

IN BRIEF

Firefighters contain fire near Jewell

Firefighters worked to put out a human-caused fire that erupted on private land near Jewell on Monday, the Oregon Department of Forestry said.

The Department of Forestry and the Elsie-Vinemaple Fire Department kept the fire in check and, after an all-night stretch, doused actively burning sites and cut a line around the impacted area so the blaze did not spread.

Many forestlands are closed to the public. Recent dry weather conditions have made North Coast forests vulnerable to fire, the department said.

The Department of Forestry asks that anyone in the forest take extreme care. Campfires are restricted to designated campgrounds. Vehicles must carry a shovel, a gallon of water and a fire extinguisher, the department said.

Youngs River Road to close for paving

Youngs River Road will be closed between Youngs River Falls Bridge and Saddle Mountain Road for paving the week of Sept. 20 through Sept. 24.

Only people who live in the area will be able to pass.
— *The Astorian*

Dollar General store planned in Ocean Park

OCEAN PARK, Wash. — Less than a year after a proposed store was scrapped in downtown Long Beach, it appears a Dollar General store will be coming to the Long Beach Peninsula after all.

Once open for business, the store will be located in Ocean Park at the former Oman & Son location, which temporarily closed at the beginning of the pandemic before permanently closing in early 2021.

Dollar General is advertising a job opening for a manager for the new store.

Earlier this year, the company opened a store in South Bend in a newly constructed building on the Willapa River estuary waterfront. The chain has been on an aggressive expansion drive nationwide, providing consumers with lower price points on groceries and other products, often by packaging them in smaller quantities.
— *Chinook Observer*

Bradford Island could get Superfund status

The Columbia River's Bradford Island moved a step closer on Wednesday to getting on the nation's list of top-priority toxic cleanup sites, following the Biden administration's proposal to designate it as a Superfund site.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the move on Wednesday for the island at the Bonneville Dam site, where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dumped toxics for decades.

The proposal was seen as a belated move to bring environmental justice to the Columbia River's Native American tribes, which have traditionally fished these waters about 40 miles east of Portland.
— *Oregon Public Broadcasting*

DEATHS

Sept. 7, 2021

BALDWIN, Donna Joanne, 81, of Warrenton, died in Warrenton. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

Sept. 1, 2021

RODGERS, Lorene, 92, of Seaside, died in Seaside.

Hughes-Ransom Mortuary & Crematory is in charge of the arrangements

Aug. 26, 2021

ABRAHAMS, Evelyn R., 86, of Astoria, died in Astoria. Ocean View Funeral & Cremation Services of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

CORRECTION

Goal-scorer misidentified — Walker Steele scored the lone goal in Astoria's 8-1 loss to Estacada in soccer. A story on A5 on Saturday incorrectly said Kyler Woodrich scored the goal.

ON THE RECORD

Assault

• Patrick R. McInerney, 46, of Post Falls, Idaho, was arrested Saturday evening on 39th Street in Astoria for assault in the fourth degree constituting domestic violence.

DUI

• April A. Breslaw, 60, of Astoria, was arrested

Sunday evening at Grand Avenue and Eighth Street in Astoria for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

• Dillan C. Billingsley, 33, of Benton, Arkansas, was arrested Friday evening at Marine Drive and 12th Street in Astoria for DUI.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

THURSDAY

Seaside Civic and Convention Center Commission, 5 p.m., 415 First Ave.

Gearhart Planning Commission, 6 p.m., (electronic meeting).

Seaside Parks Advisory Committee, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

Warrenton Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 225 S. Main Ave.

the Astorian

Established July 1, 1873
(USPS 035-000)

Published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday by EO Media Group, 949 Exchange St., PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103 Telephone 503-325-3211, 800-781-3211 or Fax 503-325-6573. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Astorian, PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103-0210

DailyAstorian.com

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEMBER CERTIFIED AUDIT OF CIRCULATIONS, INC.

Circulation phone number:
800-781-3214

Periodicals postage paid at Astoria, OR

ADVERTISING OWNERSHIP

All advertising copy and illustrations prepared by The Astorian become the property of The Astorian and may not be reproduced for any use without explicit prior approval.

COPYRIGHT ©

Entire contents © Copyright,
2021 by The Astorian.



Printed on
recycled paper

Subscription rates
Effective January 12, 2021

MAIL

EZpay (per month).....\$10.75
13 weeks in advance.....\$37.00
26 weeks in advance.....\$71.00
52 weeks in advance.....\$135.00

DIGITAL

EZpay (per month).....\$8.25

KID OF THE CASTLE



Luke Whittaker/Chinook Observer

Ida Curry, 3, jumps in a Bouncy Castle at the Pacific County Fair in Menlo in late August.

Virus hospitalizations could be reaching peak in Oregon

By ERIN ROSS

Oregon Public Broadcasting

Oregon's COVID-19 hospitalizations could peak over the course of next week — and possibly, begin to decline, according to a new model out of Oregon Health & Sciences University. But that will only happen if Oregonians continue to wear masks and take precautions.

But while hospitalizations might be peaking, that means they're higher than ever before.

Oregonians fought previous surges by wearing masks and abiding by strict social distancing measures. This time around, the masking is helping to flatten the curve — but another big reason is that there aren't as many people left for the virus to infect.

"This is the exact place that we were trying to avoid, with 1,200 hospitalizations, and nearly all hospital systems feeling overwhelmed or having to postpone or cancel other types of care. This is what we were trying to avoid. We are in that crisis," said Dr. Peter Graven, the lead data scientist at OHSU.

Oregon's hospitals are full and have been for several weeks. That isn't going to change any time soon.

