

The Bulletin

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SPORTS PULLOUT, A5-8

2020: A YEAR OF CHALLENGES

How BendFilm kept movies rolling safely

BY MAKENZIE WHITTLE
The Bulletin

Movies and television had a major impact on the world as a whole over the course of the pandemic. When people were stuck at home for quarantine or stay-at-home orders they turned to films and shows old and new to pass the time with.

While theaters have closed, reopened and closed again, Todd Looby and his team at BendFilm have rolled with the ever-changing landscape, providing Central Oregon and the larger film community with a way to connect with filmmakers and soldiered on with screenings and their annual film festival in a safe way.

The organization already had eventual plans to implement more of a virtual element to the festival as well as outdoor screenings, according to Looby, but when the pandemic hit, those plans were put into hyperdrive as a way to keep the community involved.

“We immediately shifted to doing what we could do,” he said. “People at the festival make such a connection with the filmmakers that I wanted to invite filmmakers back and kind of get an update of what they’re working on and what Bend and (the BendFilm) festival meant to them.”

The BendFilm: Makers series which screened on Face-

THEY MADE A DIFFERENCE

There’s no question about it: Central Oregon residents faced unprecedented challenges in 2020, from a crippling pandemic to social justice unrest to wildfires that turned communities to ash. But with every development, someone stepped forward to help, answering a personal calling to improve the lives of neighbors and strangers alike because it was the right thing to do. They were selfless. They were generous. They made a difference.

book Live had such strong engagement the series continued throughout the summer and Looby hopes to start it back up in the new year.

But the organization didn’t stop there. BendFilm introduced virtual screenings via its website called Virtual Tin Pan (the theater which the nonprofit owns and holds regular screenings), created the pop-up drive-in, which hosted two world premiers of Oregon-made films including “The Last Blockbuster,” held outdoor screenings in Tin Pan Alley and developed a production fund for minority women filmmakers.

See **BendFilm** / A13

December, like all of 2020, was warmer, drier than normal in Bend

BY KYLE SPURR
The Bulletin

December in Bend continued a yearlong trend of being warmer and drier than normal.

Every month in 2020, except March, had warmer temperatures, and seven of the months had less precipitation than usual, according to the National Weather Service office in Pendleton.

Despite the hot and dry trend, 2020 was not significantly warmer than most years, said Rob Brooks, a meteorologist at the weather service. The average yearly temperature for the region is about 62 degrees, and 2020 averaged 66 degrees, Brooks said.

“We had our warm spots and it was a little above at times,” Brook said. “I wouldn’t call it huge. It hasn’t been one that flagged a whole lot of attention for researching it.”

The average temperature last month in Bend was 34.9 degrees, which was 3.9 degrees above normal, the weather service reported in its monthly climate summary.

High temperatures averaged 43.7 degrees, which was 4.3 degrees above normal. The highest temperature recorded last month was 63 degrees on Dec. 9, short of the daily record high temperature of 69 degrees on Dec. 4, 1922, according to weather service data.

See **December** / A13

Corrections

The story, “Shots slow to roll out in region,” which appeared on Page A1 on Tuesday, Jan. 5, incorrectly stated the percentage of vaccines in Deschutes and Crook counties. In Deschutes County, 1.3% of the population has been vaccinated, and in Crook County, 0.5% of the population has been vaccinated against COVID-19.

A story with the headline “County restores berm,” which appeared on Page A1 on Sunday, Jan. 3, incorrectly stated when the work was done on a berm that had blocked access to Juniper Ridge, and the nature of the work. The work to improve the berm was done Monday.

The Bulletin regrets the errors.

Redmond plans out projects, construction to finish in 2021

BY JACKSON HOGAN
The Bulletin

Redmond city staff expect to build a slew of capital projects this year, from a new \$16 million water facility to a new park at the south end of Dry Canyon.

City staff have outlined eight major construction projects throughout Redmond that should be completed in

2021, totaling about \$19.4 million.

Some were outlined in Redmond’s new, 20-year transportation plan, approved by the City Council in mid-December. Others, like the South Redmond Water Facility, have been planned for years.

The water facility is easily the biggest ticket item sched-

uled to be completed this year. Construction is already underway at the site, located in Redmond’s western edge off SW Reservoir Drive. The reservoir will hold 4 million gallons of water.

It will be the city’s second booster pump, providing tap water for households and industrial buildings throughout Redmond, according to City

Engineer Mike Caccavano. The southern location was chosen due to the boom in both residential and industrial construction on that end of the city, he said.

“There’s a lot of growth in that area,” Caccavano said. “We were running up against the limits of the existing booster pump.”

See **Redmond** / A4

CENTRAL OREGON SNOWPACK



Dean Guernsey/Bulletin photo

Phil Fine pays close attention to the weather as he walks across a field of dirt on his farm near Madras. Fine said farmers in financial distress due to water shortages forcing them to leave fields unplanted have few options.

Watching, waiting as Wickiup fills

BY MICHAEL KOHN
The Bulletin

Lower-than-average snowpack in the Cascades could set the stage for another challenging growing season in Central Oregon, but some farmers are still holding out hope that this winter could bring enough precipitation to push the area out of drought conditions.

“We’d like to see the snowpack higher. It doesn’t look like Wickiup (Reservoir) will fill,” said Phil Fine, who grows carrot seed, garlic seed, grass seed and other crops on his farm near Madras. “But we still have some time.”

Snowpack in the Upper Deschutes and Crooked River basins was 98% of normal as of Monday, according to data compiled by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Precipitation was 88% of normal for the water year, which started on Oct. 1. Still, most of Deschutes County is in a state of severe drought, according to U.S. drought monitor.

Central Oregon farmers have been hit hard by low snowpack in recent years, forcing many to fallow fields, which lowers their revenue and also creates dry, dusty condi-

tions. The low snowpack can also have long-term negative impacts on the environment, as both fish and wildlife depend on higher stream flows for their survival.

The water year had started off well. In mid-November, Bend was 144% of normal for precipitation. While the region was dry for most of December, January storms could push the snowpack to above average. According to the National Weather Service, rain and snowfall is forecast for Central Oregon through Friday.

See **Snowpack** / A4

“Wickiup Reservoir is on track to start the 2021 irrigation season at a record low level, which I am fairly confident will happen no matter what the next three months bring in the way of precipitation.”

— Kyle Gorman, region manager for the Oregon Water Resources Department

TODAY’S WEATHER



A couple showers
High 43, Low 27
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