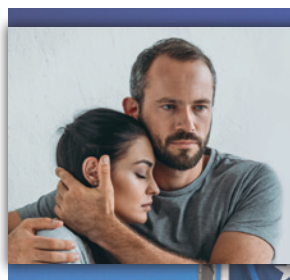


SUICIDE PREVENTION & RESOURCES
Page A8

Patriot Day
SEPTEMBER 11

The Chief

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2020

$1.50
VOL. 129, NO. 18

Serving the Lower Columbia Region since 1891

‘Great loss of human lives, structures expected’

JEREMY C. RUARK
jruark@countrymedia.net

Wildfires burning across Oregon are expected to leave a significant trail of lost lives and lost property.

“We expect to see a great deal of loss both in structures and in human lives. This could be the greatest loss of human lives and property due to wildfires in our state’s history,” Oregon Gov. Kate Brown said in her opening remarks during a media briefing Wednesday afternoon, Sept. 9. “My heart goes out to the families affected.”

“Our number one priority right now is saving lives. Our statewide strategy is focused on live safety, evacuation and protecting structures.”
~ Kate Brown, Oregon Governor

Courtesy photo

Gov. Brown has asked for a federal emergency declaration to free up additional resources to help in the battle against Oregon’s wildfires and the recovery that will be needed.

Brown said Oregon is facing a statewide fire emergency.

Evacuations are occurring across the state and numerous Oregonians have been rescued from harm’s way, Brown said, but many more Oregonians will need to evacuate in the coming hours to ensure their safety.

Brown said there are currently five incident management teams fighting 35 wildfires with multiple smaller fires continuing to erupt across the state. The latest fires are in the Santiam Pass area of Marion County, the Lionshead Fire near Warm Springs in Central Oregon, the Holiday Farm Fire in rural Lane County and two wildfires in Jackson County.

“Right now, more than 300,000 acres are burning across the state,” Brown said. “This is the equivalent of over 500 square miles.”

Brown said parts of Oregon where fires are not burning face the worst fire conditions in three decades.

“This means everyone must be on high alert,” Brown said.

This week, Brown evoked a fire conflagration act for the entire state, allowing state resources to be placed in areas of need. Brown also has requested a federal emergency declaration to free up federal resources in the response effort. That would include search and rescue, mortuary assistance and mass care shelter and feeding support.

“Our number one priority right now is saving lives,” Brown said. “Our statewide strategy is focused on live safety, evacuation and protecting structures.”

Oregon Department of Forestry’s Chief of Fire Protection Doug Grafe said the combination of a cold front on top of an east winds event and the state’s critically dry conditions over the past three years have fueled the wildfires.

Grafe said the winds pushed the fires down steep slopes into cities such as Detroit in the Santiam Canyon and Lincoln City west of the central Oregon Coast Range. Grafe said there is hope that weather conditions will change by Thursday.

“The winds have subsided,” he said. “Although we are still seeing gusts of 25 mph in the high mountain passes. Tomorrow begins a hopeful change in weather conditions to give us a chance to shift resources.”

Grafe said cooler moist air is expected to flow into the state from the Pacific.

Oregon Office of Emergency Management Director Andrew Phelps emphasized the need for all Oregonians to be ready for evacuations.

“Stay home if you are in a safe place,” Phelps said. “If you are in an evacuation zone, know when you need to go and what you need to take with you. Follow the evacuation orders. Make sure you are prepared as soon as possible.”

Oregon Deputy State Fire Marshal Mariana Ruiz-Temple also urged Oregonians to be prepared.

“All residents need to be prepared to understand evacuation levels 1-2-3,” she said. “All residents should be ready to go at a moment’s notice. Be ready to go. Stay tuned to all emergency messages.”

Follow new developments online at thechiefnews.com with in-depth reports in the Friday print editions of The Chief.

Rare east winds cause havoc

Christine Menges / The Chief

This large tree fell onto this home in the 200 block of S. 8th Street in St. Helens during the Monday wind storm.

Jeremy C. Ruark / The Chief

This heavy wildfire smoke continued to drift along the Columbia River in Columbia County Wednesday morning, Sept. 9.

Opinions.....A4
Market Place.....A6
Public Notices.....A6
Obituaries.....A7
Suicide Prevention A8

JEREMY C. RUARK
jruark@countrymedia.net

A rare east wind event sent strong winds and smoke from wildfires in Washington state and Oregon into Columbia County late Monday afternoon. The smoke lingered for much of the week.

The National Weather Service issued a High Wind Warning Monday, Sept. 7 which remained in effect until 1 p.m. Tuesday for the region. Wind warnings were also issued for the Cascades and the Oregon Coast.

Columbia River Fire & Rescue reports the high winds knocked a tree into house in the 200 block of S. 8th Street in St. Helens. No injuries were reported. Another tree fell into power lines and blocked Highway 30 near Rainier for a time.

National Weather Service meteorologists Tyler Kranz in Portland said such wind storms are usually seen in fall and winter.

“It was definitely a rare event,” he said. “We usually don’t have winds of this magnitude in late

See **WINDS** Page A5

Christine Menges / The Chief

Bundy’s Café Drive-In in Clatskanie is one spot that has been used for the web movie locations. On Sept. 2, 3 and 4, the cafe was closed and coned off to the public during the filming.

Lights. Camera. Action:
Movie making comes to town

CHRISTINE MENGES
chronicle2@countrymedia.net

Although far from Hollywood, most Columbia County residents are familiar with movie makers coming to local towns, such as St. Helens: from Twilight (2008), to Halloweentown (1998), to Behind the Mask: The Rise of Leslie Vernon (2006), the place is rife with filming spots, many of the spooky/horror genre.

Now, Clatskanie is part of the latest filming effort for a web series, produced by Crypt TV, called “The Birch,” and broadcast on Facebook Watch, at: https://www.facebook.com/watch/thebirchshow/2699333366784923/.

The first season is already available. The second season will have 14 new episodes, and will be released Oct. 11.

The series

Some might say the show’s premise is scary. According to the series’ Facebook Watch show page, “The Birch” follows the lives of three teenagers who have been forever changed by the Birch, a blood-thirsty monster deep in the woods.

“Once you summon her protection, you never escape,” the synopsis reads.

Film producers did not return requests for comments on filming, saying they wanted to wait until 2021 to talk about the show.

However, a trailer of a short film called “The Birch,” released in 2016, and what the series is based on, is available on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SxQj0DumF8Y.

There’s a warning on the video that the content may be inappropriate for some viewers. “Viewer discretion is advised” is written below the warning.

But a watered-down version could be described as thus: a misfit teenage boy, being tormented by the school bully, finds escape in the woods. As he’s walking, a hoarse voice narrates: “Some people believe that the forest cares for nothing but itself. That’s not true. If you listen carefully, you can hear its voice. Its tortured heart. It can feel our pain too.”

It’s later revealed that the narrator is the boy’s grandmother, who lies on her death bed as she gives her grandson a book, saying, “When I’m gone, she will look after you. Protect you. Just as I have always done. Just as she did for me. Look for her mark in the forest.”

The camera then reveals the teenage boy being confronted by the bully in the woods, and all of a sudden, help comes in the form of The Birch: a 20-foot-tall tree-like creature, with a skeleton-like face, and a nest-like structure enveloping its head.

The last shot implies that The Birch, in answer to the boy’s summons, kills his tormentor.

A similar concept - a creature coming to protect those who summon it - is what the series “The Birch” is all about.

Filming

It was a location scout from the filming company who reached out first, about two months ago, to Columbia County Economic Team interim executive director Paul Vogel.

Vogel then put them in touch with Rachael Barry from the City of St. Helens and Doug Hayes from the Port of Columbia County. He was also able to put the company in touch with the South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce to use their building as a film production site.

According to an email from the City of St. Helens Community Relations Representative Crystal King, the city received an email in July with questions about avail-

See **MOVIE** Page A4

Fairgrounds become animal evacuation center

Christine Menges / The Chief

Horses, rescued from nearby wildfires, stand in their stalls at the fairgrounds.

