

# Appeal Tribune

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021 | SILVERTONAPPEAL.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

## Sam Brentano leaves a legacy as commissioner

**Bill Poehler**

Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The only time Sam Brentano didn't connect with an audience was when he didn't want to.

Early in his 17 years as a Marion County Commissioner – which came to an end in early January – Brentano and commissioners Patty Milne and Janet Carlson were called to a meeting of Metro, a governing body centered in Portland, about the possibility of Marion County being added into its jurisdiction.

On the ride to the meeting, Brentano asked if he could be mean while talking with the Metro councilors, and the other commissioners told him he could.

At the meeting, he told the Metro councilors the two things the body has to offer – garbage and land use planning – Marion County already does better. If he wanted to support the Oregon Zoo, Brentano added, he'll buy a ticket.

They didn't take it well.

"I'm going to tell you what, we never were bothered with them. They're staying in Portland and we're hoping it stays that way," he said.

Brentano has never been one to mince words.

Over his 30 years in public office – he was the mayor of Sublimity from 1982 to 1993, the city where he still lives – Brentano frequently voiced his opinions, no matter how popular or unpopular they are.

Republican Danielle Bethell won the race to fill Brentano's seat.

He describes his biggest failure as a commissioner as the death of the proposed third bridge in Salem in 2019.

"I'm fully convinced this region will suffer for decades to come," he said. "We had a tremendous opportunity and to not be able to move that ahead is probably bigger to me than it should be, but that's how it is."

See **BRENTANO**, Page 2A



Marion County Commissioner Sam Brentano listens during a work session for officials from Marion and Linn counties about fire response and rebuilding efforts, in Cascade Hall at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem on Tuesday, Sept. 29.

BRIAN HAYES / STATESMAN JOURNAL



Construction crews lower a septic tank into the ground at the first Santiam Canyon temporary housing site organized by FEMA in Mill City. BRIAN HAYES / STATESMAN JOURNAL

## FEMA trailers coming to Mill City Park

**Bill Poehler**

Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

MILL CITY – Two weeks ago, it was an undeveloped field on the east end of a city park next to the wastewater treatment facility.

Then it was a gravel lot buzzing with activity as electric poles and septic tanks were installed.

Soon it will be a temporary home for 16 families that survived the Labor Day wildfires.

FEMA spokesperson Paul Corah said about 50 wildfire survivors from Santiam Canyon cities currently in hotels will get the first temporary housing units, commonly referred to as FEMA trailers.

Corah said 22 families in Linn and Marion counties have requested housing assistance. The Mill City site will be the first location for them.

"We're looking now if we need to expand this or we need to build another RV park," Corah said. "That decision has not been made."

Upward Bound director Diane Turnbull said she has been in discussions with FEMA about adding five or more trailers to the site of the former Gates School.

Another 228 families from Jackson and Lincoln

counties have also been approved for FEMA housing.

Corah said FEMA is still working to find a site for the trailers in Lincoln County.

### Wildfires displace hundreds

Approximately 800 homes in the Santiam Canyon were destroyed in the wildfires in September, though about 300 were second homes.

Many people found temporary housing with family members or are renting apartments or homes with money they received from insurance payouts.

Those in line for FEMA housing assistance didn't have those options.

Corah said FEMA would prefer to place the wildfire survivors approved for housing into rental houses or apartments as near as possible to their hometowns. But with a tight housing market in the Willamette Valley, the trailers are the only option for some.

He said the agency would prefer to place the housing units on people's properties, but many of the properties in the Santiam Canyon have yet to be cleared or don't have access to water, sewer and elec-

See **TRAILERS**, Page 3A

## Area legislators set goals for 2021 session

**Connor Radnovich**

Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Oregon Legislature will open its 2021 legislative session on Jan. 19, and lawmakers from across the state have already submitted hundreds of bills.

