Wilderness permits came and went fast

here's fast like Usain Bolt. There's fast like how fast a parking spot can go in downtown Bend. And now there's a new one: fast like how fast the Forest Service's new

wilderness permits went for the Central Cascades.

On the first morning they were available, April 6, high-demand dates and locations were sold out in 30 minutes. Page views on the associated recreation.gov website spiked to more than 1,000 a minute for overnight trips.

The most recent data we could get courtesy of the Forest Service was as of April 27. By then:

• About 15,800 individual day-use permits were sold — about 93% of the total.

• 4,582 overnight group permits were sold — about 85% of all advance overnight permits.

Before you start to get depressed — as a certain editorial writer did — thinking that you will never, ever get a chance to visit the nearby wilderness again, there is something important to remember. The Forest Service didn't put all the permits up for sale online. It only put up a percentage.

The majority of permits, particularly for day-use permits, are still available. New permits are going to be made available on a sort of rolling one-day window. For instance, the Green Lakes trailhead will have 80 day-use permits open up every day during the permit season. Only 20 permits per day were available in advance.

dvance. So you likely still can go, though it

eople can sometimes be re-

leased from professional med-

ical care in Deschutes County

with serious mental illness before

at Oregon State Hospital are hard

to come by, especially during the

tients may be stable. Without it.

there can be trouble.

cases this year.

pandemic.

anyone would like them to be. Beds

With proper medication, the pa-

The problem just can be ensur-

ris, program manager of Deschutes

County Behavioral Health Crisis

Services, said her department has

Patients needed medication but

had three or four more extreme

were "trespassed" or prohibited

from visiting locations where the

county offers those services. She

didn't specify what got the individu-

als trespassed. Weapons were mentioned. On Tuesday, she asked the

Deschutes Public Safety Coordinat-

in a risk assessment we talk about

being uncommon but potentially

high consequence or catastrophic,"

said Dr. George Conway, Deschutes

This is one of those things that

ing Council for help.

The majority of permits, particularly for day-use permits, are still available. New permits are going to be made available on a sort of rolling one-day window.

might take more advance planning than it did in the past. And there is now a cost. A day-use permit is "\$1 per person, for each outing." An overnight permit is "\$6 per group permit, for each outing" with 1-12 people per group.

people per group.

Is this new system better for everyone? It was put in place because the Forest Service was concerned crowds were overwhelming trails and degrading the wilderness experience. This system may help better protect the wilderness for now and for the future.

The concern we continue to have is if it will just put some people off. That may mean people value the wilderness less because they can't visit it as easily.

And any barrier to entry can be a bigger barrier to entry for people of lower income. Will the Forest Service be able to mitigate that? We hope so.

County's Health Services Director.

the meetings of the Deschutes Pub-

lic Safety Coordinating Council and

not see an important public safety

organization represented. The sher-

iff, the presiding judge, the district

attorney, local police departments,

gether to identify problems like this.

As soon as Harris explained the

problem, Deschutes County Sheriff Shane Nelson spoke up. "Since

we are already in partnership with

you, if you want to just call me

offline, we'll solve it for you," he

said. He added nonuniformed de-

tectives could be used to perhaps

That will hopefully work. For

now. But as Deschutes County Circuit Court Presiding Judge Wells

Ashby pointed out, more and more

counties need to handle these prob-

lems locally — beds may continue to

not be available at the state hospital.

Deschutes County may need to de-

velop its own solution.

the state seems to be saying that

lower the tension level for some

mental health and more meet to-

They then work together to solve

You can't turn in any direction at

Safety problem presented

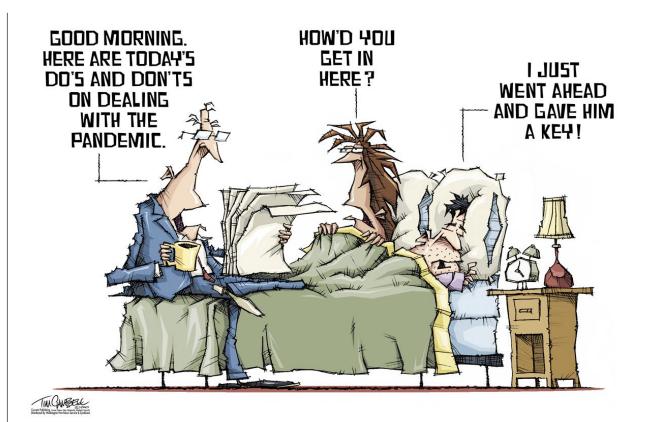
them.

patients.

