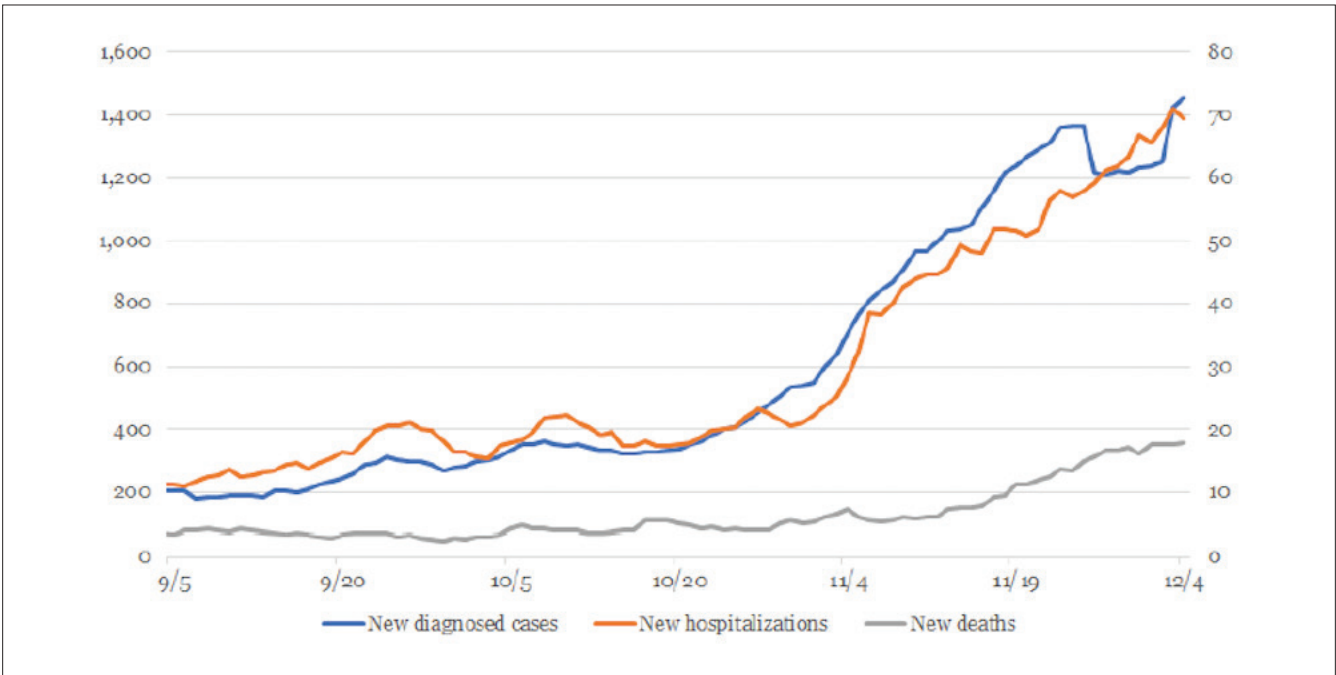


CROSSROADS

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every day by Jan. 1. Both of these predictions show a near future in which the pandemic worsens severely and rapidly. As of Friday, Dec. 18, just over 14 percent of Oregon’s hospital beds were both staffed and unoccupied. The state, with a population of 4.2 million, had 742 total adult hospital beds to share. While the first two outcomes modeled by the OHA were dire, the third painted a future in which Oregonians become more adherent to preventive measures and the spread of COVID-19 slows, dropping to a transmission rate of 0.9. In that scenario, with more people in the state staying home, limiting travel, wearing masks, social distancing and maintaining preventative hygiene, exponential spread would cease and daily hospitalizations would drop to 55 per day — a much more manageable number for Oregon’s



Oregon Health Authority/Contributed Graphic

This graph from the Oregon Health Authority shows the seven-day rolling averages on new cases of COVID-19 and new hospitalizations for the disease in Oregon increased dramatically in mid-October, and deaths from COVID-19 have been increasing since early November.

tial spread would cease and daily hospitalizations would drop to 55 per day — a much more manageable number for Oregon’s

hospitals. The modeling also showed that daily new cases would level off to around 1,200 per day. The Health Authority

has noted repeatedly that its modeling has limits and that “predicting future trends in COVID-19 is extremely challenging.”

Only time will tell which, if any, of these futures comes to pass, but one thing is certain: the pandemic is far from over.

PROTEST

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accusing Democrats and Senate President Peter Courtney of joining Gov. Kate Brown’s “campaign against the people and the children of God.” The senator from Roseburg called the special session “illegitimate” as the public is not allowed inside and described it as an “unchecked assault” against people and their freedom. In addition he decried the mask mandate. “If you had not done such great evil to my people and had simply asked me to wear my mask, I would have,” Heard said. “But you commanded it and therefore

I declare my right to protest against your false authority and remove my mask.” During the special session lawmakers are asked to follow regulations including wearing a face covering, limiting the number of people in elevators, following one-way hallways and physical distancing while on the legislature floor. Heard ended his brief statement by saying he would stand at he microphone without a mask for 30 seconds as he ripped off his surgical-style mask. “Your time is up,” Courtney said seconds later as he banged the gavel. “No it is not Mr. President,” Heard said raising his voice. A quick back and

forth ensued before Heard’s microphone was shut off and he stormed out of the chamber. The four bills expected to be taken up Monday during the one-day special legislative session include a proposed eviction moratorium that includes \$200 million in relief for landlords and tenants, a restaurant relief package that includes a provision legalizing cocktails to-go, a bill that would protect schools from some coronavirus-related lawsuits and a measure that would transfer \$600 million in to the state’s emergency fund for COVID-19 and wildfire-response and recovery. A fifth bill, that would

extend liability protections from coronavirus-related lawsuits to hospitals and health care providers, did not make it past the Joint Committee meeting. The bill that has dominated discussions among lawmakers for weeks and drove the immediate need for a special session is House Bill 4401, which focuses on evictions. With the federal and state eviction moratorium set to expire at the end of the year, the issue has been pushed to the forefront. For weeks, housing advocates have implored lawmakers to extend the moratorium, estimating that between 20,000 and 40,000 Oregon households could be at risk for eviction.

