

Appeal Tribune

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Businesses struggle to find employees

Labor shortages persist in Mid-Valley

Bill Poehler and Claire Withycombe

Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Delivery drivers. Salespeople. Police officers. Policy analysts.

Oregon needs a lot more of them. Employers in the Willamette Valley are scrambling to find people to fill positions as the COVID-19 pandemic subsides and the economy expands. The share of Oregon workers seeking jobs is

nearly as low as it was before the pandemic, businesses are growing quickly, and baby boomers are leaving the workforce at a faster rate.

A stroll through downtown Salem reveals the need for workers, from Kuebler's Furniture to Thai Orchid and the Straight From New York pizza shop.

Home Depot is hiring hundreds of workers for its stores in Salem and throughout the Willamette Valley for positions in sales, store support, freight, merchandising and warehousing. Stayton's police department is hiring officers.

In Oregon's capital, where state gov-

ernment is the area's largest employer, dozens of positions such as policy analysts and fleet support are advertised by Oregon Housing and Community Services.

Experts say it will be a while until they find the number of workers they are seeking.

The need for workers is so great, and was even before COVID-19 set in, that the Oregon Legislature passed and Gov. Kate Brown Tuesday signed into law an infusion of \$200 million in state and federal funds known as Future Ready

See LABOR, Page 4A



A help wanted sign is posted at Kuebler's Furniture on Tuesday, April 5 in Salem.

ABIGAIL DOLLINS / STATESMAN JOURNAL

Shelters amid the ashes



Above: Diana McGuire stores personal belongings in a shed she received through the project on Saturday in Lyons. McGuire's home and garage burned down in the Beachie Creek Fire. Top: Volunteer Tim Long builds sheds for Santiam Canyon residents who were affected by the fire on Saturday in Stayton. PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL DOLLINS/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Volunteers build sheds for victims of 2020 wildfires

Whitney Woodworth Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

Many Santiam Canyon residents who lost their homes in the 2020 wildfires are still waiting to rebuild their lives.

Some like Diana McGuire, who lives near Highway 22 and the Santiam River, returned to their home in ruins.

She and her husband once had a workshop, thriving garden, chicken coop and 1936 home.

"It was our little bit of heaven," McGuire said.

But when the Beachie Creek Fire swept through the region, all that remained was her barn and chicken coop. Everything else was a loss.

"It was totally burnt down," she said.

The stress of losing their home took its toll on her husband. He died four months later, just after the couple was able to design a new home to rebuild.

Since October 2020, McGuire's been living in an

"It's a godsend. I don't know what I would have done without it."

Diana McGuire

Received one of the sheds after her home near Highway 22 and the Santiam River burned down in the Beachie Creek Fire

RV on her land while construction on her home is underway. The cramped quarters meant she had no place to store the feed for her chickens who miraculously survived the blaze, her canning tools to use once her garden is back and her other belongings.

Just as she was debating giving up the chickens,

See SHEDS, Page 2A

2020 primary election: Fluoride in water, school bonds, levies to be decided

Bill Poehler

Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

This is part of a series of stories on the issues in the May 17 primary election. Ballots will be mailed to voters April 27.

Sublimity is a serene city.

Located 15 miles east of Salem off Highway 22, surrounded by farms and near the Santiam State Forest, the city of 3,106 boasts homes with big front porches on large lots in quiet neighborhoods, charming restau-

rants and rural tranquility with a close-knit, small-town vibe.

How much longer it will have fluoride in its drinking water is an open question.

On the May 17 primary election ballot, its voters will get a choice after 67 years if they want fluoride in the water that is piped into their homes, schools and businesses.

That issue is among the ballot measures, bonds and levies that voters in Marion County cities such as Ger-

See ELECTION, Page 2A

Artist Stephanie Juanillo's search for home

Dianne Lugo

Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

This is part of a weekly series introducing readers to individuals who are passionate about our Mid-Valley community.

Stephanie Juanillo is still unsure of where she will call home in the near future. It is an uncertainty she explores in a new installation at the Bush Barn Art Center titled *Mi Cuerpo Es Mi Hogar*.

Currently a senior at Linfield University, Juanillo said she's known she was going to be an artist since she was 3. It is a career that her parents and family have been supportive of. The studio art program at Linfield is small, she said, but students get a lot of one-on-one time with the professors.

After graduation, she will be continuing her education and she has applied to two graduate schools. One program is in Vancouver, Canada, and another in Chicago.

That is why she was eager to accept the invitation from the Salem Art Association to be a featured artist at the gallery.

"I might be moving soon and I thought it'd be cool to do an installation here in Salem," Juanillo said.

The meaning of home

Juanillo said she has spent her senior year focused on exploring the concept of home and what that means for immigrants.

"For a lot of us, we've had to redefine the definition of home," she said.

For Juanillo, home is tied to family. She was raised in Perrydale and has been living in McMinnville while attending Linfield. The prospect of moving far from her tight-knit family for graduate school has been difficult, she said.

Her installation focuses on finding home within your body.

"For most of my life, I've searched for the meaning of home. Attempting to understand whether home is a place, a person or a feeling. As much as my concept of home is tied to my family and community, I also believe that home is inside each of us," reads her artist statement.

The exploration of Juanillo's heritage is prominent in the symbols she has chosen to display. Large monarch butterflies migrate and surround the photo of a two-year-old Juanillo, similar to the way millions of monarch butterflies migrate each year thousands of miles to the same forests in central Mexico.

Monarch butterflies are incorporated in almost all of her work, she said. Both of her parents are from Mexico and the butterflies are another way of commemorating and honoring them. The yearly migration is a natural wonder that also frequently coin-

See JUANILLO, Page 4A



Stephanie Juanillo works on her exhibit called "Mi Cuerpo Es Mi Hogar," at the Bush Barn Art Center on Thursday, March 31, 2022 in Salem, Ore. ABIGAIL DOLLINS / STATESMAN JOURNAL

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