

## Cases:

*Continued from Page A1*

And since July, at least 48 Umatilla County residents who contracted the virus have died, making the delta variant surge the deadliest and most infectious that the county has ever seen.

“Unfortunately, we are still getting death reports,” Fiumara said. “Not that I can say they’re directly from Round-Up, but they do seem to be from the spike in cases. And that is unfortunate, but I don’t know if it was unforeseen.”

To curb the rapid spread of infection tied to events across the region, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee announced Oct. 14 that events must require proof of vaccination or a recent negative coronavirus test from attendees. The rule applies to indoor events exceeding 1,000 people and outdoor events exceeding 10,000.

No such requirement exists in Oregon.

Health officials have reported that some Round-Up attendees came to the rodeo with COVID-19 symptoms and later tested positive. And despite low vaccination rates across Eastern Oregon, the Round-Up did not require a negative COVID-19 test or proof of vaccination.

Fiumara said if a requirement had been in place, some ill attendees may have thought twice before coming to an event that attracts tens of thousands of people. But he wouldn’t go so far as to say that a requirement similar to Washington’s should be in place.

“I’m really torn,” Fiumara said. “I’m not a big mandate fan. I do understand that these measures work, but I’m in that camp where I want people to choose those options, and I don’t know how well compliance would have gone if it would have been enforced with Round-Up.”

Fiumara said he doesn’t believe there are enough people ready for strict requirements like Washington’s to be implemented.

“I’m not saying these measures don’t work, but I’m not taking the position that we should have done them necessarily,” he said, adding, “I don’t want to shoot ourselves in the foot moving forward.”

Since the pandemic started, Umatilla County has reported 14,240 confirmed or presumptive coronavirus cases. Nearly 18% of the county’s population has contracted the virus, and 144 residents have died, according to county health data.

### LATEST COVID-19 FATALITIES IN UMATILLA COUNTY

Umatilla County reported five new COVID-19 deaths between Wednesday, Oct. 13, and Friday, Oct. 15, bringing the county’s pandemic death toll to 144.

The follow are Umatilla County’s latest fatalities from the disease:

- The county’s 140th victim is a 79-year-old woman who tested positive on Sept. 16 and died on Oct. 3 at Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston. She had unspecified underlying health conditions.

- The county’s 141st victim is a 61-year-old man who tested positive on Sept. 24 and died on Oct. 7 at Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center, Portland. He had unspecified underlying health conditions.

- The county’s 142nd victim is a 61-year-old woman who tested positive Aug. 29 and died Sept. 23, at a private residence. Health officials have not determined whether she had underlying health conditions.

- The county’s 143rd victim is a 71-year-old woman who tested positive Sept. 22 and died Sept. 25 at Providence St. Vincent Hospital, Portland. She had unspecified underlying health conditions.

- The county’s 144th victim is a 66-year-old woman who tested positive Oct. 4 and died Oct. 7 at a private residence. Health officials have not determined whether she had underlying health conditions.

## Martin:

*Continued from Page A1*

Ordeman remembers he and Martin having occasional disagreements but still getting along perfectly well. That reality was common in their years working together, he said, adding he “loved Ron Martin like a brother.”

Other speakers told stories about Martin’s commitment to helping those in need. He accommodated families who couldn’t pay for end-of-life services, “just because it was the right thing to do,” Clemons said. He also helped people experiencing homelessness, Clemons said, buying meals, renting hotel rooms, or using the chapel as a drop-off point for food and clothing for those less fortunate.

“It was more than a business to him,” Clemons said. “These were people. This was his community. These were his neighbors.”

The service concluded with music. Martin, a musician himself, could sometimes be found playing around the markets on the streets of downtown Pendleton on summer evenings. At the end of the service, a small band of Martin’s musician friends jammed for a while playing “You Are My Sunshine,” and “I’ll Fly Away.” The mourners listened quietly.

