

COVID-19 State goals 'well within reach'

Continued from page 1

snacks. Jason Bradley, One Community Health site manager, walked the governor through the process, from check in to shot, and gave her a tour of the clinic's new mobile vaccine unit, provided by the Center for Disease Control.

Oregon's statewide mark stood at 66.2 percent on Wednesday. OHA Director Pat Allen said that if the current pace continues, the mark would be hit about June 21.

"This is not a slam dunk," Allen said.

Allen said that the June 30 deadline set earlier in the year by the governor was well within reach.

"It will take a lot of work by a lot of people to get it done," Allen said.

Lifting restrictions would include:

- Ending the risk level system for counties of lower, moderate, high and extreme.
- Ending a state requirement for masks and face coverings in almost all settings. Exceptions would be airports, public transit, and health care settings that follow federal agency guidelines.

- End requirements for individuals to show vaccination verification in public venues and businesses.
- Allow K-12 students to attend school in-person, full time, five days per week.

K-12 guidance is being revised to support schools in safely delivering in-person instruction throughout the school day.

Current health and safety standards, including indoor mask requirements, will remain in place in workplaces, schools and child care settings. Colleges and universities can make their own decisions on protocols after considering guidance from the Centers for Disease Control.

Brown said the move would not mean the pandemic was over in Oregon. She will re-examine whether or not to lift her emergency order that gave her a wide latitude on public health decisions.

"The pandemic will not be over," Brown said.

To try to increase the vaccination rate toward the goal, many pharmacies will extend hours to reach out to more people who want shots.

"Some people are not vaccine resistant, but vaccine inconvenient," Allen said.

Brown also reiterated



Jackson DeBorde, 14, sits for a vaccine shot by Sandy Chilate during a vaccine clinic at One Community Health in Hood River for youth ages 12-14. Below, Gov. Brown speaks to a television news reporter. Mark B. Gibson photo

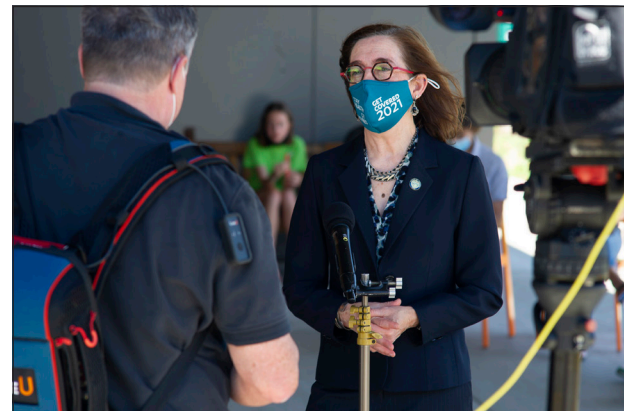
plans to give away \$1 million to a vaccinated Oregonian, along with \$10,000 to a vaccinated person in each of the 36 counties. Scholarships worth \$100,000 are also being offered to lucky vaccinated youth.

Brown and OHA officials said it was time to push past the current levels of inoculation as medical evidence and state statistics show the impact of the virus has separated residents into two groups with very different likely futures.

Those with vaccination are almost completely free of infections, severe illness and death.

But the pandemic is still "a shadow" across the state for those who are not inoculated. OHA said nine out of 10 deaths are currently among people who have no record of vaccination.

Children, immunocompromised and those who have not been able to get vaccinated must still be considered when communities



decide what steps to take. "There are still Oregonians who need to take extra precautions to feel and stay safe," Brown said.

Those battling cancer, immunocompromised Oregonians, and organ donors were among those still needing protection, to name a few. There are also many Oregon kids who are not yet eligible for a vaccine.

"So, it will remain incredibly important for Oregonians to continue making smart choices," Brown said.

OHA will continue to monitor the global pandemic and provide assistance and resources, but will increasingly advise local officials on measures to take.

OHA and CDC are expected to issue more guidance in coming days as the state nears the 70 percent goal.

Mark Gibson of Columbia Gorge News contributed to this report.

COVID-19 economic needs assessment identifies key issues

Gorge communities need small business support, critical community infrastructure, workforce support and increased regional resilience, according to a 2021 needs assessment by Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD).

Early this year, MCEDD conducted a COVID-19 economic needs assessment across the five-county bi-state region (Klickitat, Skamania, Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman counties) to determine local needs and priorities for recovery, understand the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and identify opportunities for future collaboration around these issues.

The assessment was developed in partnership with six economic development districts across Oregon with support from University of Oregon's Institute for Policy, Research and Engagement.

In the Gorge, MCEDD conducted 17 interviews with 25 stakeholders across the region. Interviewees were chosen to reflect key industries and community organizations that support economic and workforce development.

The goal of the assessment was to apply a "listen to learn" framework to discover what community leaders feel are priority concerns and

what actions will be needed to support an equitable recovery, according to a press release from MCEDD. The report summarizes those findings and makes recommendations for future action through existing and new partnerships.

The project uncovered needs in the following four key areas:

- **Small Business Support:** Support small businesses as they recover and grow. Focus on those most impacted.

- **Critical Community Infrastructure:** Collaborate to expand broadband capacity, attainable workforce housing and improved transportation networks.

- **Workforce Support:** Increase access to affordable, accessible childcare and workforce development initiatives that will help our residents get back to work and increase skills.

- **Regional Resilience:** Leverage the robust response to the pandemic to build resiliency planning networks to prepare businesses, organizations, and residents for future economic shocks and disruptions.

To learn more about these core areas and potential opportunities to address them, visit the MCEDD website to read the full report at www.mcedd.org/mid-columbia-covid-19-economic-needs-assessment-project.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Virtual tea benefits HR History museum

HOOD RIVER — The History Museum's afternoon tea celebration is back for its fourth year and is going virtual. Enjoy savories and sweets and sip tea from the comfort of your home.

The guest of honor is Elizabeth Woody, former Oregon Poet Laureate and director of the Museum at Warm Springs. Woody is known for her poetry and as a visual artist, educator, and community leader. Proceeds support the museum's mission to celebrate and preserve the unique history of Hood River County and the Mid-Columbia River region.

Ticket price includes savory and sweet treats, tea, and a free museum admission pass; \$35 or Tea for Two for \$60. Lecture only is \$15.

Food and tea can be picked up between noon and 2 p.m. at Spirit of Grace Church, 1140 Tucker Road, Hood River. For more information, call the museum at 541-386-6772 or visit www.hoodriverhistorymuseum.org.

ODOT project list available

Oregon Department of Transportation has released its 2021 Projects Map for Northwest Oregon. This map lists all major projects under way this summer and can be found online at www.oregon.gov/odot/Regions/Documents/ODOTSummerConstruction2021WebFriendly052521.pdf.

Water advisory lifted

THE DALLES — Certain customers of the City of The Dalles water system were notified on June 3 to boil their drinking water before consumptive use such as drinking, preparing food and baby formula, brushing teeth and making ice. Water mains have since been repaired, tests show no bacteria in city water and the advisory was lifted June 6. The affected area was generally limited to that east of Lewis Street to Thompson Street, from E. Ninth to E. 19th streets.

The water main has now been repaired, the system has been flushed, and test results indicate that the water is safe to drink. If you live in the affected area, please throw away any ice that may have been made by automatic ice makers after June 3.



Lucian Burns, 14, is vaccinated by One Community Health staff Sandy Chilate as Oregon Gov. Kate Brown, in back third from left, looks on. To Brown's right is One Community Health Site Director Jason Bradley. Mark B. Gibson photo

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