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SPORTS PULLOUT, A5-8

Brown: 70% vaccination rate across state will lift COVID-19 restrictions

BY GARY A. WARNER

Oregon Capital Bureau
 Gov Kate Brown laid out some basic math on Tuesday for Oregon's way out of pandemic restrictions: Get 70% of adult residents at least one shot of vaccine and "normalcy" can start to return as early as next month.

"Let's get this done. Let's get our economy open and enjoy the summer," Brown said during an afternoon press call. Oregon Health Authority Director Pat Allen said the state needed to inoculate about 430,000 more people to reach the goal by June. The announcement marked a major policy shift in which the vaccination rate will now

be the key measure of a county's ability to drop COVID-19 restrictions. Individual counties could move out of restrictions even earlier under the new policy. Counties could apply for the removal of restrictions early next week if they can show 65% of residents 16 and older have started the vaccination

process. If approved, restrictions could be curtailed starting May 21. Counties must also submit a "vaccine equity" plan on how to get vaccine opportunities to people in underserved communities. OHA officials said some counties with high vaccination rates and low infection counts,

such as Clatsop County, could move out of the restrictions next week. But the new emphasis on vaccination levels also meant counties such as Deschutes and Washington could move out of most restrictions despite high infection rates this week.

See **Vaccination** / A13

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

Redmond candidates talk masks, summer school

Editor's note: This is the second of two mini profiles of Redmond School Board candidates in the May 18 election. The first published Tuesday, May 11.

BY JACKSON HOGAN

The Bulletin
 The most competitive races on the May 18 ballot are for the Redmond School District. Eleven candidates are running for four seats, with only one incumbent in the mix. All six candidates running for positions 3 and 4 interviewed in this article have never served on the board, and none have held elected office.

Position 3

Jill Cummings said she is familiar with both the financial world — she's an administrator with Summit Bank — and, as a mother of two Redmond students, the education world. "I think we're dealing with the two most important things to most people: their kids and money," said Cummings, 41. "I feel uniquely qualified with both."

See **Redmond** / A4

Gates shut on rural road popular with hikers, bikers

Road runs through west Bend property owned by orthopedic surgeon James Verheyden



Mountain bikers stop Tuesday to read a sign at a gate closing off Forest Road 4606 near Shevlin Park.

BY MICHAEL KOHN
 The Bulletin

A gravel road that connects Bend and Sisters through a scenic area of the High Desert was blocked by gates on Monday by a local landowner who says the road invites illegal camping, poaching and arson.

Forest Road 4606 is frequently used by hikers and bikers. Their access is now in doubt while the U.S. Forest Service challenges the installation of three gates.

At the core of the issue is who owns a 3.5 mile stretch of Forest Service road where it passes through property owned by Dr. James Verheyden, an orthopedic surgeon in Bend, Deschutes National Forest spokesperson Jean Nelson-Dean said in an email.

"That is the legal question that we are pursuing with our legal counsel. That is the issue," said Nelson-Dean.

Land disputes between private landowners and federal authorities are not common in Bend, but as the city explodes in population, more individuals are moving out to areas that bump up against federal

lands. Forest Road 4606 passes through private property where the Forest Service has an easement.

"We were aware that private landowners had installed three gates on FSR 4606/Sisters Mainline Road," Nelson-Dean said. "We are now aware those gates have been closed and locked."

Nelson-Dean said the Forest Service is working with the landowners "to resolve the issue amicably."

"We value the public's access to FSR 4606/Sisters Mainline Road and hope the situation can be resolved quickly," Nelson-Dean added.

Verheyden, who built three gates along the road, declined to comment for this story. Verheyden's lawyer Craig Russillo also declined to comment, explaining that "the situation was fluid."

But on April 4, Verheyden posted a message on the website Nextdoor explaining his plans for the road. He said he has maintained the road at his own expense without help from the Forest Service and the maintenance is very expensive.

See **Gates** / A4



Dean Guernsey/Bulletin photos

John Blankfort gives information to a driver on Forest Road 4606.

SISTERS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Bond would build new, larger elementary building

BY JACKSON HOGAN

The Bulletin
 Voters in the Sisters area will decide May 18 whether or not to fund a new, larger building for Sisters Elementary School with a \$33 million bond. Sisters School District leaders say that the proposed new elementary would allow for more room for the crowded

school, make the elementary a true K-5, instead of K-4 and create a cohesive, three-school Sisters campus on the west end of town. Passing the bond won't raise taxes. It will simply retain the tax rate that's been in place since residents passed a bond in 2001 to build Sisters High School.

Curt Scholl, superintendent of Sisters School District, said he is hopeful Sisters voters would approve the bond. "We have a strong partnership with the community, so we are optimistic," he said. The current Sisters Elementary building — built in the '70s — only has enough room for grades K-4, unlike a typi-

cal K-5 elementary. That can make ordering curriculum tricky for elementary leaders — most elementary curriculum covers K-5 — and fifth grade teachers, who are at the middle school, Scholl said. "All the curriculum we buy is K-5, so it just makes sense to build a K-5," he said. Even with one fewer grade,

Sisters Elementary is stuffed. The school expects to need portable classrooms next school year, and small groups taken out of the classroom for breakout sessions are forced onto the stage, in hallways and even closets, Principal Joan Warburg told The Bulletin in February.

See **Sisters** / A13

Correction

In a story about the Bend Police chief's new budget plan, which appeared Tuesday, May 11, on Page A1, the number of new staff positions proposed to be added to the department was incorrect. Chief Mike Krantz has proposed adding six new positions. The Bulletin regrets the error.

