

COVID-19

Continued from Page 1A

La Grande. There might be a few test results lingering from that clinic, but CHD Public Health Administrator Carrie Brogoitti said the majority of those test results have been processed.

“My understanding is that most of those, if not all of those results have come through from that two-day testing event,” she said.

Through Monday, there were 1,537 negative tests in the county — up 603 from the 934 negative results through June 19. Conversely, there have been 74 new positive results since that date.

“It’s safe to assume that many of the positives were tested at those events,” Brogoitti said, although she also said there still are individuals getting tested



EO Media Group file photo

Jake and Kathy Wolfe of Enterprise wear masks when they are out and about, including grocery shopping. Oregon Gov. Kate Brown issued orders effective Wednesday requiring the statewide use of masks or other face coverings in indoor public spaces to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

through their care providers or at CHD. “I don’t want people to assume all of those positives came from those events.”

Since the 218 cases in the two peak days of the

outbreak, Union County’s highest count of new cases in one day was 19 on June 23. The county has added an average of 6.7 cases per day since the spike occurred.

Brogoitti said some of the cases are connected to the outbreak, but that doesn’t apply to all new cases. That also doesn’t mean they are necessarily community spread, she said, in which the virus is spreading from casual contacts among numerous people and cannot be traced to a source. Oregon health officials have been concerned about the rise in those cases.

More than 1,400 of those have been confirmed in the last week. In all, 204 individuals in the state are reported to have died with COVID-19.

As of Saturday, Oregon’s overall positive testing rate was 3.4%, while the national average is 9%. But with the rate rising, state officials decided Monday it was time to act.

Less than 1% of those under 50 who are infected

have died from the virus. Fatalities increase rapidly with age, with 20 percent who are 75 and older dying. A New York Times statistical analysis reported 54,000 of the deaths in the United States — 43% — are tied to nursing homes and long-term care facilities.

The Oregon Health Authority has used forecasts from the Institute of Disease Modeling to create a trio of scenarios of the growth of infections: optimistic, moderate and pessimistic.

State epidemiologists recently have said they were aiming to stay within the moderate scenario in which COVID-19 cases would rise to about 900 a day. Daily hospitalizations would go to 27 per day. Under the pessimistic model, new cases could spike to more than 4,800 per day and 82 new patients would need hospi-

talization each day. The optimistic scenario saw cases remain at about 180 new daily cases. But Oregon has passed 200 cases in a day, with all but one of the highest number of daily cases occurring in the past two weeks.

Oregon joins a growing number of states that are backtracking on “reopening” amid a surge of new COVID-19 cases. Only two states — Rhode Island and Connecticut — have not shown a rise in coronavirus infections in the past week, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Florida, Texas and Arizona — three states that quickly reopened businesses in recent weeks — are showing the sharpest increases.

Gary A. Warner for the Oregon Capital Bureau contributed to this article.

WYDEN

Continued from Page 1A

Wyden also talked about the need to increase testing and contact tracing, and said small community pharmacies such as Murray Drug in Heppner should be part of the solution in making testing available to everyone.

“This country needs to ramp up testing because it is a fundamental pillar of getting the economy to reopen,” Wyden said. “We all want to reopen the economy. We just want to make sure it is done in a safe way.”

He also said he was working to help get personal protective equipment, testing reagents and other supplies to Oregon.

Wyden said that when a vaccine becomes available he wants to make sure it is affordable to everyone.

“As I’ve always felt with respect to pharmaceuticals, it’s great to have the product, but if people can’t afford to get the product, how did the innovations and the breakthrough really help people in their

homes and in their communities?” he said.

He promised as a member of Congress he would work to hold pharmaceutical companies accountable that in exchange for all of the federal funding they were receiving to research COVID-19 and develop a vaccine or cure, there will be no “profiteering” off of the end result.

Other topics the Democrat addressed at the town hall for Umatilla, Morrow, Union and Wallowa counties included the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, protecting the integrity of inspector general positions in federal agencies, problems with the Oregon Employment Department’s system for disbursing unemployment benefits and the importance of a strong meat inspection program.

He said when the United States is no longer dealing with the physical and economic effects of the pandemic, he wants to see the country create a national strategic food reserve to prepare for future crises.

Wyden also addressed a question from Patricia Ken-

nedy of Union County on vote-by-mail, a topic he frequently tweets about. She asked Wyden what is happening in the fight to allow mail-in voting nationwide.

Wyden, a Democrat, said he was the country’s first senator elected completely by mail, and former senator from Oregon Gordon Smith, a Republican, was the second, proving members of both parties can be elected through a vote-by-mail system. He also pushed back on Sen. Mitch McConnell’s claims that expanding mail-in ballots would encourage fraud.

He claims President Donald Trump, who has been vehemently against nationally allowing mail-in voting, submits his votes through the mail along with many of his cabinet members, though multiple sources, including the Los Angeles Times, have reported Trump has voted by absentee ballot.

“The late (Oregon Secretary of State) Dennis Richardson, who was a Republican, a conservative, he actually wrote Donald Trump and said ‘Oregon just hasn’t seen it,

and that’s because we have been so strong in opposing the kinds of things that could generate fraud,” Wyden said.