For lawmakers from the area, their pre-session bill filings include concepts that would: extend SNAP benefits to include personal hygiene items; regulate kratom products; reform the state's emergency management infrastructure; establish a beautification pilot program within the Department of Corrections; and permit the merger of community colleges and public universities.

Some of these ideas were introduced in previous sessions, but for various reasons did not garner

enough support.

Bills can be introduced throughout the legislative session. Normally several thousand will be introduced, with most of those receiving some kind of committee hearing.

Much is still unknown about how the 2021 legislative session will function amid the coronavirus pandemic. During the three special sessions in 2020, lawmakers kept the Capitol closed as they deliberated bills, irking some, especially Republicans, who wanted the public to have more access.

The presiding officers of the Legislature decided to close the building because large indoor gatherings create a higher risk of transmitting COVID-19. Lawmakers, essential staff and journalists who were al-

See **GOALS**, Page 2A

## Death of father and daughter brings Oregon's deadliest boating year

**Zach Urness**

Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

It was a deadly year on Oregon's lakes and rivers in 2020.

The state recorded 27 deaths involving boats this year, the most since 1979 and almost double the average number of fatalities from the past three decades.

The two most recent boating deaths were particularly heartbreaking.

Just two days before Christmas, David Schenderlein, 60, and his daughter, Sarah, 17, of Eugene, were found dead in the Willamette River after their stand-up paddleboards apparently became tangled in a downed tree. Both were wearing life jackets.

"It's not just the individual accidents that are so heartbreaking," said Randy Henry, boating safety program manager for the Oregon State Marine Board. "Every incident brings trauma that impacts family, friends, so many different people."

"Recreation is a critically important part of living in this state, and we are worried about this uptick. We need to find a way to push it back the other way."

### Spike in number of boaters brings increased accidents

The number of boating deaths in Oregon, which averaged 14 per year for the past three decades, has been slowly ticking upward since 2015, but it rose dramatically this season.

A big reason for that, Henry said, was record numbers of people getting outdoors as the COVID-19 pandemic limited other options. And many of those people were new to boating, he said.

"It's partly a numbers issue," he said. "With more people on the water, and more inexperienced people on the water, you're going to see more accidents. We saw that trend not only on the water, but also on land with search and rescue missions being way up as well. This year, likely because of the pandemic, there was just a lot more people that got themselves into trouble."

"What disturbs me is that the mistakes, in a lot of cases, are just a lack of basic knowledge."

Fatal accidents split between motorized and non-motorized boats.

Of the 27 fatal accidents, 14 involved motorized boats while 13 involved non-motorized boats such as canoes or kayaks. Twenty-one of the people who died were male, with an average age of 51.8, while six were female, with an average age of 33.3.

Two of the deaths involved motorboats running into swimmers – which occurred at Foster Lake and Henry Hagg Lakes this past summer.

The number of fatal accidents doesn't include those on inner-tube and small "pool toy" style watercrafts, which aren't managed by the Marine Board. (Story continues below)

### Not wearing life jacket remains biggest issue

As ever, the vast majority of fatal accidents involved someone not wearing a life jacket.

Of the 27 fatalities, 24 were required to have a life jacket or personal flotation "readily accessible." Of the 24, 17 were not wearing them, two were not wearing them correctly and five people were wearing them, according to Marine Board numbers.

"This year we're seeing very little life jacket use, which I think is indicative of the more casual, novice user," Henry told the Statesman Journal in August. "Generally speaking, we see life jacket use increase in coastal waters. Inland, use is pretty poor. I think most inland users just don't see the need until it's too late. And in a paddle craft, you have no time because you're basically already in the water."

That can become a major problem, even in flat water and particularly when the water is cool, because muscles can seize up and bring hyperventilating that

See **BOATING**, Page 4A

Online at **SilvertonAppeal.com**

News updates: ● Breaking news ● Get updates from the Silverton area

Photos: ● Photo galleries

Vol. 140, No. 4

Serving the Silverton Area Since 1880  
A Unique Edition of the Statesman Journal

