

Food program draws area families to school meal sites

Seaside Signal

Members of Seaside School District staff made the rounds of the South County Friday as part of the Seaside School District's meal delivery plan for students to age 18.

At the Broadway Middle School parking lot, the district's busiest location, staff has been providing 55 meals a day, Jessica Smith, head cook for the Seaside School District, said Friday.

Due to the public health threat of coronavirus, Governor Kate Brown announced a statewide closure of Oregon K-12 schools, including all Seaside schools, through April 27.

Students will be provided with food daily receiving a sack with lunch and breakfast items for the next day. Food service staff will be present to distribute meals.



R.J. Marx
Seaside School District Head Chef Jessica Smith and cook Catalina Campos, with Trinity, a local student, at the Broadway Middle School meal drop site Friday.

Food will be delivered on a modified schedule during spring break week, Monday, March 23, to Friday, March 27.

- Cannon Beach City Hall, 163 E. Gower, parking lot 10:15-10:45 a.m.
- Cannon Beach Elk Creek Terrace Apartment

driveway, 115 N. Hemlock, 11-11:30 a.m.

- Cartwright Park, Avenue T and South Franklin, Seaside, 10:30-10:45 a.m.
- Broadway Middle School parking lot, 1120 Broadway, Seaside, 11-11:35 a.m.
- Seaside High School parking lot, 11:45 a.m.-noon.
- Windjammer Motel parking lot, Gearhart, 10:30-11 a.m.
- Cullaby Lake, main parking lot, Warrenton, 11:15-11:30 a.m.

From March 30 to April 28, food will be delivered via modified bus routes. Delivery routes will be available on the school website, www.seaside.k12.or.us and a document will be sent to parents or guardians. Delivery for Food for Kids will follow the district's modified delivery routes.

Sunset Empire Park and Rec looks to fill vacant board seat

Seaside Signal

The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District is seeking District residents interested in being appointed to a vacant board seat. The seat was vacated by Rodney Roberts, who submitted a letter of resignation earlier this month.

The selected individual will serve out the remainder of the term which expires on June 30, 2021 and will have the opportunity to run for re-election. Board members

meet on the third Tuesday of every month at 5:15 p.m. at the Bob Chisholm Community Center in Seaside. Candidates are required to submit a letter of interest to Executive Director, Skyler Archibald: sarchibald@sunsetempire.com no later

than 5 p.m. on April 10. A resume is encouraged, but not required.

Potential candidates must reside within the district's boundaries. For more information, contact Skyler Archibald at 503-738-3311, ext. 103.



Neal Maine/Pacific Light Images
Spotted towhees can be seen year-round on the North Coast. Neal Maine photographed this one at his backyard bird feeder.

With nature areas closed, conservancy offers some at-home nature tips

Seaside Signal

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, North Coast Land Conservancy has closed access to all of its properties, including Circle Creek Conservation Center in Seaside. The office is also closed, and staff are working remotely.

But with spring unfolding right outside our doors, NCLC has some suggestions for how to enjoy this season — and every season — without even leaving home. Email ncle@NCLCtrust.org if you have more suggestions to share.

- Go into the garden. This may be a good time to pay attention to a neglected corner of your yard, to plant some seeds you've been saving, or to attack those invasive blackberries or that English ivy crawling up a tree.
- Notice nature. Biologist David Haskell wrote an entire book about changes he observed over a year in a single square meter of forest. You don't need to travel to be amazed by the natural world. Consider signing up at iNaturalist.org to share your observations.
- Do some backyard birding. The Audubon Society has suggestions for how to get started at www.audubon.org/birding/backyard. If you want

a feeder or some seed, you can order them online. You don't need a big yard: a feeder outside an apartment window will do.

- Try sketching. To draw a leaf or a feather, you need to spend time looking closely—which is reward in itself. Use pencils or pens and paper you have on hand. Enjoy the process and don't judge the result.
- Catch up on reading. Google "John Burroughs Medal" for a list of every book that has been awarded this medal for distinguished natural history writing since 1926. Naturalist (and NCLC founding director) Neal Maine also offers his own top-five list of nature books, below.

Many independent bookstores are temporarily closed, though some, including Seaside's Beach Books, are offering alternative purchasing options; visit beachbooks37.indielite.org for details.

Hot meals for seniors available for pickup

Seaside Signal

NorthWest Senior and Disability Services has temporarily suspended Seaside's senior dining program in response to the COVID-19 virus. Instead of dining in, senior citizens will have a hot lunch available for pickup in Seaside at the Bob Chisholm Center, 1225 A St. Drive up to Avenue B or pick up at back.

