

▲ DOW 33,171.37 +98.49	▼ NASDAQ 13,059.65 -79.08	▼ S&P 500 3,971.09 -3.45	▲ 30-YR T-BOND 2.42% +05	▲ CRUDE OIL \$61.56 +59	▼ GOLD \$1,712.10 -20.10	▼ SILVER \$24.71 -38	▼ EURO \$1.1764 -.0026
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BRIEFING

Biden boosts plans for wind energy

The Biden administration is moving to sharply increase offshore wind energy along the East Coast, saying Monday it is taking initial steps toward approving a huge wind farm off the New Jersey coast as part of an effort to generate electricity for more than 10 million homes nationwide by 2030.

Meeting the target could mean jobs for more than 44,000 workers and for 33,000 others in related employment, the White House said. The effort also would help avoid 78 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year, a key step in the administration's fight to slow global warming.

Despite the enthusiasm, offshore wind development is still in its infancy in the U.S., far behind progress made in Europe. The three major projects under development are all owned by European companies or subsidiaries.

Not everyone is cheering the rise of offshore wind. Fishing groups from Maine to Florida have expressed fear that large offshore wind projects could render huge swaths of the ocean off-limits to their catch.

VW to switch name to 'Volkswagen'

Volkswagen plans to change its brand name in the United States to "Volkswagen" as its shifts its production increasingly toward electric vehicles and tries to distance itself from an emissions cheating scandal.

A person briefed on the plan said a formal announcement is planned for Tuesday. The person didn't want to be identified because the plans had not been made public.

The person who was briefed on the plan said the name Volkswagen Group of America, which also includes the Audi, Bentley, Bugatti and Lamborghini brands, won't change. Rather, only the 'k' in the Volkswagen brand itself will be changed to a 't'.

Southwest Airlines commits to Boeing

Southwest Airlines will buy 100 new Boeing 737 Max 7 jets over the next decade, ending any speculation that the Dallas-based carrier will switch away from its all Boeing fleet.

Boeing announced the deal Monday morning that will bring Southwest's order of the 737 jets to more than 349 over the next decade, sealing the long partnership that was severely strained when Boeing's flagship 737 Max line was grounded for two years.

The 737 Max 7 is the slightly smaller version of 737 Max 8, carrying 140 to 150 passengers. The Max 8, which Southwest currently flies, carries 175 passengers. The smaller jet should give the airline more options to fly to smaller destinations or more frequencies when the bigger jets aren't required.

The first 30 of those 737 Max 7 jets should be delivered in 2022, Southwest said.

— Bulletin wire reports

St. Charles, union come to terms

Bend technicians, technologists and therapists were on strike from March 4 to 13 over wages

BY SUZANNE ROIG
The Bulletin

The union representing 154 technicians, technologists and therapists reached an agreement with St. Charles Bend over the weekend, pending ratification by its members.

Details were not forthcoming on the agreement, the first since the union was formed. The contract will be voted on by the members of the Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals on Wednesday and be in effect immediately.

In a joint statement, the union and the hospital said the federal mediator requested that neither side discuss the details of the agreement until after the members have voted on the contract.

The union began representing the members in October 2019. Workers walked out March 4, the first work stoppage in more than four decades, because they could not reach a contract agreement.

The hospital and the union have disagreed about salary and shift wages. The hospital objected to the union's request to require any new employees to join the union and also would only agree to wage increases for the first year.

