

▲ DOW 31,537.35 +15.66	▼ NASDAQ 13,465.20 -67.85	▲ S&P 500 3,881.37 +4.87	▲ 30-YR T-BOND 2.20% +0.2	▲ CRUDE OIL \$61.67 +18	▼ GOLD \$1,804.40 -2.30	▼ SILVER \$27.69 -.39	▼ EURO \$1.2144 -.0023
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BRIEFING

Tahoe ski resort faces lawsuits

The widow and a friend of a skier killed in an avalanche at a Lake Tahoe ski resort last year have filed separate lawsuits accusing the resort of negligently rushing to open the slopes in unsafe conditions for a holiday weekend that's typically one of the season's busiest.

Cole Comstock, 34, of Blairsden, California, was killed and his close friend, Kaley Bloom, was seriously injured when they were swept up in the avalanche on an Alpine Meadows ski run on Jan. 17, 2020 — the Friday before Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Bloom and Cole's widow, Caitlin Raymond, seek unspecified damages from Alpine Meadows on accusations of negligence, gross negligence and breach of contract.

"While we cannot comment on ongoing litigation, January 17, 2020, was a devastating day for our team at Squaw Valley Alpine Meadows, and we continue to share our deepest sympathies with the family and friends of those affected," Alex Sychalsky, a spokeswoman for both of the neighboring resorts, said in an emailed statement.

Alaska ordered to pay \$3.2M in suit

A jury ordered Alaska Airlines on Monday to pay \$3.2 million to the family of a 75-year-old disabled woman who died four months after falling down a Portland International Airport escalator.

KGW reports the family of Bernice Kekona, of Spokane, Washington, was traveling from Hawaii to Spokane in June 2017 with a connecting flight in Portland. She was disabled with an amputated leg.

At the Portland airport, while trying to get to her connecting flight, she fell down an escalator, resulting in significant injuries that led to her death, according to the lawsuit that alleged the airline contributed to her injuries.

In a statement, the Seattle-based airline said: "We're disappointed in the ruling and are evaluating next steps. There is no more important responsibility than the safety and wellbeing of our guests, whether they're in our care or the care of a vendor."

U.S. consumer confidence rises

U.S. consumer confidence rose again in February as an accelerating COVID-19 vaccine push provides hope for Americans who have lived through a year of unprecedented restrictions.

The Conference Board reported Tuesday that its consumer confidence index rose to 91.3, up from 88.9 in January.

Despite the improved vaccination rollout, consumers are more optimistic about current conditions than they are about the near future. The present situation index, which is based on consumers' assessment of current business and labor market conditions, rose to 92 from 85.5 last month.

But the expectations index — based on consumers' near-term outlook for income, business, and labor conditions — ticked down slightly to 90.8 this month from 91.2 in January.

— Bulletin wire reports

See **Hawaii** / A12

Riff Cold Brewed

COVID brings changes



Paul Evers, Riff Cold Brewed CEO and co-founder, displays some of the company's products at the production facility in Redmond on Monday.

Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin photos



Riff Cold Brewed employee Deb Sindayen processes coffee at the production facility in Redmond on Monday.

Riff leaves Bend taproom; Stoller Wines moves in

BY SUZANNE ROIG • The Bulletin

One of the main reasons Riff Cold Brewed had a taproom was to develop new flavors and new products and solicit customer feedback in a real-time setting.

Doing hands-on research and development requires a volume of customers that hasn't been achievable in the middle of a pandemic where businesses are restricted on the number of customers they can serve indoors. The forced closures and social-distancing requirements imposed to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus proved to be too much to keep open the cold brew taproom in The Box Factory on NW Arizona Avenue.

Beginning Feb. 12, Stoller Wines took over Riff's space and the remaining three years on the lease. Riff will continue production and distribution direct to consumers and in grocery stores.

"We decided that the taproom wasn't serving the brand, and we decided to get out of the lease because it was too much time and energy to run to keep in the guidance," said Paul Evers, co-founder of Riff Cold Brewed, formerly of TBD Agency and Crux Fermentation Project. "Our forecast at the start of 2020 was continued growth and then COVID hit. That has led to significant ongoing challenges."

See **Riff** / A12

Hawaii affordable housing guidelines could include \$1 million homes

Honolulu Star-Advertiser

HONOLULU — Affordable housing guidelines set by a Hawaii state agency could rate two-bedroom homes costing \$1 million as affordable for some households eligible for government-subsidized housing.

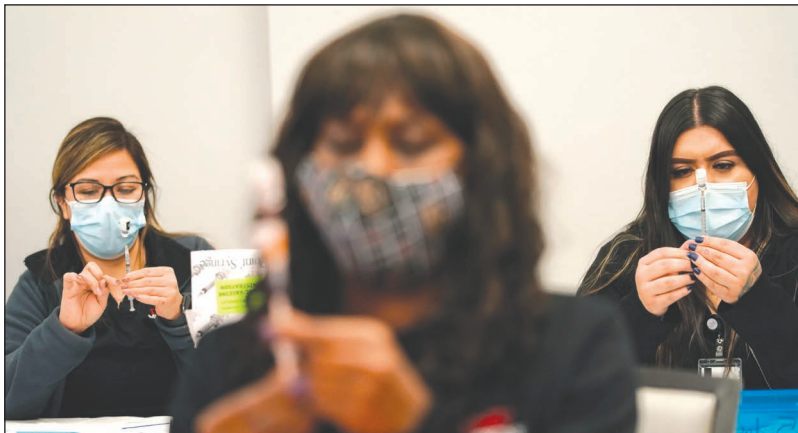
The guidelines established by the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corp. were aimed at helping developers produce affordable housing, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported.

There is little likelihood developers could produce and sell \$1 million homes to satisfy an affordable-housing condition under state and county requirements typically tied to projects receiving zoning changes, development bonuses and fee waivers.

"These formulas get to be so crazy that they get to be above market price," said Kenna Stormo-Gipson, an analyst with the Hawaii Budget and Policy Center. "Their guidelines clearly need revamping."

Household income, family size and interest rates are primarily used to compile annual housing affordability tables.

Drug executives



John Locher/AP file

Certified medical assistants prepare doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine at a vaccination center at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, in Las Vegas on Jan 22.

Big jump in vaccine supply is coming soon

BY MATTHEW PERRONE AND LAURAN NEERGAARD
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — COVID-19 vaccine makers told Congress on Tuesday to expect a big jump in the delivery of doses over the coming month, and the companies insist they will be able to provide enough for most Americans to get inoculated by summer.

By the end of March, Pfizer and Moderna expect to have provided the U.S. government with a total of 220 million vaccine doses, up sharply from the roughly 75 million shipped so far.

"We do believe we're on track," Moderna President Stephen Hoge said, outlining ways the company has ramped up production. "We think we're at a very good spot."

See **Vaccines** / A12

Court arguments heard over Eastern Oregon transmission line

BY MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Press

Opponents of a 300-mile transmission line in Eastern Oregon claim the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's approval of the route across its property violated federal laws.

The Stop B2H Coalition — which is challenging the high-voltage power line between Boardman and the Hemingway substation in Idaho — is asking a federal judge to overturn the BLM's permission for the project.

Among the transmission line's critics, the agriculture industry has raised concerns about the project taking prime farmland out of production and impeding farm practices.

The agency didn't comply with the National Environmental Policy Act by selecting a preferred route and a variant in 2017 that were different than what it had analyzed in a draft environmental study, according to the coalition.

The newly chosen route is problematic because it's only a half-mile from La Grande, runs across an intact portion of the Oregon Trail, and passes near ecologically sensitive areas, critics say.

See **Line** / A12