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FRIDAY,  
JANUARY 14, 2022

# The Chief

**\$1.50**  
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## No Stopgaps: Council reverses vote on NEXT

ZOE GOTTLIEB  
chronicle2@countrymedia.net

The Clatskanie City Council will not be sending a letter to the Columbia County Board of Commissioners requesting a slowdown of the permitting process for NEXT Renewable Fuels, Inc.

On Tuesday, Jan. 11, at 7 p.m. the council held a special meeting at Clatskanie Cultural Center, 75 South Nehalem street to hear a presentation from NEXT's CEO Chris Efir, updating the council on the status of the \$1.5 billion renewable diesel production facility proposed for Port Westward.

At the meeting's conclusion, city councilors passed a motion to rescind the previous motion, made Jan. 5, which had formally requested the county commissioners slow down the permitting process for the plant.

The special meeting drew an audience of community members and stakeholders, among them Jasmine Lillich and Brandon Schilling, members of Save Port Westward, Cathy Hurowitz, Clatskanie Middle/High School Superintendent, and Tony Hyde, board member of Columbia Economic Team, among others.

Parties on both sides of the aisle were given the opportunity to make statements for and against its development.

Members of the opposition expressed fears that biodiesel fuel production would be detrimental to surrounding wildlife, properties, and agriculture.

President of Beaver Drainage District Warren Seely called the mitigation site "a massive host site for agriculturally damaging weeds and pests," and lodged



NEXT Renewable Fuels, Inc. CEO Chris Efir leads a presentation on the benefits of renewable biodiesel fuel.



The special meeting attracted a large crowd of both opponents and proponents of the project.



The special meeting attracted a large crowd of both opponents and proponents of the project.

concerns over the drainage of 650,000 gallons of wastewater the NEXT plant would produce.

Others expressed support for the project's ability to bring economic prosperity to the city and increase tax revenue for schools, libraries, and the Clatskanie Rural Fire Protection District.

Others expressed support for the project's ability to bring economic prosperity to the city and increase tax revenue for schools, libraries, and the Clatskanie Rural Fire Protection District.

Hurowitz emphasized the

potential gains for the school district should development go forward.

"I could say a lot about the project's benefits but something I

am particularly focused on is the project's developing partnership with the school district to create a new science program," she said. "Our students would have the opportunity to grow trees that are planted in the wetlands, or they could learn how to test the soil for nutrients or observe the biodiversity as the wetlands take shape."

After public comments, Efir conducted his presentation, addressing the public's concerns on environmental impact, disaster prevention, and potential impacts on wildlife.

"Is it the final answer?" he said, in terms of the shift to renewable biodiesel fuel. "No, but it's a path for the next 40, 50, 60 years to reduce our carbon footprint."

Efir also said NEXT's development will provide 240 community jobs, restore 450 acres of tree farm to natural wetlands, and falls under the rules and regulations of Cleaner Air Oregon, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's initiative to restore, maintain, and enhance the quality of Oregon land, air, and water.

NEXT officials launched the plant project in 2016 and applications started in 2019 for official review, according to NEXT Renewable Fuels Director of Communications Michael Hinrichs.

Part of the process to obtain approval for the project includes thorough third-party evaluation of NEXT's data, opportunities for a public dialogue, refinement of applications and designs, and inclusion of additional conditions if needed.

See NEXT Page A7

## Flood aftermath

JEREMY C. RUARK  
jruark@countrymedia.net

State and local public works crews continue to assess the damage left from last week's flooding.

In Columbia County, a section of Highway 47 near Mist was washed away by the surging flood waters. Work to repair that section of the highway began this week.

"We have hired a contractor to make repairs on OR 47 in Mist and the work has started," Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) spokesman Don Hamilton said. "There is no estimate on completion

as we need to have the pipe manufactured. We may have a better timeline by the end of the week."

The significant rainstorms have eased but the heightened travel danger remains across the region, according to Hamilton.

"If you are traveling, you need to be very careful," Hamilton said following the Highway 47 washout Friday, Jan. 7. "We have had a lot of water in Northwest Oregon and there is lots of danger. You need to watch for high water, landslides and falling



Courtesy photo from ODOT. Surging flood waters washed away this section of Highway 47 near Mist.

See FLOOD Page A7

## Look into 2022

ZOE GOTTLIEB  
chronicle2@countrymedia.net

Henry Heimuller is stepping into his new role as chair of the Columbia County Board of Commissioners.

Heimuller was elected chair Wednesday, Jan. 5, following a vote by Heimuller, Margaret Magruder and Casey Garrett, the three board of commission members.

In a one-on-one interview with The Chief, Heimuller outlined what he and the board would like

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# 3 nominated to fill Senate District 16 post

Columbia, Clatsop, Multnomah, Tillamook, Washington and Yamhill County Commissioners will hold a joint meeting at 9:30 a.m. Friday, Jan. 14, to interview candidates and select a replacement for the Oregon Senate District 16 position.

The county commissioners have received the following list of Democratic nominees from the Oregon Democratic Party seeking the appointment. They are:

- Melissa L. Busch
- Rachel L. Armitage
- Nadia E. Gardner

Oregon law requires that a legislative vacancy be filled by county commissioner's representing the district in which the vacancy exists. Senate District 16 includes voters in Columbia, Clatsop, Multnomah, Tillamook, Washington and Yamhill Counties.

## Melissa Busch

Columbia County resident Melissa Busch lives in Warren with her partner and three

children. Busch is a home health nurse who travels the county visiting patients in their homes and long-term care settings, providing care and connection before and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. She has also volunteered at numerous vaccine clinics in the county.

"I know the challenges our community faces because I see my patients navigating those challenges every day," Busch says. "Parents lack affordable childcare, schools lack crucial resources, and families are regularly confronted with impossible choices like whether to buy groceries or pay for prescription medications. As a working mother and a union member, I understand how important it is that we have family wage jobs, good benefits, and safe working conditions. This was true before the COVID-19 pandemic. As our next State Senator, I will stand up for our community just like I stand up for my patients."

Busch announced her intention to run for Johnson's seat in November 2021. Her



Courtesy photo

The three nominated candidates are Melissa L. Busch, Rachel L. Armitage and Nadia E. Gardner.

endorsements include the Oregon Nurses Association and Chair of the Oregon House of Representatives Committee on Health Care, Representative Rachel Prusak.

## Rachel Armitage

Columbia County resident Rachel Armitage lives in Warren with her husband and stepdaughter. She previously worked as a Legislative Assistant in the 2016 and 2017 legislative sessions, focusing on constituent service and

issues such as education, and rights for foster youth. If appointed, Armitage's legislative experience will allow her to hit the ground running in the Legislature with a focus on jobs and housing.

"As a lifelong Oregonian and the daughter of a teacher and a pastor, I know that community is often what gets us through hard times," said Armitage. "That's why I'm seeking this appointment. Our community needs a leader in Salem who brings us together even when we

have strong disagreements—who will be an independent voice for rural Oregonians."

## Nadia Gardner

Nadia Gardner is a 20-year North Coast resident, who has always been very active in local politics. She lives in the unincorporated Clatsop County community of Arch Cape with her partner and six-year-old son. She is the Chair of the Clatsop County Planning Commission. She was elected as a

Director on the Arch Cape Domestic Water Supply District Board. In addition to providing critical governance and financial oversight, the Board is leading the acquisition of Arch Capes's 1,500-acre forested drinking watershed.

"I am a scientist with expertise on our forests, rivers, estuaries and ocean and how they contribute to human health and community livability. My scientific background leads me to find proven solutions to tough problems," Gardner says. "I am running because this is a critical moment, and I am the dedicated, knowledgeable, and experienced candidate to bring forward the right solutions."

The county commissioners are making the selection to replace Sen. Betsy Johnson who recently resigned her District 16 position to run for Oregon governor.

The term for that Senate seat runs through 2022.

*The Tillamook Headlight Herald contributed to this report.*

# State clarifying drone use in parks and along ocean shores

## JEREMY C. RUARK

jrurark@countrymedia.net

You have likely seen small drones navigating over parts of Clatskanie and Rainier from time to time.

The popular crafts are used by businesses and hobbyists and have now got the attention of the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD).

The OPRD intends to create rules to provide the clarity needed for drone pilots, hobbyists and the general public to know where drone take-off and landing is allowed and prohibited within a state park and along the ocean shore.

"While we do get occasional complaints about drones, we also get requests from pilots about where and how they can launch and land in a state park and on the ocean shore," OPRD spokesman Chris Havel said. "So, it's not so much about responding to complaints as managing a legitimate form of recreation so it doesn't create conflicts or cause resource damage. Drones are

popular, and we want to give our field staff guidance on how to manage it, and help owners enjoy their hobby by having a consistent approach from park to park."

**“***It's not so much about responding to complaints as managing a legitimate form of recreation so it doesn't create conflicts or cause resource damage.*  
~ Chris Havel, OPRD

Havel said the state agency currently does not have rules specific to drones. "We had to get permission from the legislature in 2021 to start the public rulemaking process now underway – so state park managers have been relying on more general rules that protect people, property, and natural and historic resources to manage drones on a case-by-case basis," Havel said. "Under

that approach, managers have sometimes prohibited drone take-off and landing from a state park to protect a nesting bird or historic structure like a lighthouse."

