

Drug abuse, bad finances derail caregiver's life



DEAR ABBY
ADVICE

DEAR ABBY: I'm conflicted about a relationship I have developed with a 77-year-old lady I'll call "Martha." I have been acting as her caregiver.

For the first three years, I was addicted to pain pills, which Martha and I both get. I was so strung out I didn't realize what kind of person she was. She expects me to be there every five minutes, which, under different circumstances, would be fine. But I have a husband and a dog.

I have since gotten sober, while Martha is still strung out. She threatens to destroy my life if I won't do what she wants, and I'm scared to quit because we have loans together.

How do I start having a healthy balance with her and my life? Now that I'm sober, I realize how badly she has been treating me the whole time. Can you please advise me how to distance from her? — **SOBER WOMAN IN GEORGIA**

DEAR SOBER WOMAN: For the sake of your sobriety, your relationship with Martha must end. Do not allow yourself to be blackmailed into continuing one with her. She needs

to find another caregiver, and you need to find another job. Because your name is on those loans, you may be obligated to pay them off if she doesn't. This is why you should discuss this mess with an attorney. That Martha still abuses her meds means you may have some leverage.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I argue about returning gifts his parents give us. They are well-off and buy excessively for their grandkids throughout the year, especially at holidays. They also buy multiple gifts for my husband and me. We are drowning in too much stuff and constantly battling clutter in our home.

None of these gifts are from our family's wish lists, nor are they particularly thoughtful. In years past, I have asked my mother-in-law to limit her purchases to three gifts — one toy, one outfit, one book — with no success. I also have pleaded with her to stop buying me small knickknacks, and have suggested more experience-based gifts. Still, year after year, we come home with a bunch of stuff we neither need nor want.

How can I get my in-laws to respect our wishes? To make matters worse, my husband becomes defensive of his parents when I get frustrated, even

though he fundamentally agrees with me. How do I help his parents understand that what they are really giving us is a fight? And, if none of them care about my wishes, how do I get past feeling disrespected and disregarded? — **BURIED IN STUFF**

DEAR BURIED: By now you should have realized that your mother-in-law, "Lady Bountiful," isn't going to change. You will spend less time being frustrated if you let go of your resentment about her spending sprees. My heartfelt advice to you is to develop a sense of humor where she's concerned. If you can't use her gifts, donate, regift or sell them.

REPAIR

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"There's definitely been an increase (in demand) especially with the other auto body shops on 10th Street in Baker City recently going out of business," said Tabitha Jensen, manager at Eagle Valley Collision Builders, Baker City. "I heard that Joe's Premier Auto Body over on Broadway Street is seeing the same. There's definitely an increase in demand that is higher than usual."

Jensen said that her shop has had an increase in business and repairs, but didn't want to point fingers at the general public's driving habits. Instead, she said that a local auto body shop closing meant that Eagle Valley Collision Builders was taking on a lot more clients than before.

So many, in fact, that the shop has a backlog of work extending well into this spring.

"Right now, for body work, on a regular schedule we're booked out to May," Jensen said. "My next job (availability) is May 2. This



Carl Severtsen, a mechanic at La Grande Auto Repair, on Monday, Feb. 28, 2022, replaces the starter in a customer's vehicle.

is the furthest that we've ever been booked out."

Jensen noted that the shop can still perform routine and basic repairs to help get cars street legal, such as replacing headlights or tail lights. As

well, Jensen said she hadn't noticed shortages on basic car parts.

Still, certain parts are difficult to procure, according to Joe Horst, owner of La Grande Auto Repair. Horst said that his

shop, which he opened in 1993, is currently averaging about a week for repairs, but that all depends on what parts are needed. Certain electrical parts are on back order for months according to Horst, which means some

repairs may be stalled for extended periods of time.

"There are some things that are getting more and more difficult to get," he said. "One good example is modules from the dealers. There seems to be a lot of

national back orders on those, and other parts as well. I think it has to do with the fact that they're not being able to come up with the (computer) chips."

Silicon computer chip manufacturers have been in the spotlight for their inability to keep up with the ever-increasing demand, leading to shortages in everything from game consoles, cellphones and even new vehicles.

"We've always been really busy," Horst said. "I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that buying new cars isn't as easy as it has been, so people are fixing their old ones."

The chip shortage has affected the manufacture of new cars, and the used car market has flourished, according to numerous media reports. In some instances, cars have actually appreciated in value due to the relative scarcity.

Repair shops have been inundated with an increased demand for services, which is only exacerbated by the still lingering nationwide labor shortage.