Meals will be available Monday through Friday between 11:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

The senior Meals on Wheels program will not be impacted.

Contact Suzanne Bjarran at 503-861-4202 for more information on the lunch program. To sign up for Meals on Wheels, contact 503-304-3420.



North Coast Land Conservancy

CoastWalk Oregon registration starts April 1

Seaside Signal

Registration for CoastWalk Oregon, a three-day walk on the Oregon Coast Trail benefitting North Coast Land Conservancy, opens April 1. Dates for the 2020 event are Sept. 11, 12 and 13. Details and registration are available at CoastWalkOregon.org.

Each year CoastWalk Oregon follows a selected 30-mile stretch of the Oregon Coast Trail somewhere between the mouth of the Columbia River and Siletz Bay at Lincoln City. This year's route will be on the northernmost stretch of the OCT, from the Columbia to Ecola State Park. For 2020 event planners have added a bonus: a walk from Fort Clatsop to the beach on the Fort to Sea and Kwis Kwis trails.

Because CoastWalk Oregon is limited to 90 participants, early registration

is advised. Organizers are hopeful that this September event will not be disrupted by the coronavirus. Just in case, a no-risk registration policy applies this year: should the event be cancelled, registration fees will be rolled over and applied to CoastWalk Oregon 2021.

Participants in CoastWalk Oregon 2020 will walk roughly 10 miles a day on a combination of beach and trails. The \$379 registration fee covers wayfinding guidance, parking fees, shuttles to and from trailheads, snacks, a celebratory lunch at the end of Day Three, and lots of cheerleading. Lodging and most meals are not included.

Most of the registration fee represents a tax-deductible donation to North Coast Land Conservancy, which is undertaking a \$10 million project to conserve 3,500 acres of forest adjacent to Oswald West State Park. Details are available at NCLCtrust.org.

ODOT ready to move forward with Gearhart traffic 'refinement' plan

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

The Oregon Department of Transportation's area planner Ken Shonkwiler looked for support from Gearhart's City Council to move forward with plans for U.S. Highway 101 upgrades at the Wednesday, March 4, meeting.

"I'd like to leave with an acknowledgement that the city is interested in participating in such an exercise before we spend money on this effort," Shonkwiler said.

In 2017, with the adoption of its Transportation System Plan, Gearhart identified 11 projects to improve roadway segments and intersections that could cost an estimated \$23 million to \$25 million to complete.

The plan is a "broad policy document," Shonkwiler said, giving direction as to what a construction project "is supposed to look like."

Seventy-five potential projects are listed in the plan, which outlines policies and projects considered important to protecting and enhancing the quality of life in Gearhart.

For Highway 101, the plan presents an option for the new configuration through most of Gearhart, with additional lanes at intersections as needed.

Shonkwiler said ODOT could develop "a corridor refinement plan" to take the concepts listed in the 2017 city transportation plan to "to set the stage for the entire corridor."

"Think of it as a jump forward on a construction project," he said.

Costs for the refinement plan would be borne by ODOT, with the city paying only for staff time and council considerations.

"As of now, we have no funded no construction projects in our next four-year transportation program, from 2021-2024," he said. "Unfortunately, there is not a direct correlation between the refinement plan and getting construction funding."

But having a plan offers "a better understanding of the magnitude of costs," Shonkwiler said.

Project funding, if and when available, would follow.

First up for Gearhart could be a design for reconfiguration of the intersection at Pacific Way and U.S. Highway 101.

Other road modifications along Gearhart's 1.7-mile stretch of Highway 101 could include adding a center turn lane to accommodate turning movements, reduce vehicle crashes, vehicle conflicts throughout the corridor, and finding ways to control aggressive driving behavior.

"I'd like to take that and have a more focused planning effort and come up with conceptual designs and do more public outreach to really solidify some of this work as we start work on the signal project," Shonkwiler said.

Council members endorsed the effort.

"Good idea," Kerry Smith said. "Let's move forward with it right away."

"It's been on our radar for some time," Mayor Matt Brown added. "It's really exciting."

Easter Egg Hunt is canceled

Seaside Signal

No Easter Egg Hunt in Seaside this year, marketing director Darren Gooch of the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District announced Friday. The event, held at Broadway

Field, typically draws more than 1,400 visitors, and had been scheduled for April 11.

The announcement comes in the aftermath of numerous event cancellations and postponements as part of the state's attempts to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

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