

# Appeal Tribune

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## Is Oregon overcounting COVID-19 deaths?

Tracy Loew

Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

On Jan. 25, 12-year-old Haley Pollman of Salem lost her fight with Batten disease, a fatal neurodegenerative disorder.

A few days earlier, at Randall Children's Hospital in Portland, her family had made the decision not to take extreme measures to extend Haley's life.

"She had lost her ability to speak and see, she had lost her strength to stand, she was screaming in pain, she was so agitated that she caused harm to her body, she stopped eating and drinking, and she stopped sleeping," her mom, Melissa Poll-

man, said.

They brought her home, where she died surrounded by her parents and her siblings, Audrey, 24, Madison, 18, and Cole, 15.

Two weeks later, Haley's family was shocked to read in the Statesman Journal that the Oregon Health Authority reported a 12-year-old Marion County girl who died Jan. 25 had been added to the state's COVID-19 death toll.

Although the child was not named, they are sure it was Haley.

The Statesman Journal publishes every COVID-19 death reported by OHA. The state's official COVID-19 death toll now is nearing 7,000.

But Haley's death raises questions about that tally.

The Statesman Journal found that Oregon is using significantly broader standards than many other states to decide who counts as a COVID-19 death. And nearly every state in the nation seems to be counting deaths using different criteria.

Haley was tested for COVID-19 on Jan. 18 as part of her hospital admission. Her family was surprised the test was positive. Haley showed no symptoms, they said.

And her death certificate, a copy of which the family provided to the States-

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Dean and Melissa Pollman with a photo of Haley on Wednesday, in Salem. Haley Pollman died of a rare genetic disorder called Batten disease on Jan. 25, but tested positive while at the hospital and was marked as a COVID death by OHA.

ABIGAIL DOLLINS / STATESMAN JOURNAL



## 'Unforgettable'

New guided trips allow climbing 300-foot trees at Silver Falls State Park

Zach Urness

Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

There's a new way to see Silver Falls State Park — from the top of an almost 300-foot tree. • Tree

Climbing at Silver Falls, a new business at Oregon's largest state park, is offering guided trips that follow ropes into the canopy of old-growth giants east of Salem. • "A lot of people have never climbed a tree — or haven't since they were children," owner and tree guide Leo Rosen-Fischer said. "To be in the canopy of a tree of this size is unforgettable. The view, the ecology and the fun takes you completely out of your box. It's a much different experience than you can get from down the trail."

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Climbers ascend into the canopy at Silver Falls State Park following a new business that takes people to the tops of nearly 300-foot trees.

LEO ROSEN-FISCHER / TREE CLIMBING AT SILVER FALLS

## 'Watching history unfold'

Teachers help students understand the war in Ukraine

Eddy Binford-Ross

Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

When Russia invaded Ukraine in late February, stories of the war flooded the social media feeds of Natalie Peton's students.

High schoolers found their Instagrams and TikToks full of posts about the war, nearly overnight. Many of them struggled to digest the information, due to a lack of background knowledge and unreliable sources.

So, Peton, a social studies teacher at McNary, set out to help them understand what was happening in Ukraine. Many other high school teachers across the Salem area did the same.

### A lack of historical knowledge

Phillip Nickel, a social studies teacher of 26 years at Sprague, saw that his students wanted to talk about the war, but many didn't have the historical understanding to make sense of the events unfolding in Eastern Europe.

"The first thing we do [when starting a topic] is ask: 'What do you know already?' They said, 'We really don't know very much at all and what we do know we got through memes,'" Nickel said.

Nickel's students were aware that Russia was the aggressor and who Russian President Vladimir Putin was, with little knowledge beyond that. Only 20% of them could even find Ukraine on a map, Nickel said.

These educators saw the importance of teaching students about current events and giving them the opportunity to learn and ask questions in a controlled environment, instead of online. They also saw a desire in their students to know more about the war.

So, Peton, Nickel and other teachers began incorporating it into their lessons.