"Right now, we're at a flattening point where, you know, frankly, it's probably going to bounce around a little bit. We'll probably see some up and down yet before it really starts going down," Graven said. "Is it slowing down? Yes, but it's far from better. I think we have two months of pain to go through before this is manageable again."

'It's not like we're past anything'

Any progress the state has made combatting the delta variant of the coronavirus is fragile. There are still a lot of people in Oregon who don't have immunity. Graven said that Oregonians have been wearing masks, and have been avoiding large crowds and indoor dining at bars and



Kristyna Wentz-Graff/Oregon Public Broadcasting

A coronavirus patient is treated in the intensive care unit at Oregon Health & Science University Hospital in August.

restaurants, and that's really helped flatten new infections. But he expects to see an increase in transmission tied to people's socializing over the Labor Day weekend. And as fall comes people will be spending more time inside, which could change transmission rates, too.

"It's not like we're past anything. Vigilance is obviously key, every bit of transmission we prevent now clears out the hospital a little quicker. And it doesn't matter if (cases are) going up or going down, it still prevents the transmission," Graven said.

And then, of course, there are kids: thousands of children under 12, who have not yet received a COVID-19 vaccine, are returning to school.

In the spring, few outbreaks were linked to in-person learning. But now cases are much higher, and that means there's a bigger chance of outbreaks in school. And the delta variant wasn't a factor in the spring: now it's a game changer.

"I think (schools) that are taking all of the precautions can feel pretty good about that. But it's something we need to monitor and maybe make changes as we go," Graven said.

As schools have opened around the country, some states have seen a spike in cases in children. Others haven't. It's still not clear if the delta variant of the coro-

navirus is more dangerous to children.

'It really takes a toll on them'

Although the Portland metro area has been less hard-hit than other parts of the state, due in part to high vaccination rates, the metro area hospital system is also overwhelmed. Both Providence Portland Medical Center and Providence St. Vincent Medical Center ordered "fatality management trucks": temporary morgues.

"We still see our COVID-19 numbers increasing. And we want to be ready for that," Rosa Cone, the director of nursing at Providence St. Vincent, said.

Hospital morgues usually have room for fewer than 10 deceased people at a time. But the delta variant is killing people so fast, the morgues can't keep up.

"It's so difficult for the staff, it really takes a toll on them emotionally and physically, especially because these patients are much sicker than our first or second surge of COVID-19," said Amanda Hanley, the nurse manager of Medical Unit B at Providence St. Vincent. The number of people needing supportive respiratory care has about doubled, and the hospital filled up much faster than in previous surges.

Medical Unit B has been turned entirely into a COVID-19 ward. It's the first place many COVID-19 patients go when they are admitted to the hospital.

Abigail McDonald, a charge nurse in Medical Unit B, said the last few weeks have been incredibly difficult.

"Our patients aren't as sick as they are when they go to the ICU. You build relationships and know them from the beginning, to when you see them enter intensive care, and know they might not come back," McDonald said.

Health care workers at multiple hospitals told Oregon Public Broadcasting that pre-pandemic when patients entered the ICU, there was a good chance they would be discharged. There was reason to be optimistic. That's not the case now, they say.

"We do normally care for some patients at the end of life, but it's much different when the patient has lived a full life, and it's something they've expected and planned for," McDonald said. Now she's transferring patients in their 30s to critical care. These are people who never thought they'd be in this position, who haven't made decisions about resuscitation or end-of-life care.

Now, McDonald and Hanley sometimes hear the last conversations patients will ever have with their family: conversations had over the phone or over Zoom, without anyone they knew before the hospital nearby.

This surge has hit health care workers particularly hard. Some of it is that many cases are preventable: people who would not have needed to be hospitalized if they had received the COVID-19 vaccine.

But more than that, they say, it's the ebb and flow of hope that's getting to them. Even if cases and hospitalizations and deaths start to decline, it's hard to feel optimistic.

"We've seen the light at the end of the tunnel so many times throughout the pandemic. And then to come to a surge like the one we're facing now, it's a roller coaster of emotions," Cone said. "It makes me hold my breath at the light."

Idaho hospitals begin rationing health care amid virus surge

By REBECCA BOONE
Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — Public health leaders announced Tuesday that they activated "crisis standards of care" allowing health care rationing for the state's northern hospitals because there are more coronavirus patients than the institutions can handle.

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare quietly enacted the move Monday and publicly announced it in a statement Tuesday morning — warning residents that they may not get the care they would normally expect if they need to

be hospitalized.

The move came as the state's confirmed virus cases skyrocketed in recent weeks. Idaho has one of the lowest vaccination rates in the U.S.

The state health agency cited "a severe shortage of staffing and available beds in the northern area of the state caused by a massive increase in patients with COVID-19 who require hospitalization."

The designation includes 10 hospitals and health care systems in the Idaho panhandle and in north-central Idaho. The agency said its goal is to extend care to as many patients as possible and to save as many lives as

possible.

The move allows hospitals to allot scarce resources like intensive care unit rooms to patients most likely to survive.

Other patients will still receive care, but they may be placed in hospital classrooms or conference rooms rather than traditional hospital rooms or go without some life-saving medical

equipment.

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Director Dave Jeppesen made the decision to enact the crisis standards about 5 p.m. Monday after the state's Crisis Standards of Care Activation Advisory Committee determined that all other measures taken to help relieve staffing and bed shortages had been exhausted.

WANTED

Alder and Maple Saw Logs & Standing Timber

Northwest Hardwoods • Longview, WA

Contact: John Anderson • 360-269-2500