While the OPRD does have penalties for rule violations, Havel said the agency's procedure is usually education first.

"We very rarely jump right to a citation when someone violates a rule; we usually inform, then warn, then cite unless it's an extreme case," he said. "The fine for violating a park rule and damaging a resource varies up to about \$2,000 and/or expulsion from a park depending on the severity of the incident."

According to Havel, penalties for violating park rules are set in a general way (see <https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/viewSingleRule.action?ruleVrsnRsn=187975>), so violating drone rules would be treated the same way as other infractions.

The OPRD Rule Advisory Committee will meet virtually Jan. 24 to review and discuss proposed changes to



Metro Creative Connection

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is launching a review of the use of drones in state parks and along the Oregon shorelines.

Oregon Administrative Rules concerning the use of drones.

The committee will also discuss any financial or economic effects of the proposed rules on businesses, local governments or other stakeholders.

The committee meeting starts at 10:30 a.m. and will be live streamed on YouTube for the public at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk-qL6iVPBfCTO27cNmCTwg>.

The meeting agenda does not include time for public comment.

After the committee review, the proposed rules will open for public comment. Details will be posted on the Proposed OPRD Rules web page.

OPRD appointed members to the Rule Advisory Committee (RAC). Members comprise individuals who are drone pilots, agency represen-

tatives, conservationists, and active visitors to state parks. Additional RAC members have been added for this second meeting. The first meeting was held in November 2021.

Individuals who require special accommodations to view the meetings should contact Katie Gauthier at least three days in advance of the meeting at 503-510-9678 or [katie.gauthier@oregon.gov](mailto:katie.gauthier@oregon.gov).

# Fed transportation funding to help save lives

## STAFF REPORT

chiefnews@countrymedia.net

Road safety improvements in Columbia County and across the state will be enhanced by an estimated \$1.2 billion and that work will save lives, according to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Much of the additional transportation funding on its way to Oregon from the recently passed federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) will focus on safety.

"This additional investment will allow us to implement more safety projects statewide," State Traffic Safety Engineer Christina McDaniel-Wilson said. "This means that 50 more fatalities or serious injuries and 750 more lower-severity crashes can be prevented over the life of these projects."

The act reinforces existing federal transportation safety programs and introduces two more urgent safety needs:

- To prevent death and injury from crashes involving motor vehicles striking other vehicles and individuals stopped at the roadside – this aligns with Oregon's "Move over" law and other efforts to improve the safety of our emergency responders on the roads.

- To educate the public on law enforcement practices during traffic stops and to train law enforcement on improving the safety of interactions with the public during traffic stops. This includes reducing racial profiling in traffic stops and aligns with ODOT's goal of improving equity in Oregon's transpor-

tation system.

While gathering Oregonians' input in the months ahead, ODOT has already identified several major investments in safety for Oregon communities such as:

- \$45 million in additional funding for the All Roads Transportation Safety Program. More on ARTS: <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/engineering/pages/arts.aspx>.

- More than a quarter billion dollars in additional direct investment in repairing and replacing Oregon's bridges – making them safer during a major earthquake and for recovery after a major disaster. More on state bridges: <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Bridge/Pages/index.aspx>.

- \$94 million for a new PROTECT Program to enhance the transportation system's resilience to disasters, including adapting to climate change. More at ODOT Climate Office: <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Programs/>

Pages/Climate-Office.aspx.

- Potentially as much as \$200 million in additional funding for cities, counties and metropolitan planning organizations for safety, bicycle/pedestrian, bridge, and other community priorities.

"Much of the additional funds for safety will support our All Roads Transportation Safety program, which uses data and national research to select the best projects that will effectively reduce the most fatal and serious injury crashes on all roads in Oregon," State Traffic Services Engineer Angela Kargel said. "IIJA also includes a new effort to address pedestrian and bicycle safety needs, so we'll see more of those projects in the coming years as well."

## How to follow IIJA in Oregon

- Subscribe to ODOT's STIP update list at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORDOT/subscriber/new>.
- Visit ODOT's IIJA

website at [oregon.gov/odot/Pages/IIJA.aspx](https://oregon.gov/odot/Pages/IIJA.aspx).

## How to provide input

- Submit comments and letters through OTC website at [oregon.gov/odot/GetInvolved/Pages/OTC-Comments.aspx](https://oregon.gov/odot/GetInvolved/Pages/OTC-Comments.aspx).

- Watch for an ODOT online open house in February.

- Provide public comment at Oregon Transportation Commission meetings: Jan. 20, Feb. 17 (special meeting on IIJA), March 10, March 30 (special meeting on IIJA).



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A portion of the \$1.2 billion will be allocated over the next five years for highway and bridge construction and maintenance, safety improvements, mass transit investments, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, electric vehicle charging stations, and efforts to reduce carbon emissions from transportation sources.

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# Guard to start 2nd hospital relief

**STAFF REPORT**  
chiefnews@countrymedia.net

With the surge of COVID-19 cases, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown has ordered an increase of National Guard members for the second hospital relief mission, with up to 1,200 Oregon Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen mobilized as of Wednesday, Jan. 12.

This new activation of the Oregon National Guard is an increased from 500 to over 1,200 service members in 40 hospitals across the state. National Guard members will provide much-needed support for understaffed hospitals during this deployment, which will begin no later than Jan. 18.

The soldiers and airmen will serve in non-clinical support roles as material handlers, equipment runners, in addition to COVID testing support, laundry, custodial services, ensure hospital operations and other services in support of healthcare systems. The mission's planning is ongoing, with guard members placed on orders and assigned to hospitals.

This activation follows a prior deployment of over 1,500 Oregon National Guardsmen that provided the

same non-clinical support rolls in Oregon hospitals that began in August of 2021 and ended in December 2021.

The Oregon National Guard comprises over 8,000 Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen, dedicated to serving the communities they live in and maintaining the ability to serve the nation in times of war.

The organization has the motto "always ready, always there" and is the largest part-time employer in the state. Its members, on average, serve one weekend a month with an additional two-week period a year while maintaining civilian employment.

### Hospital crisis care

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has provided the state's hospitals with an interim crisis care tool to help them prioritize treatment if they reach a point when critical care beds, specialized equipment, such as ventilators, and other resources become scarce due to surging COVID-19 admissions.

Oregon hospitals may activate crisis standards of care if their critical care resources are severely limited, the number of patients presenting for criti-



Courtesy photo from Maj. W. Chris Clyne, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

**Oregon Army National Guard Human Resource Specialist Sgt. Niki McCurdy assigns soldiers to specific hospitals at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Jan. 12.**

cal care exceeds capacity, and there is no option to transfer patients to other critical care facilities, according to a release from OHA.

Hospitals may implement OHA's interim crisis care tool - or one of their own that is consistent with Oregon's Principles in Promoting Health Equity in Resource Constrained Events - if they have taken specific steps to extend their capacity to deliver care. Those steps include stockpiling supplies, delaying non-urgent care, and repurposing existing beds and staff that are not typically used to provide critical care.

Under the interim triage tool, all patients who can

potentially benefit from treatment will be offered care, if health care resources are sufficient. If hospital staff, beds and treatment are insufficient, all patients will be individually assessed according to the best available objective medical evidence. According to the tool:

- No one will be denied care based on stereotypes, assumptions about any individual's quality of life, or judgment about an individual's "worth" based on the presence or absence of disabilities.
  - Care decisions should be based on the likelihood of survival to hospital discharge.
- Under Oregon's interim

crisis care standards, state health officials expect providers to treat all patients with respect, care and compassion. Hospital clinicians may not base care decisions on an individual's use of past or future medical or social resources. They should apply reasonable modifications to any triage scoring criteria when considering individuals with underlying disabilities or certain underlying health conditions, according to the release.

Triage decisions will be made without regard to morally or scientifically irrelevant considerations such as income, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, health insurance coverage or other factors.

Oregon remains committed to developing a permanent tool based on broader community input, according to OHA Chief Medical Officer Dana Hargunani.

"Right now, we want to put a triage tool in the hands of clinicians who are likely to face very difficult decisions in the coming weeks, as the Omicron variant takes its toll and puts more patients in the hospital," Hargunani said. "This interim tool isn't perfect, but it ensures that

clinicians can be confident they are using criteria firmly grounded in Oregon's values of non-discrimination and health equity as they face these gut-wrenching decisions."

The OHA also is calling for applicants to serve on a new Oregon Resource Allocation Advisory Committee.

The Oregon Resource Allocation Advisory Committee's role will be to:

- Review and inform updates to OHA's Principles in Promoting Health Equity During Resource-Constrained Events, which ensures health equity in decision-making when resource shortages occur.
- Review and inform future amendments or changes to the interim crisis care tool.
- Guide development of any additional necessary resources - including triage tools, guidance, best practices - to ensure these principles can be readily applied in Oregon during a resource-constrained event.
- Inform the norms and expectations regarding patient communication and transparency when health system allocation decisions are necessary due to resources constraints.