Christine Menges / The Chief

A group of volunteers unloads a truck of donations for animals sheltering at the Columbia County Fairgrounds.

Christine Menges / The Chief

Piglets, rescued from nearby wildfires, eat in their pen.

CHRISTINE MENGES
chronicle2@countrymedia.net

The Columbia County Fairgrounds, located at 58892 Saulser Rd. in St. Helens, is now serving as a makeshift animal evacuation shelter to support livestock that have been displaced due to wildfires around the state.

As of Wednesday, Sept. 9, the place was serving animals from eight to nine different farms, although that number grows larger by the hour, according to organizer Shana Cavanaugh. The place was also sheltering about 120 animals, mostly horses and pigs, but Cavanaugh said that would increase to about 200 animals by end of day Sept. 9.

The sheltering is necessary because of the raging wildfires across most of the state during the first full week of September that forced thousands to evacuate.

Evacuations affected numerous animals as well as humans. To help with sheltering animals during the emergency situation, organizers Cavanaugh and Emily Miranda, both of Columbia County's newly formed political action committee, Moving Forward Columbia County (MFCC), stepped up.

"In running the groups that I run, I started getting requests of if anyone was able to take in livestock," Cavanaugh said.

Cavanaugh then told her mother, Julie Pelletier, who works on the fair board, who then made some calls to other board members. The action was set in motion, and at around 8 p.m. on Sept. 8, Cavanaugh, Miranda and other volunteers arrived, and worked through the night to get organized.

> *"Literally everyone that can donate has donated." ~ Shana Cavanaugh, animal evacuation center organizer*

"We had pigs and horses in from Molalla and Beaver Creek, it took us all night to get those wrangled in here," Cavanaugh said.

Cavanaugh said she didn't take a break until 5 a.m., when she went home to rest for two hours before coming back to start feeding and taking care of the animals.

Calls have been constant since 5 a.m., Cavanaugh said, adding there were 70 more horses on their way from Estacada and Molalla. Animals run the gamut, including cows, alpacas, goats and lambs, according to Cavanaugh.

There is even a family coming over because their house was burning, and they will be staying in an RV park in the area, Cavanaugh said.

Using the animal stalls at the fairgrounds to shelter animals is not a new idea. MFCC had already been working with the fair board in order to start an animal rescue operation at the fairgrounds. According to Cavanaugh, they had received permission to move forward in conjunction with the Oregon Humane Society. Those plans have been halted in light of the current situation.

Already, the organizers have had a massive support of donations and volunteers, according to Cavanaugh.

"Literally everyone that can donate has donated," Cavanaugh said.

Donors have included Dahlgren's Feed & Builder's Suppply, Linnton Feed & Seed and numerous pet stores in the area that have donated bedding, feed, supplies and numerous other items, according to Cavanaugh.

Volunteers have numbered in the 50s, with one of the most prominent volunteer groups being 4-H, whose service Cavanaugh described as invaluable.

There have even been volunteers to help the volunteers.

"The local food truck brought burritos to feed 50 volunteers today. It's been an experience, a lot of people coming together really, really quickly to handle a dire situation," Cavanaugh said.

The fairgrounds still has a lot of room for animals, according to Cavanaugh, and horses seem to be the main animal coming.

Sheltering will mostly be done on a first come, first served basis.

"If they're at 'go' time at the time they call, we will hold stalls at the time, but we're not holding reservations from people trying to do backup plans," Cavanaugh said.

Cavanaugh said there is another barn of about 40 stalls available in the fairgrounds area and in the rodeo area there is room for another 100-200 animals.

If the fairgrounds does not receive requests for sheltering cows, Cavanaugh said they can put horses in the cow barns, which she said she knew was not ideal for the animals but would be the best plan in an emergency situation.

Most of the care for the animals is done free of charge. If livestock owners can supply feed and hay, Cavanaugh said that is welcome, but not required.

"People had no notice, we're not going to let any animals go unfed or uncared for or unwatered. We're offering the space for as long as it's needed for families that have evacuated," Cavanaugh said.

Cavanaugh said she had no idea how long that would be.

Passion for bike riding

Photo courtesy of Andrew Bauer

Riders roll along the challenge route in a recent Columbia County Challenge.

JEREMY C. RUARK
jruark@countrymedia.net

The 5th annual Columbia Century Challenge will roll through parts of Columbia County on Saturday, Sept. 12. The event begins at 6:30 a.m. at Rainier City Park.

The approximately 66-mile course begins and ends in Rainier, winding through Clatskanie and Mist.

Columbia Century Challenge Event Organizer Paul Barlow said making sure the bike ride would occur has been especially challenging this year.

"2020 has proven to be a challenge for everyone," Barlow said. "We moved our ride date from June to September with the glimmer of hope that we could still host something. As our planning group are making the final preparations for September 12, we are all glad that we can provide a ride that will help people mentally and physically."

Barlow said the whole idea is to promote the beauty in the county as well as local dining, shopping and other businesses.

The most challenging stretch of the route this year, according to Barlow, will be the first six miles from the start line as riders climb from 125 foot elevation to 1,125 foot elevation and the climb from the Mist rest stop to the top of Clatskanie Hill.

Barlow said even with the challenging course, the ride remains a draw to hundreds of bike riders.

"Columbia County has some of the most beautiful views on the route," he said. "When you're coming down from Mist you can't help but stop for a moment to take in the scenery. Our county also has a rich logging culture in which much of this route is on. So for riders looking to get away from the day-to-day busy city streets, all they have to do is come visit Columbia County."

Barlow said he hopes the riders take away a sense of accomplishment from their experience.

"We are known as a hard ride due to some of the elevations, but once they see that downhill, they know they can let their legs relax and prepare for the next hill," he said. "We've had riders in the past tell us that the Columbia Century Challenge is a good practice ride for the Seattle to Portland ride."

History

A team of local cycling enthusiasts and community members first brought the idea of a century bicycle event to life in 2016.

For more information and to volunteer, visit the Cycle Columbia County Facebook page.

Sen. Johnson addresses Portland unrest, virtual government, pandemic

JEREMY C. RUARK
jruark@countrymedia.net

"This feels like the most unsettled of unsettled times," Sen. Betsy Johnson (D) said in her opening comments during the Clatskanie Chamber of Commerce Zoom online meeting Thursday afternoon, Sept. 3.

Johnson spoke of the unrest in Portland, the lack of effective leadership and accountability at the state level concerning the use of federal pandemic relief funds, and other issues.

"Portland is on fire," Johnson said. "The leadership seems unwilling or unable to do anything about it. I am seeing these lists of demands from various groups that are basically the conditions to stop the rioting and they are outrageous."

Johnson said she understands the pent-up frustrations that many people feel but she said the concerns can be dealt with in a more constructive and collaborative way than "threatening to burn downtown Portland buildings with people in them."

"It is an outrage," she said.

Johnson also criticized new Multnomah County District Attorney Mike Schmidt, saying Schmidt is incompetent to be district attorney.

"His pronouncement that he wasn't going to go after the level of vandalism and criminal behavior in Portland stunned me," Johnson said.

Johnson also spoke about virtual government triggered by the pandemic.

"Virtual government is not working," she said. "It is a complicated process. This is not the same public participation in the development of public policy we have all grown up with and come to value and recognize."

Johnson said virtual government has had the net effect of concentrating power in the hands of a handful of folks, notably Gov. Kate Brown, who Johnson said is now ruling by executive orders, and the Speaker of the House and the Senate President, who are the top officers of the Oregon Emergency Board.

"We have run more than a billion dollars in ways that

Chief photo

Senator Betsy Johnson, seen here in an earlier photo during a local town hall, spoke to the Clatskanie Chamber of Commerce Zoom meeting Sept. 3, by phone from her office.