"If this had gone a different direction and the conflict had fizzled or Russia had withdrawn, we would be talking about a different unit by now, but it didn't. So the kids have been going along in this journey, watching history unfold in front of them," Nickel said.

### Teaching about the war

At the beginning of the war, Peton put together a lesson for her freshman world social sciences class, walking them through the timeline and providing a crash course on that area of the world over the past century.

She's also helped her students put what they had been learning in class before the war — alliances and imperialism in the 1900s — into the modern context.

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## Local barista places among the best in competition

Em Chan

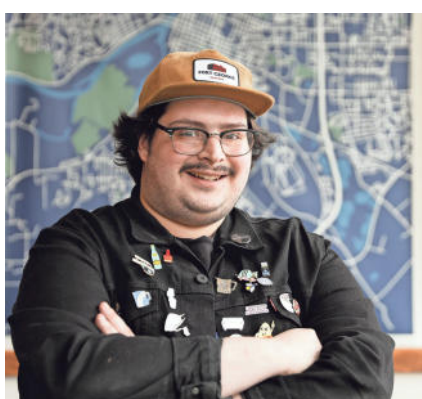
Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

If you close your eyes and listen to the whirring of the espresso machine behind the bar at Isaac's, you wouldn't guess at the magic being worked with espresso and milk at the hands of barista Kyle Layton. He recently placed in the top 16 at the World Latte Art Championship in New York City.

The World Latte Art Championship is a bracket-style, latte art competition that occurs four times a year during CoffeeFest, a convention that revolves around coffee and espresso. The championship requires competitors to be on a stage; they have two and half minutes to do as many latte art attempts to make one they can submit. Once photos and judging are done, competitors are eliminated or move ahead in the bracket.

"It was a big moment for me," Layton said. It was only his second time competing and getting to the finals in one of the most notoriously competitive latte art cities, he felt over the moon to be among the best.

Layton has been a barista for the past five years, originally starting out at Ikebox before moving to Isaac's once it opened almost four years ago. This past latte competition was just Layton's second; his first time attending and participating was last November, which was hosted in Seattle.



Isaac's Barista Kyle Layton competes in latte art competitions and is top 16 in the World Latte Art Championship in Salem.

ABIGAIL DOLLINS / STATESMAN JOURNAL

He said his first time competing in Seattle he had "the shakes," his hands being almost too jittery and shaky to pour the milk into the mug. Layton had one goal: to beat one person, which he completed by advancing to the second round.

However, he "completely threw it away." Dissatisfied with his first latte art, he attempted a second and because it took too long and he was unable to finish it, was disqualified.

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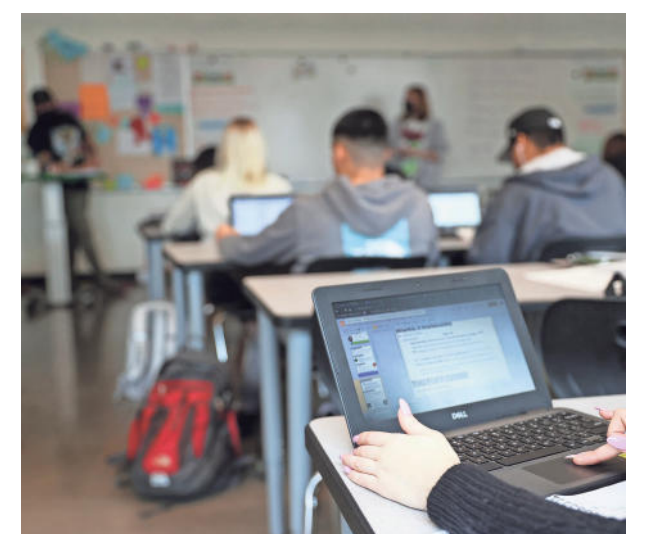
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South Salem High students take notes during DJ Correa's class.

BRIAN HAYES / STATESMAN JOURNAL