MEAT

Continued from Page B1

Plants operating under USDA inspection that are planning to increase meat processing from animals raised in Oregon.

ODA anticipates its inspection program will begin in July, pending approval from the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service.

Andrea Cantu-Schomus, ODA spokesperson, said the program's first set of draft rules were evaluated by

the federal government in January.

"We are in the midst of making necessary changes to meet their program requirements," she said.

Oregon has not had a state inspection program since 1971, when it was eliminated due to budget cuts. In 2020, the Legislature allocated \$926,195 and three full-time employees to re-establish the program.

Currently, Oregon has 13 USDA-inspected meat plants that are either at full capacity or require ranchers to drive long distances —

what are known as "processing deserts."

By expanding processing capacity, ODA says it can reduce transportation time and costs; support direct-to-consumer meat sales; reduce processing bottlenecks; provide wholesale options for value-added processors; and give producers greater control over the price they receive for livestock.

The \$2 million Oregon Meat Processing Infrastructure and Capacity Building Grant is meant to help spur this work.

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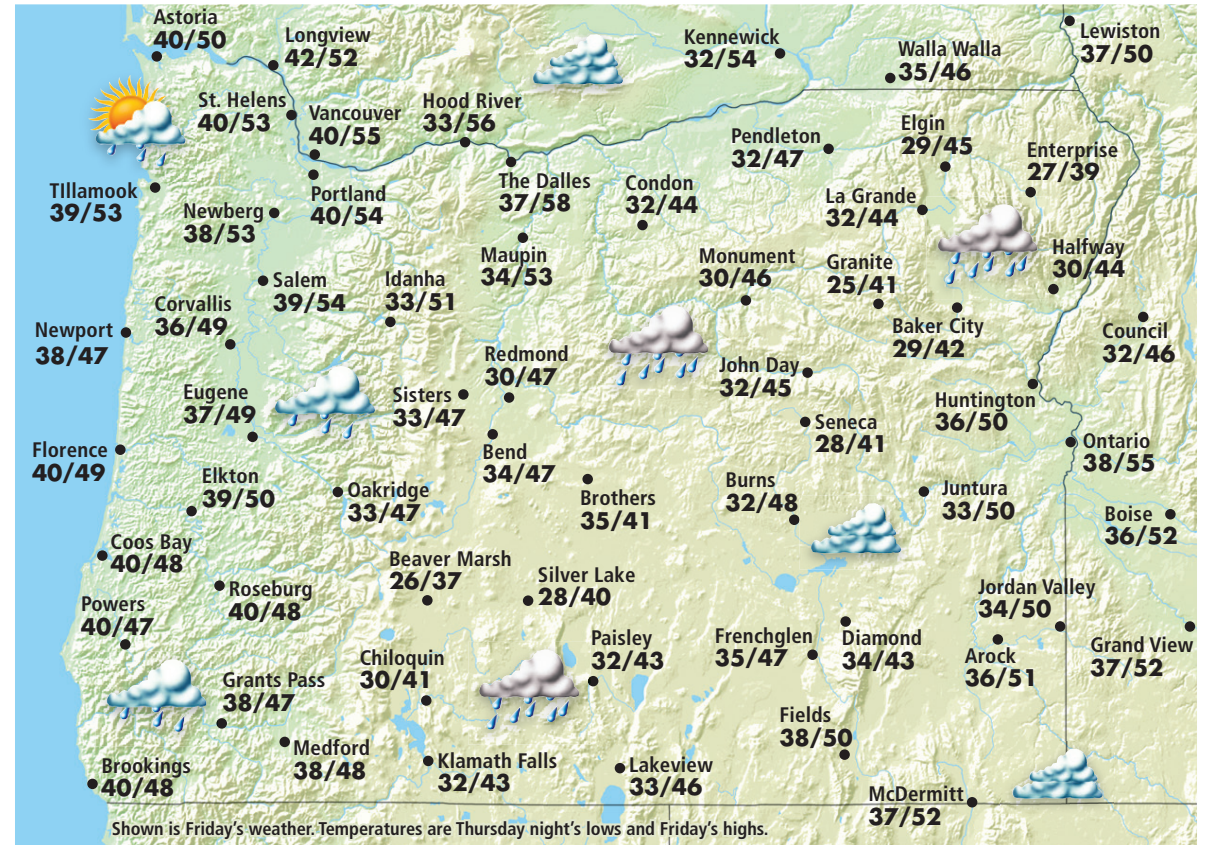
	TONIGHT	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON
	Late-night snow, 1-2"	Partly sunny and chilly	Rather cloudy and chilly	Mostly sunny and chilly	Mostly sunny
Baker City	29	42	30	43	22
<small>Comfort Index™</small>	0	0	0	0	1
La Grande	32	44	33	42	29
<small>Comfort Index™</small>	0	1	0	1	6
Enterprise	27	39	32	38	28
<small>Comfort Index™</small>	0	0	1	2	5

Comfort Index takes into account how the weather will feel based on a combination of factors. A rating of 10 feels very comfortable while a rating of 0 feels very uncomfortable.