# Hemp prevents coronavirus from entering human cells

**STEVE LUNDEBERG**  
Chief Guest Article

Hemp compounds identified by Oregon State University (OSU) research via a chemical screening technique invented at OSU show the ability to prevent the virus that causes COVID-19 from entering human cells.

Findings of the study led by Richard van Breemen, a researcher with Oregon State's Global Hemp Innovation Center, College of Pharmacy and Linus Pauling Institute, were published today in the Journal of Natural Products.

Hemp, known scientifically as Cannabis sativa, is a source of fiber, food and animal feed, and multiple hemp extracts and compounds are added to cosmetics, body lotions, dietary supplements and food, van Breemen said.

### The research

Van Breemen and collaborators, including scientists at Oregon Health & Science University, found that a pair of cannabinoid acids bind to the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, blocking a critical step in the process the virus uses to infect people.

The compounds are cannabigerolic acid, or CBGA, and cannabidiolic acid, CBDA, and the spike protein is the same drug target used in COVID-19 vaccines and antibody therapy. A drug target is any molecule critical to the process a disease follows, meaning its disruption can thwart infection or disease progression.

"These cannabinoid acids are abundant in hemp and in many hemp extracts," van Breemen said. "They are not controlled substances like THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana, and have a good safety profile in humans. And our research showed the hemp compounds were equally effective against variants of SARS-CoV-2, including variant B.1.1.7, which was first detected in the United Kingdom, and variant B.1.351, first detected in South Africa."

Those two variants are also known the alpha and beta variant, respectively.

Characterized by crown-like protrusions on its outer surface, SARS-CoV-2 features RNA strands that encode its four main structural proteins - spike, envelope, membrane and nucleocapsid - as well as 16 nonstructural proteins and several "accessory" proteins, van Breemen said.

"Any part of the infection and replication cycle is a potential target for antiviral intervention, and the connection of the spike protein's receptor binding domain to the human cell surface receptor ACE2 is a critical step in that



Courtesy photo from OSU

**Lab tests showed that cannabigerolic acid and cannabidiolic acid prevented infection of human epithelial cells by the coronavirus spike protein and prevented entry of SARS-CoV-2 into cells.**

cycle," he said. "That means cell entry inhibitors, like the acids from hemp, could be used to prevent SARS-CoV-2 infection and also to shorten infections by preventing virus particles from infecting human cells. They bind to the spike proteins so those proteins can't bind to the ACE2 enzyme, which is abundant on the outer membrane of endothelial cells in the lungs and other organs."

Using compounds that block virus-receptor interaction has been helpful for patients with other viral infections, he notes, including HIV-1 and hepatitis.

### The invention

Van Breemen, Ruth Muchiro of the College of Pharmacy and Linus Pauling Institute and five scientists from OHSU identified the two cannabinoid acids via a mass spectrometry-based screening technique invented in van Breemen's laboratory. Van Breemen's team screened a range of botanicals used as dietary supplements including red clover, wild yam, hops and three species of licorice.

An earlier paper in the Journal of the American Society for Mass Spectrometry described tailoring the novel method, affinity selection mass spectrometry, to finding drugs that would target the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein.

In the later research, lab tests showed that cannabigerolic acid and cannabidiolic acid prevented infection of human epithelial cells by the coronavirus spike protein and prevented entry of SARS-CoV-2 into cells.

"These compounds can be taken orally and have a long history of safe use in humans," van Breemen said. "They have the potential to prevent as well as treat infection by SARS-CoV-2. CBDA and CBGA are produced by the hemp plant as precursors to CBD and CBG, which are familiar to many consumers. However, they are different from the acids and are not contained in hemp products."

Van Breemen explains that affinity selection mass spectrometry, which he abbreviates to AS-MS, involves incubating a drug target like the SARS-CoV-2 spike

protein with a mixture of possible ligands - things that might bind to it - such as a botanical extract, in this case hemp extract.

The ligand-receptor complexes are then filtered from the non-binding molecules using one of several methods.

"We identified several cannabinoid ligands and ranked them by affinity to the spike protein," van Breemen said. "The two cannabinoids with the highest affinities for the spike protein were CBDA and CBGA, and they were confirmed to block infection."

"One of the primary concerns in the pandemic is the spread of variants, of which there are many, and B.1.1.7 and B.1.351 are among the most widespread and concerning," he added. "These variants are well known for evading antibodies against early lineage SARS-CoV-2, which is obviously concerning given that current vaccination strategies rely on the early lineage spike protein as an antigen. Our data show CBDA and CBGA are effective against the two variants we looked at, and we hope that trend will extend to other existing and future variants."

### Challenging COVID-19

Van Breemen said resistant variants could still arise amid widespread use of cannabinoids but that the combination of vaccination and CBDA/CBGA treatment should make for a much more challenging environment for SARS-CoV-2.

"Our earlier research reported on the discovery of another compound, one from licorice, that binds to the spike protein too," he said. "However, we did not test that compound, licochalcone A, for activity against the live virus yet. We need new funding for that."

Timothy Bates, Jules Weinstein, Hans Leier, Scotland Farley and Fikadu Tafesse of OHSU also contributed to the cannabinoid study.

*Steve Lundeberg is a researcher and writer for Oregon State University Relations and Marketing. He may be reached at steve.lundeberg@oregonstate.edu*

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## ••OBITUARIES••

### Gerald "Jerry" Weigant

April 29, 1949 ~ Dec. 20, 2021



Gerald "Jerry" Erhardt Weigant of Clatskanie died Monday, Dec. 20 at the age of 72. He was born in Portland, Oregon April 29, 1949 and moved to Clatskanie with his parents Casper and Roslee in 1974. They along with his brother, Richard Weigant, opened Weigant's Sentry Market and spent the next 46 years working on Nehalem St. Jerry gave back to the community every chance he got. He spent his free time singing, boating, taking vaca-

tions and with family.

Survivors include two daughters, Victoria Weigant Davis and Rhonda Weigant Patrick; eight grandchildren; and four great grandchildren.

A funeral will be Friday, Jan. 14, 2022 at the Alston Corner Assembly of God Church.

Service will start at 10:30 a.m. followed by a lunch reception. At 1 p.m. we will head to Clatskanie for the burial. Burial at Murray Hill Cemetery at 1:30 p.m.

### Jack Dean Sirnio

June 5, 1954 ~ Dec. 27, 2021

Jack Dean Sirnio, longtime Mayger resident, died Dec. 27, 2021 at the age of 67. He was born June 5, 1954, in Astoria, Oregon to Edward and Mary Etta (Riddle) Sirnio.

He grew up on the family farm in Quincy, Oregon, graduating from Clatskanie High School in June of 1972. In July of 1972 he met the love of his life Carol. They married Jan. 27, 1973, and made their home between Clatskanie and Minneapolis, before settling in their current home in Mayger in 1976. During his working years, he worked at Beaver Lumber and Gunderson's prior to retiring.

Jack is remembered by family as a loving and devoted husband, dad, and papa. He had a love for the outdoors. Always enjoying hunting, fishing, clam digging and tinkering in his shop. He took great pleasure spending time with his family, attending their events, especially those of his beloved granddaughter. Jack would also lend a hand to



anyone that asked. His love for being a proud American will also be remembered; he was so delighted to lead the 1st Quincy 4th of July parade in 2020 with his flags.

Jack was also known to drop in on his friends on his daily rounds and attend their get togethers for special occasions. He also enjoyed his Tuesday morning coffee group, only missing it when he absolutely had to. He loved sharing stories of his life and family with all of his friends. In his most recent years, he also loved hunt-

ing for sage rats in eastern Oregon.

He is survived by his wife Carol; son Jackie; daughter-in-law Michelle; daughter Carla and boyfriend Tim; granddaughter Kelsey; brother Joe; sisters-in-law, Susie (Carl) and Bonnie; brothers-in-law, Brian (Kim) and Buddy; numerous uncles, aunts, nieces, and nephews; as well as numerous friends and family.

Jack was welcomed into heaven by his daughter Carrie; parents, Edward and Mary Etta; sister Vickie; brother-in-law Marvin; parents-in-law, Shirley and Raymond; along with other treasured family members and friends.

A celebration of life will be held at 1 p.m. on Sat., Jan. 22, 2022 at the American Legion Hall in Clatskanie. Please bring your favorite dish and memories of Jack to share. A private graveside service will be held at Murray Hill Cemetery. Groulx Family Mortuary is assisting the family with arrangements.

### Kenneth Humphrey

Sept. 7, 1961 ~ Dec. 20, 2021

Kenneth (Kenny) Leon Humphrey unexpectedly passed away on Dec. 20, 2021, leaving behind mourning loved ones who will forever cherish their time with him. Born Sept. 7, 1961, Kenny spent childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood in Rainier, Oregon. He later lived in Fruitland, Idaho, where he raised his son and passionately watched high school sports.