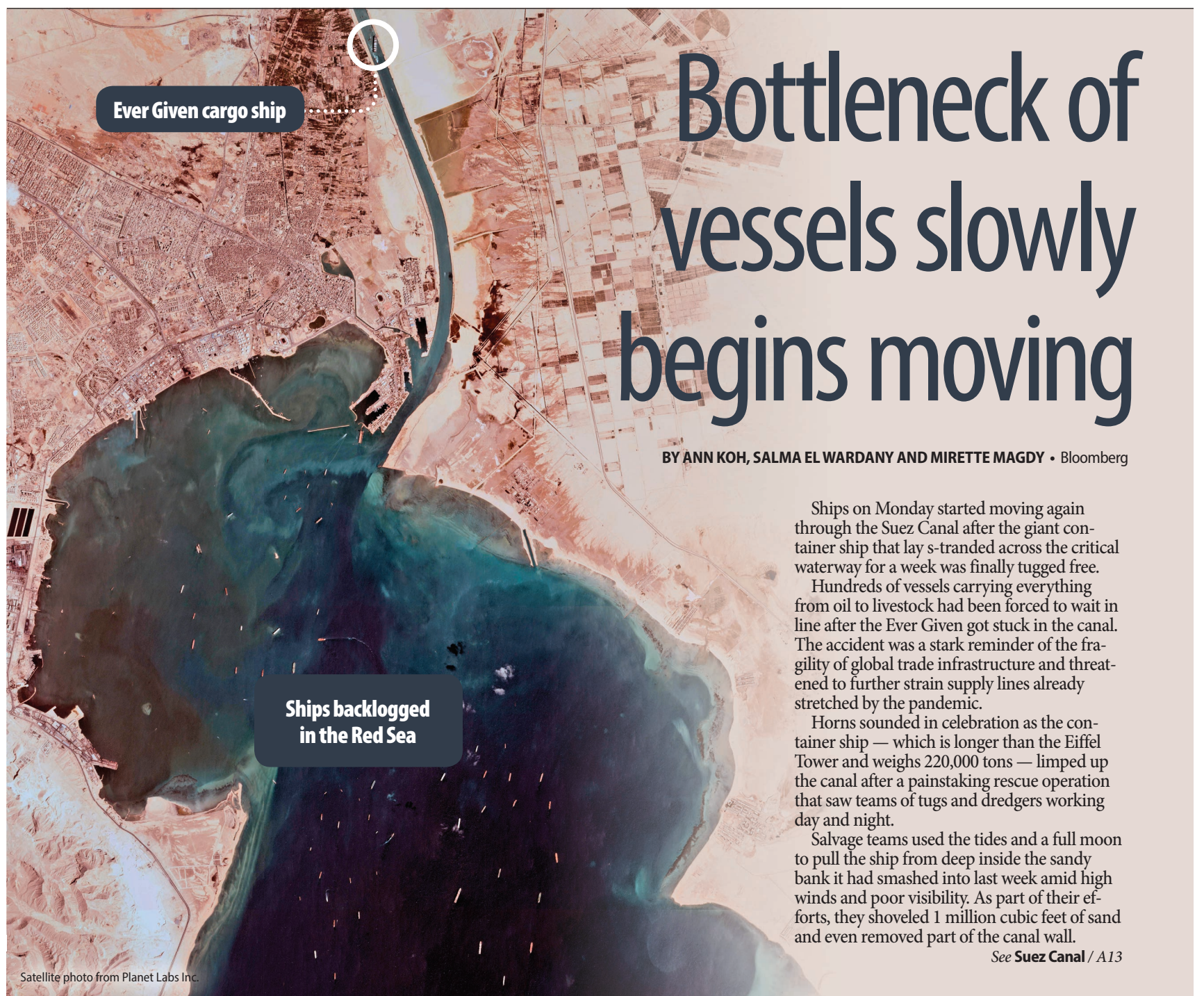
Over the past year, both sides met 29 times to resolve the labor dispute with medical technicians, technologists and therapists.

The hospital tried to stop the

strike by filing lawsuits in state and federal courts. A federal judge ruled the court could not halt the strike and returned the labor dispute to the National Labor Relations Board.

The walkout ended March 13 when the union and hospital administration agreed to continue negotiations and finalize an agreement by March 31.

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Bottleneck of vessels slowly begins moving

BY ANN KOH, SALMA EL WARDANY AND MIRETTE MAGDY • Bloomberg

Ships on Monday started moving again through the Suez Canal after the giant container ship that lay s-tranded across the critical waterway for a week was finally tugged free.

Hundreds of vessels carrying everything from oil to livestock had been forced to wait in line after the Ever Given got stuck in the canal. The accident was a stark reminder of the fragility of global trade infrastructure and threatened to further strain supply lines already stretched by the pandemic.

Horns sounded in celebration as the container ship — which is longer than the Eiffel Tower and weighs 220,000 tons — limped up the canal after a painstaking rescue operation that saw teams of tugs and dredgers working day and night.

Salvage teams used the tides and a full moon to pull the ship from deep inside the sandy bank it had smashed into last week amid high winds and poor visibility. As part of their efforts, they shoveled 1 million cubic feet of sand and even removed part of the canal wall.

See **Suez Canal** / A13

While the world tore its hair out over the Suez Canal blockage, Russia saw an opportunity

Russian officials are seizing on the Suez Canal blockage saga to promote its Northern Sea Route, an ambitious infrastructure plan being pushed by President Vladimir Putin that aims to capitalize on the polar ice melt from global warming by opening up Arctic shipping and development.

