to divest its and sister company Stevenson Land Company’s corporate assets, Columbia Gorge has learned.

A sales brochure provided to Columbia Gorge News gives insight into how SDS Lumber Company, based in Bingen, plans to market its assets to potential investors. The brochure shows that SDS has

retained New York-based Perella Weinberg Partners to serve as financial adviser in connection with a potential transaction with the lumber company.

The four-page slideshow presentation, first posted on the Friends of the White Salmon River website, provides an overview of the company’s assets and operations, and displays “key investment highlights” that underscores the selling points SDS and PWP are using to gauge interest in the sale.

The second slide presents an overview of SDS’ current

operations, which highlights the company’s 2020 production capacity for lumber at 59 percent, and for plywood at 78 percent. SDS, according to the slide, has voiced a preference for a combined sale of the sister companies and its assets, but acknowledge that SDS Lumber Co. and Stevenson Land Co. are “available together or standalone.” The slide also offers investors an “opportunity to increase harvest levels.”

On the next slide, the firm lists selling points, which include a “unique opportunity of scale,

integrated mill and timberlands opportunity, positive market dynamics, conservative silviculture and forest management history, mature forest inventory with 85 percent over 50 years old, immediate mill production increase potential, potential for significant harvest, “higher and better use” and potential non-core asset sales.”

Columbia Gorge News reached out to SDS President Jeff Webber for comment, who wrote in an email that “we are still early in the sale

See **SALE**, page 5

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