Afterwards, those in attendance moved to the back of the room. They shared snacks and their memories of Martin.

Among them was Clifford Smith, a post commander with the Pendleton VFW, who served in the United States Army in Vietnam from 1971 to 1972. He and several VFW members wore matching jackets at the ceremony, and they spoke about Martin’s commit-

ment to helping local veterans.

Smith recalled Martin reaching out to local veterans and telling them his services always were available to them. He held ceremonies for veterans annually, and maintained a memorial garden for local fallen members of the military that sits in front of the chapel. Seeing the garden makes Smith feel pride in having served his country.

“He went far beyond his duties,” Smith said of Martin.

Smith said he’s worried about what the chapel’s annual Veterans Day memorial service will look like now that Martin is gone.

Umatilla County Commissioner George Murdock met Martin soon after he came to Pendleton more than a decade ago. They bonded while involved in the Pendleton Rotary together and through event planning, he said. Murdock, a graduate of Washington State University, said he even contacted Martin about setting up a prepaid funeral and making an urn out of a steel WSU football helmet. That’s still the plan, even though Martin has passed, Murdock noted.

“He cast quite a shadow,” Murdock said. “He touched a lot of people. I looked around (today) and thought, what a tribute.”

Margaret Harned sat with two friends at the back of the room, chatting about Martin. He had helped her when her husband died a year ago. The three spoke about how, in this life, one meets only a handful of truly extraordinary people. Those who you meet and, within moments, you feel that you’ve known them your whole life, and you know they’d do anything for you.

To them, that was Ron Martin.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian  
**Pastor Chris Clemons, of the Pendleton Church of the Nazarene, speaks Wednesday Oct. 13, 2021, about his friend Ron Martin at Martin’s funeral at the Pendleton Convention Center.**



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian  
**Carl Scheeler and other musician friends of Ron Martin laugh after playing together at Martin’s funeral on Wednesday, Oct. 13, 2021, at the Pendleton Convention Center.**

## Sams:

*Continued from Page A1*

### Sams climbs the ladder

CTUIR Education Director Modesta Minthorn is only a few years older than Sams and remembers him as a young man. While his youth may not have presaged a future in a presidential administration, Minthorn said he was known for being smart and having leadership qualities.

As an adult, Sams started working for tribal government before leaving to start a new career in environmental nonprofits. His resume includes stints at the Earth Conservation Corps, the Community Energy Project and The Trust for Public Land. When news broke that Sams had been nominated for the National Park Service position, the latter sent out a statement celebrating his achievement.

After Sams decided to return home in 2012, it was Deb Crowell who made the decision to hire him as the tribes’ communications director. Crowell had known Sams long enough that both had worked in a tribal recreation program together as teens.

The deputy executive director at the time, Crowell said Sams had the necessary qualities to be the public voice of the tribes.

“He’s a good communicator, he’s very articulate, very insightful (and) thoughtful,” she said. “He’s a good supervisor, he’s a good manager of people and really cares about people and their needs and wants to help people learn and grow and do their jobs well. So those are all things that contributed to him being a good communications director for the tribes.”

Those qualities seem to help Sams climb the ladder of tribal government, eventually earning him a promotion to deputy executive director after Crowell moved over to Cayuse Holdings, a tribal enterprise, and



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian, File  
**Chuck Sams speaks to local high school students on Aug. 29, 2018, about tribal history and beliefs. Sams now is President Joe Biden’s nominee to direct the National Park Service. His confirmation hearing is Tuesday, Oct. 19, 2021.**

two stints as interim executive director.

As a colleague, his former peers described Sams as being collaborative and well-prepared. As a supervisor, CTUIR Finance Director Paul Rabb was clear about his expectations while remaining fun and approachable.

“He wasn’t this dictator of a boss,” he said.

Rabb, who succeeded Sams temporarily as the interim executive director, said Sams would’ve been in-line for the permanent position if he had stayed.

