



The Bulletin

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The United States has now surpassed half a million COVID-19 deaths, by far the worst toll in the world. Globally, about 2.5 million people have perished. About as many Americans have now died from COVID-19 as on the battlefields of World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War combined.

Sources: Johns Hopkins University, The Associated Press

« **BACKGROUND PHOTO:** Cindy Pollock has planted tiny flags across her yard in Boise, Idaho — one for each of the more than 1,800 deaths attributed to the disease in her state. **Story on A4**
Otto Kitsinger/AP

COVID-19 CONFUSION | IN OREGON AND BEYOND

Patchwork of pandemic rules creates ethical issues

BY GARY A. WARNER
Oregon Capital Bureau

Oregon vaccinates teachers before seniors. California punishes hospitals for vaccinating teachers. Washington vaccinates all seniors — and warns older Oregonians against trying to sneak north for an early shot. Governors around the country have issued

edicts during the COVID-19 crisis that often conflict with neighboring states, creating a national patchwork of do's and don'ts. "States are all over the place," said Dr. Arthur Caplan, director of New York University Langone's Division of Medical Ethics. "It's rarely clear why restrictions are expanded or removed. Criteria are modified without explanation."

The COVID-19 pandemic is the greatest public health crisis in a century, made all the more difficult by strict adherence to a geographical fiction: The United States is 50 distinct states. Hawaii is an island in the middle of the Pacific. All other states are connected by land mass, with demarcations of boundaries sometimes a river or mountain range, but often just

a 19th-century surveyor's line. The problem is the virus doesn't factor in whether the human it is infecting lives on the Idaho or Oregon side of the Snake River. The result has been 50 states fighting COVID-19 in 50 different ways. Masks or no masks. Open for business or shut for safety. Lockdown or liberty.

See **Patchwork** / A4

BEND

St. Charles medical techs warn of strike

Workers set March 4 to protest wages and working conditions

BY MICHAEL KOHN
The Bulletin

Medical techs at St. Charles Bend are threatening to strike if hospital administrators are unwilling to meet union contract terms. The strike could put further strain on a medical system already reeling from the coronavirus pandemic.

The strike will begin March 4 if the two parties fail to resolve matters related to pay and benefits, according to Samuel Potter, a spokesman for the Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals. The decision to strike comes after a year of negotiations between the medical techs and St. Charles management. The techs are seeking to resolve the differences as part of their first union contract.

"Management's unwillingness to settle the contract has pushed these essential healthcare employees to take a stand so that they can gain living wages and a voice on the job," according to a statement released by the federation.

See **St. Charles** / A4

SALEM

Legislature wants its day in court for redistricting

BY GARY A. WARNER
Oregon Capital Bureau

Democrats and Republicans in the Legislature are uniting to reset the clock on delays that would cut them out of drawing political maps for the 2022 election.

Citing the overwhelming challenge of counting heads during the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Census Bureau said the data due April 1 won't arrive until Sept. 30 — six months late.

INSIDE
• More political news from Salem, **A2**

"We are going to blow by all the deadlines at this point," said Rep. Andrea Salinas, D-Lake Oswego, chair of the House Redistricting Committee, at a press call Monday.

Legislators want the courts to reset the clock, saying the extraordinary U.S. Census delay shouldn't take away their rightful job of drawing lines for 60 House, 30 Senate and up to six congressional seats.

See **Redistricting** / A14

Correction

In a story titled "Gun sales break records in Oregon," which appeared Sunday, Feb. 21, on Page A1, the number of firearm background checks nationwide last year was incorrect. The number is 39.6 million. The Bulletin regrets the error.

Mt. Bachelor introduces a new avalanche rescue dog



ABOVE: Shasta the puppy explores in the snow while spending time with her handler, Drew Clendenen, and a fellow avalanche rescue dog, Riggins, at Mt. Bachelor on Friday.

Shasta *the* fantastic

BY KYLE SPURR • The Bulletin

MT. BACHELOR —

The most popular visitor at the Mt. Bachelor ski area west of Bend this winter might be Shasta, a 10-week-old golden retriever training to become the resort's next avalanche rescue dog.

For the past two weeks, skiers and snowboarders have enjoyed seeing Shasta get familiar with the mountain.

Shasta's handler, Drew Clendenen, a ski patroller at Mt. Bachelor for the past nine years, walks her around the resort's base area and takes her on snowmobile rides. Soon she will learn to ride a chairlift, Clendenen said.

By next winter, Shasta will be trained to find someone trapped under the snow.

"The end goal is you have a dog that uses its nose to smell someone that could be 10 feet in the ground," Clendenen said.

Shasta is the 16th dog to join Mt. Bachelor's Avalanche Rescue Dog Program, which started in the mid-1990s. Shasta joins three other rescue dogs in the program — two 8-year-old golden retrievers, Mango and Banyan, and a 9-year-old black Lab, Riggins.

Betsy Norsen, Mt. Bachelor National Ski Patrol director, said golden retrievers and Labs make some of the best avalanche rescue dogs because they are agile and have a strong drive. Finding a person under the snow is fun for the dogs, and they are rewarded with a treat or toy when they accomplish the goal, Norsen said.

See **Shasta** / A14



LEFT: Shasta licks Drew Clendenen on the face as he carries her back to the Mt. Bachelor National Ski Patrol building after exploring the snow together Friday.

Ryan Brennecke/Bulletin photos

