

# Appeal Tribune

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## Gift and comeback moment for Detroit

**Bill Poehler**  
Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Another problem came up in completing the Detroit Community Center.

Concrete pads needed to be poured outside of the back doors of the nearly completed building to make sure the building met regulations and it could be finished in time for the June 4 grand opening.

Like a lot of things in the construction of the building, the coalition of builders who are working on the project for free figured out a way.

A white Ford pickup with "Rich Duncan

Construction" signs on the doors was pulling a concrete mixer with "Siegmond Construction and Excavation" signs on it around back to haul the concrete to pour the pads.

"I would say that's a visual example of how a lot of things occurred, rolling on the fly and doing whatever it took to get done," said Andrew Siegmund, owner of Siegmund Construction and a part-time Detroit resident.

Conceived in the aftermath of the Labor Day wildfires of 2020 and executed by a consortium of builders, the group is going to give the community something it's never had: A gathering place and something the people of Detroit can take pride

in.

Over 70 companies in construction and other fields and organizations in a variety of fields have banded together, and it's nearly ready to be given to the community.

"We build buildings all the time," Duncan said. "It's getting the right people in the room. I can't say enough for all of the different construction companies."

**Detroit was a vacationer's haven**

Duncan and his family frequently vacationed in Detroit.

He kept a trailer in the town. You could find him and wife Shelly on weekends on

his boat on the lake, watching his grandchildren jumping in the water. The kids didn't care how cold the water was, but he did and frequently stayed on the boat.

"They say one of the biggest bonding things that you can do with your family is boating and we certainly enjoyed the boating and the water sports, especially with the younger kids and letting them learn how to participate with those," he said.

Vacationers and part-time residents of Detroit contributed greatly to keeping the city going after the decline of the logging industry in the 1990s.

The city had a population estimated at

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## 'More than just identifying fire'

### Oregon uses 'digital fire lookouts' to monitor wildfires

**Zach Urness**  
Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

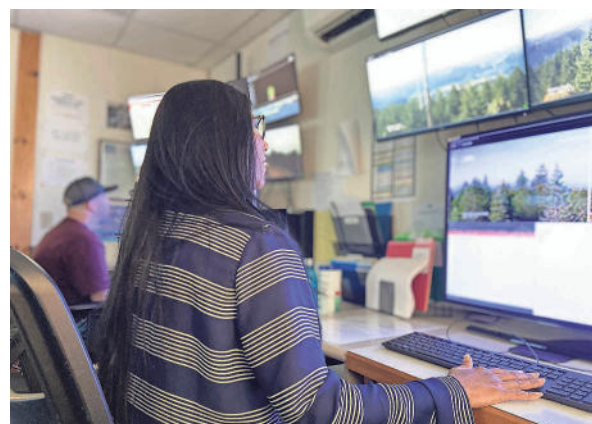
Each day during fire season, Tobi Beavers and his team of four begin the critical work of watching the southern Oregon forest for any sign of wildfire.

They scan the mountains and valleys of the Siskiyou and Cascade ranges for any puff of smoke rising into the sky, just like generations of fire lookouts across the American West since the early 1900s.

But Beavers and his team don't climb to high-altitude lookout towers or spend entire summers in solitude atop mountains. Instead, they head into a building in Central Point equipped with numerous screens showing images beamed in from 30 cameras placed at 15 different mountaintop sites across rural Josephine and Jackson counties.

"We rotate through the images of each camera every two and a half minutes, just to see if anything catches our eyes," Beavers said. "There are times

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**Above: Oregon's digital fire lookouts watch the forest for signs of smoke on screens that beam in images from remote cameras placed across the state.** OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY

**Main: The Bootleg Fire roared to become one of the largest wildfires in Oregon history.**

JOSH VARELLEN / US FOREST SERVICE

## Students lead fight to improve mental health

**Eddy Binford-Ross**  
Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

One Salem-Keizer Public Schools student recalls using his suicide prevention training twice in the past few years. He's not sure his friends would be alive if he hadn't.