I believe are irresponsible," she said. "It is outrageous how sloppy we have been. Our state has lost its way. We are out of control. The proliferation of gun licenses is a testimony of how frightened Oregonians are."

But Johnson also spoke about what she called "pockets of hope." Citing the development of a shelter and referral center for the homeless at the former Wapato Jail in Portland's St. Johns industrial neighborhood.

Johnson also called the completion of the Rainier 'A' Street Improvement Project another bright spot.

"That took forever to get done," she said. "It is going to be an enormous impact in downtown and the people that were cranky about the loss of a few parking spaces will see what a tremendous benefit it is to the town that is not pitted with those dangerous tracks that could have easily created an accident."

Johnson said she is hopeful that more rail traffic will now be developed to signify a reopening of Oregon's economy.

Johnson also described how her office helped a woman navigate through a health care problem and as a result of the uniqueness of that woman's circumstances, undying policies in the Oregon Health Plan may be changed.

Johnson acknowledged the challenges of fixing the Oregon Employment Department's benefit claim system, but said she is hopeful that she can help some of the Oregonians out of work, struggling through the pandemic.

"We are able to help ordinary Oregonians by being that shock absorber between them and state government and we do that every day," she said. "So, there are some bright spots."

Johnson also listed the positive efforts of firefighters on the lines of Oregon wildfires, and that she is seeing restaurants reopening after being forced to close by the pandemic, and bridge and highway repairs now being made across the region.

Clatskanie City Manager Greg Hinkelman, attending the meeting, detailed another bright spot concerning action by the Clatskanie City Council Wednesday night, Sept. 2, which approved a resolution that permanently suspends base rate and utility changes for nonprofits that own buildings in the city.

"This will be an enormous help to those groups, since nobody is having church services or allowed to rent the building, and all of them are suffering revenue loss," Hinkelman earlier told The Chief. Hinkelman also said the city is considering giving $52,000 in federal pandemic relief to the Clatskanie School District.

"We are allowed to help out other organizations and it is my preference to keep that money in Clatskanie and we hope to help out the school district," he said.

Ribbon cutting set for 'A' Street improvements

JEREMY C. RUARK
jruark@countrymedia.net

The $11.1 million Rainier 'A' Street Improvement Project is done.

Local and state officials will hold a ribbon cutting on Oct. 11 to mark competition of the project what began with discussions about downtown safety in 2002.

The 'A' Street Improvement Project is designed to improve safety along the main street of the City of Rainier, where previously the rail line had bisected the community without any safety barriers.

The project included:

• Realigning the rail tracks, including "day-lighting" the tracks to eliminate the asphalt road surface over the track and exposing the railroad ties and aggregate base.

• A curb and gutter was constructed to physically separate the rail line from other modes of travel. New crossing gates were installed at two locations to further improve railroad safety.

• New ADA compliant sidewalks were constructed, storm water collection facilities were added along with new street lighting an upgraded city utilities.

• In a related but separate project, the city of Rainier constructed a parking plaza, paved multiple City streets between A Street and U.S. 30, and improved freight movements on a nearby city street.

Funding is from several different sources, including a Connect Oregon grant and PNWR required match, Oregon Department of Transportation's Rail and Public Transit Division, Oregon Legislative approved Regional Solutions funds, Business Oregon and the City of Rainier.

"It took forever to get done," said State Sen. Betsy Johnson, a key supporter of the project over the years. "It is going to be an enormous impact in downtown."

Rainier Mayor Jerry Cole said the project has been all about safety.

"This can create economic opportunities and will markedly improve Rainier infrastructure and quality of life," Cole told The Chief in an interview in January.

Specific details about the October ribbon cutting were pending at press time.

Follow developments online at the chiefnews.com and in the Friday print editions of The Chief.

Courtesy photo from the Oregon Department of Transportation

This photo shows a portion of the 'A' Street Improvement project in mid summer just about done.

Officials urge public to be ready

Courtesy photo

State and local officials encourages you to have a Go Kit ready in case you need to evacuate in a moment's notice. The kit should contain essential items, such as those in those photo.

JEREMY C. RUARK
jruark@countrymedia.net

During this intense wildfire season in Oregon, officials said it is critical that everyone be ready to evacuate at a moment's notice.

Oregon Office of Emergency Management Public Information Officer Paula Fasano Negele said the most important element is to be prepared.

"If you do not have a 'go kit' put one together now," she said. "Have a conversation with family members about what you will do, what you will bring and where you will go if you are evacuated. Know your evacuation levels.

Fasano Negele said when a Level 3 – go now – is ordered, go.

"Be prepared to leave behind items," she said. "It's more important to get out safely. This nugget comes from a survivor of the Mosier Creek fire who escaped her home with 9 other family members and 7 dogs without a moment to spare."

Fasano Negele said there critical steps of action you need to take during an evacuation.

"Know your evacuation levels," she said. "This seems trite but with the fast-moving fires that have occurred in the past few days, this information is the difference between being a survivor and a victim."

Level 1 – Be ready – Monitor emergency services websites and local media outlets for information. This is the time for preparation and precautionary movement of persons with special needs and, in some cases, pets and livestock.

Level 2 – Be set – Be ready to leave at a moment's notice. There is significant danger to your area. Be prepared to voluntarily relocate to a Temporary Evacuation Point (TEPO as set up by the Red Cross, or move to family/friends outside of the affected area.

Level 3 – Go – Leave immediately. Danger to your area is current or imminent. Do not delay leaving to gather any belongings or make efforts to protect your home.

Fasano Negele also recommends that you sign up for emergency alerts if they are available in your county.

Here are the basic elements that you should all have in your To Go Kits:

- Water
- Food
- Radio (battery operated or hand crank)
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Face covering, hand sanitizer
- All-purpose tool
- Cell phone and/or tablet and chargers
- Prescriptions, extra eyeglasses
- Copies of important documents (insurance, bank records, etc.)
- Cash – small values such as $1, 5, 10
- Plastic bags for sanitation
- Paper, pencils, games, books, comfort items
- Complete change of clothing