Russia's Energy Ministry said Monday that the dayslong blockage of the canal by Rotterdam-bound Ever Given showed that its Northern Sea Route, or NSR, and gas and oil pipelines were reliable, secure and competitive "in comparison to alternative routes."

Russia last year released a sweeping plan to open up the Arctic shipping route, which includes building a fleet of dozens of nuclear icebreakers and other ships, mapping natural resources in the region and developing airports, ports and railways in northern Russia.

As Suez traffic choked to a halt last week, Russian officials were busy promoting the NSR.

Nikolai Korchunov, Russia's envoy for international cooperation in the Arctic, said Friday that the Suez Canal blockage should press the world to look at the NSR as an alternative.

"The incident in the Suez Canal should make everyone think about diversifying strategic sea routes amid the increasing scope of sea shipping," he said. Korchunov added that there was "no alternative" to the NSR.

In 2018, Putin decreed that cargo traffic along the route should be sharply increased — to 80 million tons by 2024. Cargo volumes reached 30 million tons by the end of 2019 and 32 million tons last year, according to the state nuclear corporation Rosatom. Responsibility for delivering on the NSR master plan and opening up exploitation of the Arctic

amid retreating polar ice has been handed to the state oil and gas monopolies Rosneft and Gazprom, Rosatom and the private natural gas giant Novatek.

Global environmental groups are concerned that the predominance of Russian state fossil fuel giants in developing the region may lead to environmental concerns being swept aside. They fear that increased traffic and icebreaking activity will speed climate change effects in the fragile Arctic region, as well as risking oil spills and other disasters.

In 2020, Russia's meteorological agency said the ice cover in the Arctic sea route had reached a record low.

Russia's Natural Resources and Environment Ministry warned in September 2019 that the country's temperatures were increasing 2.5 times as fast as those of any other nation.

— The Washington Post

OSU study looks at hemp byproduct as animal feed

BY GEORGE PLAVEN
Capital Press

Hemp is already touted for its healthful and therapeutic benefits in humans. Researchers at Oregon State University are now studying whether the plant could also be part of a nutritious diet for livestock.

The project, which received a nearly \$300,000 USDA grant in February, aims to determine whether "spent hemp biomass" can be fed to animals including lambs, chickens and dairy cows, and whether any residual cannabis compounds are present in the meat and milk.

Spent hemp biomass is the leafy byproduct left over after processing hemp for cannabidiol, or CBD, oil, which makes up the vast majority of



Capital Press

Spent hemp biomass, processed into pellets, consists of leaves and stalks left over after the plants are processed for oil extract.

Oregon hemp production. The research team, led by Massimo Bionaz, has found this material is similar in

both appearance and chemical composition to alfalfa hay, long considered the gold standard of animal forages, especially for dairy cows.

"Personally, when they told me about hemp, I didn't even know what the plant looked like," said Bionaz, an associate professor of dairy nutrigenomics at OSU. "The more we analyzed, we were really amazed by the nutritive value."

Rich in protein, fiber and minerals, hemp biomass appears to have promise as a cheaper alternative animal feed. It could also provide hemp farmers with an added revenue stream, turning what was a waste product into a cash crop.

See **Hemp** / A13

First trial nears in huge 3M earplugs litigation

BY MIKE HUGHLETT
(Minneapolis) Star Tribune

The first trial in one of the largest U.S. mass torts ever kicked off Monday with 3M defending itself against claims that its Combat Arms earplugs were knowingly defective, harming the hearing of tens of thousands of soldiers.

3M became a giant in the military earplug market when it bought Aearo Technologies in 2008. The Maplewood, Minnesota-based company maintains that Combat Arms plugs were designed properly and worked as they should.

The size of the earplug litigation — nearly 230,000 claims are pending before a federal court in Pensacola, Florida — dwarfs most mass torts.

"Anytime you get a case with

this many people involved, people turn their heads," said Alexandra Lahav, a professor at the University of Connecticut School of Law. "It's an incredibly large number of complaints."

If the verdicts go badly for 3M, damages could tally in the hundreds of millions of dollars, if not more, based on the outcome of other large mass tort cases in recent years.

The earplug claims against 3M were lodged after the company settled a whistleblower suit in 2018.

That suit was brought by rival earplug maker Moldex-Metric on the U.S. government's behalf, after an inquiry by the Army Criminal Investigations Command.

See **Earplugs** / A13