Kenny's love for high school football and baseball was the stuff of legend, and his reputation earned him Fruitland High's Fan of the Year award. In addition to sports, Kenny collected Hot Wheels, unique salt and pepper shakers, and enjoyed fishing with his cousin Mike. As a well-known community member, Kenny volunteered his free time to help others, always



insisting those he helped to, "Pass the good deed forward," rather than accepting gratuities for his hard work. Kenny's livelihood consisted of working for the Ontario School District as a Head Start bus driver and custodian, where colleagues respected him, and children loved him.

Preceding Kenny in

death are his parents, Ivan and Patricia Humphrey.

Surviving Kenny includes his son Michael Humphrey (Kayla); grandchildren, Bradley, Sara, and an unborn little one scheduled to arrive in August 2022; siblings, Ivan Humphrey (Pam), Teresa DeBois (John), Brenda Bush (Verlo), Linda Humphrey-Trumble, Darla Derrick (Roger), Mary Humphrey, Christine Humphrey (Javier), and Carolyn Samples (Roger); along with several nieces and nephews who will longingly miss his youthful spirit that taught them to love the great outdoors.

Services will occur at 1 p.m. inside the Highway Worship Center on Feb. 5, 2022, with a potluck fellowship afterward. Highway Worship Center is located at 100 South Whitley Drive Fruitland, Idaho 83619.

### James Joseph Langlo

Feb. 11, 1937 ~ Jan. 9, 2022

James Joseph Langlo of Clatskanie, Oregon, age 84, passed away on Jan. 9, 2022 at Community Home Health and Hospice in Longview, Washington.

### Martha Cramer

Jan. 4, 1935 ~ Jan. 4, 2022

Martha Cramer, 87, of Rainier, Oregon passed away Jan. 4, 2022 in Longview, Washington.

## Wrong people, wrong place, wrong project

### JASMINE AND BRANDON SCHILLING

Chief Guest Column

Give NEXT an hour to talk, and they'll fill it with promises. That's what venture capitalists are best at.

We appreciate the City Council's effort in addressing the NEXT issue, but the neighbors closest to the NEXT facility know that the project will be untenable as its currently proposed. NEXT's latest dog-and-pony show will not change the fundamental reality: Port Westward is a terrible place to put a major fuel refinery.

The Council gave us a late-night emergency meeting to consider an issue that could have decades of impact, upend people's livelihoods, and poison our water if a spill were to occur on site with hazardous chemicals or fuel. We should not face such a steep challenge just to pose a set of obvious questions, such as "will the project impair local drainage systems?" (The answer is unequivocally yes.)

As usual, local political players filled the room and obvious pressure was applied on councilmembers raising questions, to browbeat away any concerns. If local leadership is concerned about "making hard decisions", then think more deeply about them first. Do your homework and propose something that makes engineering sense – not NEXT's wild-eyed scheme. Saying yes to NEXT is the easy way out.

If you look closely and if you've been doing your homework, you will realize Christopher Efirid, spokesperson for NEXT, said nothing new. Like his predecessor Lou Soumas, Efirid's responses were superficial at best and misleading at worst when it came to addressing his own

track record and NEXT's ability to site its project responsibly. We were given no opportunity to rebut Efirid's many flawed claims about his Houston-based venture.

Despite the discomfort of being thrown under the bus by our own elected leaders for asking questions, we celebrate that our community sees beyond the charade of how corrupted our local politics can become, when a Houston-based company can walk in and sow division by making false promises. We know that our neighbors outnumber any project supporters where it matters at Port Westward, and that's within the Drainage District that would be impacted most.

So, Save Port Westward is officially moving on to address solutions for our community in a different way. First, we stand behind the Beaver Drainage Improvement Company and nearly all landowners neighboring the proposed site who are against NEXT's proposal. After the special meeting Tuesday night, we refuse to be intimidated, and we will keep speaking up for our neighbors.

Second, the details of NEXT's official plans have only recently been availed through the beginning of their permitting process. Pertinent details like train and truck traffic have changed often and drastically from original proposals. There should be an Environmental Impact Statement for this project, which will give us more information. Why would we pre-approve the project without an analysis, first? That makes no sense. Let's see what the EIS says, first.

Third, we are not anti-jobs, anti-tax revenues, or even anti-renewable diesel. We do not support a poorly conceived NEXT project that

proposes to be an actual hazard and a major polluter in our community. Renewable diesel has tremendous potential if produced in a way that doesn't undermine its very objective through industrial agricultural practices that promote massive emissions, soil and water contamination, and the destruction of communities world-wide. NEXT's proposal is simply the wrong plan, in the wrong place, and by the wrong people.

Fourth, Christopher was involved in the mess in Odessa, period. No matter his spin, Odessa happened on his watch, and his former associate Lou Soumas' watch. An EPA cleanup and unpaid debts are not something to dismiss, and a thorough third-party evaluation of his conduct is the responsible thing for local leadership to require.

Fifth, farmland is disappearing at an alarming rate, and clean water is hard to come by. We're not sure where you'll be getting your food from in the future, but we plan to get ours at Port Westward. Our soils here are high value. You cannot make or buy them, and you cannot imagine how important it will be that we preserve what we have left.

We ask you finally: Clatskanie, are we going to put the future of our communities in the hands of one man from Texas?

Think about it, but don't give yourself too long. The hearing is on January 19 at 10 a.m. [Protectoregonfarms.com](https://www.facebook.com/portwestward).

Jasmine and Brandon Schilling are members of the group Save Port Westward. They can be reached at [saveportwestward@gmail.com](mailto:saveportwestward@gmail.com). For more information, see <https://www.facebook.com/portwestward>.



### Weekly Online Poll

Are you taking any new precautions due to the sharp increase in COVID-19 cases?

Yes  No

### Last Week's Results

Do you agree that extracurricular activities at Oregon schools should be canceled due to the spike in COVID-19 cases?

44% Yes 56% No

**Vote online at [thechiefnews.com](http://thechiefnews.com)**

# The Chief

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James Yang  
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Kelli Nicholson  
Office Manager

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Driver

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#### Editorial policy

Opinions expressed on this page are independent of The Chief views and are solely those of the writers expressing them.

#### Letters policy

This newspaper's letters to the editor are limited to a maximum of 250 words and will be edited for grammar, spelling and blatant inaccuracies. Unsubstantiated or irresponsible allegations, or personal attacks on any individual, will not be published. Letters containing details presented as facts rather than opinions must include their sources. Writers are limited to one published letter per month. All submissions must include the author's full name, local street address and telephone number (only the name and city of residence

will be published). By submitting a letter, writers also grant permission for them to be posted online. Opinions expressed on this page are the writer's alone and do not represent the opinion of the newspaper or its parent company, Country Media, Inc.

#### Guest commentary

We welcome all variety of community viewpoints in the newspaper. These longer, guest opinions might be columns written by newsmakers, public officials or organization representatives. Or you might just have interesting thoughts to share and a penchant for writing. If you'd like to submit a guest column for publication, contact us at (503) 397-0116 or [chiefnews@countrymedia.net](mailto:chiefnews@countrymedia.net).

countrymedia.net. All columns are subject to editing for style, grammar and clarity. However, views expressed in guest columns are independent and do not represent those of The Chief, its staff or Country Media, Inc.

#### Obituaries

Obituaries received after noon on Wednesday may not be in time for that Friday's paper. Obituaries may be emailed to [chiefnews@countrymedia.net](mailto:chiefnews@countrymedia.net), sent via mail, or dropped off at the office. We also accept obituaries written by funeral homes. Include the address and daytime phone number of the person who submitted the obituary, so we can verify information as necessary.

# Marketplace

It's easy to place a classified ad in The Chief Just call 503-397-0116

Listings are updated daily at www.thechiefnews.com

**502**  
Help Wanted

**Communicable Disease Intervention Specialist**  
Columbia County, OR EOE Deadline 1/28/2022 Apply at ColumbiaCountyOR.gov

**Hiring Classroom Specialists**  
at Quest Academy in Longview, WA. 32 hrs/wk, school year schedule. (7:30-2:30 M-F) \$20.68/hr with benefits. Details and apply online: www.esd112.org/takeroot

**502**  
Help Wanted

**OPERATIONS MANAGER**  
Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District (C911CD) is conducting a hiring process for an Operations Manager. Apply online at www.columbia911.com/careers. Additional information can be found on our website or by calling 503-366-6971.

