

<span style="color: green;">▲</span> <b>DOW</b> 33,153.21 +171.66	<span style="color: green;">▲</span> <b>NASDAQ</b> 13,480.11 +233.24	<span style="color: green;">▲</span> <b>S&amp;P 500</b> 4,019.87 +46.98	<span style="color: red;">▼</span> <b>30-YR T-BOND</b> 2.34% -08	<span style="color: green;">▲</span> <b>CRUDE OIL</b> \$61.45 +2.29	<span style="color: green;">▲</span> <b>GOLD</b> \$1,726.50 +12.70	<span style="color: green;">▲</span> <b>SILVER</b> \$24.94 +.42	<span style="color: green;">▲</span> <b>EURO</b> \$1.1773 +.0047
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**BRIEFING**

**FDA OK's 2 changes to Moderna vaccine**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has authorized two changes to Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine that can provide extra doses from each vial.

The agency said late Thursday it approved new vials from Moderna that can contain up to 15 doses each, compared with the original vials designed to hold 10 doses. Additionally, regulators said providers can safely extract up to 11 doses from the original 10-dose vials. Those changes will be added to instructions for health care workers.

The dosing updates should help bolster U.S. supplies and speed vaccinations as the U.S. nears 100 million inoculations against COVID-19.

Moderna said in a statement it plans to begin shipping the new 15-dose vials in coming weeks. The company submitted updated data to FDA showing how much vaccine can be extracted from each vial using different types of syringes.

**March hiring accelerated to 916K**

America's employers unleashed a burst of hiring in March, adding 916,000 jobs in a sign that a sustained recovery from the pandemic recession is taking hold as vaccinations accelerate, stimulus checks flow through the economy and businesses increasingly reopen.

The March increase — the most since August — was nearly double February's gain of 468,000, the Labor Department said Friday. The unemployment rate declined from 6.2% to 6%.

Even with last month's robust increase, the economy remains more than 8 million jobs short of the number it had before the pandemic erupted a little over a year ago. But with the recovery widely expected to strengthen, many forecasters predict enough hiring in the coming months to recover nearly all those lost jobs by year's end.

**CDC: Vaccinated people can travel**

Add travel to the activities vaccinated Americans can safely enjoy again, according to new U.S. guidance issued Friday.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated its guidance to say fully vaccinated people can travel within the U.S. without getting tested for the coronavirus or going into quarantine afterward.

Still, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky urged caution and said she would "advocate against general travel overall" given the rising number of infections.

"If you are vaccinated, it is lower risk," she said.

According to the CDC, more than 100 million people in the U.S. — or about 30% of the population — have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. A person is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the last required dose.

— Bulletin wire reports

## Oregon unemployment tax relief bill gets warm reception

BY PETER WONG

Oregon Capital Bureau

Oregon businesses, business lobbyists and lawmakers from both parties blessed a bill that would let some businesses defer part of their unemployment payroll taxes and pay a little less to a reduced state trust fund in future years.

House Bill 3389, which the House Rules Committee

heard Thursday, also would set the payroll tax rates for the years 2022-2024 at 2020 levels, which were determined before the coronavirus pandemic resulted in a sharp economic downturn a year ago.

When the state's jobless rate goes up, Oregon employers pay higher unemployment insurance taxes. Those taxes help replenish Oregon's unemployment insurance trust

fund, which is used to pay jobless claims.

According to Rep. Paul Holvey, a Democrat from Eugene and one of the key lawmakers involved in its drafting, the bill would allow employers to defer \$100 million this year. Because of a lower target for the state unemployment trust fund, he said, it would save them \$2.4 billion in taxes over a decade.

Employees do not pay into the fund.

"I think it's something to recognize that we are doing what we can" for business, said Holvey, a retired union representative.

"We must be careful to avoid unintended consequences and understand that our efforts here and the numbers are estimates."

See Bill / A6

## Changing times for livestock sale barns



Buyers and sellers gather every Friday at the Chehalis Livestock Market.

George Plaven/Capital Press

BY GEORGE PAVEN • Capital Press

CHEHALIS, Wash. — Auction day at the Chehalis Livestock Market begins with a flurry of activity behind the scenes, as hundreds of cattle from area ranches arrive at the sale barn adjacent to Interstate 5 in southwest Washington.

Once at the loading dock, the animals are ushered into a hydraulic squeeze chute, where veterinarian Jason Humphrey pierces their ears with electronic identification tags and gives vaccinations, if needed. The cattle are then sorted and placed in holding pens.

Alongside the auction ring, long-time customers sit on reclining chairs and sofas, trading gossip and renewing friendships. Next door, the restaurant is open, serving cheeseburgers, fries and coffee.

"We have a strong connection to the community," said Brenda Balmelli, whose husband, Dave, bought the Chehalis market in 1986 with business partner Joe Parypa. "Most of our customers are small farms, with five to 25 head they raise per year."

That community connection, however, is becoming more difficult to sustain, Balmelli said. Fewer cattle, rising costs and the emergence of new technology are putting a strain on small sale barns.

