

# THE NEWPORT MINER

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## Wash your hands, don't panic

Coronavirus hits Washington state, communities brace for impact

BY MICHELLE NEDVED  
OF THE MINER

NEWPORT – There is no shortage of information on the novel coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, and all that information can be confusing and sometimes inconsistent. Two suggestions are agreed upon by all agencies, however: wash your hands and don't panic. Empty facemask and hand sanitizer shelves show the latter might be easier said than done.

"We're going to face crazy town for a while," Newport Hospital and Health Services CEO Tom Wilbur said.

After weeks of watching the wave of COVID-19 sweep the globe, the virus hit the United States, namely Washington state. Pend Oreille County commissioner Mike Manus, whose wife is the CFO of Newport Hospital and Health Services,

said Tuesday morning that Washington state is ground zero for COVID-19 in the U.S. While the confirmed cases and nine fatalities occurred on the west side of Washington state, closer to home, the Colville School District closed its doors Monday and Tuesday, awaiting test results from a person related to the school district who is at risk of COVID-19. Test results can take up to three days and the test commenced on Sunday, March 1.

The decision to close schools and cancel all extra curricular activities was done in consultation with the Northeast Tri County Health Officer and Tri County Health Department, according to a press release. While schools are closed, the district disinfected school buildings.

### County holds emergency meeting

Pend Oreille County commissioners held an emergency meeting of department heads and elected officials Tuesday morning.

"This is a moving target," said Joanne Boggs, emergency management director for the county. "We'll talk to you to-

SEE **VIRUS, 2A**



MINER PHOTO|SOPHIA ALDOUS

## Ash Wednesday

Millie Brumbaugh receives the ash from Pastor Janine Goodrich at American Lutheran Church in Newport during Ash Wednesday services Feb. 26. Lenten Soup Suppers and Worship returns to local churches on Wednesdays and are open to the public. Meals start at 5:30 p.m. and worship begins at 6:30 p.m. The American Lutheran Church will host Lenten supper and worship March 4 and 11. On March 18 and 25 St. Anthony's Catholic Church will host. The United Church of Christ hosts Lenten suppers and worship April 1 and 8.



COURTESY PHOTO|PERRY PEARMAN

## Cold water rescue training

South Pend Oreille Fire and Rescue and Pend Oreille County Search and Rescue volunteers held their annual ice rescue training Sunday at Sacheen Lake. The focus of the training exercise was on surface rescue for cold water and ice incidents with particular emphasis on personal survival and safety of the rescuer. With all of the large and small bodies of water in South Pend Oreille County and Northern Spokane County, special efforts are made to ensure that firefighters are properly trained and equipped to respond at a moment's notice to ice and cold water rescue situations.

## Gentle running for county commission

NEWPORT - John Gentle has announced that he is running for Pend Oreille County Commissioner in District No. 1, as a Republican. The seat is currently held by Karen Skoog, also a Republican, who has announced she won't seek re-election. Democrat Phyllis Kardos has also announced her candidacy for the position. On Tuesday afternoon Devin

Beach announced his candidacy to run for the commissioner position as well.

"I've been a part of this community since high school," Gentle, 46, said in a news release announcing his candidacy. "I believe

represents. We have some remarkable people, world-class recreation, and some of the most beautiful countryside in the state. I'm excited to help maximize our potential."

Gentle currently works in the Pend Oreille County Assessor's Office. His family moved into Pend Oreille County in 1991.

SEE **GENTLE, 2A**

### BRIEFLY

#### Newport Rodeo Queen coronation

OLDTOWN – Rodeo aficionados should mark the calendar for the 2020 Miss Newport Rodeo Coronation for Saturday, March 21, 5 p.m. at the Riverbank Restaurant and Fay's Lounge in Oldtown. This year's queen is Leana Newman. There will be a dinner and live auction to follow. There will be several silent auction items as well. Social hour starts at 5 p.m. and dinner starts at 6 p.m. with a live auction to follow.

Dinner tickets are \$16 at the door. The Newport Rodeo is June 26-27.

#### Family Math Night March 12

PRIEST RIVER – Family Math Night will be at Priest River Lamanna High School Thursday, March 12, 5-7 p.m. A free chicken dinner will be served from 5-5:30 p.m. in the cafeteria, followed by engaging math lessons and games for kids and adults. There will be 12 sessions to choose from. The event is open to the public.

For more information, call Priest River Elementary at 208-448-1181.

#### Benefit for Lila Hirst Saturday

PRIEST RIVER – A benefit for Lila Hirst will be held at Jammers Bar in Priest River Saturday, March 7 at 2 p.m. There will be a spaghetti and salad dinner for a \$5 donation, along with a live and silent auction. Raffle prizes include a quilt, a half-gallon of Crown Royal and a cord of mixed firewood. Raffle tickets are \$5 each or five for \$20.

To buy raffle tickets or donate auction items, call Carol at 208-448-0965 or Pam at 206-226-7980.



CLASSIFIEDS	7B	OPINION	4A	RECORD	5B
LIFE	2B	POLICE REPORTS	5B	SPORTS	1B
OBITUARIES	5B-6B	PUBLIC NOTICES	7B-10B	SENIOR CALENDAR	4B

**SPRING FORWARD THIS WEKKEND**  
MOVING AHEAD AN HOUR THIS SATURDAY EVENING