Editorials reflect the views of The Bulletin's editorial board, Publisher Heidi Wright, Editor

Gerry O'Brien and Editorial Page Editor Richard Coe. They are written by Richard Coe.

then solved — for now



My Nickel's Worth

Douglass did not dox

Bend-La Pine School Board Chair Carrie Douglass was accused of "doxing" her opponent in a formal complaint to the district. Doxing is the act of publicly revealing private personal information. When a candidate files for public office in Oregon, they submit a candidate filing form (SEL 190), which requires a candidate to disclose information to the public. These filings are public records, searchable on the county clerk's and secretary of state website. Sharing information that is retrievable by a Google search is not doxing.

When you run for public office, you make trade-offs; one of those is to public scrutiny. At best, candidates engage the public about who they are, what they stand for, and their positions on relevant issues. When candidates refuse to participate in our democratic processes by not showing up at nonpartisan forums or participating in endorsement interviews, they shirk their responsibility to inform the public. Claiming "doxing" and filing "formal complaints" against your opponent doesn't lead to a better democratic process; it sows misinformation and baseless divisiveness. Families and students in Bend-La Pine deserve

Carrie Douglass courageously engages the public in many ways: social media, public events, email, etc. I'm awed by the time she dedicates to engaging and listening to the community, even and especially when people don't agree with her. We need more public officials like Carrie who are willing to talk to the people they represent, not people who stand behind their lawyers and deprive the public of dialogue.

— Whitney Swander, Bend

Lopez-Dauenhauer for Bend schools

I live in Redmond, but I pay close attention to what is happening in Bend because of my grandchildren being enrolled in public school there. I support Maria Lopez-Dauenhauer for Bend school board. Maria was born in Mexico and moved up the ladder through the Silicon Valley tech world. She is a Latina mother, businesswoman, wife of a Navy veteran and mother of two teens. She is not afraid to speak up for our students to get back to the basics in the classroom, to teach our kids to love their country and who they are regardless of race or gender.

Her message is one of unity and common sense: that we are all equal and have the capacity to excel and succeed, and lift all students up. This community talks about the need for diversity. Please vote for Lopez-Dauenhauer for her diversity of thought, background and character.

— Joyce Waring, Redmond

Leaving the area

I read and fully agree with the letters from Clarissa Jurgensen and Bill Eddie. Bend is becoming a sprawling, unwelcoming place for us residents, including the wildlife that is trying to hang on. In a letter to The Bulletin a few months ago, Cylvia Hayes asked the question, "When will we reach enough?" It doesn't look like anytime soon

Wildlife habitat is disappearing rapidly without second thoughts. I realize there will be a count and assessment of the dwindling remaining numbers of some species. Do you seriously think any change in this crazy overbuilding ethic will occur as a re-

sult? I don't like being a pessimist, but clearly, clearly, money is the ruling decider here.

I'm leaving the area. I don't want to be around to witness the continued destruction of this beautiful place.

We do not need any more developments, golf courses that suck up our dwindling water supply and emerald-green lawns in the city doing the same.

If I thought that staying and fighting the good fight would matter, I would think hard about it. I'm sure I will be replaced by at least 10 other folks who will happily try to deal with the growing traffic, road rage, water shortages and sprawl.

— Suzanne Staples, Bend

Don't vilify the unvaccinated

In the Wednesday edition of The Bulletin, Vicky Ryan, Crook County public information officer, is quoted as saying, "The bottom line is that not getting vaccinated could set us all back."

This makes no sense. If vaccinations are as effective as they're professed to be and now almost universally available, then the main population that one puts at risk by not getting vaccinated is other people who choose not to get vaccinated. Some of those people could get COVID and even die, but that's a risk that they are apparently willing to take. None of this, however, will "set us all back" because it should have no effect on most of us who have already been vaccinated

If, as Ms. Ryan claims, "Each individual has a right to choose, and we respect that choice," she might begin by not vilifying the unvaccinated as threats to the community.

— Gary Miranda, Redmond

Letters policy

We welcome your letters. Letters should be limited to one issue, contain no more than 250 words and include the writer's signature, phone number and address for verification. We edit letters for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We reject poetry, personal attacks, form letters, letters submitted elsewhere and those appropriate for other sections of The Bulletin. Writers are limited to one letter or quest column every 30 days.

Guest columns

Your submissions should be between 550 and 650 words; they must be signed; and they must include the writer's phone number and address for verification. We edit submissions for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We reject those submitted elsewhere. Locally submitted columns alternate with national columnists and commentaries. Writers are limited to one letter or guest column every 30 days.

How to submit

Please address your submission to either My Nickel's Worth or Guest Column and mail, fax or email it to The Bulletin. Email submissions are preferred.

Email: letters@bendbulletin.com

Write: My Nickel's Worth/Guest Column P.O. Box 6020 Bend, OR 97708

Fax: 541-385-5804

Make Election Day a holiday in Oregon to increase voting numbers

BY KEVIN FRAZIER

ur state Legislature cannot wave a wand and solve Oregon's problems. Gov. Tom Mc-Call acknowledged as much in his second inaugural message: "Members of the Assembly, we cannot shape a better Oregon by ourselves.

We are leaders but we are

We are leaders, but we are not magicians. Only the citizens of Oregon themselves can attain this goal." McCall encouraged legis-

lators to rely on compromise to solve problems, reminding his colleagues that "if we renounce realism and gradualism, we may — paradoxically — be frustrated in our ideals, and see the

realization of our goals delayed."
In other words, it's on Oregonians in every corner of the state to end the gridlock in Salem — by electing collaborative officials, keeping them account-

able, and replacing them when they've placed partisan or personal goals over the needs of their constituents.

The problem is too many Oregonians haven't used the best tool to help shape a better state: Too many of us aren't voting.

As recently reported by Jim Moore in The Oregon Way, "in 2020, 91.3% of Republicans and 90.9% of Democrats voted. Of the six minor parties, turnouts ranged from 84.3% (Independents) to 59.1% (Working Families). Unaffiliated voters came in at 64.8%." The participation

gap between Oregonians affiliated with major parties and everyone else has a drastic impact on who heads to Salem. Moore pointed out that even in a Portland-metro district where the Democratic candidate did not receive the party's endorsement, the third-

GUEST COLUMN

party candidate failed to draw robust support (though 39% of the district was registered as nonaffiliated, the third-party candidate received just 19% of the vote).

This isn't to say that Oregon needs a competitive third party (though I think it does). This isn't to say Democrats and Republicans are flawed (each has pros and cons). This is merely to say that as long as more partisan Oregonians participate at a drastically higher level than everyone else, we'll continue to see politics and policymaking in blue and red shades — making the sort of compromise and collaboration that McCall urged all the more difficult to realize.

Why non-D and non-R voters are sitting on the sidelines is a bit of a chicken-and-egg problem. Ds and Rs

are motivated by seeing candidates on their team on the ballot. Oftentimes, the rest of the electorate doesn't see anyone with their views vying for office. Ds and Rs feel like their vote matters — for example, one additional Democrat could be the difference in whether the party has a supermajority.

It can feel less necessary to vote for the lone independent or third-party candidate, who will face stiff odds in realizing their agenda.

One solution would be universal voting — taking steps to ensure that every eligible voter indeed participates. I'm not sure that's the approach McCall would suggest. After all, he pointed out that an "Oregonian is an individual unique and his fierce independence."

For now, let's start by making Election Day a holiday. Oregonians should celebrate their role in and responsibil-

Oregonians should celebrate their role in and responsibility for shaping our state.

ity for shaping our state. It may seem unnecessary in a mail-in voting state, but the date would make clear that participation is an expectation in our

And, at a time when just one in four Oregonians think our democracy has improved over the last four years, investing in our civic pride is an overdue investment.

If Oregonians want compromise in Salem, then we'll have to vote like we want it, and that will require even the nonaffiliated voters actually showing up to the polls.

 Kevin Frazier was raised in Washington County.
 He is pursuing a law degree at the University of California, Berkeley School of Law.