**Tidewater Contractors, Inc.** is looking to hire a Shop Supervisor to

**502**  
Help Wanted

join its Brookings, Oregon crew. Requirements: At least 3 years supervision experience At least 5 years work experience in a heavy equipment/truck repair role. Apply with resume: Tidewater Contractors, Inc. 16156 Hwy. 101 S., PO Box 1956. 541-469-5341/Phone 541-469-5543/Fax Email: info@twcontractors.com. Tidewater Contractors is an EOE Employer

**860**  
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2022 CHRONICLE

# HOME & GARDEN SHOW

**VENDORS WANTED**

Contact Katherine at 503-397-0116 or chronicleads@countrymedia.net

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# Public Notices

## PROTECTING YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

CC22-1566

### NOTICE OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

The Clatskanie People's Utility District Board of Directors has scheduled the next regular Board meeting for Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 6:00 pm in the community room of the District's administration building located at 495 E Columbia River Highway, Clatskanie. A Board Workshop will be held at 5:30 pm. An executive session may be called at the workshop and/or meeting,

pursuant to: ORS 192.660 (2) (f) information or records that are exempt by law from public inspection. AGENDA CLATSKANIE PEOPLE'S UTILITY DISTRICT BOARD WORKSHOP on Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 5:30 P.M. I. NW RIVERPARTNERS DISCUSSION: Our Power is Water Education Support II. POLICY REVIEW: EH 301 Employee Benefits and EH

381 Wellness Program III. STAFF REPORTS UPDATE CLATSKANIE PEOPLE'S UTILITY DISTRICT REGULAR BOARD MEETING on Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 6:00 P.M. I. PUBLIC COMMENTS II. CONSENT AGENDA · Minutes of Board Workshop, December 15, 2021 · Minutes of Regular Board Meeting, December 15, 2021 · Review payment of bills for December 2021

III. ACTION ITEMS · Policy Review: Policy 308 Power and Financial Risk Management, Policy 309 Load and Resource Portfolio Planning, and Policy 310 Resource Acquisition and Disposition · Wildfire Mitigation Plan · EV Carshare Program Agreement IV. DISCUSSION / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS · Board Comments & Calendar V. EXECUTIVE SESSION VI. ADJOURNMENT

CC22-1562

### NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular meeting of the Clatskanie Park & Recreation District will be held on Thursday, January 20, 2022, at 6:00pm at 555 SW Bryant St, Clatskanie, OR, Port of Columbia

County Offices (the Old Middle School). Items on the agenda include but are not limited to: General Park maintenance and pool operation update(s). Board Chair, Andrew Mustola

**PUBLIC NOTICE DEADLINE IS WEDNESDAYS BY NOON.**

Late submissions are not guaranteed to make it into the paper.

### HEIMULLER From Page A1

to focus efforts on going into 2022.

#### Infrastructure

Relocation of court services to the historic 100-year-old John Gumm Building, already underway, is one top priority. Columbia County purchased the Gumm building in April for \$1.5 million. The 100-year-old building served as a school from September of 1919 until December of 1999.

The end goal, Heimuller explained, is to have buildings designated for a specific purpose and to expand the capabilities of the Columbia County Public Health (CCPH) department as the county grapples with a new variant of the COVID-19 virus.

"We literally had employees working out of our cars," he said, in reference to CCPH's mobilization of COVID-19 resources. "We didn't have room for anything."

In late December, the county's Land Development Services moved from the Columbia County Courthouse Annex on 230 Strand Street to Port Business Center at 445 Port Avenue, a temporary relocation site to make room for more public health personnel as the Gumm building awaits renovations.

Once the renovations are complete, Heimuller said the county will move its administrative services and the board of commissioners to the new building.

Heimuller said he believes such a change will ultimately be a cost-saving measure, since buying a new court building altogether would require taxpayer money.

"The state funds part of it,



Zoe Gottlieb / The Chief

Heimuller was appointed as chair of the Columbia County Board of Commissioners Jan. 5.

but they only fund half, and it was going to be about a \$15 or \$16 million project, which would have meant we would have had to go out to the taxpayers and try to get them to bond \$20 to \$30 million to build it," Heimuller said.

Another board goal is to tap into the county's natural resources and buy Prescott Beach from Portland General Electric (PGE).

Prescott Beach, situated between Rainier and Goble, features volleyball courts, horseshoe pits, picnic areas, offering a host of summertime recreational activities.

"It's beautiful. It's right on the Columbia River. It's just gorgeous," Heimuller said.

Heimuller said the land used to be adjacent to the Trojan Nuclear Power Plant.

"We can't get grants to improve it unless we get a long-term lease on it," he said.

Heimuller also said the area is suited to provide fishing, hiking, and biking opportunities.

Heimuller revealed he is

working with state partners to tie the Salmonberry Trail to the Banks-Linear Trail, which he said will stretch from Highway 47 to Tillamook County, creating 180 miles of trail for recreational use.

He suggested Salmonberry Lake as a possible location for an ATV park, which he said would attract more people to the area by virtue of more expansive activities.

Fostering recreational opportunities is a central focus of Heimuller's because according to a figure he cited, 70% of Columbia County residents commute and are therefore drawn away from the county for two or more hours of the day.

#### Health concern

Fixing the overburdened septic system in Prescott has been at the top of Heimuller's list for some time.

"There's sometimes five houses on one septic tank," he said. "There are places where septic effluent is above the

ground and it's dangerous. It's not right."

Heimuller said the problem is so dire, no one can build a house in Prescott because the building requires a septic permit.

"What we're going to do, assuming that we're going to be able to buy the property from PGE, is we're going to build a septic water treatment plant," he said.

The biggest challenge to public health, however, goes beyond failing septic systems.

With exploding COVID-19 case rates and the introduction of a new variant, Heimuller, while a staunch defender of personal choice, contends now is the time to double down in light of new advisories from the Oregon Health Authority.

"The county has all the responsibility," he said. "We have the responsibility for public health, we have the responsibility to coordinate vaccine clinics. So that coordination has to happen at the county level."

"When you talk about our biggest challenge, the challenge is the variants — the things we don't know about," he added.

During the Columbia County Board of Commissioners Jan. 5 meeting, the board voted to extend the county's Declaration of State of Emergency for COVID-19.

According to Heimuller, the county has to be in a state of emergency to qualify for state and federal COVID-19 relief. With resources stretched thin, Heimuller indicated that move is more than necessary.

"We continue hiring personnel, we continue making ourselves ready and available to accept federal and state funding to provide those services that we feel all of our citizens deserve," he said.

Columbia County has also partnered with the Oregon Health Authority to offer fee drive-through COVID-19 vaccinations and booster shot clinics from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. this week at the county fairgrounds, 58892 Saulser Road, in St. Helens this week.

#### Jobs and the economy

Heimuller said he sees Scappoose's Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center (OMIC) as a game-changer for the county.

OMIC, an apprenticeship program for Portland Community College students, seeks to combine applied research and development and workforce training to serve the region's advanced manufacturers and create economic mobility, according to the OMIC website.

"The goal is in those programs to go in, find students when they're in middle school and start figuring out those kids that want to do things with computers and robots," Heimuller said. "What (the

companies) are doing is building their own workforce."

The Chief asked Heimuller how commissioners plan to strike a balance between the preservation of tight-knit, community values and industrial and economic growth.

A possible solution, Heimuller surmised, would be to bring jobs into Columbia County tied to corporate sponsors supportive of community interests, such as jobs in manufacturing.

"Do we want everything that comes in to be here? Probably not," he said. "But do we want good, energy efficient, high job, high wage paying businesses to come here who are good corporate sponsors, who are not afraid to support the schools, the fair and baseball teams? Yeah."

#### Appointment process

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners are elected and serve four-year terms.

Under county policy, the current commissioners Heimuller, Magruder, and Garrett rotate positions of chair, vice-chair, and budget officer, giving each commissioner the opportunity to perform different functions of the board.

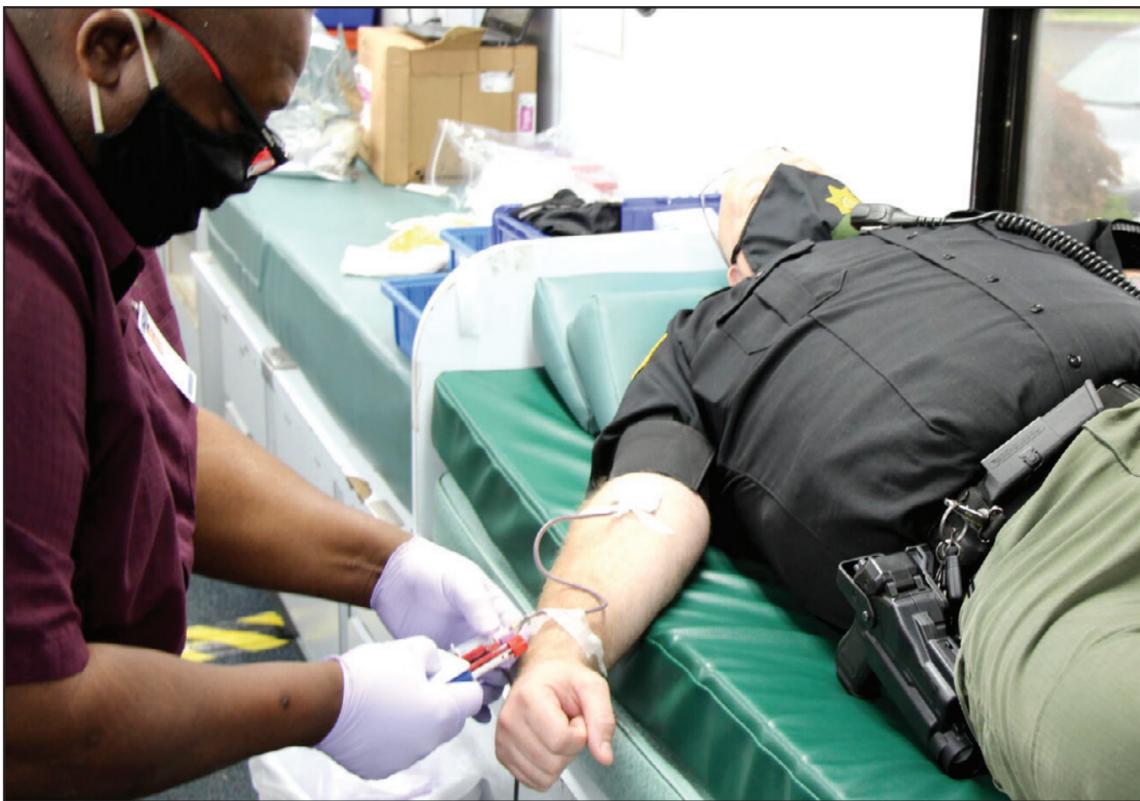
Heimuller has been appointed chair several times over the years. In his previous term he served as budget officer, with Magruder as chair.