When they first started, Balmelli said, it was common to sell 200-plus dairy cows, 100 feeder cattle and 300 slaughter animals at the weekly auction. Now, they typically sell 15 dairy cows, 150 feeder cattle and 150 slaughter animals.

At the same time, Balmelli said, they have kept their commissions the same to remain competitive, while costs such

as labor, insurance and repairs have tripled over the last eight years. The internet has also made it easier for ranchers to sell their livestock direct to buyers online, foregoing the sale barn entirely.

Despite the difficulties, Balmelli and other market owners around the nation say they are optimistic about the future of livestock auctions. Balmelli said it remains the one venue where there is true price discovery, while providing a social gathering place unique to rural America.

"We feel this loyalty to our customers and our employees to stay in this business as long as we can," Balmelli said. "We love what we do."

**Two auctions close**

Already in 2021, two sale barns on the West Coast closed their doors within weeks of one another.

Woodburn Livestock Auction in Oregon and Shasta Livestock Auction Yard in Cottonwood, California, both announced their closures in February.

Brad Peek, general manager of the Shasta market, said the decision to halt regular Friday auctions was difficult but necessary. The sale barn was opened in 1961 by Peek's father, Ellington Peek, and is a major part of his family's legacy.

"Obviously, it's sad," Peek said. "We are friends with our customers, number one. It's going to be some inconvenience for them."

In 1989, Ellington Peek co-founded Western Video Market, getting into the business of video livestock auctions. Since then, Brad Peek said the company has grown steadily, marketing cattle and lambs.

Western Video Market now holds a dozen sales every year — six in Cotton-

wood, and six remotely in places such as Nevada, Wyoming and Nebraska. The company sells close to 350,000 head of cattle annually, Peek said.

"We need to focus on that part of our business," Peek said. "It's growing, and highly successful."

Meanwhile, cattle numbers at the sale barn had been dwindling since the 1990s, dropping from 150,000 per year to between 60,000 and 80,000 per year.

The last in-person sale at Shasta Livestock Auction Yard was Feb. 12. The last sale at Woodburn Livestock Auction was Feb. 23. That property is now up for sale, according to owners Tom and Mary Elder.

In a statement, the Elders said they decided to shut down the livestock portion of their business "due to the continual declining head counts and rising costs of doing business." They will continue to hold online-only machinery sales.

**The rise of video**

Forrest Mangan, region executive officer of the Livestock Marketing Association, said the rise of video auctions is one example of how times and technology have changed the industry. The association represents more than 800 local livestock auction markets and allied businesses.

Video auctions are another avenue for larger producers to market their livestock, Mangan said. Rather than transporting large lots of cattle to the sale barn, they are instead filmed on the ranch. The footage can then be broadcast virtually anywhere, as well as online, inviting buyers from across the country and around the world.

See Sale barns / A6

## Oregon Employment Department hopes to fix phone mess

BY MIKE ROGOWAY

The Oregonian

A year into the pandemic, and the steepest economic fall in Oregon history, placing a phone call to the Oregon Employment Department remains an onerous chore.

Jobless workers spend an average of 70 minutes on hold when calling the agency. Its obsolete computers keep spitting out automated letters instructing laid-off Oregonians to call for help even though they would likely get a much quicker response online.

"We recognize that we need to make it easier for people to get in touch with us," acting Director David Gerstenfeld said on his weekly media call Wednesday. For the first time, Gerstenfeld set a target date for resolving the phone mess.

By the end of June, Gerstenfeld said the department aims to answer 80% of calls within 15 minutes. And it aims to resolve 90% of online inquiries, made through its "Contact Us" form, within a week. Currently, it resolves no more than 21% of those online contacts within seven days.

See Phone / A6

## Nike wins in court to halt more sales of 'Satan Shoes'

*First batch of the shoes by rapper Lil Nas X have already been sold, distributed*

BY ARON YOHANNES

The Oregonian

Nike has obtained a temporary restraining order against the company that collaborated with artist Lil Nas X to sell "Satan Shoes," a pair of modified Air Max 97s decorated with a bronze pentagram and a drop of real human blood.

A U.S. District Court in New York granted Nike's request this week against streetwear company MSCHF, preventing the company from fulfilling the rest of its orders for the shoes. Nike filed a lawsuit against the company Monday.

The black and red shoes, which also feature a Bible verse, Luke 10:18 — "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" — were created as a collaboration between the rapper and the streetwear brand to coincide with the release of his music video "Montero (Call Me By Your Name)." Nike, headquartered near Beaverton, quickly distanced itself from the release.

Nike said the shoes were likely to cause confusion or cause fans of Nike to believe it worked with MSCHF to create the shoe, Nike said in the complaint.

Nike also once again mentioned that despite its signature Nike swoosh being on the shoe, the company was not involved in the creation of the sneaker and does not endorse them.

MSCHF released a limited-edition drop of 666 pairs of the rare sneakers, which sold out in less than a minute. They were priced at \$1,018 a pair.

See Nike / A6