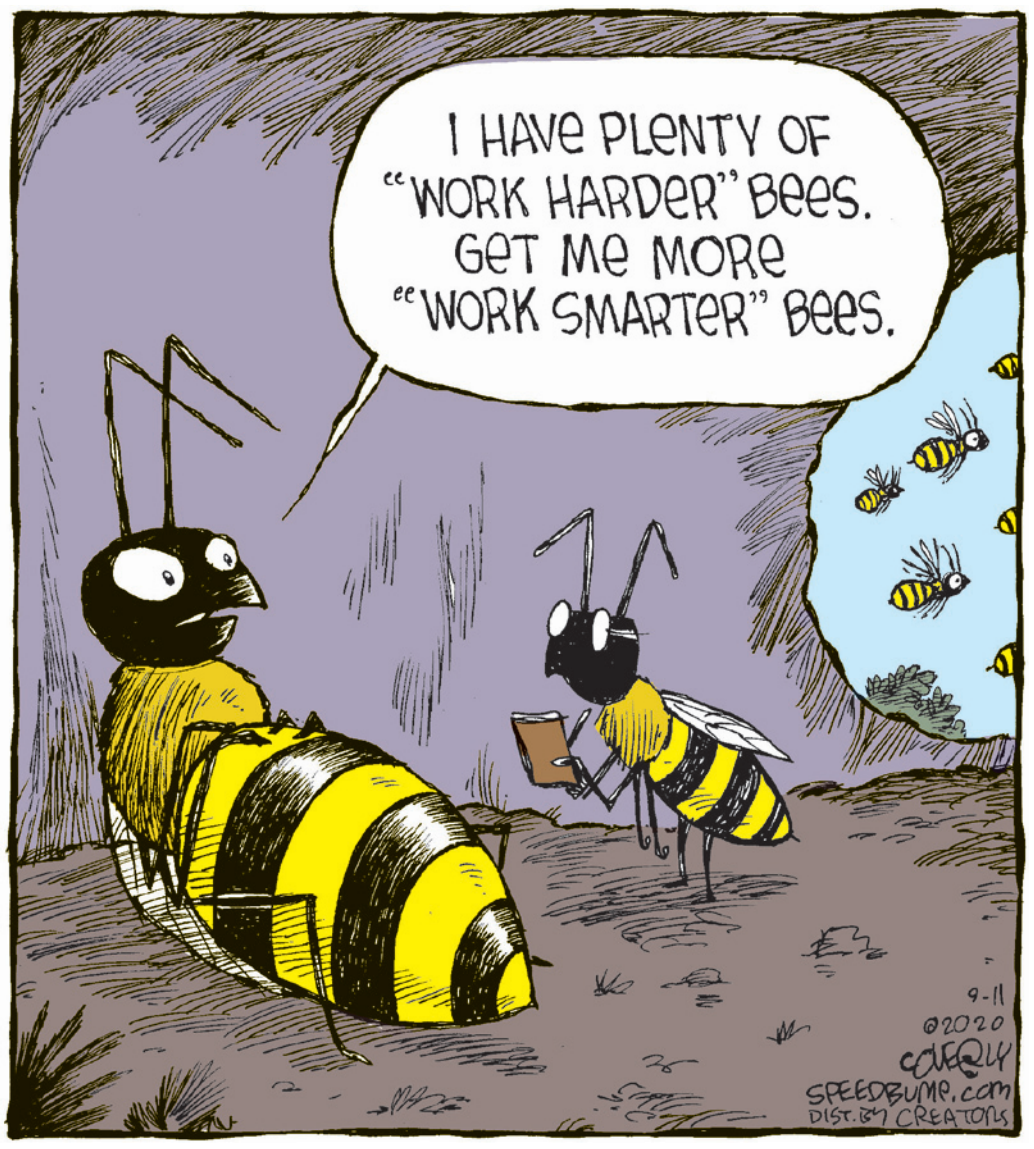
Tailor to your family

- Pet food, leash, toy
- Infant food, diapers, toys, extra clothing

Resources for preparedness information

- www.ready.gov
- Red Cross: https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/wildfire.html
- https://www.Oregon.gov/oem/2WeeksReady

Follow developments online at thechiefnews.com and in-depth reports in the Friday print editions of The Chief.



Weekly Online Poll

Are you prepared to quickly evacuate if a wildfire threatens your home or business?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Last Week's Results

What should be done to lower Oregon's rising boating fatalities and accidents?

42% More Enforcement

58% More Education

Vote online at thechiefnews.com

··Voices of The Community··

Support Brad Witt

Brad Witt has my vote and has been a real source of support and inspiration for our community.

I hope that you will join me in supporting State Representative Brad Witt this November, because we need an advocate in Salem who understands that sustainable resource use and conservation go hand in hand. Brad is not just the co-chair of the Oregon Sportsmen's caucus, he is an actual sportsman, who has spent countless hours hunting, fishing, and reloading.

As a hunter myself, I can attest to the fact that sportsmen are true conservationists. He enjoys Oregon's woods and rivers, and knows how important it is to protect them. When Brad recognized that Oregon had been targeted by poachers, he drafted and passed legislation to protect our wildlife. Brad also supports the 2nd Amendment and gun safety.

We need more level headed, commonsense leaders like Brad in Salem.

Tara Hicks,
Columbia County

A bit shocked

A sign on Highway 30 caught my attention. It said in big red letters "Fire Brad Witt"

I was a bit shocked and surprised to see the sign. I have always appreciated Representative Witt and have never had a problem reaching him or people on his staff.

I have been and still am "Glad that we have Brad." He has been there when people needed him.

Right now, he is working with the Oregon Employment Division to correct their failure to get people needed checks. He is a strong advocate for health care and has worked to protect and improve our Oregon Health plan. He is a sports man, outdoorsman, angler, hunter and reloader. And an advocate for animals, wild and domestic. He worked hard to stop the illegal trade in shark fins.

Brad is a genuine person who supports timber workers, hunters, and the needs of the majority of all Oregonians.

I have always believed that you don't fix something that isn't broken. Brad is far from broken; he is active and working hard in Salem for all of us.

His opponents may have signs up to fire him, but you don't fire a man who works as hard for us as he does.

I'm "glad that we have Brad." I hope you are as well.

Bill Eagle
St. Helens

Camp Wilkerson

It is with great dismay that I heard of the suggested plan of allowing OHV rallies to be held at Camp Wilkerson. I am adamantly opposed to such a plan. There are very few equestrian-safe locations remaining in our area. Oregon Equestrian Trails, of which I am a member, has spent many, many hours and a significant amount of funds over the past twenty years developing and maintain Camp Wilkerson's equestrian trails. Those beautiful and peaceful trails will not be able to be returned to their present state once motorized traffic is allowed. Anyone who lives in this area can see how trails are affected by wheels – the deep ruts left cannot be returned to their natural state without repeated filling (as dirt settles again and again). Once narrow, pristine trails are widened for race use they can't be "unwidened," either.

Once two-wheeled races are allowed at Wilkerson, it will be a bell that can't be unrung. People will bring their motorcycles there spontaneously on non-official weekends. Who do you expect to police the trails for unauthorized use?

The beauty of Wilkerson is absolutely irreplaceable for the many horseback riders, hikers, horse and non-horse campers and dog-walkers who use it presently. Greed must not be allowed to ruin one of our natural outdoor wonders. Camp Wilkerson's trails must remain untouched by motorized vehicles.

Nancy Abell
Rainier

MOVIE

From **Page A1**

able sites for filming. King added that the city has an agreement with the Port of Columbia County to market their industrial sites.

So far, filming has taken place in many places in the county: at Bundy's Café Drive-In in Clatskanie, at the former Boise Cascades site in St. Helens and in other places, according to Vogel.

However, Vogel said he doesn't know exactly where the crew is filming on a day-to-day basis. Filming locations can also change based on the writers' whims, Vogel said. One week they might be looking for two to three specific locations, and then they change the script and then need to look for something else, according to Vogel.

Vogel said he has no idea how many people are involved with filming, or even exactly which filming locations are being used.

"They haven't told me any of that. They're afraid I'd show up and want to be an extra," Vogel said, jokingly.

Acting as liaison has been Vogel's primary role: getting the film production company in touch with other city and county leaders so they can communicate about using sites for filming locations, and also pointing them in the right direction for getting the licenses they need for filming.

"These folks are being very professional and going by the book and getting licenses, they've been good to work with," Vogel said.

Filming in the county is good for economic development, Vogel said.

"Any kind of filming like this, done right and safely is really good for business. They buy stuff: food, office supplies, gas, all kinds of stuff, it's a nice little shot in the arm," Vogel said.

However, both Vogel and King said that the community will not receive any, or very little, direct revenue related to the filming.

Clatskanie City Manager Greg Hinkelman echoed other county and city leaders' statements that filming brings in business for the city. He also said that the filming in Clatskanie is a form of economic development, but not one he would count on consistently.

Bundy's is the only filming location in Clatskanie that the show will use that Hinkelman said he knows of.

Hinkelman is a little bit camera-shy and does not have a role in the movie, even as an extra.

"The mayor and Jim Helmen are kidding me to go walk on and do a cameo, which is a 'hell, no' for me," Hinkelman said.