Garrett, elected to the board last year, has yet to become board chair.

The board oversees public safety, economic development, land preservation, and roads and transportation in Columbia County.

*The Columbia County Board of Commissioners holds regular Wednesday meetings at 10 a.m. To reach the commissioners, call (503) 397-4322.*

**Let us know what YOU think** EMAIL YOUR LETTERS TO: CHIEFNEWS@COUNTRYMEDIA.NET



Courtesy photo

Columbia County Sheriff Brian Pixley recently gave blood at the Red Cross donor van parked at the InRoads Credit Union.

# Gas prices climbing

**JEREMY C. RUARK**  
jrurark@countrymedia.net

You are paying more at local gasoline stations this week. In a quick price survey, The Chief has found a 10-cent jump per gallon price increase over the past few days in Columbia County.

Clatskanie's high is now at \$3.99 for cash payments and at \$4.09 for credit card payments. The high end in St. Helens is \$3.93 a gallon for unleaded today. Scappoose is at \$3.95 per gallon for unleaded gasoline.

The cost of gasoline is moving higher, driven primarily by a jump in crude oil prices, according to the Oregon/Idaho AAA. Some refinery and distribution issues here on the West Coast are causing prices in this region to rise faster than the national average. For the week, the national average for regular climbs one-and-a-half cents to \$3.30 a gallon. The Oregon average jumps eight cents to \$3.89.

Crude oil has surged to near \$80 a barrel. Events on the far side of the globe are fueling the recent rise. Social unrest and violence in Kazakhstan, a member of the OPEC+ alliance, have forced that nation to cut production. Before the recent flare-up of violence, Kazakhstan pumped nearly 2 million barrels of crude oil a day. In contrast, the United States, as the top oil-producing country in the world, pumped an average of 18.6 million barrels a day.

"Since the global price



Metro Creative Connection  
**Gas prices are moving higher, driven by a jump in crude oil prices, weather, uncertainty and volatility, according to the Oregon/Idaho AAA.**

for oil accounts for nearly half of what consumers pay at the pump, higher oil costs will usually result in higher gasoline costs," Oregon/Idaho AAA Public Affairs Director Marie Dodds said. "Markets, in general, don't like uncertainty and volatility, and the oil market is no exception. The oil production cuts by Kazakhstan demonstrate that in times of tight supply, it doesn't take much to put upward pressure on the overall price of oil."

Here in the Pacific Northwest, some refinery and distribution snags have led to some supply disruptions, according to Dodds. At least two refineries including HollyFrontier Puget Sound and Phillips 66 Ferndale have reportedly had some issues, impacting Washington and Oregon. Weather has also played a role. Mountain snow has made traveling over the passes challenging, and flooding has impacted roads in Oregon and Washington.

# National blood shortage declared

**STAFF REPORT**  
chiefnews@countrymedia.net

COVID-19 related challenges leading to a significant drop in donations has the American Red Cross declaring a national blood shortage.

The Red Cross calls the blood shortage its worst in over a decade, posing a concerning risk to patient care and forcing doctors to make difficult decisions about who receives blood transfusions and who will need to wait until more products become available. Blood and platelet donations are critically needed to help prevent further delays in vital medical treatments.

"While some types of medical care can wait, others can't," American Red Cross Chief Medical Officer Dr. Pampee Young said. "Hospitals are still seeing accident victims, cancer patients, those with blood disorders like sickle cell disease, and individuals who are seriously ill who all need blood transfusions to live even as Omicron cases surge across the country. We're doing everything we can to increase blood donations to ensure every patient can receive medical treatments without delay, but we cannot do it without more donors. We need the help of the Ameri-

can people."

The Red Cross has experienced a 10% decline in the number of people donating blood since the beginning of the pandemic and continues to confront relentless issues due to the pandemic, including ongoing blood drive cancellations and staffing limitations. Adding to the concern is the surge of COVID-19 cases. The Red Cross has experienced low donor turnout ever since the delta variant began spreading in August, and that trend continues as the Omicron variant takes over.

All types are needed now, especially types O positive and O negative, as well as platelet donations, to help reverse this national blood crisis. If there is not an immediate opportunity available to donate, donors are asked to make an appointment in the days and weeks ahead to ensure the Red Cross can replenish and maintain a sufficient blood supply.

### Special thank you to those who come to give

The Red Cross and the NFL are partnering this January, during National Blood Donor Month, to urge individuals to kick off 2022 with a blood or platelet donation. Those who come to give

blood, platelets or plasma in January will automatically be entered for a chance to win a getaway to Super Bowl LVI in Los Angeles. As an extra thank-you from the Red Cross, those who come to donate will also be automatically entered to win a home theater package and a \$500 e-gift card. Terms apply; visit RedCrossBlood.org/Super-Bowl for more information.

### Blood drive volunteers needed

In addition to blood donors, the Red Cross also needs the help of volunteers to support critical blood collections across the country. Blood drive volunteers play an important role by greeting, registering, answering questions and providing information to blood donors throughout the donation process. Blood transportation specialists – another volunteer opportunity – provide a critical link between blood donors and blood recipients by delivering blood to hospitals in communities across the country. To volunteer to support Red Cross blood collections, please visit redcross.org/volunteertoday.

### COVID-19 safety protocols

Each Red Cross blood

drive and donation center follows the highest standards of safety and infection control. Individuals who have received a COVID-19 vaccine are still eligible to donate blood and platelets. Knowing the name of the manufacturer of the vaccine they receive is important in determining blood donation eligibility.

### About blood donation

A blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age in most states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

Blood and platelet donors can save time at their next donation by using RapidPass® to complete their pre-donation reading and health history questionnaire online, on the day of their donation, before arriving at the blood drive. To get started, follow the instructions at RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass or use the Blood Donor App.

## ••CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS••

Solution for the Jan. 7, 2021 crossword puzzle

S	L	A	P		A	N	C			M	A	D	E						
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## ••CROSSWORD PUZZLE••

CROSSWORD															
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# STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THEME: THE GRAMMY AWARDS

### ACROSS

1. Chunk of land
6. Sail alternative
9. Female sheep, pl.
13. Oak, in Spanish
14. Nucleic acid acronym
15. "\_\_\_ under fire"
16. Permeate
17. Internet meme move
18. \*Number of 2022 Grammy nominations for Doja Cat or H.E.R.
19. \*Justin Bieber's stuff from Georgia
21. \*Gaga's partner
23. Mauna \_\_\_\_, Hawaii
24. Cartoon Coyote's first name
25. Lawyers' grp.
28. Marine eagle
30. Like Roger Rabbit
35. Boisterous play
37. Ore deposit
39. Davy Crockett's last stand
40. U.S. city and lake
41. Tossed starter
43. F.B.I. operative
44. Group of nine singers, e.g.
46. Gardner's gear
47. In the middle of
48. Arctic-wear
50. Porcini mushrooms

52. In the manner of, in French
53. \*Bruno Mars and Anderson .Paak, a.k.a. \_\_\_ Sonic
55. Decimal system base
57. \*2022 Grammy nominations leader
61. \*\*"Bad Habits" performer
65. Lacking sense
66. Unit of electrical resistance
68. Low landform
69. Grassy mound
70. Recent or new, prefix
71. Los \_\_\_\_, CA
72. Peasy precursor
73. .0000001 joule
74. Earp of the Wild West

### DOWN

1. LSD consequence?
2. City on the Tiber
3. \*Swedish band with one 2022 Grammy nomination
4. Exclamation from a coop
5. Tittering laugh sound
6. Bookie's quote
7. Registered nurses' org.
8. Torah expert
9. Female name or a name for Ireland
10. Worker's reward
11. Not counterfeit
12. Cobblestone
15. Genus, pl.

