

**INSIDE »** Meet the characters of Oregon's uranium gold rush



# THE REDMOND Spokesman

A special good morning to subscriber Tracy Hitt

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## BMX pedals back into action at Smith Rock

**BY TIM TRAINOR**

Redmond Spokesman

More than 85 riders took to the dirt of the Smith Rock BMX Park on Friday night, helping to christen an improved track in the first race of the 2022 season.

"Everyone is excited," said track operator Seth Tassie. "It's great to be out here and have everyone back. We put a lot of work into this."

Tassie estimates he spends 30-35 hours a week at the track — shaping obstacles, keeping dust down, performing main-

tenance and chasing away trespassers. The course then attracts Redmond locals, as well as riders from across the Northwest, for twice-weekly races throughout the season.

Competitors range from novices aged toddler to adult, while others are serious professionals gearing up for nationwide competitions. BMX bikes are human-powered and consist of one lap over dirt bumps, sharp corners and big jumps.

"You get all kinds of different riders," said Tassie. "Part of

the fun of it is everyone getting together and riding alongside each other."

Redmond has produced two rising stars in the BMX community who are traveling the nation to compete for some of the sport's biggest events. They include 15-year-old Cyrus Russell, who attends the Redmond Proficiency Academy, as well as Ryley Rojas, another young star who has made a name for himself on the national level.

Russell has been riding for more than nine years, ever since

he took his first nerve-wracking trip down a big jump.

"Once I did that, I was fine and this was fun," he said.

About six years ago, he took his hobby to the next level. His family started traveling to regional and national competitions. Most recently, they traveled to South Carolina, where he qualified for the world championships in France in July.

"Now we're just raising money to try and get there," he said.



Tim Trainor/Redmond Spokesman

Young riders wait for the start of a practice run Friday night at the Smith Rock BMX track in Redmond.

See **BMX** / P5

### CITY OF REDMOND

## Council returns to in-person meetings

**BY TIM TRAINOR**

Redmond Spokesman

After two years with all but one city council meeting being held virtually, Redmond city councilors will once again convene in city hall — in person — for their biweekly council meetings.

The April 5 meeting is set for 6 p.m. at City Hall executive conference room. It will be a shared meeting with the planning commission.

For Mayor George Endicott, the return to open meetings at city hall is a sign that local government is getting back to normal. He also thinks in-person meetings improve both efficiency and conviviality, both for councilors and city staff.

"It's good for camaraderie, good to see people in person," he said. "As helpful as video is, when you're in-person you get to see people, read people's body language."

He said that as the person running the meeting, it was difficult to watch all those little boxes, looking for people holding up their hands or waiting to say something or make a motion.

"It's just a different atmosphere," he said. "I think everyone is looking forward to being back in person."

City council did have one in-person meeting since the start of the pandemic. In the summer of 2021 they were able to meet once, before a COVID-19 variant forced them back online until Tuesday.

At their (hopefully) last virtual meeting on March 29, city council took the following actions, all unanimously:

See **Meetings** / P5

### Central Oregon drought



Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin

An aerial view of Ochoco Reservoir in Prineville on Wednesday. As of Sunday, the reservoir was 11% full.

## DRY TIMES Area reservoirs fall to record lows

**BY MICHAEL KOHN**

For the Spokesman

As the irrigation season gets underway next month, water authorities are taking stock of Central Oregon's reservoirs, and the reports coming back are worrying. Four of the five large reservoirs are at their lowest levels ever.

"I would like to report some good news, but it is hard to find any," said Jeremy Giffin, Deschutes Basin watermaster.

The reservoirs in question include Wickiup, Prineville, Crescent Lake and Ochoco. The fifth, Craine Prairie, is higher than past low levels due to federal require-

ments to protect the Oregon spotted frog.

Natural flow in the Deschutes Basin was classified as extremely low last year, but now rivers and streams are down an additional 15% from a year ago, said Giffin, whose job duties include regulating and distributing the waters of the state and enforcing water law.

River and stream levels are not expected to rise substantially this spring because of low snowpack in the Cascades. The low stream and reservoir levels will once again mean tight water allotments for irrigation districts, as well as calls for people to cut their water use at

home.

"The vast majority of city water that is delivered in the spring, summer and fall goes to outdoor landscaping, so that is really a great place to make adjustments to water usage," said Giffin.

The Oregon Water Resources Department has advice for Central Oregonians who want to reduce their water use and help alleviate stress on the environment caused by the drought. Everyday lifestyle modifications can be considered, including shorter showers, using less water when washing dishes and clothes, avoiding hosing off driveways and decreasing the



Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin

A group of docks sit on a dry bank of Ochoco Reservoir in Prineville on Wednesday. As of Sunday, the reservoir was 11% full.

amount of water put on lawns. Irrigation district patrons can save water by investing in more efficient sprinkler systems, or by leasing their water right instream.

See **Drought** / P5

## Spokesman Calendar

### Events in and around Redmond

The Redmond Spokesman welcomes event information for its community calendar. Submissions are limited to nonprofit, free and live entertainment events. Deadline is 5 p.m. Thursday for the following Wednesday's paper. Items are published on a space-available basis and may be edited. Contact us at news@redmondspokesman.com or fax 541-548-3203.

#### Tuesday 4/5

**Writers Writing — Quiet Writing Time:** Enjoy the focus of a quiet space with the benefit of others' company; 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; free; Redmond Public Library, 827 SW Deschutes Ave., Redmond; deschuteslibrary.org or 541-312-1050.

**Pints for Ponies:** For every pint sold, \$1 goes to the Heart Space Horse Sanctuary; 4-8 p.m.; Wild Ride Brewing Co., 332 SW Fifth St., Redmond; wildridebrew.com or 541-610-2520.

**Arbor Week Tree Planting #1:** To celebrate Arbor Week, the city will be hosting three tree plantings at three different park locations; 4-5:30 p.m.; free; Hayden Park, 1964 SW 35th St.,

Redmond; redmondoregon.gov or 541-923-7710.

**City Council Workshop:** A regular workshop will be held online and in person; 6-8 p.m.; free; Redmond City Hall, 411 SW Ninth St., Redmond; redmondoregon.gov or 541-923-7710.

#### Wednesday 4/6

**Arbor Week Tree Planting #2:** To celebrate Arbor Week, the city will be hosting three tree plantings at three different park locations; 4-5:30 p.m.; free; Hathaway Park, 1021 NW Rockcrest Ct., Redmond; redmondoregon.gov or 541-923-7710.

See **Calendar** / P5

The Spokesman uses recycled newsprint

#### INDEX

Puzzles..... 2 Sports..... 5  
Flashback..... 3 Classifieds..... 6

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