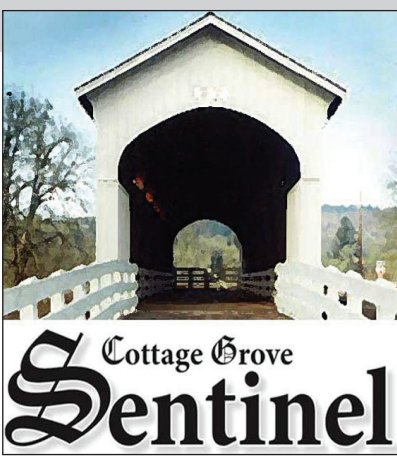


THURSDAY | MAY 7, 2020

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Governor announces limited opening of recreational areas

Governor Kate Brown announced Tuesday the limited opening of some state parks, outdoor recreation facilities and areas across Oregon for day use effective May 5, with camping opportunities becoming available as federal, state, local and private providers are able to prepare their facilities for visitors. Ski resorts will also be able to resume activities under a new executive order that will be forthcoming.

“Enjoying Oregon’s beauty and bounty is one of our state’s time-honored traditions,” said Brown. “As we begin to slowly open up recreation sites, state parks and ski areas opportunities, it is critical we ensure the health and safety of staff, volunteers, and the public. And that begins with each of us taking personal responsibility to be good stewards of our parks, and each other.”

Under the Governor’s “Stay Home, Save Lives” executive order, not all outdoor recreation areas were closed. However, as concerns about public health and safety due to crowding and lack of physical distancing grew, Brown supported the decisions of local, state and federal jurisdictions to close sites to protect the health and safety of their communities.

Oregon’s outdoor recreation providers and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) have partnered to create recommendations for safely and gradually offering limited outdoor recreation opportunities. This approach means not all day-use and camping areas will open at once.

Reopening outdoor recreation areas will be a phased approach as it becomes safe for some communities and recreational providers to do so. It will also mean a change in the way Oregonians visit some familiar sites.

Columbia River Gorge parks and recreation areas, as well as coastal areas that are not yet ready to welcome visitors back, will remain closed for now, while the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department coordinates with local jurisdictions and partners in Washington to determine the appropriate timing for reopening.

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) has already announced a small number of inland state parks that will offer limited services beginning May 6:

- Tryon Creek in Portland
- Willamette Mission north of Keizer
- Mongold boat ramp at Detroit Lake
- State Capitol State Park in Salem
- The Cove Palisades boat ramp at Lake Billy Chinook near Culver
- Prineville Reservoir boat ramp near Prineville
- Joseph Stewart boat ramp on Lost Creek Lake near Shady Cove
- Pilot Butte to pedestrians (no vehicles) in Bend

Limited day-use will slowly return to other state parks starting the week of May 11 based on the readiness of the community around the park to welcome visitors, and how prepared the park is with staff, supplies and equipment. State parks will open and close with little advance notice; updates will be

See PARKS 2B



PHOTO BY NICK SNYDER/CG SENTINEL

Middlefield Golf Course reopened last Friday and local golfers took advantage of the sunny weather on Monday as the parking lot — both for cars and carts — was packed with visitors eager to get back to hitting the links.

Middlefield reopens after five-week closure

By NICK SNYDER
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It may be a long and winding road back to normal, but as of last week at least one local institution is one step closer to getting there.

Middlefield Golf Course, owned and operated by the City of Cottage Grove since 2006, reopened last Friday, May 1 giving golfers a chance to get back to the outdoors just in time for warmer, sunnier weather.

The course had been closed since March 23 when Governor Kate Brown issued Exec-

utive Order 20-12 which designated essential businesses that were allowed to remain open — hospitals, gas stations, grocery stores, etc. — while closing a wide variety of other outfits such as gyms, dine-in restaurants and bars, hair salons, movie theaters and golf courses.

After over five weeks of closure, the reopening is a welcome sign for a nation and local community that has seen the normal course of day-to-day life upended in the face of a global viral pan-

See GOLF 2B



PHOTO C/O SKYE HEFNER

A collection of handsewn face masks made from donated materials by Skye Hefner, Athena Intros and a host of other local volunteers.

Sewing the seeds of community

By NICK SNYDER
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There’s a longstanding tradition of sacrifice and community involvement in Cottage Grove, something even a global pandemic can’t shake.

Just as Rosie the Riveters - a group that holds a place of special prominence in the Cottage Grove area - took up manufacturing slack in the war effort over seven decades ago, local residents Skye Hefner and Athena Intros — friends who work together at the Western Oregon Expo as office manager and secretary, respectively — have headed up a local group to sew and provide face masks for Grovers in need as the country faces shortages of all manner of personal protective equipment (PPE).

“This whole [virus] thing started and I

had joined that group that had started up in Eugene,” Hefner said. “I started with that and then Athena and I were talking and decided that, because what happens - and it happens very frequently - is that anything

“I’ve been up until two, three, four o’clock in the morning, but this hasn’t just been me and Athena only, there’s a whole bunch of people that have been helping out.”

that’s based up in Eugene or Springfield ends up basically forgetting that Cottage Grove exists, so we decided that, instead of providing work up there, that we wanted to cover Cottage Grove because that’s what we do.”

Towards the beginning of the COVID-19 shutdown, Hefner and Intros posted to the Pay It Forward Cottage Grove Facebook page that they would be providing handsewn face masks free of charge and began making their list. Healthcare workers, caregivers and essential workers were given priority and moved to the top. The list quickly grew to over 400 and then kept growing.

“The list, as of [April 25], we hit 1,000 masks that we’ve put together and given out,” Hefner said. “Pretty much all of the material we’ve used has been donated from people in the community who have masks, but wanted to help out. It’s been really cool.”

When asked about the idea of being a “modern-day Rosie the Riveter,” Hef-

See MASKS 2B

Oregon to provide over 351,000 children with meal replacement benefits

The Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) announced today that Oregon families with children who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals will get cash benefits for the meals they would have received at school even if they have been accessing meals from schools during the closure.

The USDA Food and

Nutrition Service (FNS) authorized DHS to provide Oregon P-EBT (Pandemic School Meal Replacement Benefits) to more than 351,000 students receiving free or reduced-price school meals in Oregon, including almost 147,000 students already receiving Nutrition Assistance. Households will receive benefits equivalent to one free lunch and one free breakfast for each eligible

child - \$5.70 per normal school day for the months of March, April, May and June.

“Together, DHS and ODE are working to ensure no child in Oregon goes hungry during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Dan Haun, DHS Self-Sufficiency Programs Director. “This resource is the result of our strong collaboration and will provide additional support for child nutri-

tion and expand families’ options for healthy food.”

“The approval of this program highlights the tremendous partnership between ODE and DHS and our shared desire to strengthen our communities,” added Dustin Melton, Director of ODE’s Child Nutrition Programs. “The P-EBT program will support student’s nutritional needs during a time of crisis and uncertainty.”

Eligible Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households will have their March, April and May benefits automatically deposited to their existing Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) accounts in late May. Students who get free or reduced-price school meals but do not receive SNAP benefits will automatically receive an Oregon Trail

See MEALS 4B