20. British peers
22. Will Ferrell holiday movie
24. Matrimony
25. \*2022 Grammy event venue, Crypto.com \_\_\_
26. B on Mendeleev's table
27. Type of acid
29. \*Grammy host's last name
31. Aquarium dweller
32. #3 Down's 1975 hit "\_\_\_ Mia"
33. Means of communication
34. \*Kanye's album
36. Source of pressure?
38. Facilitate
42. Profoundness
45. Tip of lion's tail
49. First aid one
51. Up and down playground attraction
54. Sergio of westerns
56. Very recently
57. Triathlon ride
58. Tolstoy's Karenina
59. New Mexico art colony
60. Inwardly
61. Dirty air
62. Common "pro" follower
63. Logs
64. Egg storage
67. \*\*"Fight for You" performer

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Solution to crossword in next week's issue of The Chief.

# Mask debate heats up



Courtesy photo

The Organized Patriots of Columbia County voiced their opposition with this billboard near St. Helens.

**ZOE GOTTLIEB**  
chronicle2@countrymedia.net

As tensions flare over Oregon's proposed permanent mask rule, a local opposition group is ramping up demonstration efforts.

Organized Patriots, a national coalition fighting against mask and vaccination mandates, has a stronghold in Columbia County, with over 70 members and counting.

## Spreading the word

Glenn Curt McKinney, the Facebook administrator for Organized Patriots of Columbia County, posted a picture of the organization's newly acquired billboard near the Knife River weigh station on Highway 30 leaving St. Helens in late December. The billboard came with a price tag of \$3,000, paid for by the organization.

"It should be your choice!" the billboard proclaims in bold red lettering, overlaying a graphic of a surgical face mask.

"I can tell you that most of the people in Columbia County now know of us," McKinney said, acknowledging the sign's impact. "We haven't gotten any negative responses from the billboard

itself, just people that are wanting to get involved."

The billboard is one of multiple strategies the organization hopes will be a catalyst for change in one of the last standing states with heavy COVID-19 restrictions.

## Public demonstrations

Demonstrators will go a step further on Saturday, Jan. 15, by shedding their masks indoors in defiance of Oregon Gov. Kate Brown's indoor mask mandate.

Under the Organized Patriots' upcoming events page, the group listed a "maskless shopping event" from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Walmart on 2295 Gable Road in St. Helens.

According to McKinney, a dozen people are already confirmed for the event, and news of the event is spreading rapidly on social media.

Charles Crawford, Director of Corporate Communications at Walmart, responded to news of the demonstration by affirming the corporation's policy for employees on mask mandates.

"We follow CDC guidance, which includes fully vaccinated people wearing masks in public indoor

settings in counties with substantial or high transmission," he said. "In these counties and where there are state or local mask mandates, associates will be required to wear masks inside our facilities, including stores, clubs, distribution centers and fulfillment centers."

"We also strongly encourage customers to follow CDC guidance and properly mask, as well," he added.

McKinney founded Organized Patriots following the first few weeks of COVID-19's initial outbreak, and more than two years later, the mission remains the same.

"Our goal is to get people to take the masks off, and stop complying," he said.

McKinney said he is a defender of free choice on both sides of the aisle.

"We don't care if somebody wants to wear their mask because that's all a part of America, right?" he said. "You have the right to choose but we just don't want it to be forced, (or) to be forced on anybody else. Same with the vaccines."

Demonstrations over the use of mask mandates also have been held by local protest groups near Scappoose High School and Hudson Park Elementary in Rainier.

about in the above question."

People, structures and roads located below steep slopes in canyons and near the mouths of canyons may be at serious risk. Dangerous places can include:

- Canyon bottoms, stream channels and areas of rock and soil accumulation at the outlets of canyons.
- Bases of steep hillsides.
- Road cuts or other areas where slopes of hills have been excavated or over-steepened.
- Places where slides or debris flows have occurred in the past.

According to DOGAMI's A Homeowners Guide to Landslides, a landslide is the downward slope movement of rock, soil or debris. Debris flow, earth flow, rock fall, mudflow, mudslide, and slump are also terms for landslide.

Landslides can take human life. However, even a few inches of slope movement can disrupt septic, sewer and water lines and crack foundations severely damaging or destroying your home, according to the guide.

If you live on or near a steep slope, the guide encourages you to look for warning signs of landslides by evaluating your property for signs of landslide movement. Many, but not all, signs of landslide activity are listed below. A high score may indicate the presence of a landslide.

## Inside your home:

- Cracks in walls
- Nails popping out of walls
- Bulging walls
- Separation of chimney from walls
- Creaking/popping noises
- Light switches coming out of walls
- Doors/windows hard to shut
- Twisted beams
- Cracks in floors
- Water seeping into basement

## Outside your home:

- Changes in surface drainage
- Bulges in retaining walls or tilting of walls
- Cracks developing in the soil
- Pistol-butted or bent trees
- Broken water, utility, or

sewer lines

- Cracks in sidewalks or foundation
- Stretched or leaning utility lines

The guide also recommends actions property owners can take to reduce the chances of landslides, which include:

- Draining water from surface runoff, downspouts, and driveways well away from slopes.
- Planting native ground cover on slopes.
- Consulting with a professional before significantly altering existing slopes uphill or downslope of your home.

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is also keeping a close watch on the landslide potential in Columbia County following significant rainstorms.

ODOT officials said there are a number of areas on all of the Oregon coast range highways that are being monitored daily for slides by ODOT crews, including on Highway 30 at milepost 33 and milepost 39 between Columbia City and Rainier.

ODOT conducted a \$1.3 million rockfall repair in 2018 to scale back a rocky cliff to solve a landslide threat at milepost 63 near Clatskanie.

During periods of heavy rainfall, travelers should recognize that there is a higher likelihood that slides can happen, according to ODOT officials, who said drives need to slow down, drive carefully, pay attention to their driving, avoid distractions, and watch for hazards.

According to DOGAMI, average annual repair costs for landslides in Oregon exceed \$10 million, and severe winter storm losses can exceed \$100 million. As population growth continues and development into landslide susceptible terrain occurs, damage and loss from this natural hazard will continue to grow.

## Resources

Visit <https://www.oregon-geology.org/Landslide/landslidehome.htm>.

View the DOGAMI web map to see landslide areas <https://gis.dogami.oregon.gov/maps/slido/>.

View the homeowner's guide to landslides at [https://www.oregongeology.org/Landslide/ger\\_homeowners\\_guide\\_landslides.pdf](https://www.oregongeology.org/Landslide/ger_homeowners_guide_landslides.pdf).

## Clatskanie Middle/High School Sports Schedule

The following sports schedule has been provided by Clatskanie Middle/High School. Dates, times and locations are subject to change.

### Friday, Jan. 14

- HS JV Boys Basketball vs. Taft
- HS JV Girls Basketball vs. Taft

- HS V Boys Basketball vs. Taft

### Tuesday, Jan. 18

- HS JV Boys Basketball vs. Rainier
- HS V Boys Basketball vs. Rainier

### Wednesday, Jan. 19

- Home MS Wrestling vs. Knappa, Rainier

- MS Girls Basketball vs. Vernonia

### Thursday, Jan. 20

- MS Girls Basketball @ NKN
- HS Wrestling @ Warrenton

### Saturday, Jan. 22

- HS Wrestling @ R.A. Long

# A brownie-inspired cookie

The 2022 Girl Scout Cookie season has kicked off in Oregon and Southwest Washington with a brand-new cookie.

For the first time, Girl Scouts will offer Adventurefuls™, an indulgent brownie-inspired cookie with caramel-flavored crème and a hint of sea salt.

The Scouts describe the new cookie as an incredible taste of adventure in every bite.

Adventurefuls joins a line-up of nine iconic Girl Scout Cookies for sale in Oregon and Southwest Washington, including favorites like Thin Mints®, Samoas® and Tagalongs®.

One hundred percent of the proceeds from every Girl Scout Cookie purchase fuel local Girl Scouts' adventures throughout the year: exploring what interests them, discovering their passions, and taking action on issues they care about. Whether they're using their STEM skills to solve a problem, changing a law to help their community, having a courageous outdoor experience, or starting an innovative nonprofit, Girl Scouts ages 5-18 build a better future for



Courtesy photo

The Scouts describe the new cookie as an incredible taste of adventure in every bite.

themselves and the world.

And through the Girl Scout Cookie Program, including earning new Cookie Business badges, girls get a taste of being entrepreneurs and learn important online and offline business skills that set them up for success in life, according to a release from the Scouts.

"Local Girl Scouts do

incredible things with their cookie earnings," Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington CEO Karen Hill said. "Whether earning their way to camp or funding a service project, they're setting goals and serving as leaders in their own lives and in their communities."

## How to purchase Girl Scout Cookies

Girl Scout Cookie season in Oregon and SW Washington runs now through March 13. This year, consumers have a variety of ways to purchase their favorites:

If you know a registered Girl Scout, reach out to her today to find out how she's selling cookies in ways that meet local and state safety protocols.