The Chief

The Chief (USPS 116-360) is published weekly by Country Media, Inc.
1805 Columbia Blvd,
St. Helens, OR 97051

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to The Chief
PO Box 1153,
St. Helens, OR 97053

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:
1 month in/out county: $8
One year in county: $60
One year out of county: $80
$3 senior discount for yearly sub

Contact Us • Phone: (503) 397-0116 • **Fax:** (503) 397-4093 • **Website:** www.thechiefnews.com
Editorial Email: chiefnews@countrymedia.net • **Advertising Email:** atrull@countrymedia.net

Write to Us

We want to hear from you and encourage you to write letters to the editor. Because of space limitations, shorter letters have a better chance of being printed. We may edit your letter for style, grammar and clarity, although we do as little editing as possible. If you don't want your letter printed under those conditions, just let us know. Thank-you letters are limited to a general thanks and summary of an issue or action. We reserve the right to exclude lists of people, organizations and businesses. Letters received after noon on Friday may not be in time for the following Wednesday's paper. To verify authenticity, all letters must be signed and include your address and daytime phone number. We won't print your street address or phone number (just your city of residence). Submissions may be emailed to chiefnews@countrymedia.net, sent via mail, or dropped off at the office.

Send Letters To:
The Chief Attn: News Editor
PO Box 1153, St. Helens, OR 97051
Email Letters To: chiefnews@countrymedia.net

Letters Policy

The Chief welcomes letters of 250 words or fewer. Letters are subject to editing for length, clarity or grammar. They should be concise, to the point and original. Letters dealing with disputes or containing criticism of private individuals or businesses will not be published. All letters must be signed (unless emailed) and include the author's full name, address and daytime telephone number (for verification purposes only). Letters will be published at the editor's discretion. Letters also may be published on our website.

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, 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.

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.

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.

Editorial Policy

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

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENT LIFELINE: 1-800-273-8255 • suicidepreventionlifeline.org **OREGON YOUTH LINE: 877-968-8491 • Text "teen2teen" to 839863**

Pandemic: Now and ahead

JEREMY C. RUARK
jruark@countrymedia.net

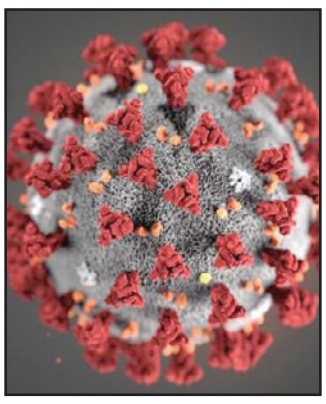
New details are emerging concerning the pandemic impact in Oregon and what is ahead.

In a detailed report, Initial Job Losses and Recovery from COVID-19 Recession, Oregon Employment Department economist Sarah Cunningham tracks the COVID-19 impact in the state from March and presents recovery scenarios that include a speedy recovery or what could trigger a second round of business closures.

The following is Cunningham's report.

Public health measures related to COVID-19 began in Oregon in mid-March. Social distancing practices and workplace and gathering changes have severely impacted business practices all around the state.

The National Bureau of Economic Research declared an official recession in the United States, beginning in February 2020. Data from the Current Employment Estimates (CES) program shed some light on the severity of initial job losses and recovery across nonfarm payroll employment.



Courtesy photo

The report pinpoints specific job losses and emerging scenarios for recovery.

By the numbers

Oregon's total nonfarm employment declined nearly 14 percent (-271,900 jobs) between February and April 2020. Initial losses were heaviest in industries most impacted by social distancing-related health measures. Leisure and hospitality suffered the heaviest losses in both absolute number and industry share, shedding roughly 118,700 or 55 percent of jobs between February and April 2020. Health care and social assistance lost 28,500 jobs, nearly 11 percent of employment, as elective procedures and appointments were cancelled and rescheduled at the onset of the crisis.

Other services, a broad industry that includes beauty salons, nail salons, and other close-contact services, shed more than one out of five payroll jobs (-14,700). Private educational services lost 16 percent or 6,000 jobs as classrooms moved online.

Since April, Oregon has recovered 38 percent (103,600) of its nonfarm payroll employment losses from March and April, but every private industry is still below its February 2020 peak. By July, leisure and hospitality regained 58,900 or 50 percent of jobs lost, but the industry is still nearly 60,000 jobs below peak employment. Health care and social assistance added back 18,700 jobs between April and July, recovering 66 percent of the initial COVID-19 losses very quickly as elective procedures resumed and health care offices reopened beginning in May.

Other services has regained more than half of its March and April job losses, but remains 5,400 jobs below its February peak. Other industries still well below their February 2020 employment levels include information (-16.8% or -6,000 jobs), and educational services (-13.1% or -4,900 jobs).

Although net job losses between February and July 2020 exist across every sector in Oregon, with the exception of Federal Government, low-paying industries – those paying below the statewide average annual wage of $55,349 – suffered more than half (55%) of job losses. Among high-paying industries, information has suffered the heaviest losses, losing roughly 17 percent of jobs between February and July. Information pays an average annual wage of $89,699. Manufacturing, a high-paying sector that brings outside money into the local economy, peaked at 198,700 jobs in January 2019 and has lost 9 percent of jobs since.

Uncertain recovery ahead

Although Oregon has regained more than a third of jobs lost in March and April 2020 at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, how quickly Oregon will return to full employment depends on many unknowns.

According to the Office of Economic Analysis' June 2020 Economic and Revenue Forecast, three recovery scenarios emerge. As social distancing measures continue to be lifted, consumers will be able to unleash pent-up demand, spending on services they previously could not, which is key to economic recovery.

Widespread availability of a vaccine or medical treatment could further restore consumer confidence and lead to a more speedy recovery. Conversely, a resurgence in the number of coronavirus cases could trigger a second round of business closures throughout the state, leading to a deeper recession and slower recovery.

Follow the COVID-19 pandemic in Oregon with daily reports at thechiefnews.com and in-depth updates the Friday print editions of The Chief.

County beginning to meet metrics to reopen schools

CHRISTINE MENGES
chronicle2@countrymedia.net

At his regular public health update at the Columbia County Board of Commissioners meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2020, Public Health Director Michael Paul delivered some promising news: Columbia County is beginning to meet the metrics for reopening schools.

In order to reopen schools, there are two metrics that must be met, according to Oregon Health Authority (OHA) guidelines: a test positivity rate of less than 5%, and a case count of less than 10 per 100,000. Both metrics must be met for three weeks in a row in order to reopen schools.

So far, Columbia County has been faring well on one metric, but not the other.

According to data from the OHA, Columbia County's test positivity rate has always been below 5%. However, the same data reveals that within the last five weeks, case count has ranged between anywhere from 15 to 30 cases per 100,000.

The week beginning Aug. 30, case count dropped to nine per 100,000.

This means Columbia County has met one week's worth of metrics to reopen schools. Two more weeks – in a row- of that will make it possible to reopen.

Additionally, Paul shared other county metrics regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

The county's cumulative case count remains at 135 cases, with five new cases reported in the last week. Paul said there are six people in the county who are currently infectious. There are also a few dozen people who have had a link to a positive case and who are quarantining, and the public health department provides daily monitoring to those people, Paul said.

There has been one death so far, and eight hospitalizations, according to Paul.

Other public health indicators show positive signs of heading in the right direction, Paul said. Of the five cases that were diagnosed last week, the county was able to trace all of them to a known case, and the county is also following up with 100% of cases within 24 hours. The county is also well below one percent of emergency department visits with COVID-like illness, according to Paul.

At his last public health update, Paul said public health departments see a common trend where cases jump after holidays, and he urged the public to stay home for Labor Day.

Paul said it is still too early to tell whether or not Labor Day celebrations have contributed to increased spread.

"Some people don't get tested until they're really sick, or they learn now that someone they were with over the holiday had a positive case," Paul said.

One of the happenings that Paul said he has witnessed during the pandemic is that individuals tend to be more vigilant about taking steps to combat spread the more they feel the effects of COVID-19 in their community. Paul said he wanted to continue to urge people to be vigilant, especially going into the fall.

Paul said he recommended the usual guidance of getting a flu shot around this time of year.

"There are many places offering free flu shots, schedule now before the end of October," Paul said.

To close out his report, Paul said the latest modeling report released by the OHA shows the state is making tremendous progress in daily case numbers.

"Every new case is generating one other case right now. If that stays the same, case numbers will continue to go down to less than 150 cases by the end of the month," Paul said.

