

Oregon Special Olympics suspend Summer Games

Financial issues lead to suspension of annual event

By Zach Silva
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Citing financial issues, Special Olympics Oregon (SOOR) announced last Monday that its annual Summer Games have been suspended.

The event that brings together children and adults living with intellectual disabilities was scheduled for July 14 and 15. Last year, around 1,500 athletes from around the state competed in the Summer Games at Oregon State University including eight individuals from Cottage Grove. It was unclear how many Cottage Grove participants would compete this year but the group has 15 members that participate in bocce and 13 in track and field.

"...it is sad to hear but I understand and support it. Most people think that everything is donated to Special Olympics, but it is quite the opposite," wrote Cottage Grove Special Olympics Coordinator Carmen Dowell in an email.

"We have to rent transportation, feed our athletes, purchase uniforms and make sure we have enough volunteers. As Local Program Coordinator, I am a volunteer myself and it's a big task to take on. Special Olympics is not ending," she added.

In a video posted to Facebook on Monday, SOOR CEO Britt Carlson, who came into that role on June 1, discussed that the decision was based on a financial shortfall from last year mixed with a lack of funds available to pay for other services.

"Today I need to share with you that we're suspending our 2018 state games competitions and focusing our efforts on the local and school-based programs," Carlson said at the start of the video. "It's important to share it with you, our loyal supporters and our athletes first. I know it is a difficult decision to hear. However, it is very important for us as it positions us for long-term success and growth."

According to the Portland Business Journal the organization lost \$325,000 in revenue based on the most up to date data from 2016.

"We have searched for every possible scenario that paints a better picture, but this is where we are," Oase went on to say in the press release.

After hearing "frustration and disappointment" after the announcement, Oase issued another press release on Thursday reiterating the necessity of the decision.

"The impact of this decision affects our entire Special Olympics Oregon family; however, suspending the 2018 Games was financially necessary to maintain local training and competitions while working to rebuild our events over time," read the release.

It went on to discuss SOOR's work moving forward including working on new fundraising ideas.

Additionally, the Law Enforcement Torch Run that works to raise money for awareness of SOOR will still be taking place in July.

Finding the thrill of the flight



PHOTOS BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL

Nathan Boehringer, 12, climbs into Kent Koester's plane at Saturday's Wings and Wheels event at the Oregon Aviation Historical Society.

Fifth annual Wings and Wheels brings in vintage vehicles

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While some just saw a shiny old red car, others saw the pristine makeup of a 1929 Ford Model A. Or maybe they were drawn by the baby blue 1936 Ford Coupe that sat just down the line. Or maybe it was the orange and blue Aeronca 65-TC Tandem Trainer plane from 1940 that caught their eye.

These vintage vehicles brought enthusiasts and novices together last Saturday as they were proudly displayed at the Oregon Aviation Historical Society's fifth annual Wings and Wheels event. The event showcases vintage planes, cars, motorcycles, bikes and, as the event description notes, "things that go." This year featured over 25 airplanes and 55 cars which surpassed the number at last year's event. According to a Facebook post from OAHS, it raised nearly \$3,000 for their organization.

"We really just kind of wanted to tie last year because we did really well last year. And the community has just come out in full force. We've nearly doubled our airplane count which is incredible because those are the hardest things to

get," said OAHS Executive Director Cassandra Barrong.

In her second year working with this organization, Barrong has specifically fallen in love with the world of aviation and being able to share it with the community.

"I want it to be a welcome place for everybody. And you're going to have a good time when you show up and it's going to be family friendly. You're going to learn something while you're here and you're going to have a great time," she said.

That aspect of learning has especially resonated with Barrong, who gave a presentation at the event in order to make sure stories are told including those of Tex Rankin, a storied pilot and flight instructor who lived in Oregon in the first half of the 20th century, and other impactful Oregon aviators. But while it was an event celebrating the past, the present was not to be overlooked.

Twelve-year-old Nathan Boehringer, who came with his grandmother to see cars ("I don't like flying," he said), got a first-hand look at planes when he stumbled across Kent Koester's 1946 Globe Swift.

The plane that stands out with its orange trim and University of Tennessee influenced checkered paint on the tail, has belonged to Koester, 74, since 1971. As he helped the young Boehringer into

the cockpit and let him hit a variety of buttons to adjust the wings, Koester couldn't help but think of his own history with planes.

"When I was like maybe the age of that kid that was here, I found this big steamer trunk in the basement. So I of course opened it up," said Koester.

The trunk belonged to his father who served in World War II and in it, aside from love letters that the Koester quickly pushed aside, there was a uniform that included a helmet and goggles from

WWII and some soon-to-be influential texts.

"There were all these instruction manuals that they used in World War II to teach the pilots and they were written like comic books because they were trying to teach these guys fast," he said. "And they were great, they were as good as anything I'd ever seen. And so by the age of like 13 or 14 I had read every one. I'd read primary training, basic, intermediate train-

WINGS AND WHEELS see B3



A 1963 Chevy II Nova was on display on Saturday.

Dorena Reservoir ready for recreation



PHOTO BY CG SENTINEL

Dorena Reservoir has been deemed safe for swimming and recreation activities.

Advisory at Dorena Reservoir lifted after algae clears up

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On Friday afternoon, Oregon Health Authority (OHA) issued a press release announcing that the advisory for Dorena Reservoir that was issued earlier this month due to algae blooms, had been lifted.

"Water monitoring has confirmed that the level of cyanotoxins (harmful algae toxins) in the reservoir are below recreational guideline values for human exposure," said OHA in the release. "However, OHA officials advise recreational visitors to always be alert to signs of a cyanobacteria (harmful algae) blooms in all Oregon waters, because blooms can develop and disappear throughout the season."

OHA went on to urge individuals to "avoid recreating in areas where the water is foamy, scummy, thick like paint, pea-green, blue-green or brownish red in color, if a thick mat of blue-green

algae is visible in the water, or bright green cells are suspended in the water column. If you observe these signs in the water you are encouraged to avoid activities that cause you to swallow water or inhale droplets, such as swimming or high-speed water activities."

A previous press release from OHA had identified a heightened presence of cyanotoxins, or blue-green algae, that could be harmful for humans and animals. Swimming and high-speed water activities were to be avoided.

Earlier this month, a drinking water advisory in Salem because of the high levels of cyanotoxins in the water. The drinking water in Cottage Grove was not impacted. At a May city council meeting, City Manager Richard Meyers informed the board that the city would be testing the Row River treatment facility every week. Meyers informed the board that this was not the first time the toxin was found in the reservoir.

For more information about recreational advisories, OHA advises individuals to contact the Oregon Public Health line at 1-877-290-6767.

Athletes of the Week



This week's athletes of the week are the third through eighth graders that attended CGHS basketball camp during the week. For more pictures from camp, see B2.



A camper passes through the defense and to a teammate during a game on Wednesday.

PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA/CG SENTINEL