Beginning Feb. 18, enter your zip code into the Girl Scout Cookie Finder at [girlscoutcookies.org](http://girlscoutcookies.org) to find a booth near you, to purchase cookies from a local Girl Scout troop for delivery or shipment, or to donate cookies to first responders and local causes.

# Kindergarten moves to remote learning

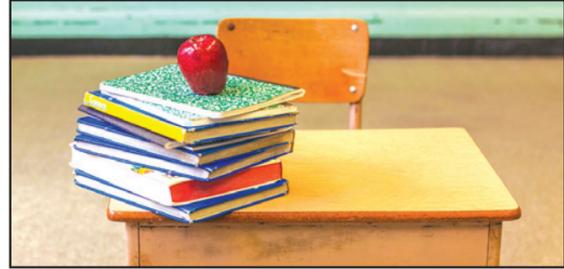
**JEREMY C. RUARK**  
jruark@countrymedia.net

The COVID-19 pandemic and a shortage of teachers and substitute teachers continues to challenge schools in Columbia County, across Oregon and the nation.

Clatskanie School District administrators sent a letter Monday, Jan. 10 to parents of kindergarten students at Clatskanie Elementary School advising that those students will have to switch from in-person to remote learning due to COVID-19 protocols and a shortage of substitute teachers in the district.

The following is the letter sent by Clatskanie School District Superintendent Cathy Hurowitz to only the parents of kindergarten students at Clatskanie Elementary School.

"Because two kindergarten teachers are out for the week due to COVID protocols, and there is a shortage of substitute teachers available, we will be moving this grade level ONLY to asynchronous learning. This means that



Metro Creative Connection

COVID-19 protocols and a shortage of substitute teachers has forced school district officials to switch Clatskanie Elementary School kindergarten students only to remote learning.

they will need to work from home for the remainder of this week.

"The students who are in attendance today will be bringing home a packet of work to complete at home. Students who are not in attendance can pick their packet up outside the office after 3:00 today. Students will return to brick and mortar learning on Tuesday, January 18, due to Martin Luther King Holiday on Monday.

"Families that would like to pick up meals daily can do so at/or after 12 noon. We will

have them at the office. Please email Sarah McClure if you want to receive these meals at [smcclure@csd.k12.or.us](mailto:smcclure@csd.k12.or.us).

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. It is a difficult time and we are continuing to practice grace and positive intent. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation."

Clatskanie, like other school districts in Columbia County and across the state are following pandemic health and safety guidelines set by the Oregon Health Authority.

# Highway 30 crash claims 1 driver

A Rainier man has died in a head-on traffic crash along Highway 30 in Columbia County.

According to Oregon State Police (OSP), at approximately 8:51 p.m. Monday, Jan. 10 troopers and emergency personnel responded to the report of a motor vehicle crash on Highway 30 near milepost 59.

Preliminary investigation revealed an eastbound white

2021 Toyota Camry, operated by Austin Nash, 28, of Rainier, lost control while negotiating a curve and slid into the oncoming lane, colliding head-on with a black Ford Explorer, operated by Brendan Smith, 29, of Clatskanie.

Nash suffered fatal injuries and was pronounced deceased. Smith remained at the scene during the investigation. Highway 30 was

closed for three hours following the crash.

A GoFundMe account has been established by a family member of Nash's pregnant wife. To contribute, visit <https://gf.me/v/c/5mp5/help-allyssa-wyatt-gummy-bear>

Columbia County Sheriff's Office, Columbia River Fire & Rescue and the Oregon Department of Transportation assisted OSP at the crash scene.



Zoe Gottlieb / The Chief

During the meeting, a woman bangs on a drum to protest the NEXT plant development.

# NEXT

From Page A1

According to the company's website, NEXT officials forecast switching to renewable biodiesel fuels

will reduce Oregon's emissions equivalent to more than 1 million automobiles from the road.

If the project is approved, NEXT officials expect the plant construction to be completed by 2024.

The county board of com-

mission has scheduled a public hearing for 10 a.m., Jan. 19 to review certain permitting needed to allow the plant.

Follow this developing story at [thechiefnews.com](http://thechiefnews.com) and in Friday print editions of The Chief.

# Tax Tips 2022

\$



The Chief has compiled the following recommendations from the Oregon Department of Revenue (ODR) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) designed to help you navigate successfully through the tax season.

## The Oregon Department of Revenue

The ODR website offers a number of links with information about Revenue's Withholding Calculator, choosing a reputable tax return preparer, getting access to department forms and publications, and a frequently asked questions page.

"We encourage taxpayers to begin gathering their tax related documents and records, waiting for their W-2 from their employer, and expect that returns will not begin processing until sometime in mid-February," The ODR Public Information Officer Rich Hoover said. "Taxpayers can make sure their information is current at Revenue Online."

## Gather and organize your tax records

Organized tax records make preparing a complete and accurate tax return easier and to avoid errors. Wait to file until you have your tax records including:

- Forms W-2 from your employer(s)
- Forms 1099 from banks, savings agencies and other payers including unemployment compensation, dividends, distributions from a pension, annuity, retirement plan, or other non-employee compensation
- Form 1099-K, 1099-MISC, 1099-NEC, W-2 or other income statement if you worked in the gig economy
- Form 1099-INT if you were paid interest

## Make sure you've withheld enough tax

"Withholding" is the portion of your wages you have withheld from your



paychecks to cover your anticipated annual income tax liability. Your employer withholds the amount you specify—based on how you fill out the state OR-W-4 and federal W-4—and sends them to the Oregon Department of Revenue and the IRS, where it's applied to your tax account. You can check if you are having enough withheld at the DOR Withholding Calculator.

## Use a bank account to speed tax refunds with direct deposit

File electronically, choose direct deposit and you will get a refund faster. Information is available at the IRS website.

According to the IRS, eight out of 10 taxpayers get their refunds by using direct deposit. It is simple, safe and secure. This is the same electronic transfer system used to deposit nearly 98 percent of all Social Security and Veterans Affairs benefits into millions of accounts.

Combining direct deposit with electronic filing is the fastest way to receive your

refund. IRS issues more than nine out of 10 refunds in less than 21 days. Taxpayers who used direct deposit for their tax returns also received their economic impact payments quicker.

## Choose a reputable tax return preparer

Taxpayers should choose a tax return preparer wisely. This is important because taxpayers are responsible for all the information on their return, no matter who prepares it for them. The Oregon Board of Tax Practitioners offers a Licensee Lookup web site. The IRS has a web site with information.

## IRS warning

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) offers the following information about tax scams and fraud.

## Impersonation telephone scams

A sophisticated phone scam targeting taxpayers, including recent immigrants, has been making the rounds

throughout the country. Callers claim to be IRS employees, using fake names and bogus IRS identification badge numbers. They may know a lot about their targets, and they usually alter the caller ID to make it look like the IRS is calling.

Victims are told they owe money to the IRS and it must be paid promptly through a gift card or wire transfer. Victims may be threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license. In many cases, the caller becomes hostile and insulting. Victims may be told they have a refund due to try to trick them into sharing private information. If the phone isn't answered, the scammers often leave an "urgent" callback request.

## Note the IRS doesn't:

- Call to demand immediate payment using a specific payment method such as a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer. Generally, the IRS will first mail you a bill if you owe any taxes.
- Threaten to bring in local police or other law-

enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.

- Demand payment without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.
- Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.

## Ghost preparers

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) urges taxpayers to be cautious of who prepares their tax statements.

The IRS warns taxpayers to avoid unethical tax return preparers, known as ghost preparers. A ghost preparer is someone who doesn't sign tax returns they prepare. Not signing a return is a red flag that the paid preparer may be looking to make a quick profit by promising a big refund or charging fees based on the size of the refund.

## Scams targeting tax professionals

Increasingly, tax professionals are being targeted by identity thieves. These criminals - many of them sophisticated, organized syn-

dicates - are redoubling their efforts to gather personal data to file fraudulent federal and state income tax returns. The Security Summit has a campaign aimed at tax professionals.

Every tax professional in the United States - whether a member of a major accounting firm or an owner of a one-person storefront - is a potential target for highly sophisticated, well-funded and technologically adept cybercriminals around the world.

Their objective: to steal your clients' data so they can file fraudulent tax returns that better impersonate their victims and are harder to detect. Their tactics: using email, the phone or other means to trick you into giving up computer passwords, e-Services passwords, to steal your EFINs or CAF numbers or even to take remote control of your entire computer system.

Protecting client data also is the law. Federal Trade Commission regulations require professional tax preparers to create and enact security plans to protect client data.

## Fraudsters posing as Taxpayer Advocacy Panel

Some taxpayers receive emails that appear to be from the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP) about a tax refund. These emails are a phishing scam, trying to trick victims into providing personal and financial information. Do not respond or click any link. If you receive this scam, forward it to phishing@irs.gov and note that it seems to be a scam phishing for your information.

TAP is a volunteer board that advises the IRS on systemic issues affecting taxpayers. It never requests, and does not have access to, any taxpayer's personal and financial information.

If you have questions about your taxes, call the Oregon Revenue Department at 1-800-356-4222 or the IRS at 844-545-5640.



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