ALMANAC		TUESDAY EXTREMES	
TEMPERATURES	Baker City 51° La Grande 55° Elgin 60°	NATION (for the 48 contiguous states) High: 93° Palm Springs, Calif. Low: -16° Clayton Lake, Maine Wettest: 0.63" North Bend, Ore.	
PRECIPITATION (inches)	High: 69° Hermiston Low: 25° Ruch Wettest: 0.63" North Bend		
Tuesday	0.01	0.04	0.54
Month to date	0.01	0.04	0.54
Normal month to date	0.02	0.05	0.09
Year to date	0.40	1.91	6.09
Normal year to date	1.31	2.95	5.70

AGRICULTURAL INFO.		WEATHER HISTORY	
HAY INFORMATION FRIDAY		On March 3, 1994, as much as 30 inches of snow buried central Pennsylvania, pushing season totals to record levels.	
Lowest relative humidity	55%		
Afternoon wind	NNW at 8 to 16 mph		
Hours of sunshine	0.0		
Evapotranspiration	0.05		
RESERVOIR STORAGE (through midnight Wednesday)		SUN & MOON	
Phillips Reservoir	3% of capacity	THU.	FRI.
Unity Reservoir	34% of capacity	Sunrise	6:27 a.m.
Owyhee Reservoir	23% of capacity	Sunset	5:42 p.m.
McKay Reservoir	44% of capacity	Moonrise	7:20 a.m.
Wallowa Lake	27% of capacity	Moonset	7:03 p.m.
Thief Valley Reservoir	53% of capacity	MOON PHASES	
STREAM FLOWS (through midnight Tuesday)		First	Full
Grande Ronde at Troy	2790 cfs	Last	New
Thief Valley Reservoir near North Powder	1 cfs		
Burnt River near Unity	7 cfs		
Umatilla River near Gibbon	606 cfs		
Minam River at Minam	381 cfs		
Powder River near Richland	30 cfs		

AROUND OREGON AND THE REGION



REGIONAL CITIES				RECREATION FORECAST FRIDAY			
City	FRI. HI/Lo/W	SAT. HI/Lo/W	City	FRI. HI/Lo/W	SAT. HI/Lo/W	Activity	Forecast
Astoria	50/40/c	51/36/pc	Lewiston	50/37/c	49/33/pc	Anthony Lakes	Snow, 1-2"
Bend	47/37/pc	50/33/c	Longview	52/37/c	55/34/pc	Phillips Lake	Morning flurries
Boise	52/36/pc	48/32/c	Meacham	42/31/c	40/28/c	Brownlee Res.	A little a.m. snow
Brookings	48/40/c	52/37/pc	Medford	48/37/c	53/32/c	Emigrant St. Park	Cloudy and chilly
Burns	48/28/sf	45/23/c	Newport	47/40/sh	50/31/pc	McKay Reservoir	Periods of sun
Coos Bay	48/41/c	50/37/c	Olympia	49/32/sh	50/31/pc	Red Bridge St. Park	Partly sunny
Corvallis	49/35/sh	52/33/c	Ontario	55/38/c	53/38/c		
Council	46/30/pc	43/26/c	Pasco	56/31/pc	57/31/s		
Elgin	45/31/pc	41/27/pc	Pendleton	47/33/pc	48/29/pc		
Eugene	49/35/sh	52/34/pc	Portland	54/38/c	59/36/c		
Hermiston	53/33/pc	56/30/s	Powers	47/42/c	49/38/c		
Hood River	56/36/pc	59/37/pc	Redmond	47/29/c	48/28/c		
Imnaha	46/35/sn	44/31/c	Roseburg	48/42/c	51/37/c		
John Day	45/32/sf	39/29/pc	Salem	54/38/c	54/36/c		
Joseph	38/30/sn	35/24/c	Spokane	48/30/c	46/28/pc		
Kennewick	54/33/pc	55/30/s	The Dalles	58/35/pc	59/37/pc		
Klamath Falls	43/29/sf	44/21/c	Ukiah	42/27/c	37/25/c		
Lakeview	46/27/sf	44/22/c	Walla Walla	46/36/c	48/33/pc		

Weather(W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice