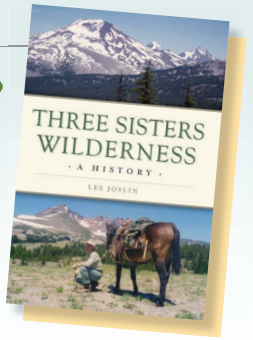




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SPORTS PULLOUT, A5-8

COVID-19 concerns in Bend-La Pine

Schools labor to keep students safe despite 'insane' crowding



Submitted photo

Students crowd the hall at Summit High School in this photo sent to The Bulletin by a Summit High parent.

Scenes of shoulder-to-shoulder students at Bend high schools concern families

BY JACKSON HOGAN • The Bulletin

On April 14, an anonymous user posted a photo on Reddit of a Bend High School hallway where students were packed in shoulder-to-shoulder. The picture — titled "Social Distancing at Bend High" — prompted over 100 comments to the Bend-specific forum of the popular website, many about the safety of students inside schools during a pandemic.

"It's insane," Bend High School senior Jade Jager told The Bulletin. "It's nearly impossible to maintain 3 feet of distance, let alone 6 in the hallways."

Jager said simply walking through the hallways can be nerve-wracking. She's concerned about accidentally bringing home COVID-19 to her high-risk brother, who can't attend in-person school, she said.

"I'm not only worrying about myself, but also my family," said Jager, 17. "I know a lot of other people are in similar situations — there's a deadly virus going around."

This has been the case since Bend-La Pine Schools left its hybrid schedule on April 12 for middle and high schools. Thousands of students are in school

"The message has been pretty simple: Keep moving."

— Michael McDonald, principal of Summit High School

in-person, all together for the first time since COVID-19 forced school online in March 2020.

Bend-La Pine administrators are aware of hallway crowding in their schools. Their solutions include releasing students from class at different times to keep hallways more open, using multiple lunch pickup locations and asking students to not stop and chat.

"The message has been pretty simple: Keep moving," said Michael McDonald, principal of Summit High School.

Paul Dean, Bend-La Pine's safe healthy schools administrator and de facto COVID-19 czar, said he and high school administrators immediately went to work on changes after seeing the crowded hallway photo at Bend High School.

The goal of the changes is to alleviate "pinch points," which is what Dean calls congested portions of hallways. He noted that these sections are only extremely crowded for a moment or two, before students return to classrooms.

"Those pinch points are a short duration, but we're still trying to clear them up regardless," Dean said.

McDonald said he's seen the photo of the crowded Bend High School hallway, as well as other crowded school hallway photos. But he said these photos actually show students following COVID-19 protocol as well as they can in that tricky situation.

"I know those students all have masks on, and they're all on the move, and that's encouraging to me," McDonald said. "I'm really impressed with how much the students are following the guidelines around keeping moving and getting to class."

See **Schools / A4**

DESCHUTES 911

For suicide calls, county may send counselors, not police

BY GARRETT ANDREWS
The Bulletin

It happens an average of three times a day in Deschutes County: A suicidal person or someone concerned about one calls 911.

Dispatchers here and around the country have traditionally routed these calls to law enforcement agencies, but a proposal being developed in Deschutes County would dispatch two mental health professionals to the door of the person in crisis — no police in sight.

"There's a lot left to figure out, but we know this can be done safely because it's been done lots of places around the country," said Holly Harris, Deschutes County's mental health program manager for crisis services.

About a year ago, after the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis Police officer and widespread calls for police reform, Harris began meeting with representatives of Deschutes 911 and local law enforcement agencies to identify calls where subjects would be better served by mental health workers.

See **Dispatch / A13**

REDMOND

Trooper hurt in DUII crash sues driver, bar

BY GARRETT ANDREWS
The Bulletin

The Oregon State Police trooper injured in a 2019 drunken-driving collision has sued the other driver and the Redmond bar that served him.

Terrebonne resident Tony Halladay filed a \$946,318 personal injury lawsuit against Arizona man Christopher Denis Luna and Timbers Bar & Grill.

The suit, filed April 7 in Deschutes County Circuit Court, alleges Luna went to the bar April 10, 2019, and was "overserved" by staff. Luna left the bar around 11:30 p.m. and drove his 2015 Kia Soul north on U.S. Highway 97.

See **Trooper / A4**

House panel ponders linking firearms storage, narrower ban

BY PETER WONG
Oregon Capital Bureau

Legislation that combines proposed requirements for firearms locks and safe storage with a narrower ban on firearms in public buildings is gaining political momentum in the Oregon House.

The House Rules Committee heard a proposal to combine elements of two bills, one awaiting a vote of the full House and a second that has already passed the Senate. If it happens, the House would have to take only one vote, instead of two, on a firearms regulation bill — and the Senate would have to vote only on whether to accept the final version.

See **Firearms / A14**

NOAA: Northwest's 'normal' temps rising

BY DON JENKINS
Capital Press

The climate for the Northwest and most of the contiguous U.S. has become slightly warmer in the past decade, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported Tuesday.

The warming was widespread, according to NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information, though Montana and the Dakotas bucked the trend and slightly cooled.

"There are some areas that actually have cooler temperature normals, especially in the spring in the north-central U.S.," said Michael Palecki, man-



ager of NOAA's climate normals.

NOAA updates every 10 years what's considered "normal" weather. Statisticians analyzed temperature and precipitation readings from thousands of weather stations between 1991 and 2020.

NOAA will release the new normals May 4. Palecki and other NOAA officials held a conference call with reporters to hit some highlights.

Because two decades overlap, the new climatic normals aren't that much different. Still, the new norms likely mean fewer seasons, months and days with temperatures "above normal."

See **Northwest / A4**



"We're really seeing the fingerprints of climate change in the new normals."

— Michael Palecki, with NOAA

