Conducting a search of the Argus Courier from June 1918 - March 1919 using the keywords: <flu mask> gave rise to many articles about the flu including the cause, symptoms, concerns, and politics. The paper reported numbers of cases across the country as well as information that readers could use to help them decide their own course of action. This timeline centers on those articles relating to masks and their use.

Setting the stage:
The war was going strong in early 1918 and signs of a pandemic style flu was being noted. By October, cities and towns all over the world were working to stop the rate of infection. Masks were one way to quell the spread.

Here is the timeline of those articles from October 1918 - March 1919. Enjoy the trip!
The first ‘flu masks’ in Petaluma were noted on October 22, 1918: “half a dozen passengers who alighted at the depot wore their masks and kept them on, these being the first masks to be seen on the streets of this city. In San Francisco, orders have been given that all persons who appear on the streets must wear these masks”.

October 30, 1918
Nov 2, 1918

One noted reason for wearing masks even in the car included the ease with which one can forget to put it on when getting out.

Nov 5, 1918

The Flu was prevalent throughout the country in early November 1918.

Nov 4, 1918

-Some of the local ladies who have chiffon or crepe de chine at hand have fashioned dainty flu masks from these materials and they are dainty and more effective than the other materials owing to the close meshes. But everybody cannot have them.

-Sure it's war and pestilence, but everybody is happy. We are beating the Hun and beating the Flu. Watch 'em run.
The women’s exchange was a shop that carried home made items including crochet, knitted and sewn clothing as well as home made jams, pickles and more.
Get in style. Wear the mask or the muzzle, whichever you want to call it. If it is custom it is law, but whether or no, wear it. You might be helping someone else. The Board of Health has authority under the police power of the constitution to require everybody to wear masks or carry shotguns, if the health or lives of people are endangered. It matters not about law or authority, the orders are to wear masks. Obey.
Nov 5, 1918

Not everyone was happy about the mask rules.

Nov 18, 1918

—in San Francisco, all fines collected from mask law violators go to the war fund drive. Why not do the same in Petaluma. The coin is badly needed and there are numerous slackers.
It’s beginning to look good for the end of the Flu...
After the war ended in early November, everyone was glad to return to normal - it appeared that the flu was diminishing and schools could re-open. With some diligence, including signage to be placed in front of the homes of those ill with the flu, it was just good to be done with it.
By early December, flu masks were once again being mandated in San Francisco, as the flu showed it’s appearance again in the larger cities.

Starting on December 11, the Argus began reporting on the spike in flu cases across the state: Los Angeles reported 650 cases in a 24 hour period. By December 19, Napa, San Jose, Modesto, and Fresno all recorded increasing cases. Healdsburg reported an increase on Dec. 14, 1918
We begin to see
The surge in late December.

Dec 30, 1918

...and yet, we are ever hopeful:

Dec 28, 1918
Jan 2, 1919

BRIEFLETS

—There were five arrests and convictions at Santa Rosa on Monday for failure to wear the flu masks as required by ordinance.

Jan 9, 1919

Back to mask wearing and the Push-back to doing so.

MASK FERMENT

There was a lively meeting of the Sebastopol Board of Trustees on Monday evening when the mask ordinance had an inning and very nearly an outing. A petition bearing 296 signatures was presented to the city fathers, but no action was taken.  

There is much antagonism to the mask enactment and much opposition was manifest to its continuance as a city ordinance. Dr. J. W. Kerr, health officer, stood manfully by his guns and secured a postponement until Tuesday afternoon, when it is understood that action will be taken.
The schools within Petaluma deal with the surge in Flu cases by closing and moving to correspondence courses.

While the rural schools stay open with masks.

—The Cinnabar school, north of this city, reopened on Monday morning, the children wearing masks.
While Petaluma schools were closing, other towns began reporting fewer cases. As January wore on, Napa and Ukiah took off mask rules and opened up socializing.

San Francisco, however, still had mask rules up through Jan 22 - and were breaking them to the tune of over 100 arrests posted in the paper that day.
Mar 19, 1919

By March 19, 1919 articles on the Flu are far and few inbetween - but there is no shortage of advice for citizens to partake as they work their way back to health.

After “Flu” Tonic

Those recuperating slowly from the effects of the “Flu” will do well to take a treatment of San Tox Tastless Cod Liver Oil With Iron. Puts on flesh and makes rich, red blood without disturbing the digestive organs. Builds tissue, gives you strength and excellent if there has been bronchial trouble.

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