

VIRUS: Governments declare State of Emergency

continued from A1



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea
Photo by Heidi Venture

Volunteer Brian Towey talks with Jami Phelps-Waits and family as they pick up some lunches Monday outside the front entrance of May Street Elementary, part of a School District and FISH program this week at local schools in response to schools closing a week early due to COVID-19 concerns — see page A5 for details on how to get food. At right, Monday's FISH food bank distribution day, high school students showed up to help pack food for clients, who stayed in their cars to minimize contact. Jacob Kaplan and Adrian Cardenas load up a cart.



Scholl, adding that the Port is working to come up with a fairer system, but the priority now is simply maintaining that social distance.

"The bridge is a critical link in our regional transportation system, and while Port operations must carry on as normally as possible, we must limit person-to-person contact wherever we can," said Port Executive Director Michael McElwee. "This is a rapidly changing situation and we will provide updates on any changes in Port operations as they occur."

Oregon experienced its first fatality in the COVID-19 pandemic on Saturday, March 14: A 70-year-old man in Multnomah County tested positive for COVID-19 on March 10 and was hospitalized at the Portland Veterans' Affairs Medical Center, where he succumbed to his symptoms on Saturday, according to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA).

"This is a sobering reminder that this virus is in our community and can be serious for older people and those with underlying conditions," said Multnomah County Health Officer Dr. Jennifer Vines via an OHA press release. "This loss has motivated us to continue our efforts to minimize the impact of this virus on our community."

As of press time Monday afternoon, Oregon had a total of 39 people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19: One each in Clackamas, Douglas, Klamath, Polk, Yamhill and Multnomah counties; two each in Umatilla, Marion and Jackson counties, four in Deschutes County, 10 in Linn County, and 13 in Washington County.

While no cases have been reported in Hood River or Wasco counties, Hood River County has confirmed plans to declare a local State of Emergency, and Wasco County declared a local State of Emergency effective 9

a.m. on March 16. "This is sort of a proactive measure for recovery," said Hood River County Emergency Manager Barb Ayers. "We're not trying to scare people. We're trying to be proactive and get ahead of this." A State of Emergency has already been

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Barb Ayers
Hood River County Emergency Manager

declared on both the national and state level, and declaring one locally makes it even easier to access emergency funding and other resources to help with prevention and recovery from a crisis.

The Klickitat County Department of Health confirmed a case of COVID-19 on Saturday but stated that the patient is not considered to be a high risk for community transmission. The City of White Salmon declared a State of Emergency on Friday, March 13, and the cities of Bingen and Goldendale and Klickitat County each declared States of Emergency the following day.

"Klickitat County and local city governments of Bingen, Goldendale, and White Salmon have maintained a proactive stance for over two weeks in anticipation of any person being diagnosed with COVID-19," said Klickitat County Emergency Management in a press release sent out on March 15. "These declarations provide for additional coordination between local and county government in their efforts to inform, serve, and protect the public."

One of the resources avail-

able to residents in Oregon and Washington counties that have declared a state of emergency is a low-interest federal disaster loan, offered via the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for to small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of the pandemic. "These loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact. Disaster loans can provide vital economic assistance to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing," SBA Administrator Jovita stated in a press release. Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at disasterloan.sba.gov/

ela — Hood River applicants need to send their application forms to Ayers at barbara.ayers@co.hood-river.or.us, so that her office can submit all of the forms to the state. These loans can move fairly quickly," Ayers said, "We had good results from them in the Eagle Creek Fire and the 2017 Winter Ice Storm emergency."

Hood River County has set up an information line — 541-399-8022 in English and 541-399-8023 in Spanish — and has information posted on its website, www.co.hood-river.or.us.

This article was sent to press Monday afternoon, but because of how quickly this story is developing, the information printed could be out of date. See hoodrivernews.com for the latest updates.

COPING: Tell us about ...

continued from A1

what's down the road, even if the details have yet to be fully worked out.

Third, let us know how are you and your family, business, or group is responding to COVID-19 and official and unofficial restrictions on gathering with other people and other impacts of social distancing. We're calling this "Coping With COVID."

There's more ...

Keep sending your Happenings and Gatherings, as appropriate.

Lastly, remember that events you see in the paper, though called off or postponed, remain vital parts of who we are. A play, exhibit, or other gathering is still a product of peoples' hard work, and the disappointment and regret at cancellation or not finishing adds to that fact.

As you read about them, consider how important these events are to our community, when they either resume or sometime later the same folks involved create something new to enjoy.

KYLE: Scheduled May 16

continued from A1

it," McCarthy said. "A lot of places are not (accessible to those with disabilities).

"It will likely be something he needs the rest of his life, for when his endurance gives out," she said.

For those who cannot make it to the fun run, donations

can be made at INB in Hood River (Superhero account). Preregistration forms can also be mailed to Ashlie Storestad, c/o Wy'east Middle School, 3000 Wy'east Road, Odell, OR 97044 or dropped off at the front office.

Superhero Fun Run

Register online at tinyurl.com/superherokyle. Registration forms can also be picked up or dropped off at Wy'east Middle School when schools reopen, or sent to Ashlie Storestad, c/o Wy'east Middle School, 3000 Wy'east Road, Odell, OR 97044.



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TRASH TALK



Q. Can I recycle my plastic shopping bags in the blue bin? Dan, Parkdale

A. Dan, Great question. Please don't put plastic bags in your recycling. Bags cause major problems with machinery at the recycling facility in Portland. Good news though- Return plastic bags and film packaging (if clean and dry) to your supermarket. That includes bags that cover produce, bread, paper towels, drycleaning, and case wraps.

questions to:

Tri-County
Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program
(541)-506-2636 www.tricountyrecycle.com

WEATHER FOR HOOD RIVER, OR | MARCH 18-24, 2020

Today	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
54° /31°	59° /33°	56° /35°	53° /34°	62° /38°	55° /36°	55° /36°
Partly sunny	Sunny to partly cloudy	Times of clouds and sun	Time of sun and clouds	A shower possible	A couple showers possible	A couple showers possible

Actual High/Low

March 11-16	
Wednesday	57/42
Thursday	58/32
Friday	48/36
Saturday	39/30
Sunday	37/29
Monday	52/26

Updated 3.16.20, 8:10 AM PDT
Data from Accuweather.com

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