Another said the pressure she feels two years into the pandemic has taken a serious toll on her mental health.

And a counselor observed the number of students seeking help for anxiety and depression rising dramatically after they returned to in-person schooling.

Since 2010, mental health professionals have seen increasing levels of anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation in students of all ages, district officials said. However, the pandemic has had an acute, negative impact on the already increasing statistics, as the stress, isolation and trauma of the past couple years have compounded.

Students in Salem-Keizer have been at the forefront of the fight to increase support available to their peers and to break the stigma around mental health.

Across Salem, young people are working with their teachers, counselors, administrators and the school district to increase the resources available in schools, teach students how to effectively help their peers struggling with mental health issues and ensure everyone knows what resources are available to them.

"The stigma around mental health is really difficult to break through for those who are struggling, which is why it's so important to have these conversations," Arnab Mohindra, a senior at South Salem High School, said. "Showing students what's available to them will help save lives."

**An 'especially difficult' year**

Students and mental health professionals agree the pandemic took a toll on students' mental health and general wellness, both during quarantine and upon their return to school.

"This year has been especially difficult. The stress from the past couple years of the pandemic and everything going on has compounded," Karley Strouse, a Salem-Keizer school psychologist and president-elect of the Oregon School Psychologists Association, said.

Rosa Rivera, a counselor of eight years at North Salem High School, said their number of suicide risk assessments — tests that predict the likelihood that someone will attempt suicide — have gone up noticeably. Along with that, the number of students reaching out for help around anxiety and depression has doubled or tripled since schools returned to in-person learning.

The isolation kids experienced during the pandemic, as well as challenges adapting back to the classroom, directly impacted this increase, Rivera said.

And, even with the hardships so far, Chris Moore, Salem-Keizer's social-emotional learning coordinator, cautioned that schools likely still have not yet seen the true effects of the pandemic on mental health.

Pragmatically, the district's goal is to have no more than 3-5% of students struggling with acute mental health crises, 10-15% at risk and 80-85% of the student population doing relatively okay. Right now, the percentage of students in crisis is higher, with 7-10% of students in the highest level of need, Moore said.

Students also feel less of a sense of belonging at school.

In a districtwide survey conducted in fall of 2021, fewer than half of students surveyed felt positively about their place at school. Out of 16,480 students in grades 6-12 grader who answered the question, 7,506 felt they belonged quite a bit or completely at their school.

Connection with the school community and others was hard to maintain during the pandemic, so relationships and support networks suffered, Mohindra said.

Another repercussion of the pandemic has been student behavior in the classroom, Moore said.

Teachers are finding their students struggling to focus more than they were in 2019. And district officials said they've seen an increase in students "disrespecting" their peers and staff members.

Counselors said schools are seeing more behavioral issues because students missed crucial stages of development during the pandemic.

"We are seeing students who are one to two years behind in emotional maturity," Moore said.

Mohindra also noted that this year's freshmen had their last full year in the classroom when they were 6th graders.

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## New state development rules could significantly impact Salem, Keizer

**Connor Radnovich**  
Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A state commission has adopted three temporary rules that could significantly impact future housing developments, prioritizing dense communities and walkability while de-emphasizing automobiles.

"The commission's action is intended to improve walking, biking and transit opportunities, increase housing choice and supply and promote more equitable and inclusive development in Oregon's communities thereby decreasing greenhouse emissions," said Robin McArthur, chair of the Land Conservation and Development Commission.

The temporary rules augment three areas of state law:

housing development, transportation planning and metropolitan greenhouse gas reduction targets. The rules apply to the eight largest metropolitan areas in Oregon: Albany, Bend, Corvallis, Eugene/Springfield, Grants Pass, Medford/Ashland, Portland metro and Salem/Keizer.

One aspect of the new rules is these metro areas would need to designate "climate-friendly areas," which would become central to future developments as cities look to expand.

These zones would contain higher-density housing, jobs, businesses and services and include "high-quality" pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure.

The zones would contain "abundant" vegetation and tree

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