

MADRAS NETS BIG WIN AS SPORTS RETURN

PREP SOCCER • SPORTS PULLOUT, A5-8

The Bulletin

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GARY LEWIS HUNTS BISON TO HELP LIMIT NUMBERS ON NEBRASKA PRESERVE
SPORTS, A5



St. Charles prepares for technician strike

BY SUZANNE ROIG
The Bulletin

After meeting 28 times over the past year to resolve a labor dispute with medical technicians, St. Charles Bend has filed a lawsuit in federal court to block a walkout.

A federal court hearing is set for 9 a.m. Tuesday in Eugene to block the strike by the 154 members of the Ore-

gon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals union. The walkout is set for Thursday unless an agreement can be reached.

Meanwhile, both sides have a date with a federal mediator for March 10, said Sam Potter, union external organizer. St. Charles is seeking an order from the court to that would pause the strike.

The hospital says the union failed to provide adequate notice of a strike as outlined by the labor board.

This is the first contract that the union, which began representing the members in October 2019, has attempted to negotiate on behalf of the members with St. Charles.

During previous negotiation sessions, 85% of the contract

had been hammered out, what was left on the table were cost items, Potter said.

“We’ve been stalled since September,” Potter said. “That’s when we began talking about economic issues.”

St. Charles, however, has filed two unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board,

which oversees disputes like these. St. Charles Bend maintains the strike notice was unlawful and the union isn’t bargaining in good faith, according to a prepared statement.

The hospital declined to comment for this story and referred The Bulletin to prepared statements.

See **Strike** / A14

DESCHUTES COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE

Sergeant investigated for sexually abusing woman

BY GARRETT ANDREWS
The Bulletin

A decorated Deschutes County Sheriff’s Office sergeant remains on paid leave more than a year after Redmond Police began investigating him in an alleged sexual assault.

A newly released police report outlines an ongoing criminal investigation into Richard “Deke” DeMars, once a fast-rising officer at the agency and Oregon’s 2007 Deputy of the Year.

“I believe there is probable cause the crime of sodomy has occurred,” wrote Lt. Aaron Wells of the Redmond Police Department. “(The alleged victim) had a clear recollection of the sexual encounter. She told friends, went to the extent of seeing a doctor and was clear communicating to DeMars and others she did not want (the sexual contact).”

See **Investigation** / A14



Seeking treasure

Metal detecting hobby helps Sisters man find cherished items lost by owners

BY KYLE SPURR
The Bulletin

Sisters resident Todd Williver has turned his hobby of metal detecting into helping people recover their priceless jewelry and wedding rings.

Last month, a woman lost her engagement ring and contacted Williver through The Ring Finders, an online platform that connects people with a metal detecting specialist.

Williver met 24-year-old Gresham resident Maddie Pernich, who said she lost her ring while sledding on the snow-covered shores of Lake Billy Chinook west of Madras.

Pernich and Williver were convinced they would find the ring, but after hours of searching on the muddy lakeshore they almost gave up. When they returned to the house where Pernich was staying, Pernich’s fiance spotted the ring on the gravel driveway.

See **Williver** / A14



Ryan Brennecke/Bulletin photos

Todd Williver, above, of Sisters has turned his hobby of metal detecting into a way to help people recover their lost things. Williver holds a small sample of items, right, that he has found with his metal detector over the past year.

Bend has ‘normal’ February weather for a change

BY KYLE SPURR
The Bulletin

Weather in Bend was normal in February, compared to year and the 2 feet of snow that fell during the month two years ago.

The National Weather Service office in Pendleton reported in its monthly climate summary that Bend had near normal temperatures and precipitation in February.

The average February temperature in Bend was 33.9 degrees, which was 0.3 degrees below normal. High temperatures last month averaged 43.5 degrees, which was 0.8 degrees below normal.

The highest temperature was 57 degrees on Feb. 23.

See **Weather** / A4

Vaccine clinic at fairgrounds to be replaced by trade show

Vaccinations will continue at rural pop-up clinics while Sportsmen’s Show uses the space

BY BRENN A VISSER
The Bulletin

The mass COVID-19 vaccination clinic currently operating at the Deschutes County Fair & Expo Center will be

temporarily replaced by the Central Oregon Sportsmen’s Show next week, though vaccinations will continue to occur in pop-up clinics around rural parts of the county.

Since Jan. 20, a portion of the Deschutes County Fair & Expo Center has been used to vaccinate thousands of people. But the annual Sportsmen’s Show is already booked in the area where the vaccination clinic is happening. The show takes place March 11 to 14.

Molly Wells Darling, the county’s deputy incident com-

mander, said the county will not stop vaccinating people because of this, but instead will open temporary, pop-up clinics in rural and remote parts of the county, such as in La Pine.

“We will continue to provide vaccines ... We’ll just be providing them in a different way,” Wells Darling said Monday.

Wells Darling said she and

her team heard about needing to find another way to do vaccinations about two or three weeks ago. Exactly how many clinics and their locations will be decided after the county learns what its vaccine allotment will be from the state on Thursday, she said.

The vaccine clinic is expected to resume at the fair-

grounds the week of March 15.

But the county has received some complaints about the move, said Commissioner Phil Chang. When asked whether the commission had any part in making the decision about moving the clinic, he said the issue was never brought before commissioners in a public way.

See **Fairgrounds** / A4

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