

<b>DOW</b> 33,015.37 +189.42	<b>NASDAQ</b> 13,525.20 +53.63	<b>S&amp;P 500</b> 3,974.12 +11.41	<b>30-YR T-BOND</b> 2.44% +0.05	<b>CRUDE OIL</b> \$64.60 -20	<b>GOLD</b> \$1,726.80 -3.90	<b>SILVER</b> \$26.03 +.06	<b>EURO</b> \$1.1979 +.0075
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**BRIEFING**

**IRS delays tax filing due date**

Americans will be getting extra time to prepare their taxes. The Internal Revenue Service says it's delaying the traditional tax filing deadline from April 15 until May 17.

The IRS announced the decision Wednesday and said it would provide further guidance in the coming days. The move provides more breathing room for taxpayers and the IRS alike to cope with changes brought on by the pandemic.

The decision postpones when individual taxpayers must file their return and when their payment is due. The IRS said taxpayers who owe money would not face any further penalties or interest if they pay by May 17. The new deadline also applies to individuals who pay self-employment tax.

**Pacific Power tries lower-rate option**

Pacific Power is launching a pilot program to the first 25,000 customers to lower their bills by shifting use to off-peak times for residential, commercial and irrigation customers in Oregon.

Serving Bend, Redmond, Madras and Prineville, Pacific Power's Time of Use plan gives customers control over the price for energy depending on the time of use. Peak times of power use, according to the company, are from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The program allows the power company to manage the power grid more efficiently and make better use of low-cost renewable power. Customers have to sign up for the program and can access online usage tracking tools at [pacificpower.net/insights](http://pacificpower.net/insights) to see energy use.

For more information go to [pacificpower.net/tou](http://pacificpower.net/tou) or call 888-221-7070. For the first year of enrollment, Pacific Power will guarantee that customers don't pay more than 10% above what their bills would have been under standard rates.

Pacific Power provides electric service to 90,000 customers in Central Oregon and 770,000 customers in Oregon, Washington and California.

**Home construction tumbled 10.3%**

Severe winter weather in much of the country pushed home construction down a sharp 10.3% in February while applications for new construction fell by 10.8%.

The decline pushed home and apartment construction down to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.42 million units last month, compared to a rate of 1.58 million units in January when housing starts had fallen 5.1%, the Commerce Department reported Wednesday.

Economists are optimistic that housing will bounce back in coming months, helped by ultra-low mortgage rates and rising demand by Americans who have been cooped up for the past year as the coronavirus pandemic rages.

However, even with the expected rebound, the growth in housing will likely slow from last year's sizzling pace given a series of restraints from a lack of building lots to surging lumber prices.

— Bulletin wire reports

## Oregon says it will pay expanded jobless benefits 'without delay'

BY MIKE ROGOWAY  
The Oregonian

The Oregon Employment Department said Wednesday that most people receiving expanded benefits through the new coronavirus relief package won't experience any delay in payments as those programs kick in.

Payments will continue

"without delay for most people," said David Gerstenfeld, the department's acting director. That includes most contract workers receiving benefits through the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program and extended benefits through the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation program.

However, Gerstenfeld warned that some people who had used up all their benefits under those programs before Congress extended them last week may have payments interrupted while the employment department adapts its computers to the federal changes.

"It will take some additional

time there," Gerstenfeld said Wednesday on his weekly media call.

Oregon has paid \$8.1 billion in jobless benefits since the coronavirus pandemic began a year ago, though many unemployed people have had to wait weeks or months for their money.

See *Jobless* / A12

## Business owners ask for more time to pay late rent

BY JAMIE GOLDBERG  
The Oregonian

The TeaScape Massage and Teahouse in southeast Portland had been open just two months last year when Oregon ordered it and other massage therapists to close in the early days of the coronavirus outbreak.

Those restrictions eased a couple months later, but only about a third of TeaScape Massage's clientele has returned. That left the business with far more in expenses than revenue. Owner Miho Hatanaka told Oregon lawmakers Tuesday that her business is now \$25,000 behind on rent.

Oregon lawmakers allowed the state's moratorium on commercial evictions to expire in September but gave business owners until the end of March to repay their outstanding rent, potentially preventing an onslaught of commercial evictions over the last six months.

With that March 31 deadline now looming, business owners say they need more time.

See *Rent* / A12

## PROGRESS SET IN MOTION



Robots walk across the floor of the University of Michigan's Ford Motor Co. Robotics Building on Friday in Ann Arbor.