He said some in Washington, D.C. want to “suffocate” the U.S. Postal Service to profit off of privatizing the service or to prevent voting by mail. But he said the postal service provides medications and other important supplies to rural Americans who can’t access them locally.

“I don’t think rural Oregon, or rural America, can afford not to have this lifeline,” he said.

And Curtis Martin from North Powder said House Bill 4206, now in the state Senate, would make meat inspection a state rather than federal function. Wyden said he is excited to see the reduction of barriers to meat production at the state level and stated his commitment to see it done at the federal level.

“Oregon really ought to have its own meat inspection program,” Wyden said.

Reporter Sabrina Thompson of The Observer contributed to this article.

AIRPORT

Continued from Page 1A

he said, pointing not only to the cargo and LifeFlight transportation that takes place from the airport but also its use during fire season and by “what I would call a robust general aviation” of personal pilots who use the airstrip.

Wright said improvement projects are identified through an airport master plan. It includes a five-year plan that he reviews with the FAA annually, and this improvement has been on the radar.

“We’ve been working on this project for sometime now because it’s been identified,” he said.

That identification is necessary to qualify for funds from the federal government.

“I just really appreciate that we got bipartisan support. It’s exciting,” Anderes said. “We’re going to be able to move forward on the project and make the airport a better place for us.”

The coronavirus pandemic stalled plans for the start of the project. Wright, though, said he is hopeful work can begin in July, and said the targeted completion date is June of next year.

“It’s basically a two-year project,” Wright said.

“COVID-19 did delay things with what was going on with FAA, (but) we’re still on track.”

FIREWORKS

Continued from Page 1A

donations can be brought to the Stubborn Mule in Joseph or to the Joseph Chamber. Checks should be made out to the chamber, her post said.

“The beaches will surely not be empty July 4, the streets will not be empty, the shops, the restaurants, or grocery stores,” Brookshire’s post stated.

Brookshire and Betscheider both urged those viewing the show to keep safe, since the risk of the spread of coronavirus was a major factor in previous cancellations of the show.

“We want to encourage everyone to be safe and follow social distancing protocols and other guidelines recommended by our health care professionals,” Betscheider said in a press release. “This celebration can be shared responsibly from a boat, a car, a front yard, a park or just about any other vantage point

people have enjoyed it from over the years. This is a tradition that needs to continue, and I truly believe it can be done safely.”

He said gathering for the fireworks show is not unlike other gatherings that have taken place during the pandemic.

“Right now, there are people choosing to protest across the nation for the sake of equality, in large groups, I might add,” he said. “July 4 celebrates what this country was founded on, which is our freedom. Our freedom of choice means that you can choose

to come enjoy the fireworks show, or you can choose not to. It’s that simple.”

“Just as we encourage in each of these places, please practice social distancing when necessary, wear a mask if you’d like, don’t come if you’re not comfortable,” Brookshire posted. “It is up to each and every individual to think for themselves and practice what makes them comfortable. Please be respectful of others around you. Let’s celebrate what this country is all about, and that is the freedom to choose.”

BRING EVERYTHING YOU LOVE TOGETHER!

Blazing Fast Internet!
ADD TO YOUR PACKAGE FOR ONLY **\$19.99/mo.** where available

2-YEAR TV PRICE GUARANTEE

\$59.99
MO.
for 12 Mos.

America's Top 120 Package
190 CHANNELS
Including Local Channels!

CALL TODAY - For \$100 Gift Card Promo Code: DISH100

1-866-373-9175 Offer ends 7/15/20.

All offers require credit qualification. 24-month commitment with early termination fee and AutoPay. Prices include Hopper Duo for qualifying customers. Hopper, Hopper w/Sling or Hopper 3 \$5/mo. more. Upfront fees may apply based on credit qualification.

Eastern Oregon University

Small Business Development Center

is Here to Help!

✓ Answering Questions about the EIDL loan and PPP Forgiveness Process

✓ Business Concept & Launch

✓ Marketing (including social media and website development)

✓ Business Planning

✓ Cash Flow

✓ Understanding the “5 C’s of Credit”

✓ Financing

✓ Human Resources

✓ Market Research

✓ Expansion

✓ Liquidation

✓ And everything else in between!

EASTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

AMERICA'S SBDC OREGON

POWERED BY U.S. Small Business Administration

business oregon growing together

All of our services are free and completely confidential. Contact us today!

541-962-1532 or email eousbdc@gmail.com

Oregon Small Business Development Centers are funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and by the Oregon Business Development Department.

TREASURE VALLEY STEEL, INC.

Quality Steel Roofing & Siding Products Since 1982

Manufacturing Zee & Cee Purlins In-House Custom Cut Exact Lengths

- 24 Colors
- Custom Trim
- 2 1/2” Corrugated
- Delivery Available
- Full Soffitt Line
- 3 ft. Gulf Coast Panel
- 3 ft. PBR Panel
- 3 ft. Mesa Panel
- 3 ft. Tuff Rib Panel
- Standing Seam
- 2 ft. Delta Rib
- 3 ft. Pro Panel

40 Year Full Paint Warranty • WeatherX Paint System

ONTARIO
541-889-4214
1460 N. Verde Dr.
Toll Free 1-866-887-8335

BOISE
208-336-7505
6619 S. Supply Way
Toll Free 1-888-717-8335

WWW.TREASUREVALLEYSTEEL.COM