

OUR VIEW

Oregonians can help build on the success of fighting COVID-19

Oregon successfully flattened the curve of the spread of COVID-19. It has one of the lower transmission rates in the country. But there was still a horrible price in lives lost, lives disrupted, people who lost jobs and businesses lost.

Oregon must build on the success and ensure the losses were not for nothing. Testing is the key.

We don't know how prevalent COVID-19 is in Oregon. Most people who get tested have symptoms. But some people have it and don't have symptoms. And some people don't get tested if they do have symptoms.

To understand the problem, Oregon needs good data to make decisions. People and policymakers can debate the right way to deal with the pandemic. But we need good data.

That's why the Key to



EO Media Group

Oregon is looking for 100,000 residents to participate in a study to better understand the coronavirus and its scope. Participants commit to submitting confidential information about any symptoms each day for a year, including their temperature

Oregon study is so important. It is looking for 100,000 people who are willing to submit daily, confidential information about their symptoms and also be tested for COVID-19. Positive tests for COVID-19 would, of course, be shared with the state's public health system. That's mandatory in Oregon.

The study is a one-year commitment, according to the invitation to participate, and takes about 10 minutes each day. Participants will take their temperature and answer seven questions, enter their results and send them off using a web-based application, said Jackilen Shannon, a professor at the Oregon Health & Sci-

ence University-Portland State University School of Public Health who is head of the OHSU Community Research office in Bend. Anonymous results from the study will be regularly posted on a website and used to track the disease.

The study is a cooperative effort between Oregon Health & Science University, and OHSU-PSU School of Public Health, working with the Oregon Health Authority. Studies like this typically take a year to plan out. They have scrambled to get this going in weeks.

If we've done a good job writing this, you might be ready to sign up. But you can't volunteer. To do this study right, it must be randomized. They sent out letters to 150,000 Oregon addresses, inviting people to participate. One might have arrived in your mailbox. If it's there, we hope you participate. Some

2,500 people had agreed to participate in the Key to Oregon study as of Thursday.

The testing could function like an early warning system, said David Bangsberg, the founding dean of the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health. It could alert public health officials where they need to make greater efforts to control the disease. The study is also making an extra effort to ensure it gets data from all aspects of Oregon's population, including among minorities and people who are lower on the socio-economic scale. It will not effectively capture data among the homeless or in prisons.

The virus will be with us until an effective vaccine is available and deployed. The Key to Oregon study will help keep Oregonians safe and open up the economy as fast as possible.

Your views

Buoyed by the kindness of neighbors

I need to be in Portland for a medical treatment every 28 days. When news of the pandemic came to Oregon and we were advised to stay home and not travel, I remained in Portland.

With our wet spring, greenery has thrived in Union County. This is a good thing. When I finally traveled back to my farm in Union on Memorial Day weekend, I found about three acres of jungle.

Friends and neighbors mobilized a big crew of all ages arriving with tools and equipment to cut much of the jungle back and cut paths so I can maneuver. What a welcome gift of kindness.

I had been feeling pretty low but I have been reenergized. Thank you, neighbors!

Susan Boyd
Union

Apologies for recent error

In my recent letter to the editor, published in The Observer's May 25 edition, I discussed a hearing that Union County District Attorney McDaniel claimed took place on Jan. 1, 2019. I stated:

"McDaniel included a transcript to support her claim — but it was a transcript from a hearing on Oct. 8, 2019, and of a different issue."

That was erroneous.