Carlos Osorio/AP photos

### Ford partners with University of Michigan on robotics research

BY COREY WILLIAMS  
The Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Digit marches on two legs across the floor of the University of Michigan's Ford Motor Co. Robotics Building, while Mini-Cheetah — staccato-like — does the same on four and the yellow-legged Cassie steps deliberately side-to-side.

A grand opening was held this week for the four-story, \$75 million, 134,000-square-foot complex. Three floors house classrooms and research labs for robots that fly, walk, roll and augment the human body.

On the top floor are Ford researchers and engineers and the automaker's first robotics and mobility research lab on a university campus.

Together, they will work to develop robots and roboticists that help make lives better, keep people safer and build a more equitable society, the school and automaker announced Tuesday.



The four-story, \$75 million, 134,000-square-foot complex has three floors that house classrooms and research labs for robots that fly, walk, roll and augment the human body.

"As we all drive and use our vehicles and go about our day-to-day lives, I'm sure all of us have moments in our day where we could use a little help or a little assistance," said Ken Washington, Ford's chief technology officer.

"We are going to be working on drone technology, walking robots, roving robots,

all types of robots in this facility and the ways in which they can make people's lives better," Washington added. "And we'll do it in a way that addresses questions and fears around safety and security. The more people see how these robots can interact with society and interact with humans, the more comfortable they'll get with them."

The building on the university's Ann Arbor campus brings together researchers from 23 buildings and 10 programs into one space. Those working on two-legged disaster response robots can test them on a 30-mph treadmill studded with obstacles or on a stair-stepped "robot playground" designed with the help of artificial intelligence.

Biomedical engineers are looking at developing lighter, more stable prosthetic legs. Ford engineers are exploring how upright Digit robots can work in human spaces.

"We want them to be able to operate in realistic situations. ... You get out in the real world where there's rolling, twigs," said Jessy Grizzle, the Robotics Institute director. "There's rocks. There's boulders. There's holes that you can't see because the grass is cut flat, and then you want your robots to respond well and stay upright just like a human would."

See *Robotics* / A12

## Melinda Gates says government, philanthropy need unity

BY GLENN GAMBOA  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Philanthropy is in a unique position to speed global change, but government action is necessary to implement it, said Melinda Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

"Philanthropy can often take risks," said Gates, speaking at the Bloomberg Equality Summit. "They can try innovations that sometimes work and sometimes fail. They can look for new solutions. They can help us collect the data. But ultimately, it's always up to government to scale up these innovations to create a change."

Gates, whose foundation has donated more than \$2 billion to fight the spread of COVID-19, said the development of the coronavirus vaccines is a prime example of how philanthropy and government policies can work together.

See *Gates* / A12

## Oregon FFA officers reflect on year of chaotic tenure

BY GEORGE PLAVEN  
Capital Press

Under normal circumstances, the 2020-21 Oregon FFA state officer team would have traveled thousands of miles around the state last fall, leading workshops and meeting with fellow "blue jackets" at more than 100 local chapters.

Of course, 2020 was far from a normal year.

The coronavirus pandemic forced high schools to adopt remote learning, thwarting in-person gatherings. For FFA officers like Grace Adams and Jenna Wallace, that meant finding new ways to connect

with their peers.

"I think it was hard at first," Adams said. "We came to the realization that our team was going to have a unique experience that nobody else could relate to."

Adams, of Dayton, was elected Oregon FFA president during last year's virtual state convention in March, and Wallace, of Hermiston, was elected vice president. Nobody could have predicted then just how long the crisis would last, or how disruptive it would be.

As the first day of the 2021 convention began Tuesday — which was also streamed on-



Adams



Wallace

line — Adams and Wallace reflected on their team's unprecedented tenure, how they were able to adapt and ultimately prevail through difficult times.

"Instead, we thought more of how can we make this better? What can we do to move onward?" Adams said. "I think

we've grown the most, because we faced a lot of struggles."

Rather than hitting the road for their regular leadership tour, the six-member Oregon FFA state officer team was forced to hunker down for three months, living in the dorms at Oregon State University in Corvallis. Every day, they would arrive at Strand Agriculture Hall on campus to facilitate workshops with students online via Zoom.

The challenge, Adams said, was figuring out how to make the presentations engaging and interactive over a computer screen. They made use of video

clips, chat features and breakout rooms, encouraging members who might already feel burned out with online classes to participate.

"Traditionally, in order to get them engaged, you'd do something hands-on or turn to a partner. We couldn't really do that," Adams said.

Adams joked the team has now perfected the art of the "awkward Zoom conversation." In addition to daily workshops, the team also held four virtual leadership camps for chapter officers, with several hundred students registered for each.

See *FFA* / A12