

LIBRARY Online offerings still available

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available, with patrons only needing to call the library to inform them of their needs (if unsure, patrons can find a comprehensive list of safety guidelines that need to be met in order to enter the building on The Dalles Wasco County Library website and Facebook page). While inside the building, three computers will be available for public use for 30 minutes at a time, with the printer and photocopier available for use as well.

While in-person library programs, such as sewing, manga/anime, and knitting clubs are on hiatus for the time being, the library has had the opportunity to become innovative by providing the community with projects and entertainment for those who desire to participate. "Take and Make" bags, filled with all the required supplies needed to make a craft or participate in a STEM related activity, are available to patrons of any age and can be taken home and put together by individuals or with their families (each bag has video instructions that can be found on The Dalles Public Library YouTube channel). Patrons can also tune into children's Storytime, an interactive



A sign at the entrance requests patrons to mask up before entering The Dalles-Wasco County library. Mark B. Gibson photo

virtual reading of children's stories for kids ranging from babies to pre-school ages. Sessions are held at 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays through Fridays, with the videos

available on the library YouTube channel or via a link on their Facebook page. Bilingual options are available for non-English speakers.

Starting June 14, the library will also be holding their second annual online Summer Reading Program. Mary Pastrana, the library's Programming and Outreach director, told *Columbia Gorge News* that those interested can use the online platform Beanstack to log reading time, write reviews, and register for Take and Make kits to earn tickets, which can then be used in virtual raffles to win prizes. Anyone who wants to participate will have three different age categories to choose from: Children 0-10, Teens 11-18, and Adults 19-plus, and all members of the community are encouraged to partake.

The theme of this year's program is titled "Reading Colors Your World." According to Pastrana, the theme "offers us the ability to explore culture, nature, the arts, and humanity, while nurturing kindness and growth in our community through reading." Those interested in registering and/or getting more information on the Summer Reading Program can visit wasco-countylibrary.com/srp2021 starting June 1.

To register for a Take and Make bag, learn more on how to watch a virtual Storytime, or get information on future events held by The Dalles Public Library, visit www.wasco-countylibrary.com/the-dalles-library.

With 2020 having made accessibility to the internet that much more crucial, on top

of providing access to books and movies the library strives to provide members of the community with that vital accessibility. Patrons can check out wifi hotspots that provide unlimited wireless service for up to three weeks (where they can then check out a new one or renew the one they have depending on demand), giving them access to high speed internet. Patrons may also be able to check out one of the Chromebooks the library has available for use, as well as gain free access to streaming services like Netflix by checking out a Roku streaming device.

On top of these available devices, the library encourages the community to take advantage of their various online resources. Resources, such as Library2go, where patrons can borrow and download e-books and audiobooks, or Kanopy, a free movie and documentary streaming service, and Tumblebooks, a website that puts animation, music, and narration to existing children's books. To access any of these services patrons only need access to the library website and their library cards.

Currently, The Dalles Library is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday.

Lewis River moves to parking passes

Those visiting popular recreation sites along the Lewis River in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest Lewis River Recreation Area can expect some changes this year. Visitors who park within the Lewis River Recreation Area will now be required to obtain a reserved parking ticket during the busy visitor season: June 15 through Sept. 30.

Visitation to this area has grown significantly in recent years leading to an increase in traffic, trash and human waste, causing public health and safety concerns, said a press release. Reserved parking tickets will allow ticket holders to park their vehicle at one of six different sites along a 14-mile stretch of Forest Road 90.

Parking tickets are available for arrivals beginning June 15 on www.recreation.gov. The remaining reservations will be made available on a rolling basis, two days in advance of each calendar day.

Every Child Oregon partners with local businesses to collect sneakers for Gorge youth

May is Foster Care Awareness Month and Every Child Oregon, has collaborated with Starbucks and First Interstate Bank in the Gorge to launch Kick-Off Summer, a campaign to collect and donate new sneakers to youth in foster care.

Through the end of May, Starbucks stores and First Interstate Bank lobbies have drop boxes where you can donate new sneakers as well as a poster with a QR code that shares three ways to get involved with Foster Care Awareness Month. Visit everychildoregon.org/kick-off-summer to find a Kick-Off Summer drop off location nearest you or donate sneakers online.

"We are committed to creatively supporting kids and young people in foster care as well as the families that open their homes to these kids," said Brooke Gray, executive

director, Every Child Oregon. "Kick-Off Summer is a fun way to engage the community around a specific summer need for every kid: new sneakers. Every child deserves a new pair of shoes as the weather changes. Hint, name-brand sneakers are an extra special treat."

Every Child Oregon mobilizes the community to uplift children and families impacted by foster care in Oregon. Several nonprofit organizations in the Gorge are working with Every Child Oregon to realize their goals. In 2020, 2,285 people inquired about foster parenting or adoption, a 27 percent increase from 2019. Foster youth need support year-round, but this May is an opportunity to increase awareness about ways to care for children and families in the foster care system.

In a time when many believe abuse to be on the rise

due to the extreme pressures on families, Oregon has risen to the challenge, thanks largely to Every Child Oregon and its local community of supporters, according to a press release. But more can be done. Sign up to donate goods, volunteer, or become a foster parent at everychildoregon.org.

For those looking for other ways to support the children and families in their communities, Every Child's MyNeighOR program is another way to help meet the essential needs of children, families, and young adults impacted by foster care.

Children in foster care need tangible support all year long. Join the movement beyond Kick-Off Summer and sign up for our monthly newsletter at EveryChildOregon.org.



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