Follow daily pandemic updates online at thepilotnews.com with in-depth reports in the Friday print editions of The Chief.

WINDS

From **Page A1**

summer."

Kranz said a mix of cool and warm air led to a difference in pressure that triggered the strong winds with a peak gust at 32 miles an hour at the Scappoose International Airpark and at 52 miles an hour at the Portland International Airport late Monday night.

While the winds began to ease on Wednesday, the smoke lingered. Koran said the hot temperates and dangerous wildfire conditions will persist.

"We don't see any significant rain in the forecast for the next several days," he said.

Due to the smoke, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality issued an air quality advisory on Monday for the Portland Metro area, Willamette Valley, Columbia River Gorge and Central Oregon.

Fire agencies throughout the region have banned all burning due to the extreme fire danger.

BEST OF COLUMBIA COUNTY READERS' CHOICE AWARDS...

... Are coming to Columbia County.

Readers of The Chronicle and The Chief can vote on their favorite food, people, best local businesses and more in this new and fun look at the Best in Columbia County.

Ballots will be online for voting from Sept. 14th through Oct. 2nd and in print in our Columbia County papers in a full page format. Either vote online or through the printed ballot for your favorite businesses and services offered to you in Columbia County.

Show your support for these local businesses and entities providing you with the goods and services you need everyday.

Look for our online and print ballots soon.

Voting opens Sept. 14th and will continue through Oct. 2nd

Winners will be announced when voting is over in a special Best of Columbia County, Readers' Choice Awards section.

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

109
Construction Services

NORTHWEST CUSTOM TILE
Showers, floors, walls, fireplace, exterior. Up to 20% off if you preorder by Nov. 1st, 2020. CCB# 228991 503-396-6714

150
Misc Services

Paul's Tree Service Inc.
No bush too small, no tree to tall- Call Paul! Specialized in danger trees, take downs, storm clean-up. Time to prune- pruning Lace Leafed Maples & ornamental shrubberies, chipping, senior or veterans discount, free estimates. CCB# 217173 Lic., Bonded & Insured. 503-440-0723 or 503-543-8274

502
Help Wanted

COUNTER PERSON WANTED
LG ISAACSON CO/LONGVIEW F/T, M-FRI 8-5 PM FULL BENEFITS 401K DUTIES INCLUDE: PHONE/COUNTER SALES, WAREHOUSE, DELIVERIES, COMPUTER. DRUG FREE & SELF MOTIVATED. SEND RESUME TO OFFICE@LGISAACSONCOM OR BRING IN: 1331 INDUSTRIAL WAY LV. LGICO EST 1911

Eagle Star Rock Products
is seeking, full time dump truck delivery driver. Current Class A CDL needed. Overtime Pay and benefit package. Contact us at 503-397-7861.

Help Wanted
Seeking full time in home caregiver for an elderly parent with dementia. Room and board along with negotiable monthly salary depending on experience. Please mail in references along with your resume to Karen Nelson, PO Box 1032, Clatskanie OR 97016 or send them to knelson@myfrontiermail.com. Resumes will be accepted through September 15th, 2020. Work to start affective October 1, 2020.

502
Help Wanted

IMMEDIATE OPENING:
St. Helens Chronicle and Clatskanie Chief, has an opening for a reporter in Columbia County. Primarily responsible for writing day-to-day news stories for the two weekly newspapers and accompanying websites. Reports to the publisher. The successful applicant will produce content featuring local businesses, government, schools, and community events. Country Media, Inc. offers highly competitive newsroom wages and a variety of employee benefits, including group health insurance; paid holidays, vacation and sick leave; mileage reimbursement; and others. For immediate consideration, please email a cover letter and resume to jruark@countrymedia.net We look forward to hearing from you.

502
Help Wanted

Park Landscape and Maintenance:
The Clatskanie Park & Recreation District is looking for a landscape and maintenance crew member. Must be at least 18 years of age and able to pass a background check. Duties are, but not limited to; mowing, landscape maintenance, trimming and general park maintenance and upkeep. The full job description is available upon request. The position is available immediately. September to March: 15-20 hours per week (approximate) March to September: 25-30 hours per week (approximate). Please send your resume to: Clatskanie Park & Recreation District, PO Box 737, Clatskanie, OR 97016. You can also email your resume to cyndi@dconnercpa.com or drop off at 365 S Nehalem Street, Clatskanie. If you have any questions, please contact Cyndi at 503-728-2038. Resumes will be accepted until 5:00pm on Wednesday September 16, 2020

502
Help Wanted

706
Estate Sales

Living Estate of Harvey Hunsicker
9/11, 9/12 & 9/13 from 9 am - 4 pm. Lots of good items, collectible glass and Xmas items, Hilton turntable w/ accessories, tools, old cameras, bikes,

702
Garage Sales

Large Yard Sale
on Sept. 11th & 12th in Clatskanie from 9 am - 3 pm. Cash only please. Wear your mask and no early sales. Fundraiser for River Larson. Added more items to the sale & some items 1/2 off. Lrg adult bike helmet, sheets all sizes, smoker, crockpot, steamer, blinds, kids gaming chair, Ranger Canopy, compressor, misc tires and rims, too much to mention. Follow signs from Hwy 30 at Johnsons Feed Store. Find sale signs up Haven Acre Rd.

706
Estate Sales

1990 Tracker 4/WD, 70's three wheeler, Craftsman riding mower, John Deere riding mower - not running w/ tiller, lumbar, lots of misc. 19059 Beaver Falls Rd., Clatskanie OR 97016.

790
Misc Wanted

ATTENTION LAND OWNERS!
Wanted cedar boughs and noble fir. Willing to pay for branches only. Do not damage trees. Call Cesar 360-241-6889 or 360-425-0738 Kelso.

808
Houses Unfurnished

2 bedroom, 1 bath remodeled manufactured home
in Quincy area. Good setting w/ large lawn. Rent $855/mo. Water/-garbage are additional tenant cost. No smoking. Pet negotiable. Must have verifiable income. 503-772-9660 or 503-732-9828

860
Storage

CLATSKANIE Mini Storage
Hoarder's Paradise! 20 sizes, Inexpensive RV Storage, Carports, Hand trucks, Locks, Fully-lined, Insulated, Condensation free, all units lit. On-site Manager
503 728-2051
503 369-6503
Visa/MC/Amex

BUY AND SELL IN THE CLASSIFIEDS
VIEW CLASSIFIED ADS IN THE CHIEF AND ONLINE AT THECHIEFNEWS.COM
CALL THE CHIEF AT 503-397-0116 TO PLACE YOUR AD TODAY.

ASPHALT PAVING
Offering Quality Asphalt Paving Services to Columbia County and surrounding areas.
TFT Construction, Inc.
FREE Estimates
COMMERCIAL · RESIDENTIAL · INDUSTRIAL
Driveways · Roadways · Subdivisions · Parking Lots · City, County, State Specification Products
Call Jim today at (503) 509-8657
Quality Workmanship At Affordable Prices

Public Notices

CC20-1302

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Board of Directors for Clatskanie School District 6J will hold a Board meeting, Monday, September 14, 2020, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. Please see our website at www.csd.k12.or.us on the main page for directions to join the meeting via Zoom. The agenda includes but is not limited to: Superintendent and Principal's reports, bond information update by McKinstry, financial report, and the consent agenda. The public is encouraged to attend.

CC20-1303

NOTICE OF BOARD MEETING

McNulty Water PUD's Board meeting will be held September 15, 2020 at 7pm. Located at 34240 Millard Road, Warren Oregon 97053. Please wear a mask per the State of Oregon regulations. No more then 10 people will be allowed in the office at a time due to the State of Oregon regulations as well.