The proposal extends the moratorium on residential evictions through June 2021. The bill would also require tenants to submit a sworn statement that they’ve experienced financial hardship in order to be protected from eviction. The main sticking point however is in the second part of the proposal — a \$200 million package in which \$50 million will be allocated for rental assistance to tenants for the months ahead and \$150 million to small landlords for previously unpaid rent. In order for landlords to receive funds they must forgo 20% of past-due payments, which Drazan described as “dramatically unfair.”

The human toll of COVID-19: Woman recounts struggle

Madras woman who helped make masks says, ‘I don’t think any of us really do recover fully’

By Suzanne Roig
The Bulletin

BEND — Jean Jones doesn’t even ask any more if her family members smell the same thing she does. She knows now the problem is a lingering side effect of having COVID-19. Bend resident Shira Franklin has a compromised immune system and lack of energy months after having COVID-19. She’s been like this since July and still fears getting the virus again because her doctor has said the immunity will only last a couple of weeks. And then there’s the social stigma of being a so-called long hauler. When each of the women told people they’d had COVID-19, they experienced people physically taking a step back from them. For the thousands who have voiced their concerns on Facebook groups and other social media platforms as long-haul survivors of the virus, COVID-19 is like a guest that stays too long. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention admits that little is known about the long term effects of COVID-19. The CDC states that most people recover fully and some have lingering symptoms that last for weeks or months. Even people who are never sick enough to be hospitalized can experience lingering side effects, according to the CDC. Jones, 64, first came down with symptoms on Nov. 3. A member of the Central Oregon Mask

Makers group, she and her mother helped make thousands of fabric masks that were given away to St. Charles Health System’s medical professionals, members of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and anyone else who wanted one. And even though she intellectually understood about the virus, she wasn’t convinced that it was truly as bad as medical professionals made it out to be. “I had been on the fence about the COVID,” said Jones from her home in Madras. “I knew it was bad, but I didn’t know if it was really all that bad. “It’s definitely real now.” While she talked about how she felt at first, she said the dates run into each other. Her symptoms began with an annoying cough, which she at first thought were allergies. Then the fatigue set in. Her eyes felt like thousands of needles were poking her. She slept for 18 hours straight. Then came the fever. Everything was an effort. Going to the bathroom. Walking and standing up. “Everything runs together,” Jones said. “It all runs together and I have no concept of time. No taste. Now smell. Congestion. I thought it was the flu. “ She finally called her doctor who told her to come by for a drive-thru test. When the medical practitioner came out to her car dressed in full personal protective equipment, she

got worried, but still didn’t think she had COVID-19. Two days later, she got confirmation. COVID-19. The worst part of the entire ordeal was that she infected her 96-year-old mother, granddaughter and granddaughter’s boyfriend, Jones said. “You feel like a piece of dog biscuit,” she said. “I feel guilty that everyone got it. I don’t know who brought it in.” Her mom spent a week in the hospital and has recovered. Her granddaughter didn’t have any symptoms and her boyfriend lost his sense of taste and had a fever for a day, Jones said. Of the three who were sick, Jones is the only one with lingering side effects. It’s been more than a month and she smells things that no one else does and is still fatigued easily. A trip to the store requires a nap. Sometimes making dinner is an effort. “We really need to take this seriously,” said Jones. The World Health Organization estimates people typically recover in two to six weeks from COVID-19, but some people may have lingering symptoms following an initial recovery, the WHO states. For Franklin, who worked in a small restaurant in Redmond, she got sick back in July. While she is recovered, she still doesn’t feel like herself pre-COVID-19, she said. “I don’t think any of us really do recover fully,” said Franklin, 36. The journey from symptom to a positive test started with breathing difficulties, she said. At first the doctor thought she had bronchitis, but opted to test

her for COVID-19 just in case. He sent her back to work because she didn’t have any COVID-19 symptoms, Franklin said. “When I got the call that the test was positive, that I had COVID, I hung up and went to my manager and told him. He told me not to touch anything,” Franklin said. “I cried for an hour in my car, not because I had it, but I was fearful with my asthma, and I realized I had put my boss and my roommates at risk.” No one else around Franklin ever got sick. That’s the oddest thing about COVID-19, it skips some and pummels others. Franklin’s pretty sure she got it while working as a server at the restaurant.

Dine-in customers were allowed to remove their masks while being seated at the table under the Oregon government mandates. It’s months later, and Franklin still has trouble with her taste buds and sometimes her energy lags. “It will take months for her immune system to return to normal, she said. And she’s never going to be safe from COVID-19 until it’s tamped down. “When people hear I had it, they step back and look at you and ask what did you do to get it,” Franklin said. “People have asked me if I was partying or not wearing a mask. Nope, I did everything I was supposed to do. “I’ve never been so depressed. I felt so alone.”

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