

LIVESTOCK AUCTIONS FEEL STRAIN

FEWER CATTLE, RISING COSTS AND THE EMERGENCE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY HURTS SMALL BARNERS • BUSINESS, A5

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DOWNTOWN BEND

WORRELL PARK MAY BECOME FLATTER, MORE ACCESSIBLE



Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin photos

Deschutes County is considering renovations to Bill Worrell Wayside Park located near the Deschutes County administration building that include more parking and better wheelchair access.

County park redesign intended to create more parking spaces in anticipation of courthouse expansion

BY BRENN A VISSER • The Bulletin

To make the area more accessible and create more parking, major changes could be coming to Bill Worrell Wayside Park, the small hillside park that sits outside of the main Deschutes County administration building on Wall Street. Earlier this week, the Deschutes County Commission decided to move forward with finding a civil engineer to redesign the 1.29-acre park that sits in the middle of Deschutes County's downtown campus parking lot.



Many gravel trails lead to the top of Bill Worrell Wayside Park in Bend.

The vision is to flatten the existing park — which is built upon a hillside of rocks — to be closer to ground level. This will make it easier to establish more usable and accessible trails and other amenities, as well as make way for more parking spots, said Lee Randall, the county's facilities director.

A current conceptual plan — which had the support of Commissioners Tony DeBone and Phil Chang — shows the redesign would add roughly 68 parking spots to the lot adjacent to the park.

The park would have trails, plazas and a variety of gardens and other shrubbery, according to conceptual design presented

Monday. The redesign would also reconfigure where the tax and ballot drop boxes would be so that on busy days, like an election day, lines of cars would form in the parking lot, rather than spilling onto Wall Street, Randall said.

"The idea is that by lowering the elevation of it you keep about the same amount of usable space for park space, but you gain additional parking spaces," Randall said in an interview Thursday.

This idea has been in the works for the past two years, and was prompted by the county trying to get ahead of an eventual courthouse expansion.

See **Worrell Park** / A7

COVID-19 in Oregon

Brown: 4th wave of virus hits state

BY GARY A. WARNER
Oregon Capital Bureau

COVID-19 infections are on the rise again in Oregon, a fourth wave of increasing cases since the pandemic began.

"This virus is at our doorstep — our numbers are rising, and we are back on alert," said Gov. Kate Brown at a Friday press conference.

A steep drop in infections since Jan. 1 had shown signs of bottoming out in recent weeks, but the most current data shows COVID-19 is again on the rise.

The April numbers are showing that the most pessimistic forecasts last month are coming true.

"The virus appears to be rebounding," said Dr. Dean Sidelinger, the Oregon Health Authority's top infectious disease expert. "COVID-19 is a resilient enemy."

See **COVID-19** / A4

Deschutes County case rates again on the rise

BY SUZANNE ROIG
The Bulletin

Deschutes County's COVID-19 positivity rate is just a fraction away from sending the county back to a high risk category that would limit indoor dining and group gathering.

"We've seen higher case counts recently than previously, which is concerning," said Morgan Emerson, Deschutes County Health Services spokeswoman. "It's an important reminder that we need to remain vigilant."

On Monday, the Oregon Health Authority will review counties to determine the appropriate risk level and it will become effective on Friday, Timothy Heider, an Oregon Health Authority spokesman, said by email.

Counties found to be backsliding are at risk of being sent back to a more restrictive category or being placed in a caution period to give it time to reduce the COVID-19 spread, according to the Oregon Health Authority website.

See **County** / A4

LUKE WIRKKALA | SECOND MURDER TRIAL

Jury begins deliberation in retrial

BY GARRETT ANDREWS
The Bulletin

REDMOND — Luke Anton Wirkkala has waited eight years for vindication that he lawfully took a life, and now he must wait until at least Monday to learn his fate.

Wirkkala's second murder trial concluded Friday with closing statements after three weeks of testimony in a temporary courtroom at the Deschutes County fairgrounds. Jurors deliberated for about a half-hour before pausing for the weekend.

Wirkkala, 40, is charged with second-degree murder, a crime punishable in Oregon by up to life in prison with parole possible at 25 years.

He's accused of intentionally killing his houseguest David Andrew Ryder, 31, with a shotgun in 2013. He's claimed self-defense, testifying he feared for his life after Ryder sexually assaulted him.

Wirkkala was convicted in 2014, but the Oregon Court of Appeals ordered a retrial because the original jury heard portions of a police interview after Wirkkala had invoked his right to an attorney.

On Friday, Deschutes County Circuit Judge Randy Miller read for the jury the legal definitions of first- and second-degree manslaughter, lesser charges they may consider if they don't find Wirkkala guilty of murder.

See **Wirkkala** / A4

Oregon House OKs \$250M for summer programs

BY PETER WONG
Oregon Capital Bureau

After being sidetracked by a partisan dispute for the better part of three days, the Oregon House voted Thursday night for legislation that includes \$250 million for summer educational and recreational programs for students statewide.

The money is contained in one of three bills to rebalance the current two-year state

"Oregonians are depending on this essential aid. We've spent the last year responding to crisis after crisis."

— **Tina Kotek, Oregon House speaker**

budget. All of the bills passed, 55-0, and went to the Senate. The discussion took less than 15 minutes.

Gov. Kate Brown and legislative leaders from both parties have signaled their support. The Legislature's joint

budget committee approved the measures two weeks ago.

"Oregonians are depending on this essential aid," House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, said in a statement after the votes.

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