

Bill Bartlett/photos for The Spokesman

Construction nears completion of 50,000 square-foot addition to Medline, which manufactures medical parts.

Tech

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They employ 18 and when they reach full scale, that number will grow to around 100 according to Carsten Sundin, President and CEO. They are supported by remote staff in Canada and India, but Sundin is proudest of the high level engineers and fabricators staff from Redmond who get the planes airborne.

BasX is HVAC

In the same league is BasX, the 10-year-old industry leader in the manufacturing of high efficiency data center cooling solutions, cleanroom settings and custom HVAC systems which employs 320 at its 140,000-square -foot complex on SW 21st Street. Just getting through the front door is a model of technology with a virtual receptionist who even takes your temperature autonomously as a COVID mitigation measure.

"Clean rooms" are those structures where extremely valuable or vulnerable operations take place such as the making of computer chips that require extreme control of temperature, dust, humidity and air pressure to avoid contamination of the product. When rooms like that need to be designed, engineered and built, one does not call Bob's Heating & Air.

Medline in line for growth

Drive all over the back streets and business parks of Redmond and you find businesses just like those, some with impressive, large scale facilities. Take Medline on NE Hemlock for example now doubling its size from 50 to 100,000 square feet. Inside the walls are highly skilled workers and highly complex systems making life-saving medical products such as used for tissue repair and wound care.

Thirty engineers alone are part of a much larger roster of skilled craft workers whose output includes high-tech surgical devices like electrical scalpels. It takes extraordinary ability and certification to supply the hospital market. The Redmond plant is one of several in the \$18 billion company's portfolio. Picking Redmond for a production facility is testament to the caliber of worker and infrastructure



found in the city.

Other, smaller technologies

A much smaller and locally owned firm, Springer Precision, on SW Deerhound typifies another of dozens of manufacturers in Redmond. It makes parts for firearms ranging from coil magazine springs to base pads to magazine extensions and much more. Guns are loaded with technology once you take them apart. Precise machining is critical in every sense of the word.

Then there's Risse Racing Technology in its new, larger facility on SW 2nd Ct., one more illustration of where

Redmond high tech is on full display. It designs and manufactures high performance mountain bike suspension components that are distributed in Latin America, Europe and New Zealand as well as in the States.

Schools playing a role

Schools in Redmond are up to the task. Both high schools offer CTE (Career and Technical Education) opportunities sorely needed to fill the ranks of unfilled jobs in the trades and manufacturing sectors. BasX, for example, expects to need another 100 workers in the near future. They are shorthanded now with a dozen or more job openings.

Redmond Proficiency Academy boasts award winning STEM Robotics and electives in computer science and AP Physics along with Business and Technology CTE courses.

The Redmond Technology **Education Center at Central** Oregon Community College could not be better positioned to guarantee graduates rewarding careers. Their 34,000-square-foot building houses technology-centered programs that allow students to train for current and future family-wage jobs. The \$12.5 million building began classes in the 2014 fall semester.

A key aspect of COCC's vision for the facility is its adaptability for future needs projecting that 10 years from now and beyond, the Center will be able to support training in technologies that are unknown today. To provide this flexibility, the Technology Education Center was designed with modifiable spaces as well as expansion space and large exterior access doors to allow for removing old and installing new equipment.

Apart form their wellknown vet tech degree program, the college offers a twoyear automotive technology degree emphasizing electric and hybrid power systems, clean diesel and on-board vehicle management diagnostics prevalent in the current generation of highly technical cars and trucks. Very few car owners could even dream of repairing their own vehicle today.

The jobs produced by the many, albeit obscure, high tech enterprises in Redmond are just the kind idealized by city planners - good paying, sustainable and contributing to the city's dynamism and attractiveness.

Capitol

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Change at the top: House Dem ocrats, who have a 37-23 majority, will choose the new speaker before the 2022 session. Rep. Janelle Bynum, D-Clackamas, wants the job, but Democrats may opt for a caretaker speaker for 2022 before regrouping after the election for the 2023 session. Adding to the political whiplash, House Majority Leader Barbara Smith Warner, D-Portland, has told Oregon Public Broadcasting she will give up her position as the party's floor leader before the 2022 session as well.