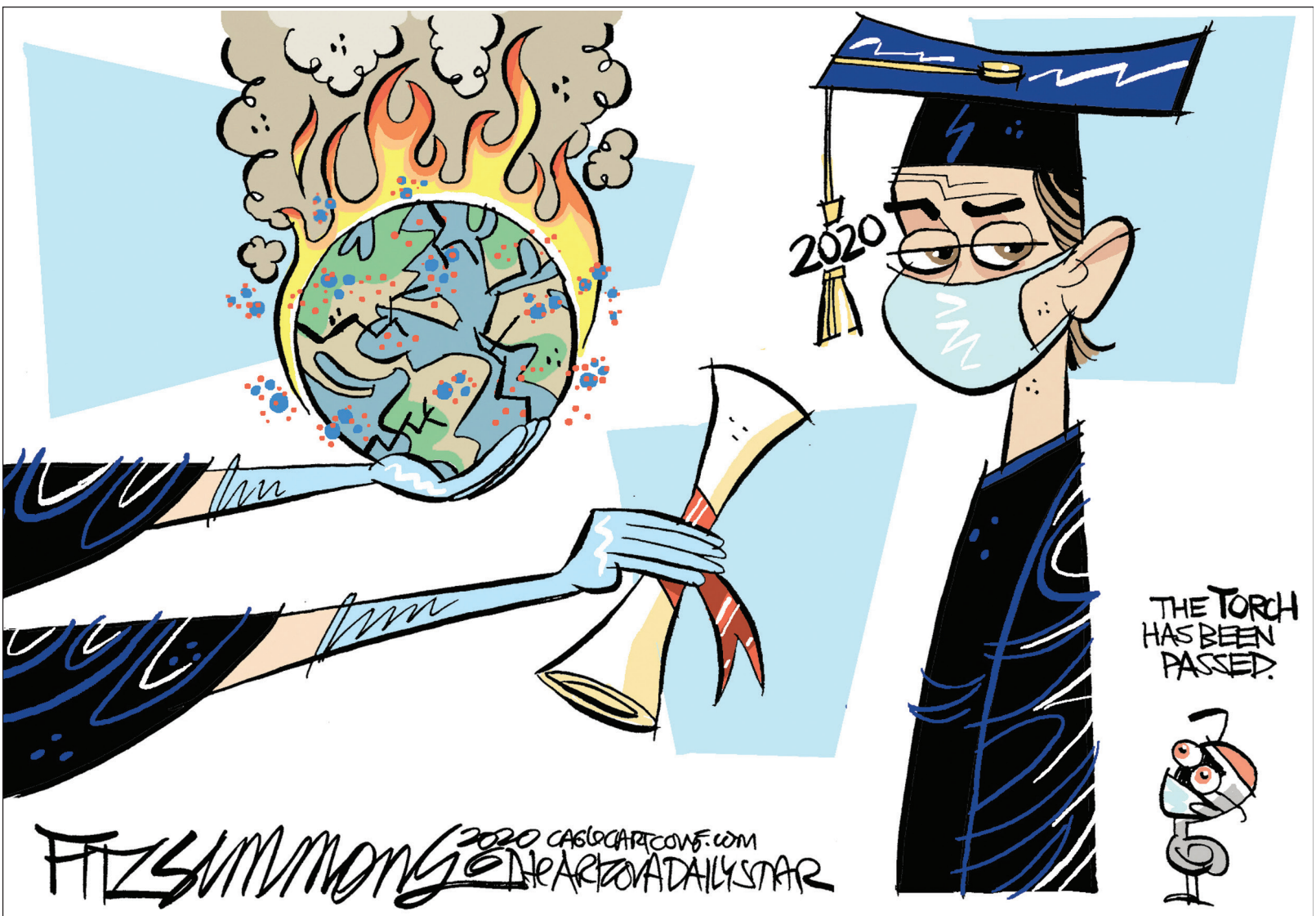
In reality, the hearing purportedly held on Jan. 1, 2019, was one of 33 referred to in McDaniel's legal memorandum for which she provided no record or transcript to support her claim.

I apologize for the error.

Anne Morrison
La Grande

Write to us

The Observer welcomes letters to the editor. Letters are limited to 400 words and must be signed and carry the author's address and phone number (for verification purposes only). Email your letters to news@lagrandeobserver.com or mail them to the address below.



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