



# Senior News August 2020

Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Avenue, Ashland OR 97520

541-488-5342

AshlandSeniorCenter.org

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## Ice Cream Social Drive Through

Wednesday, August 19, 1-2:30pm

In front of Ashland Senior Center



Our summer ice cream social for seniors and their families returns—as a *drive through!* The traditional event was disrupted by COVID-19, but now we have figured out a safe way to offer this fun treat!

Village at Valley View is generously donating all the supplies for delicious ice cream sundaes (or plain vanilla ice cream on request).

Please plan to line up in cars on the park side of Homes Avenue. For those who arrive on foot, we will have an area set aside to line up at least 6' apart. Everyone must wear a mask at all times so that staff and volunteers can approach to hand you a sundae at arm's length, then step back. We are looking forward to saying a quick hello and hearing how you are doing! Then you can drive home or enjoy your sundae in spacious Hunter Park.

This is a drop-in event, no registration needed. We recommend that people arrive at varying times during 1:00-2:30pm, to avoid a long line.

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## Creative Programming in Uncertain Times

Ashland Senior Center remains closed to the public while COVID-19 infection numbers rise throughout the state. In these uncertain times, Ashland Parks and Recreation has made the difficult decision to offer classes only outdoors or online through the end of the year. So we had to get creative!

In the Senior Services Division, staff are developing new ways for seniors to connect and engage safely. In this issue, learn more about the Ice Cream Social Drive-Through on August 19, new outdoor social groups, curbside checkout for jigsaw puzzles, and our ongoing Senior Phone Buddy program. Also, instructors Susan Jaques and Charlotte Nuessle are piloting outdoor yoga in August-September, and Char Hersh is beginning free outdoor tai chi.

In addition, we are preparing to host some activities over Zoom or the phone in the fall. Understanding that not all seniors have internet access, we will continue to offer a variety of opportunities.

Did you know that research has linked social isolation and loneliness to serious health conditions, including a weakened immune system, heart disease, and cognitive decline? So *let's stay connected to stay healthy!*

## **NEW!** Outdoor Social Groups

Let's get together *safely* in the park! While the Senior Center building remains closed to the public, we would like to offer small outdoor social gatherings for community seniors, in Hunter Park by the Senior Center. *All gatherings would be with physical distancing and other safety precautions.*

What kinds of outdoor groups would you want to attend? Please let us know via a [brief survey](#) or call us at 541-488-5342.



## **Curbside Checkout for Jigsaw Puzzles**



Ashland Senior Center is continuing to lend jigsaw puzzles on Thursdays, 1:00 - 2:00 pm! To ensure safe distancing, please call for your specific pick-up time. Staff will meet you at the curb and offer a couple choices of puzzles to take home and enjoy. For the safety of all, please remain in your vehicle and wear a mask.

We are now able to accept a few donations of puzzles that contain 1000 or less pieces. To donate, call 541-488-5342.



## **Free Outdoor Tai Chi Classes**

Ashland Senior Services instructor Char Hersh is offering free outdoor Tai Chi classes, starting in August. Classes will be on the grounds of Ashland Christian Fellowship at 50 W Hersey Street. For more information, contact Char directly at 541-552-0698.

## **Summary of Survey on Reopening Senior Programs**

Thank you to the 124 people who responded to our *Survey on Reopening Senior Programs*! Here is a summary of the responses, which will help guide our strategy to reopen when it is safe:

- Almost all respondents would only feel comfortable returning to Ashland Senior Center with precautions in place and when the government authorizes such a reopening.
- Almost half of respondents would be willing to try an outdoor class or alternate, more spacious class venue. A quarter responded they might be willing but would need more information.
- Only 12% said they would not return until the COVID-19 pandemic has ended with widespread vaccination. The rest would be willing to return with precautions in place, with the most popular being mandatory masks and markings for physical distancing.
- The most requested programs were educational presentations (49%), computer/ phone/tablet tutoring (45%), yoga (43%), and congregate dining (30%).
- Interest in participating in online programs was split, with 40% responding "no" and 40% responding "yes" or "maybe/need more information." 20% reported being interested but needing access and/or training.



## **Senior News Mailing Changes**

Due to budget cuts, we must reduce the mailing list for our monthly newsletter to Ashland and Talent residents only, starting in September.

If you live outside this area, we would be happy to put you on our list to get the newsletter via email. Please call us at 541-488-5342 or email [seniorinfo@ashland.or.us](mailto:seniorinfo@ashland.or.us).

Or let us know if you live in Ashland or Talent and are willing to switch to the email newsletter. That will help us stretch limited funds for programs!



## Updated Oregon Guidelines to Protect Yourself and Others

As of July 15, face coverings are required statewide for indoor public spaces **and** for outdoor public spaces when at least 6 feet of physical distancing is not possible. For those most vulnerable to the virus, it is still recommended to stay home as much as possible.

The World Health Organization confirms that the virus can spread by both droplets and aerosols. Aerosols are tiny respiratory particles that can linger in the air for hours in poorly ventilated indoor spaces. Touching contaminated surfaces and then your eyes, nose or mouth can also spread infection. COVID-19 may be even be spread by infected individuals who are not displaying symptoms.

Always follow the three W's:

**Wash** your hands

**Wear** a face covering over mouth and nose

**Watch** your distance

Learn more at [healthoregon.org/coronavirus](http://healthoregon.org/coronavirus).

Please take care to protect your health and the health of those around you!

Seniors may request a free cloth mask at 541-488-5342 or [seniorinfo@ashland.or.us](mailto:seniorinfo@ashland.or.us).

## Keep Your Air Clean during Smoke Season

With wildfire season upon us, it is important to prepare your home for smoke. Here are some guidelines to help keep the air inside your home as clean as possible during a smoke event:

1. Keep windows and doors closed.
2. Run an air conditioner if you have one. Keep the fresh-air intake closed and the filter clean. Use a high-efficiency filter with HEPA or MERV 13 or higher rating.
3. If you do not have an air conditioner and it is too warm to stay inside with the windows closed, seek shelter in an evacuation center or away from the affected area.
4. If you are sensitive to smoke, create a "clean room" in your home. Use a portable, HEPA-grade air purifier in the room, and keep doors and windows closed.
5. Avoid activities that increase indoor pollution, such as smoking, vacuuming, or burning candles.

Learn more at [ashland.or.us/indoorair](http://ashland.or.us/indoorair). And sign up for Ashland Community Alert System to get alerts and health warnings about air quality: [www.ashland.or.us/nixle](http://www.ashland.or.us/nixle)



### Ashland Senior Advisory Committee (ASAC) Update

ASAC has been on hold since March due to the pandemic. Meetings are expected to resume **September 14, 3:30-5:00pm** over Zoom. All meetings are open to the public. The agenda, with Zoom link, will be posted on [ashland.or.us/APRCAgendasAndMinutes](http://ashland.or.us/APRCAgendasAndMinutes).



Senior Services Division  
1699 Homes Avenue  
Ashland, OR 97520

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## Senior Phone Buddy

Stay connected during this time  
of physical distancing!

The free **Senior  
Phone Buddy**  
program matches  
seniors for regular  
check-ins and  
socializing.



Ashland Senior Services Division  
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*Thank you to our July/August  
sponsors and donors!*

*Your kindness and giving brightens our lives.*

*Debbie Sanford*



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**Ashland Senior Center office is closed Monday August 10th  
for a mandatory staff furlough day.**