

Batter up at hitting facility

SKY BOX
SKYLER ARCHIBALD



has long supported our community through grants and been a partner of SEPRD's in many ways. Through the Lester and Sarah Louise Raw Seaside Youth Fund, the project was kickstarted by a sizable grant.

Second, the project had a number of key supporters from our community. Chris Corder, a local coach and business owner, volunteered to serve as project manager and coordinated the undertaking. Along the path to completion, he likely gave hundreds of hours of his time and knowledge. Other individuals including the Seaside Kids Inc. Board, SEPRD staff and Sunset Park & Recreation Foundation board have also volunteered time or resources along the way. Now that the project has been completed and opened, Chris gets to coach his children in the facility but the benefits will outlast the current athletes' time in competition — this will be a great thing for decades to come!

Third, the project got generous funding from many individuals and businesses within the community. Countless contractors donated their time, knowledge and expertise including AMJ Insulation, Borland Electric, Coastal Restoration, Ryan Osburn Plumbing and White's Heating. Daily during the construction process, a different contractor pulled in, often offering help and support.

Included in this process were connections to the Autzen Foundation and a wonderful donation from the



Kaden enjoys the new batting facility.

Skyler Archibald

Mary and Tom Herche Family. Both of those supporters provided an incredible lift in the process. The Herche Family earned the naming rights to the facility.

Fourth, the project gained approval from the City of Seaside and the SEPRD board. These were important steps to share the land that the facility is built on and establish responsibility for supervision and maintenance to the district and S.K.I., with support from the Sunset Park & Recreation Foundation.

As the facility neared completion, the timing was unfortunate with the spread of COVID-19 and due to the guidance from state and local health authorities, the

opening was delayed. However, I'm happy to share that over the past few weeks the facility has been open and heavily utilized with revisions to keep participants safe.

It's been an amazing lift to many of our young athletes in our community to have a space to recreate and be active and the facility has been utilized by children and youth ages 7 to 18. Those rentals have come through the good work of Seaside Kids and their formed teams but it's also available for the public to utilize.

It has been so inspiring to be a small part in this process and I'm in awe of the good people and hard workers in this community.

Park district: 'We want to do this in the right way'

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than mid-April. He anticipates completion within four-to-six months.

The park district purchased the former Broadway Middle School for \$2.15 million in January with the sale closing in January. The middle school was among Seaside School District properties relocated to the new Spruce Drive location outside of the tsunami inundation zone. Three acres of the 5.4-acre property at 1120 Broadway are zoned medium-density residential and the remaining portion general commercial.

The Kloth Group, which acts as owner's representative, signed a contract with the park district in November during due diligence

prior to purchase.

So far, investments at the Sunset Recreation Center have been the district's investment with the Kloth Group, landscaping equipment, replacing a scoreboard in one of the gyms and rekeying of the building, Archibald said. The cost of the scoreboard replacement will be shared by the Sunset Empire Park & Recreation Foundation and the Pacific Basketball League Youth Basketball Program.

"We have some decisions to make upcoming regarding how much investment we want to make into the building right now," Archibald said.

The park district has additional funds available from the building addition fund and purchase financing.

"We're in kind of a precarious situation because we don't want to use too much of that money right now because of what opportunities are ahead where investment might be needed," Archibald said. "At the same time, some aspects of the building are in need of attention sooner rather than later."

He said the park district is taking a pause on any further investment.

"I'd like to work with the board and the people that are working with us on the RFP to figure out what the use of the funds will be," Archibald said. "We want to do this in the right way."

For now, events are limited to youth basketball programs. While spectator events are limited, participation is exceeding expectations, Archibald said. "We also have hosted a little bit of softball practice — just pitching and catching — and are close to providing space for indoor soccer and pickleball."

The park district has not made any decisions about potential partnerships or sales at the center, but board and staff have heard from interested parties, Archibald said.

The park district plans on relocating pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes from the Sunset Pool building during spring break, March 22 to March 26. The program will be closed for all youth programming during the move. The closure will last one week and the normal schedule will resume March 29.



OPRD

Western snowy plover

Nesting season for the western snowy plover is underway

Beachgoers are urged to help recovery efforts of the threatened western snowy plover by staying on the wet sand at snowy plover beaches during nesting season, starting Monday and running through Sept. 15. Signs and ropes that identify sensitive plover nesting areas and list restrictions to protect the small shorebirds during this period.

Plover beaches remain open to foot and equestrian traffic on wet, packed sand throughout nesting season. All other recreation on plover beaches is off limits on both wet and dry sand, include walking your dog, even on a leash, driving a vehicle, riding a bicycle, camping, fires and flying kites or drones.

These small birds nest on open sand along Oregon's beaches. Nests, and especially chicks, are well-camouflaged. During nesting season, human disturbances can flush adult plovers away from their nests as they attempt to defend their young from the perceived predator. Left alone

too long, or too often, eggs or chicks can die from exposure, predators or people.

Native wildflowers

The public is invited to join the North Coast Land Conservancy in Surf Pines this spring for nine small, socially distanced volunteer parties to plant native wildflowers.

The nine events run from

Tuesday to April 1. Each planting party is limited to six volunteers. Masks are required while working on the land.

During the outings, the organization will be planting 3,000 plugs of dune tansy and edible thistle. These native wildflowers — not to be confused with invasive tansy ragwort or Canada thistle — are important nectar species for

pollinators, including the federally threatened Oregon silverspot butterfly that once occupied the Clatsop Plains. The conservancy is working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to improve habitat at the organization's Surf Pines Prairie Habitat Reserve so these rare butterflies may one day be reintroduced.

To register for a work party, visit nclctrust.org.

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