

# Offers of help come in many forms



Submitted photo

E-BIKES ON CALL: Jodie Gates and Matt Morrow are ready to ride.

*In response to COVID-19 closures and folks' need to self-isolate, local businesses and individuals have extended hands of kindness*

### Pickup and delivery

Big Winds and Oregon E-Bikes has closed its front doors to in-store visitors, though they are still available over the phone and online, and are offering to pick up and deliver for other businesses. Or, if you're a local resident finding pharmacy or grocery runs challenging, Matt Morrow and Jodie Gates and their e-cargo bikes are available to help. Call Gates at 541-386-6086.

Carrie and Steve Dix, Gorge Oregonian newspaper delivery team, has offered this to their clients:

"If you are staying in due to the virus but need something, please reach out to us. We cover a lot of territory ... I can pick up what you need and have your carrier deliver it with your paper," the Dixes said in their letter.

"We've had a number of folks tell us, 'We don't need help right now, but we will keep you in mind in case we need you.'"

Said Carrie Dix, "So far, people are still managing, but we are here to help."

**Yoga online**  
Laurie VanCott, MSPT, phys-

ical therapist and yoga teacher, will be offering yoga classes online on a donation basis.

English and Spanish options will be available.

The first episode included ways to stay calm and feel connected while practicing social distancing.

VanCott began posting the classes on March 25. Access them via [www.gorgeyoga.com](http://www.gorgeyoga.com).

**Burchell scholarship update**

In light of the ongoing coronavirus situation, the Gorge Community Foundation's board of directors has an-

## CGCC classes scheduled to start April 6

One way to beat the boredom and occupy your family time is to take a class from Columbia Gorge Community College, notes Stephen Shwiff of Hood River, who is CGCC's dean of general education.

"We have delayed the beginning of the term until April 6 and we offer a variety of courses of interest and, for any high school students, potential step up for their college and career goals. All classes will be delivered remotely through Zoom conferencing and our online learning system. Check out the offerings at [cgcc.edu](http://cgcc.edu)."

nounced a change to the 2020 Burchell Fund grant making program.

This year, grants from the Joan Burchell Fund will be dedicated to addressing issues of food insecurity throughout the Columbia River Gorge exacerbated by the necessary response to the coronavirus pandemic.

This is a one-time decision to help communities protect their most vulnerable citizens through this time of need, said a press release. Organizations that provide meals or access to safe, healthy food for children, families and seniors are invited to apply for funding. Applications are due on April 15 and grants awarded by the end of May.

The purpose of the Joan Burchell Fund is to provide charitable grants as the Foundation board determines are most needed. In this grant cycle, the total available for granting is \$13,340 and proposals will be accepted for any amount up to that total. The range of grants in the past has

been \$650 to \$4,000.

"Joan was self-educated, mechanically clever and artistic. Her spirit, humor, independence, and interest in all things endeared her to many people. Joan is a true example of living life on one's own terms. Joan Burchell's spirit and care for others lives on through the Joan Burchell Fund," said Jill Burnette, foundation director.

Founded in 2001, the Gorge Community Foundation's assets total over \$6 million and the foundation manages nearly 50 designated funds and 30 donor advised funds. The foundation made grants and scholarships totaling over \$204,000 in 2019.

The foundation is managed by a 10-member board of directors led by Board President Gil Sharp that includes representation from Gorge communities on both sides of the river. More information is available at [www.gcf.org](http://www.gcf.org).

# UNIFIED: 'More aware of how much of an impact we have on each other'

continued from A1

week for around 40 minutes," she said. "During this time, we are improving our robots and programming. We split into individual teams and concentrate on problem solving and having fun. We make different attachments for our robots and oftentimes, we run scrimmages and smooth out rough patches in our programs."

The Unified Robotics students participate in a "Sumo Bots" competition, which, Bunch explains, "takes place on a white, circular table with a black, two-inch ring around the diameter, that is about two feet off of the ground. The object of these games is to knock the (other person's robot) off."

For Franks, seeing her differently abled students joking and conversing with their peers and succeeding at competitions has been "beautiful."

"Listening to them at my desk, just how normal the joking and conversation is ... my students can't provide experience for each other," Franks said. "We need typically developing people to help with that."

At the FTC Super Qualifier competition held at HRVHS on Feb. 8, she "almost broke down in tears" because "the expressions on my kids' faces — I've never seen that before."

Bunch said that she has also learned a lot from the experience.

"I feel as though I have become more education about differently abled students," she said. "I've also become more aware of how much of an impact we have on each other. To me, the most impactful moment was after our first competition and seeing pride and accomplishment on my peers' faces. I am so proud to be a part of something that brings new experiences to people who didn't previously have



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

**SHOWING THEIR SKILLS** at the Feb. 8 SuperQualifier Coronet event at HRVHS are Unified Robotics are David George, left, and Jesse Bigelow, seated at center, with teammate Taylor Meckoll standing at left center. With them are Jaime Rodriguez, left, Payton Bunch standing far left, and Team Java members Haley Stuben, center, and Mose Banks, at right.

access to them."

Ben Garofalo, who also participates in HRVHS robotics and worked as a volunteer for the Unified Robotics program, said that, at first, he was unsure of what the program might look like.

"When the program first started, I was really unsure how it would work and how well it would go," he said. "But as the season progressed, I started to really enjoy our weekly Unified Robotics meetings."

"I think it's so wonderful that we started this program here to give these students the opportunity to try something like this," he said. "Now, I look forward to every meeting and the competitions we set up are super fun."

He said that, too he has made friends with the Unified Robotics program participants — something he didn't expect. And for Franks, that's another benefit of the program.

"I want to see our community be more and more inclusive," she said, and the HRVHS robotics students as an example of what is possible. "(Jeff) asked his students, 'Do you want to be more inclusive?' and they said, 'Yeah, we do.' I stood in the hallway and cried the day he told me that."

**About Unified Sports**

Unified Sports, of which Unified Robotics is a part, is a pro-

gram of Special Olympics and is funded through the U.S. Office of Special Education and the U.S. Department of Education. The goal is to use Special Olympics "as a way to build inclusion and tolerance in schools," said Naomi Grimsley, a parent and Unified volunteer who brought the idea forward to then-Athletic Director Tom Ames a couple of years ago.

"I first heard about Unified Sports through a friend and PE teacher in Walla Walla," Grimsley said. "Perhaps because I have a child with special needs, she was sharing with me about her excitement over their Unified Program ... Over the next year, I chatted here and there with other community people who showed excitement and support for a program like this ... Trent Kroll (current athletic director) was excited to pick up the torch when he took Tom's position, and he's been very supportive."

Grimsley is working on three aspects of the Unified program

that would make HRVHS a Unified Champion School: Inclusive sports, inclusive youth leadership and whole school engagement.

"Another goal this year is for Unified to become more involved in the elementary schools and eventually becoming a Unified Champion School District," she said.

Franks said that she needs community members who "are willing to risk a little bit" to expand the program to include more students.

"There's tons of room to help — be a coach, be part of setting up these activities," she said.

Of course, with the coronavirus pandemic that has now closed schools until at least April 28, the rest of this year is up in the air.

Planning, however, is happening for the 2020-21 school year. For more information, contact Grimsley at [Naomi.grimsley@hoodriverk12.or.us](mailto:Naomi.grimsley@hoodriverk12.or.us).

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	9 6				1 8
3		7		4	9

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