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# The Bulletin

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# Gun sales break records in Oregon

BY SUZANNE ROIG • The Bulletin

**W**hile Guntraders in Redmond sells mostly collectible guns, owner Jerry Koch said that isn't stopping customers from flocking to his shop in search of a firearm. They're coming out of fear, Koch said. Customers are fearful of the protests they've seen on television, in Portland and across the country.



Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin

Scott Wyke, owner of Hammer Down Firearms in Bend, straightens a case of guns Friday while working at his store.

"I pray for America," Koch said. "At the start of the pandemic, they came in and we were busy. They were scared then, too. But once the riots started, they started climbing again."

The pandemic and protests have made 2020 a banner year for gun sales in Oregon, according to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, which tracks criminal background checks of gun applicants.

Gun sales are not tracked, but the background checks required for most gun sales

**"Guns themselves are generally not my worry. The combination of drugs being plentiful and guns being plentiful, that's a worry. We've had five murders so far and at least two involve a firearm."**

— Steven Leriche, the Jefferson County district attorney. He said there is a correlation between drug and alcohol use and gun ownership and serious crimes.

are. Still, not every background check results in a gun sale, and some sales are made without going through background checks. For example, guns sold between family members do not require a background check, according to federal guidelines.

In 2020, Oregon sold more than 516,000 guns and performed background checks for those sales. In the United States, 3.9 million gun background checks were done in 2020, compared to 3.3 million in 2015.

See **Guns** / A4

# Interest in concealed carry expands

*Increases reported in Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties*

BY GARRETT ANDREWS  
The Bulletin

Interest in carrying concealed firearms has increased in Central Oregon throughout a year-long run on firearms.

The sheriff's offices of Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties report increases in issuance of concealed handgun licenses.

In Deschutes County (population 197,629), there were 1,318 more registered concealed handgun permit holders at the end of 2020 than at the start, a jump from 15,127 to 16,445, or an 8.7% increase.

Jefferson County (population 23,607) added 282 new concealed handgun license hold-



Ryan Brennecke/Bulletin file photo

A casing discharges from a handgun during the live-fire portion of a concealed weapons class at the Redmond Rod and Gun Club.

ers in 2020, bringing its total to around 2,400, or approximately a 14% increase.

Crook County (population 24,404) saw a 20% increase in

concealed handgun licenses in 2019-20 over the previous two-year period, or an increase of 656.

Additionally, the three coun-

ties reported slowdowns processing the permits due to reduced or altered operations to provide social distancing. Jefferson County is still contending with a seven-week backlog processing concealed handgun licenses and sex offender registrations following the mid-November pandemic lockdown.

"We're behind on our fingerprinting, but we're catching back up," said Jefferson County Sheriff Jim Adkins.

Purchasing a firearm in Oregon requires a background check, though firearms safety training is not required. But to carry a firearm beneath a shirt or otherwise "concealed," a concealed handgun license is required. In Oregon, that requires completion of an NRA-approved concealed weapons safety course.

See **Concealed** / A4

*"Brecken Boice was a bright and pure soul who brought so much joy to this world. He was so kind and beautiful and easy to love."*



Submitted photo

Brecken Boice dreamed of becoming an engineer. He also loved to skateboard and had been skiing since he was 4.

# Family mourns son lost in Mt. Bachelor accident

*Brecken Boice, 9, remembered as 'kind and beautiful,' 'easy to love'*

BY GARRETT ANDREWS  
The Bulletin

The father of the boy who died after a skiing accident last month at Mt. Bachelor said conditions on the mountain were the iciest he had ever experienced.

"It's not something I've seen at all in my 25 years as a skier," said Brian Boice, of Tacoma, Washington, the father of Brecken Boice, 9.

Brecken was injured around 2:20 p.m. Jan. 16 while on an intermediate run near the summit. Brecken, who was wearing a helmet, was airlifted to St. Charles Bend, where surgery was attempted. He died several days later.

The Boices had traveled to Bend with another Tacoma-area family. The parents are experienced skiers and had skied at Mt. Bachelor before, but it was new for their two sons.

It's difficult for Brian Boice to talk about what happened on the mountain, about the moment his son started sliding away from the group.

"He got away from us," he said. "That's really all I can say."

Much of the local online chatter afterward centered on the conditions on the mountain that day, often describing the slopes as icy. The ski resort has been tight-lipped with the media, working through a spokesperson, who released a written statement:

"When considering opening terrain at Mt. Bachelor, safety is our number one priority. Several variables are considered in terrain management decisions. These include analysis of snow levels on different aspects of the 360-degree mountain, visibility, and the inherent conditions of the terrain. Only after these factors have been carefully assessed will terrain management decisions be made by the Mt. Bachelor team. Warnings and guest reminders are provided on the Mt. Bachelor conditions page and at the bottom and top of chairlifts and at the top of runs, where applicable," the statement reads.

Brian Boice said his son, who loved robotics, dreamed of becoming an engineer. He also loved to skateboard and had been skiing since he was 4. Brecken had two best friends and together they called themselves the "three amigos," his father said.

Brecken looked forward to Taco Tuesday at school and followed the off-kilter web series Annoying Orange and the digital character Crazy Frog.

See **Brecken** / A4

