

ST. ED, continued from Page A1

Anyone with the ability to donate a trailer for a few weeks should contact Henny at 503-393-5323, ext. 303.

On Monday, May 18, 25-pound boxes of produce were being passed out by volunteers to drivers making their way through the St. Edward parking lot. The boxes contained apples, oranges, strawberries, potatoes, onion, broccoli, cauliflower, celery, lettuce and carrots. The supply ran out about 4:30 p.m. and visitors were still showing up after 5 p.m.

Henny hopes to make boxes

available to the those attending the drive-through Community Dinner held at the church each month.

The first shipment the church received totaled more than 700 food boxes and the church passed on 100 of those to the Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde to feed community elders, another 50 were sent to the Gervais School District which is experiencing a shortage in its school meal programs.

"We love our community outreach and taking care of each other," Henny said.

Future weeks will feature dairy boxes containing eggs, milk, butter, yogurt, cheddar and jack cheeses. Combo

boxes containing deli ham and turkey, milk, cheddar and jack cheeses, carrots, apples, celery, lettuce and tomatoes will be given out other weeks. Requests for specific boxes are not possible.

Marion Polk Food Share is receiving a similar shipment of the food boxes, from the same USDA source, to distribute through its network of community food banks.

No appointment is necessary to receive a food box and there is no requirement to prove need. Those picking up food boxes are encouraged to ask neighbors if they need assistance.

The food box delivery will continue through June 30.

REACH, continued from Page A1

Chamber staff have also consulted with businesses on the hard questions of layoffs and how to handle them.

"We had one that was in jeopardy of layoffs that could have resulted in age discrimination claims and we were able to help them navigate away from that," Bethell said.

She has also participated in teleconference calls with a wide array of those affected by the pandemic.

"We had one with more than 70 hairstylists and barbers on the line to talk about what they were seeing and what measures they could take to reopen," she said.

Last week, Bethell accepted delivery of face masks from the Marion County Health Department that will be given out to Keizer businesses according to their need. Bethell said she pitched the idea to Marion County commissioners during a meeting two weeks prior.

"A lot of our local businesses are going to need masks and other items to begin to reopen and this was a way to assist," Bethell said.

A total of 10,000 masks were donated to local chambers of commerce throughout Marion County.

Bethell is currently running to replace Commissioner Sam Brentano on the Marion County Board of Commissioners and that standing has granted her access to calls and meetings she might not otherwise be privy to.

The chamber is putting up a survey on its Facebook page requesting info about businesses protective equipment needs and will arrange for pick-up of the masks at its office.

In the midst of putting out a thousand small fires, the chamber itself has taken some considerable lumps in recent weeks. It started with needing to layoff one of its three employees and peaked with the postponement of the annual KeizerFEST. While organizers hoped to simply delay the festival until August, Oregon's ban on large gatherings is now expected to extend through September which puts the new target dates in question.

"We're doing this effort with two people and a board of amazing community volunteers," Bethell said.

LOAN, continued from Page A1

Country Lanes; Salon Paradise Inc.; Dazy Maze dba: The Maze; and Classic Tap Dance Studio, Inc.

City officials, backed by the Keizer City Council, established the loan program with \$45,000 it plans to receive from Marion County's Prosperity Fund. The money was divided into 18 \$2,500 grants. Each business had to complete an online application showing they had staffing expenses impacted by forced closures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The names of qualifying applicants were then put into a bucket and drawn randomly by City Manager Chris Eppley in front of two witnesses Monday. The money was expected to be disbursed no later than Thursday, May 21.

However, there may be more support in the pipeline.

Last week, the city was notified by Business Oregon last week that the Oregon Legislature had ordered \$7.5 million to be disbursed to Oregon businesses in an effort to fill in gaps not met by other programs. The initial structure of the program, which could change, re-

quires a 50 percent match on the part of municipal agencies. Community Development Director Nate Brown told city councilors that Keizer had applied to have the \$45,000 forgivable loan program matched by Business Oregon's Fund.

The city's loan program did not align completely with the guidelines Business Oregon had established, but Brown held out hope that Keizer would qualify.

Business Oregon's program requests that the money be directed at sole proprietorships with special emphasis on historically disadvantaged groups such as minority-owned or women-owned businesses.

Brown said announcement of the recipients of the Business Oregon funds were expected by the end of the week. Provided that the qualifications for receiving loans does not change, Keizer businesses that applied for the first round of grants and did not receive a forgivable loan would be kept and put back into the pool of eligible recipients for the new funds if the city's application is approved. Those who received money in the first round of grants would likely need to reapply.

The city's tight purse strings minimize its ability to put forward money for matching funds if that requirement remains in place.

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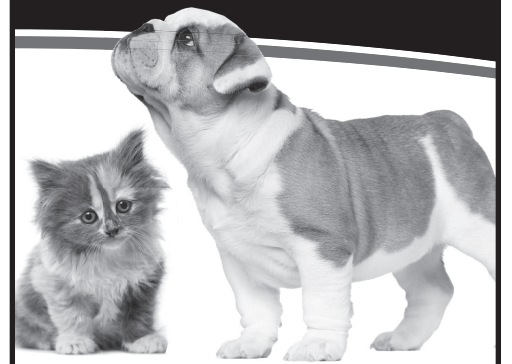
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