But in a March interview, Sams said he told the CTUIR Board of Trustees he was looking at other opportunities and wasn’t interested in staying on long-term.

By then, Gov. Kate Brown had already appointed him to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council and wrote a letter to Biden recommending Sams for a much bigger position.

### The tribal spokesman

When “racial incidents” roiled local schools, students from Pendleton, Echo and Nixyaawii Community School joined several other Eastern Oregon schools in taking a trip to the Tamastlikt Cultural Institute, where Sams was one of the featured speakers.

## CCS:

*Continued from Page A1*

CCS also either will take over the existing leases or purchase all of Lifeways’ 11 facilities in the county, Lindsay said. And during the next year, the provider will turn each of these facilities into centers where people can get both types of services, she added.

When Community Counseling Solutions starts its mental health services,

former Lifeways patients should expect a seamless transition, Lindsay said.

Lifeways has said that, in Umatilla County alone, it served 184 clients with schizophrenic disorders, 491 clients with major depression, 471 clients with post-traumatic stress disorder, 215 clients with bipolar disorder and more than 2,000 clients with adjustment disorders.

Come Dec. 1, Lindsay said, “People should be able to walk in and pick up right where they left off.”

wanted to welcome Pendleton students back to the city after a 2011 earthquake and nuclear disaster, Sams was a part of the 2014 contingent the city sent to ensure it was safe.

When the tribes started a land buyback program, Sams wrote an editorial explaining how the Dawes Allotment Act of 1887 led the reservation to be subdivided and sold to white settlers.

“It seems strange that we have to buy back our own land,” he wrote in 2014. “We did not create this problem. Our ancestors signed the Treaty of 1855 in good faith, convinced that exclusive use meant the land was ours forever. Though it is true we were dealt a poor hand by history, we can make a new start. We now have a chance to restore our land base, and with proper oversight and use, we will begin to make ourselves whole again.”

He also was appointed to various committees and commissions throughout the tribes, city and state. One of his most recent appointments before joining the Northwest Power and Conservation Council was a spot on the state’s Racial Justice Council.

### A historic appointment

When the National Park Service commissioned an article from historian Mark David Spence, he wanted to start the run-up to the establishment of the national park system at 30,000 years ago when the land belonged to America’s indigenous peoples.

Spence, author of “Dispossessing the Wilder-

ness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks,” said the federal government used a mechanism similar to the one that subdivided the Umatilla Indian Reservation on land they intended to use for national parks such as Yellowstone, which intersects with ceded lands that belonged to the Crow, Shoshone-Bannock and Blackfoot tribes.

Those policies continue to reverberate today. While the government will open federal land to tribes to exercise their treaty rights, Spence said national parks remain off-limits to tribes looking to engage in the traditional hunting, fishing and gathering activities that have defined their people for generations. While he thinks communication has improved between Indian Country and the park service, Spence said Sams has an opportunity to push it further because of his own lived experiences.

“There is an undercurrent or maybe even overcurrent right now, where ... a broader public is more amenable to seeing native peoples as managers of their own lands, as opposed to props in a national park,” he said.

Back home, several of Sams’ former colleagues described the feeling of pride that one of their own is now in position to become the next park director.

“It’s one of those things that we’re going to talk about for generations,” Minthorn said. “I can see (myself), talking to grandkids, telling them, ‘Be more like that guy.’”



3 Webinars to Choose from...

Topics vary for each webinar:

Nov 10: Eastern Oregon topics

Approved by Oregon Dept. of Agriculture

Nov 2: 4 credits (2 Core, 2 Other)

Nov 4: 5 credits (3 Core, 2 Other)

Nov 10: 4 credits (3 Core, 1 Other)

Full agendas online. Register at [OACFA.com](http://OACFA.com)

**For all Pesticide Applicators**

**OACFA**  
OREGON AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS ASSOCIATION

503-370-7024  
[info@oacfa.com](mailto:info@oacfa.com)