CC20-1304

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS

Sealed bids for the City of Clatskanie, Water Treatment Plant PLC Upgrade, will be received by the City of Clatskanie until 3:00 PM, Monday, September 28, 2020. Bids shall be addressed to Mr. Greg Hinkelman, City Manager, 75 South Nehalem Street, P.O. Box 9, Clatskanie, OR 97016. At 3:00 PM. Bids will be opened and read aloud in the City Hall Council Chambers, Clatskanie, OR. The purpose of this upgrade is to replace the existing GE PLC and computer control with a new Rockwell Automation control system. Details and specifications are available for review at the City of Clatskanie's administrative offices, located at 75 South Nehalem Street, Clatskanie, Oregon 97016, telephone number: (503) 728-2622. No bid shall be received or considered unless the bid contains a statement by the Bidder that the provisions of ORS 279.350 and Oregon Prevailing Wage Rates will be complied with if the amount of the bid equals or exceeds $50,000. Oregon prevailing wage rates, published by the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, are available on-line at www.oregon.gov/BOLI. Within two (2) working hours after the date and time of the bid opening, the bidder shall submit to the City of Clatskanie a disclosure of the first tier subcontractors, pursuant to ORS 279C.370. Failure to submit the first-tier subcontractor list will constitute a non-responsive bid. If there is no first-tier subcontractors mark "NONE" on the submittal. The City of Clatskanie reserves the right to reject any or all bids not in compliance with all prescribed bidding procedures and requirements, may reject for good cause any and all bids upon a finding of the agency it is in the public interest to do so, and may waive all informalities. No bidder may withdraw or modify his bid prior to the lapse of thirty (30) days after the bid opening.

CC20-1301

CLATSKANIE PEOPLE'S UTILITY DISTRICT MEETING NOTICE

The Clatskanie People's Utility District Board of Directors has scheduled the next regular Board meeting for Wednesday, September16, 2020 at 5:30 pm in the community room of the District's administration building located at 495 E Columbia River Highway, Clatskanie. A Board Workshop will not be held this month. 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 REGULAR BOARD MEETING on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 5:30 P.M. I. PUBLIC COMMENTS II. CONSENT AGENDA · Minutes of Regular Board Meeting, August 19, 2020 · Review payment of bills for August 2020 III. PRESENTATION AND STAFF REPORTS UPDATE · Presentation: Amendment to the Idaho Power Exchange Agreement, Paul Dockery · Staff Reports Update IV. POLICY REVIEW · Policy 316 Power Theft Policy V. ACTION ITEMS · Policy Review: 101 Credit and Collections Policy, 104 Line Extension Policy, and EH 703 Prevention of Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation VI. DISCUSSION / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS · Board Comments & Calendar VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION VIII. ADJOURNMENT

CC20-1300

Rainier Cemetery District MEETING NOTICE

The regular meeting of the Rainier Cemetery District will be held on Monday, September 21, 2020 at 6:30pm at the Rainier Cemetery Office, 24952 Alston Rd, Rainier, OR. Items on the agenda include, but are not limited to: Monthly updates on cemetery operations. ALL SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES IN PLACE AT THE TIME OF THE MEETING WILL BE STRICTLY FOLLOWED. Janice Carstensen, Board Chairman.

CC20-1296

NOTICE OF SALE

Rainier Storage Place, LLC will hold a sale at 29098 Dike Rd., Rainier OR 97048 of the contents of the following storage units: 8x40 storage container, CY1 – Abandoned; 10x28 A1 – Abandoned; 7x10 A16 – Abandoned at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 12th, 2020. Published Aug. 28, 2020, Sept. 4, 2020 and Sept. 11, 2020.

Jeremy C. Ruark / The Chief

Columbia River Fire & Rescue has received a $314,277 federal grant.

CRFR receives grant

Columbia River Fire & Rescue (CRFR) has received a $314,277 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant for volunteer recruitment and retention.

The four-year grant will fund firefighter personal protective equipment, fitness equipment, volunteer leadership training, chaplain program training, and a monetary stipend for volunteer response and training attendance, according to CRFR.

The fire district said in a Facebook post that over the past three years CRFR has worked hard to receive $1,059,873 in grant funding from FEMA to fund volunteer programs and purchase firefighting equipment to improve services to the citizens of the fire district.

NEXT Renewable Fuels update

CHRISTINE MENGES
chronicle2@countrymedia.net

At an update to the Port of Columbia County, President and Director of NEXT Renewable Fuels, Lou Soumas said it'll be two more years before NEXT begins to hire a managing team. This is in line with what Soumas originally promised; that commercial operations would begin in 2022.

Soumas also gave details on the status of permitting, other hiring processes and next steps for the operation.

According to Soumas, the site is properly zoned, but NEXT will have to get a conditional use permit through the county as a final step before operations can begin. Hiring is also in process for senior positions in design and engineering, according to Soumas. Next steps for NEXT include releasing a work order for dock evaluation work, which will be done in coordination with the port, according to Soumas.

The port approved the ground lease for NEXT in September of 2019. The vote was controversial, with three commissioners, Larry Ericksen, Robert Keyser and Chris Iverson in favor of the lease, and two commissioners, Nancy Ward and Chip Bubl opposed.

With the ground lease approval, the port also approved a memorandum of agreement that stated that NEXT would not take advantage of any tax breaks from the Enterprise Zone where the facility is located. The agreement means that NEXT will pay property taxes from the beginning of operations.

NEXT Renewable Fuels is a corporation that turns recycled organic materials into biofuels, with up to 85% less greenhouse gas emissions, according to NEXT's website. The biofuels plant in Port Westward in Clatskanie is estimated to be an investment of approximately $1 billion. Soumas has promised that the facility will result in approximately 200 local jobs.

OBITUARIES

Wenda Nikkoline Hall

July 9, 1936 ~ Aug. 21, 2020

Wenda Nikkoline Hall, 84, Clatskanie Oregon, went to live happily ever after on Aug. 21, 2020. She was born in North Dakota. As a child she moved to Sellwood, Oregon. Born with perfect pitch, she was on stage at five years old. As a teen, she would enter the talent contest at Oaks Park, winning ride tickets weekly. Graduating from Portland State in 1959, and then earning her master's in education and music. An accomplished cellist and pianist, she could play almost every instrument.

Her energetic, outgoing and loving personality made her a great teacher, spending the bulk of her career working for Salem/Keizer School District. Retiring in 1990, she moved to Clatskanie, Oregon. She spent her retirement substituting in the area, playing organ at Faith Lutheran Church, having an annual Christmas sing-a-long, and spending time with her grandchildren. She was known to go holiday caroling to local businesses just to bring a smile to locals.

Surviving is her son James N. Hall of Clatskanie; daughter in-law Jill J. Hall of Clatskanie; daughter, Kimberly J. Rivera of Clatskanie; daughter and son in-law Margaret and John Campbell of Murrieta, California; 10 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

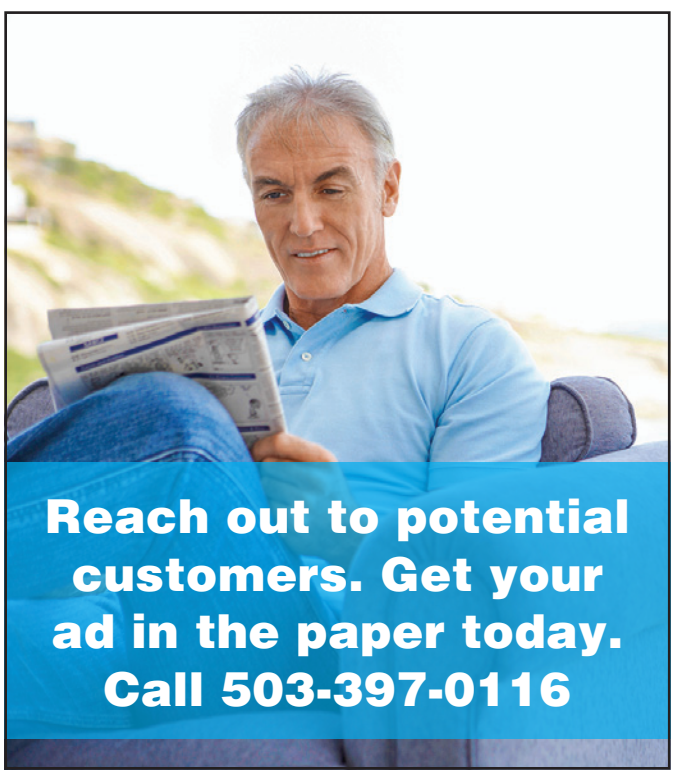
She was preceded by death by her husband James F. Hall; daughter Kari Arness; and son Robert Arness.

