

COVID-19 cases are rising again in Central Oregon

BY SUZANNE ROIG
CO Media Group

The pace of COVID-19 deaths in Central Oregon appears to be increasing, with four occurring in the first six days of July.

That compares to three deaths in June and four in May. All of the deaths have been at St. Charles Health System hospitals in Central Oregon.

What's more, about 10% of the hospital beds are occupied with COVID-19 patients who are experi-

encing illness from the latest subvariant circulating, said Mike Johnson, St. Charles Health System senior data scientist.

"We're seeing a high transmissibility with the subvariants of omicron," Johnson said. "When that many people have it, it will push more people into the hospital. COVID-19 is not over."

St. Charles hospitals have seen on average 35 to 40 patients with COVID-19 coming through the hos-

pital on any given day over the past two weeks, he said. It's a concern given that the hospital system is still experiencing a staffing shortage, said Lisa Goodman, St. Charles Health System spokeswoman. Initially, the hospital cared for COVID-19 patients only at its Bend location, but recently began admitting COVID-19 patients at all of its hospitals in Redmond, Bend, Prineville and Madras.

"We already are so full that we're boarding people in the emergency

department while we wait for beds," Goodman said. "We're very busy."

It's the same at other hospitals around the state, Johnson said. More than three-fourths of the intensive care hospital beds in the region St. Charles serves — Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake and Wheeler counties — are filled, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

Since the start of the pandemic, 300 people have died in Deschutes

County. Since the beginning of the pandemic, St. Charles has cared for 3,650 patients with COVID-19, Johnson said.

In Central Oregon, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had classified Deschutes County in the high risk category, said Emily Horton, Deschutes County Health Services COVID-19 program manager. That was because of the number of hospitalizations, not because of high case counts, Horton said.

FLASHBACK

Caterpillars invade forest at Sisters in 1972

The Spokesman

100 YEARS AGO

July 20, 1922 — Boys will leave for training camp

Maurice Gates, Forest Ehlers, Harold Cline, Harry Hansen and Edgar Petersen have made application and are preparing to take advantage of the month spouting offered by the government at Ft. Lewis, Wash.

This is a splendid chance for the young man, as it not only gives them a full month of recreation but improves them both physically and mentally by learning army tactics and good health-giving exercises of all kinds. It would be a good thing if more of the boys took advantage of this big offer.

75 YEARS AGO

July 23, 1947 — Riders attend western party

About 48 members of Redmond Saddle Club joined a party of 125 people from three counties for a western party held over the past weekend at Fort Rock. Ruben E. Long, northern Lake County stockman, was host to the large



Archived Photo

Anthony Jager, 12, with his pig, Speckles. Both will appear with some 22 other swine at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds next week.

group and presided over the rangeland breakfast that was served Sunday morning at 6 o'clock.

Horses were transported by truck and trailer to the area Saturday afternoon and that night a dancing party and pic-

social was held in the community hall in true frontier fashion. Activity lasted until dawn when the horses were saddled and the party rode eight miles to the Devil's Garden lava beds for the buckaroo breakfast.

Following serving of the chow, Long rounded up his broodmares and colts, which were pastured near Devil's Garden, for the inspection of the visitors.

50 YEARS AGO

July 26, 1972 — Caterpillars invade forest at Sisters

SISTERS — Snow brush in the Sisters area has been attacked by caterpillars of the tortoise shell butterfly, with entire bushes, denuded of leaves, sprouting new ones in an attempt to survive.

Up to 90 percent of the foliage has been removed in some areas with about 700 acres affected around Abbott Butte, Cash Mountain and Minto Burn.

Ernest Nelson, forester, said two generations will probably occur during the season but he believes a virus or parasite will control the invaders by next season.

The entomology depart-

ment of the U.S. Forest Service regional office in Portland reports the infestation is statewide.

Several caterpillars, taken to the Sisters Ranger District office, have been the center of interest as they emerge from their chrysalis as butterflies.

25 YEARS AGO

July 23, 1997 — County youth ready for fair auction

The contestants have been weighed in and are ready to step into the ring.

However, this is not the next heavyweight boxing championship match — it's the 4-H/FFA Livestock auction.

More than 450 cows, pigs, sheep, rabbits and poultry will be auctioned off Aug. 2 at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds.

The animals are shown in three classes: open, showmanship and market class. Contestants who do not wish to have their animals slaughtered enter them in the open and showmanship class.

"Any animal that is shown in Market Class and gets either a red or blue ribbon is then eligible for the auction," said Bob Shive, auction

co-chairman.

Auction livestock are sold, then slaughtered. If an animal is sold above market value, the buyer has the option to sell it back to the market, donating the difference to the 4-H member. Each buyer receives a placard and a picture of the animal purchased.

"It's designed uniquely in Deschutes County as an educational process," Shive said. "We don't pay them exactly what they get at auction."

Shive explained that the 4-H members get the market value of the meat, even if that value is a little above or below what the animal was bid at.

"Most of them use the money to buy animals for the next year's auction or for education," Shive said.

Like last year, there will be two auction rings running simultaneously due to the large number of animals.

"The first round will be the champion and grand champion animals," said Shive.

The auction will begin at 4 p.m. with the champions, followed by the swine and poultry auctions at 4:30 p.m. More than 150 sheep, 50 beef and 220 swine are entered into the auction this year.

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