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**BALLOTS DUE NOW FOR MAY 19 ELECTION**



MARK BRENNAN/SIUSLAW NEWS

Ballots for the May 19 Primary Election can now be dropped off outside the Florence Municipal Court, 900 Greenwood St. In order to assure receipt of the ballot in time to be counted, Lane County election officials recommend bringing the completed and signed ballot to an official drop-off location before Tuesday's election. Lane County Elections is currently closed for walk-in customers. For more information on the upcoming Primary Election, go to [lanecounty.org/elections](http://lanecounty.org/elections) and [sos.oregon.gov/voting/Pages/current-election.aspx](http://sos.oregon.gov/voting/Pages/current-election.aspx). See ELECTIONS on page 2A for more information

**Lane County offers reasons for reopening proposal**

*Application to reopen includes details on testing, plans*

By JARED ANDERSON  
 SIUSLAW NEWS

On May 8, Lane County submitted its proposal to the state of Oregon on its plans to begin the process of reopening after two months of restrictions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The 40-page submission lists details on the county's preparedness, including rates of hospitalizations, plans for a resurgence of the virus and testing capabilities.

While at press time the state has not officially announced whether or not the county will be allowed to reopen on May 15, representatives have stated that the "majority" of counties that have applied will see applications approved.

"The health and safety of Lane County residents must be the top priority as Lane County prepares to relax restrictions implemented as part of Governor Brown's Stay Home, Save Lives executive order," the county wrote in its application for reopening. "While there is no expectation that COVID cases will get to zero in the near future, a phased approach to reopening the community and allowing commerce to resume will help limit the number of people impacted by the new disease."

See COUNTY page 8A

**Siuslaw News**  
 NEWS & VIEWS THAT DEFINE OUR COMMUNITY  
 VOL. 130, NO. 38  
 FLORENCE, OREGON

**WEATHER**



Rain with a high of 56 and a low tonight of 50.

Full forecast on A3

**COMMUNITY**



Dutch Bros Donates  
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**LIFESTYLE**



Bottle and can drive  
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**Community Foundation awards grant to 90by30**

This year Western Lane Community Foundation (WLCF) generously awarded 90by30 a grant totaling \$6,000.

This grant funded the Roots of Empathy project in Siuslaw and Mapleton first grade classes for the 2019-2020 school year. 90by30 is an initiative at the University of Oregon that is working to "reduce child abuse by 90 percent by the year 2030" throughout Lane County. Roots of Empathy is one of the projects being implemented by 90by30 throughout West Lane.

Roots of Empathy was created in 1996 by Mary Gordon, an educator, author and child advocate. The program is delivered on three continents, and in multiple languages.

It is an evidence-based classroom program that has shown significant

effect in reducing levels of aggression, including bullying, among school children while raising social/emotional competence and increasing empathy. Lane County is proud to be the first to deliver this program in Oregon. Roots of Empathy is now in 30 Lane County classrooms, with over 750 local elementary students.

At the heart of the program are a neighborhood parent and baby who visit a classroom nine times during the school year. A trained volunteer Instructor coaches the students to observe the baby's



COURTESY PHOTO

Teresa and Baby Walter visit Mapleton Elementary School as part of West Lane 90by30's Roots of Empathy Program.

development and to label the baby's feelings.

See 90by30 page 7A

**THE NEW NORMAL** *Gov. Kate Brown's plan to reopen Oregon*

By JARED ANDERSON  
 SIUSLAW NEWS

"We've joined the rest of the world in facing this historic pandemic head-on, taking extraordinary measures to save lives," Gov. Kate Brown said in public remarks last Thursday as she unveiled specific details on reopening the state, including guidelines for retail stores, restaurants and bars and personal services, along with guidelines for the general public.

It had been two months since the state began to shut down in a bid to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus COVID-19. On Thursday, Oregon officials stated the measures worked, with the state ranking the fourth lowest in the nation for infections per 100,000.

But now Brown and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) are faced with balancing reopening the state

to bolster the economy, while simultaneously preventing the spread of a disease that still little is known about.

Over the past week, the state has been releasing specific guidelines for a variety of businesses, including outdoor businesses and spas. *Siuslaw News* looked at three businesses to understand what the requirements may bring — retail stores, bars and restaurants, and personal services, such as beauty salons and barber shops.

For many businesses, the requirements are minimal and could potentially cause few disruptions. However, others could see a steep loss in clientele or be prevented from opening up all together in the state's blueprint for the new normal.

**When will we begin to reopen?**  
 To reopen, each county must

prove to the state that it can meet specific guidelines, including declining COVID prevalence, a contact tracing system and sufficient healthcare capacity. If that criteria is met, the county can begin to reopen this Friday, May 15.

Lane County was one of the first counties to submit a reopening plan, and all indications from state officials point to the request being approved, though at press time Tuesday, no official announcement has been made.

The county's application lists a host of measures it has taken to help curb the spread, from additional testing capacity to stronger contract tracing protocols. So far, the county has seen few cases, though it pointed out that testing in the early parts of the pandemic were limited. However, the rates of hospitalizations due to COVID have been minimal, and the coun-

ty believes it can respond to any flare ups that occur.

Even if the county's application is rejected, "standalone furniture stores, boutiques, art galleries and jewelry shops" will be allowed to open on March 15, regardless of the county's status, the state said.

**What will retail stores look like?**

Retail stores will see the least amount of requirements, beginning with maintaining at least six feet of distance between employees and customers.

"Store management should determine maximum occupancy to maintain at least six feet of physical distancing, considering areas of the store prone to crowding (like aisles) and limit admittance accordingly," the OHA wrote in a list of rules and regulations.

See REOPEN page 6A

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