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UMATILLA COUNTY

Risk drops to moderate as cases rise statewide

The county reported 25 cases last week — the fewest total since last spring, officials say

By **BRYCE DOLE**
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Umatilla County has been lowered from the high coronavirus risk category to moderate risk, Gov. Kate Brown announced on Tuesday, April 6,

relaxing restrictions for indoor activities and commerce throughout the county as cases surge elsewhere in Oregon.

It's the lowest risk category the county has achieved since the state started the four-tiered risk categories in December 2020.

"To be one of the counties to move down is just phenomenal," Umatilla County Commissioner George Murdock said. "Of course, we've got to continue now. We can't pause very long to celebrate because

we've just got to continue our efforts to make sure that we get vaccinated, wear our masks and distance."

The new risk categories go into effect on Friday, April 9.

Umatilla County was one of five counties whose risk level dropped in the state's most recent list. Meanwhile, six other counties with cases rising were placed under greater restrictions, and five more were placed under a "two-week cautionary period."

"We still have to be cautious

and we still have to be careful," Murdock said. "We spent an awfully long time trying to figure out how to get to moderate (risk). And if we let our guard down, we could be right back at high (risk), as a lot of counties are discovering."

Low local cases

The change allows indoor gatherings of up to eight people, and 10 people outdoors. Indoor dining is also allowed at 50% capacity, or a maximum of 100 people. Outdoor

dining is limited to 150 people and establishments must close nightly by 11 p.m.

Indoor fitness and entertainment facilities can operate at 50% capacity or a maximum of 100 people. Retail stores can operate at 75% capacity. Churches can open at 50% capacity, with a maximum of 150 people indoors or 250 people outdoors.

The change comes as the county

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MORROW COUNTY

County sees low vaccine turnout

Officials hoping to use 2,000 doses this month

By **BRYCE DOLE**
East Oregonian

HEPPNER — Fewer than 250 people were vaccinated against COVID-19 this week in the first two of eight clinics scheduled in Morrow County this month, raising concerns as officials push to use more than 2,000 doses in April.

Morrow County Commissioner Melissa Lindsay said officials are hoping to use 400 doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine at each of the eight clinics. She said it's unclear what might have led to the low initial turnout, but said populations now eligible may be more skeptical about the shot.

Lindsay said that, with cases rising across much of Oregon and nationwide, it is especially important that people get vaccinated.

"It's scary," Lindsay said of the recent statewide case spike. "I don't think we're going to sidestep it if it continues."

Over the last week, Oregon has averaged more than 420 cases per day, according to state health data. And on Monday, April 5, the state reported 177 Oregonians were hospitalized with COVID-19. Both totals were the highest in seven weeks, according to *The Oregonian/OregonLive*.

The increase comes as Gov. Kate Brown announced on Tuesday, April

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Contributed Photo

Dekin Carney, third from left, and Samantha Craig-Allen, fourth from left, pose for a photo with their parents, Crystal Reynolds, far left, and Josh Carney, second from left, and Sandy Craig, second from right, and Sheldon Allen, far right. Carney and Craig-Allen are starring in "Waking Up In Idaho." Craig-Allen is a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

Tribal member Samantha Craig-Allen to star in 'Waking up in Idaho'

By **KATY NESBITT**
For the East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Budding Pendleton actress Samantha Craig-Allen is getting her big break this fall when she stars in the upcoming film "Waking Up in Idaho."

The film, scheduled to start shooting in September, is about two women who are new foster moms and the teenagers for whom they are caring. Craig-Allen, 19, plays Anna, a tough girl and the best wrestler in her high school, who was kicked off the team for unsportsmanlike conduct.

"Anna has anger issues, while my co-star, Dekin Carney, plays Boyd, a shy kid," Craig-Allen said.

A natural-born ham, Craig-Allen said acting has always been an interest.

"As a kid I would reenact scenes from movies like Harry Potter and Spider-Man," she said.

At the age of 15, Craig-Allen, a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, said she got

involved in theater at Pendleton High School and was encouraged by her acting teacher, Shannon O'Rourke, to help with set design and backstage work.

"While I was working backstage I was able to take notes from the actors, kids my age, who had parts in the play," she said.

During her junior year she got a part in a comedy skit called "Hold For Three." "I had to hold my breath

for three minutes, while doing things the other actors told me to do," she said.

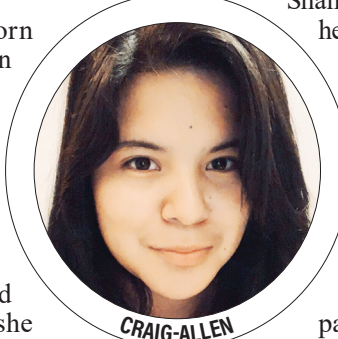
Soon she will get to put her comedic acting experience to the test. While the film deals with tough subjects, such as foster care and struggling for love and connections, it's actually a comedy.

Craig-Allen became involved when her father, Sheldon Allen of Culdesac, Idaho, contacted her about the film's production, knowing her love of acting. Sheldon and Eve Bean-Allen have become producers of the film, finding local connections and

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Lindsay



CRAIG-ALLEN

Pendleton Bike Week gets canceled again

Pandemic forces cancellation for second year in a row

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — For the second year in a row, Pendleton Bike Week is canceled.

The organizers behind the motorcycle rally made the announcement on the event's website.

"Due to COVID-19 and the mandated restrictions the official word has come down and unfortunately, as most anticipated, Pendleton Bike Week 2021 ... and the Summer



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian, File

A contingent of bikers look skyward at a B-25 bomber flying over the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport as part of the Pendleton Bike Week "Ride with the Raiders" event on July 17, 2019.

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