Senate Majority Leader Rob Wagner, D-Lake Oswego, first chosen majority leader for the 2021 session, will be the longest-serving legislative leader in the 2022 session with plans to stay in the Legislature. He'll lead the Democrats, who have a majority of 18 of 30 seats.

The minority Republicans in both chambers have new leaders as well.

Sen. Tim Knopp, R-Bend, a former House majority leader, steps in as an institutional stalwart for a fractured GOP caucus in which only 10 of the 12 senators follow the party leader.

A faction led by Sen. Dallas Heard, R-Roseburg, who is also the Oregon Republican Party chair, takes a hardline stance or boycotts votes.

In the House, Rep. Vikki Breese Iverson, R-Prineville, will lead a more cohesive Republican caucus. Chosen leader late last year after House Minority Leader Christine Drazan, R-Canby, stepped down to focus on her campaign for governor, it will be the first regular session with Breese Iverson determining the strategy for her "superminority."

The change will be unfamiliar to all but a handful of the most veteran lawmakers. To have new legislative traffic controllers in a short session could be a tall task.

"There will be a leadership experience vacuum and that always leads to

instability," Knopp said. **Big plate of bills:** Lawmakers could submit nearly 200 bills, with additional legislation coming from leadership and committee chairs. Each bill would have to be introduced, have a hearing, win committee approval, win a floor vote, then go to the other chamber where the process would be repeated all over. If approved and any changes reconciled, only then would it go to Brown.

All in 35 days. Democrats would like to deal with skill and job training, increase the number of educators, make criminal justice reforms and address safeguards and aid for the pandemic's front-line

"It's my job to help my colleagues get their bills across the finish line," Wagner said.

Knopp said Republicans wanted to honor what he said was the will of voters who approved adding the short session in addition to the odd-year 160-day long session.

"Only bills that are budget-related, technical fixes or emergencies should pass during the short session," Knopp said. "Democrat majorities should be wary of government overreach as the public is done with it."

Stalls and stops: Republicans do not have enough members in either chamber to block legislation. But two archaic parts of the Oregon Constitution have given them a big cudgel in recent years.

Oregon is one of the few states where more than a majority of lawmakers is needed in each chamber to create a quorum to do any business.

Oregon requires two-thirds attendance, which is 40 in the House and 20 in the Senate. Republicans have walked out over carbon cap legislation and education legislation in the past. The 2020 session died after just three bills were passed.

Drazan came up with a different way to jam the gears on the Democrats' agenda as minority leader in 2021. Under the Constitution, bills must be read in their entirety before final passage. In less contentious times, the requirement was usually waived without objection and just the short title of the bill was read. If an objection was raised, it took a twothirds vote of the House to overcome the objection.

Objections had been used sparingly on highly controversial bills. Drazan employed a blanket objection to all legislation, which led to a massive backlog of bills to back up until a deal was struck with Kotek to speed

Kotek agreed to give Drazan a seat on the House Redistricting Committee, giving it 3-to-3 parity on the panel. But when a special session was held in September to approve redistricting, committees had to be formally reestablished. Kotek announced the redistricting panel would revert to a Democrat majority.

pects of finding areas of agreement were possible, leaders of both chambers and both parties said. But whether 2022 and its many challenges in a short time will make reaching consensus a challenge.

"There's no reason we can't successfully pass essential bills that solve problems for Oregonians this year unless our Democrat leadership fails to listen to Oregonians by charging ahead with a partisan agenda," Breese

If her caucus sees bills they think fit the "partisan agenda" moving toward approval, Breese Iverson said slowing down the legislative assembly line was

'The reading of bills is an essential backstop in response to failed Democrat leadership that shuts out differing opinions and concerns," Breese Iverson said. "We hope it won't be necessary this session and that we can work on bipartisan legislation to benefit the entire state fairly, but it's not off the table."

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