A celebration of life will be held at 2 p.m. on September 13, 2020 at Clatskanie City Park with Pastor Anthony of Faith Lutheran.

Sharon "Sharri" Poorman

Oct. 7, 1950 ~ March 2, 2020

Sharri Poorman passed away at home in Rainier, Oregon on March 2, 2020. A celebration of life will be held at 1 p.m. on Sat., Sept. 12, 2020 at the Rainier Eagles Lodge, 106 E "A" Street, Rainier, Oregon.



SUICIDE PREVENTION & RESOURCES

Suicide prevention resources

AL-ANON info-line: 503-369-1195
Alcoholics Anonymous info-line: 503-366-0667
Columbia Community Mental Health (24 Hours): 503-782-4499
Clatsop Behavioral Health Care: 503-325-5722

Resources for suicide prevention

Oregon Lines for Life: 800-273-8255 or text 273talk to 839863
Military Helpline: 888-457-4838 or Text MIL1@ 839863
Local VA Medical Center: 503-220-8262

Oregon Youth Lines for Life: 877-968-8491 or Text TEEN2TEEN at 839863 online chat too at OregonYouthline.org
RED Nacional para la Prevención de Suicidio: 888-628-9454 (servicio en español)

Deaf or Hard of Hearing: 800-985-5990
Senior's Crisis Line: 800-971-0016

Training opportunities and more information

Brianne Mares: 503-396-7637
Russ Clark: 503-366-6580

Suicides: On the rise in Columbia County

CHRISTINE MENGES
chronicle2@countrymedia.net

Editor's Note: This story was originally published in July.

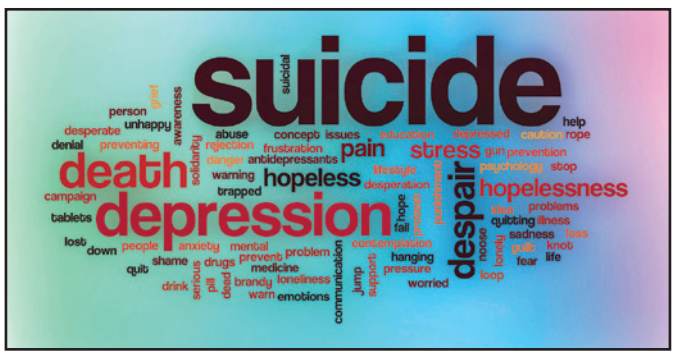
After two years of declining suicides, Columbia County has experienced a sharp increase in the first few months of 2020.

There were seven suicides within the months of January and February, and by March the county had surpassed all of the suicides in 2019, according to Columbia Health Services Suicide Prevention Coordinator Sarah Trejo.

The numbers have left mental health care workers in Columbia County grappling for answers. While there are no definite reasons, Trejo said there seems to be a worldwide trend with suicides spiking in February and March, which could be weather-related.

All of the increasing suicides in Columbia County were middle-aged to elderly men, Trejo said. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), middle-aged white men account for the demographic with the highest suicide rate.

The trend is something that a task force, made up of community members, Columbia Pacific CCO, Columbia Health Services, Columbia Community Mental Health, local schools, and suicide survivors and other community leaders, is attempting to address.



Courtesy graphic

There were seven suicides within the months of January and February, and by March the county had surpassed all of the suicides in 2019, according to Columbia Health Services Suicide Prevention Coordinator Sarah Trejo.

According to CCMH Crisis Team Clinical Supervisor David Flynn, the task force addresses suicide in a myriad of ways, through "training, education, community meeting, community partnering, and reducing stigma. We bring together a variety of different perspectives and stake holders. This includes people with lived experience – those who have survived a suicide attempt or whose loved one completed suicide – as well as a variety of professionals and community members who are passionate about this issue," Flynn said.

Task force review

Columbia Health Services Director Sherrie Ford put together the task force in 2018 in response to the rise in suicides. The task force was composed of groups and individuals with an interest in preventing suicide, from law enforcement, to teachers, to suicide survivors, to "anyone interested in suicide prevention as a whole," Trejo said.

After the task force was created, Ford put together a grant proposal to Columbia Pacific CCO and requested that they fund a five-year position for suicide prevention, according to Trejo.

That is now Trejo's position, one that she has held for the past five months. As of now, the position is on a two-year contract, but she is hoping the contract will be extended to at least five years so they can continue the work that they have been doing.

The numbers

Different community partners have collected statistics on the social problem of suicide over the past several years. According to those statistics, Columbia County saw an all-time high suicide completion number of 18 in 2018. In 2017, there were 12 suicides. In 2016 there were 15 suicides. 2019 saw an all-time low of seven suicides. However, that number crept back up in 2020, with the number in March surpassing all of 2019 suicides.

This is on par with national statistics. According to the CDC, the age-adjusted suicide rate increased by 33 percent from 1999 to 2017.

In preventing suicide, Trejo described her role as being one of education.

As the suicide prevention coordinator, Trejo leads frequent "QPR" trainings, which stands for "Question," "Persuade," "Refer." These trainings can take place at multiple different settings, from businesses to schools. Trejo said Columbia Health Services is trying to implement the trainings in general as part of the hiring process. In the time of COVID-19, the trainings have been done online through Zoom.

The signals

"You cannot put the thought of suicide into someone's head," Trejo said. "Either they're thinking about it or they're not. It's better to ask someone and get them resources to get help."

Trejo said she has a list of resources she uses to refer people to get the help they need. One of those resources is a crisis team in Columbia County.

"Our training goes over recognizing potential signs. The more large events that have happened in someone's life, the more likely they are to have thoughts of suicide. When you ask someone if they're having suicidal thoughts, it's actually a huge relief. Even if they're not having those thoughts, it's communication," Trejo said.

A postvention suicide program also exists, which involves providing support to those affected by suicide in its aftermath. In order to do that, Trejo said that community partners like CCMH and CHS are trying to work with law enforcement so that they can communicate with the CCMH crisis team so that they can get to the scene of a suicide and be a presence of support.

COVID-19 is also a concern for the individuals trying to prevent suicide in Columbia County. According to Trejo, evidence shows suicides do not increase during the pandemic, but might rise as things start to head back to normal.

"We're going to help people know that there's services available to community members, and start preparing for the possibility of that occurring," Trejo said.

The most important parts of suicide prevention plan are protective factors, according to Trejo.

"Having a team around an individual," Trejo said. "The more people you have working towards keeping someone safe. The more people that know QPR. We compare it to CPR, when someone has a heart attack. The chance of that person to survive, it increases exponentially. If you know how to ask the question, you can help that person before they get to the point where they're taking their own lives."

If you are struggling with thoughts of suicide, CRISIS SERVICES are available 24/7 at CCMH: 503-782-4499 or TTY 711. You can also call 911.

September is
National Suicide Prevention & Awareness Month

Things are tough for many of us right now, but there's always help – and hope. If you or anyone you know is having thoughts of suicide, please talk to someone.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255)
Columbia Community Mental Health Crisis Line: 503-782-4499
Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

Columbia Pacific CCO is a proud supporter of the Columbia County Suicide Prevention Task Force. For information about the Task Force and suicide prevention trainings, contact Sarah Trejo at Columbia Health Services, 503-397-4651, ext. 2006 or strejo@columbia-health.org

Columbia Pacific CCO™
Part of the CareOregon Family