

▼ DOW 33,587.66 -681.50	▼ NASDAQ 13,031.68 -357.74	▼ S&P 500 4,063.04 -89.06	▲ 30-YR T-BOND 2.41% +06	▲ CRUDE OIL \$66.08 +.80	▼ GOLD \$1,822.60 -13.30	▼ SILVER \$27.23 -.43	▼ EURO \$1.2080 -.0072
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BRIEFING

Most of Klamath Project loses water

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is shutting down the Klamath Project's A Canal for the entire 2021 irrigation season in response to worsening drought, the agency announced Wednesday.

It is the first time the A Canal will deliver no water since it was constructed in 1907, said Paul Simmons, executive director of the Klamath Water Users Association.

The Bureau of Reclamation oversees the Klamath Project, which provides irrigation for approximately 200,000 acres of farmland straddling in Southern Oregon and Northern California.

Under the Endangered Species Act, the bureau is also responsible for ensuring the project does not threaten the survival of several species of threatened and endangered fish in the lower Klamath River.

The A Canal normally diverts water from Upper Klamath Lake for the bulk of the Klamath Project, or about 150,000 acres.

Digital currency moves to U.S.

A once-ambitious Facebook-backed digital currency project — formerly known as Libra, now called Diem — is shifting operations from Switzerland to the U.S. and said it plans to launch a cryptocurrency tied to the U.S. dollar later this year.

The Diem Association, which includes Facebook and 25 other companies, said Wednesday it entered a partnership with Silvergate Capital Corp. to issue a "stablecoin" backed by the U.S. dollar. A stablecoin is a digital currency backed by real-world assets such as national currencies or other commodities.

As the name implies, stablecoins are designed to not fluctuate wildly in value. That's in sharp contrast to cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, whose value is not tied to a real-world currency and whose price has ranged between roughly \$9,000 and \$63,000 over the past year.

Program will give \$50 off internet

Americans can begin applying for \$50 off their monthly internet bill on Wednesday as part of an emergency government program to keep people connected during the pandemic.

The \$3.2 billion program is part of the \$900 billion December pandemic-relief package. The government is increasing spending on broadband as the pandemic made stark that millions of Americans did not have access to, and could not afford, broadband at a time when jobs, school and health care was moving online.

It's unclear how long the money will last but it's expected to be several months. Tens of millions of people are eligible, although the Federal Communications Commission, which is administering the program, did not specify a number.

To see if you qualify, visit <https://getemergencybroadband.org> to find out if you qualify.

— *Bulletin wire reports*

U.S. advisers endorse Pfizer shot for youths

BY LAURAN NEERGAARD AND MIKE STOBBE
Associated Press

U.S. health advisers endorsed use of Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine in kids as young as 12 on Wednesday, just as expected new guidelines say it's OK for people of any age to get the shot at the same time as other needed vaccinations.

The sprint to vaccinate millions of middle and high school students has already started in parts of the country, as a long line of kids rolled up their sleeves in suburban Atlanta for a first dose Wednesday. But much of the nation was awaiting recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that Pfizer's

vaccine, already used for months in those 16 and older, was a good choice for 12- to 15-year-olds, too. The CDC was expected to accept its advisers' recommendation.

"It just felt like a flu shot, honestly," said Meredith Rogers, a 14-year-old middle school student from Decatur, Georgia.

See **COVID-19 / A13**



Robert F. Bukaty/AP

Jacob Canary, 15, listens to advice from a medical assistant after receiving his first shot of the COVID-19 vaccination Wednesday in Auburn, Maine.



Carol Ryan Dumas/Capital Press file

NEW OREGON INITIATIVE TARGETS ANIMAL FARMERS

BY GEORGE PAVLEN
Capital Press

Animal agriculture could soon be considered animal cruelty under a proposed ballot measure in Oregon. Farm groups are pushing back against Initiative Petition 13, which would strip away most protections for livestock producers under the state's animal abuse laws.

The result would effectively criminalize everything from slaughtering livestock to basic animal husbandry, including branding and docking horses, sheep and pigs, said Mary Anne Cooper, vice president of public policy for the Oregon Farm Bureau.

The initiative also seeks to reclassify livestock breeding and artificial insemination as sexual assault of an animal — a Class C felony.

"It's a very different tack than we have ever seen before," Cooper said. "Basically, they're looking to ban anything with animals that is not doctoring."

Initiative Petition 13 was filed Nov. 2 with the Oregon Secretary of State's Office. The chief petitioner is David Michelson, a Portland animal rights activist.

A similar proposal, called the Protect Animals from Unnecessary Suffering and Exploitation, or PAUSE, Act is also being pursued in Colorado.

The Oregon campaign recently cleared its first regulatory hurdle, submitting 1,000 sponsorship signatures for verification on April 28. If approved, supporters will need to collect 112,020 signatures to place the initiative on the November 2022 ballot.

Michelson did not return calls for comment.

According to state law, a person commits animal abuse if they "intentionally, knowingly or recklessly cause physical injury to an animal," or "cruelly cause the death of an animal," except when practicing good animal husbandry. The petition seeks to remove that exemption.

"IP13 doesn't change our definition of abuse. It merely changes who is con-

sidered above the law," the Yes on IP13 website states.

Cooper said the petition is the biggest threat to Oregon's livestock industry in decades.

"I think it would leave producers in incredibly uncertain territory," she said. "It is very dangerous territory for folks."

Perhaps the cruelest twist, Cooper said, is the effect the initiative would have on 4-H and FFA programs. Animal abuse in Oregon is considered a Class A misdemeanor but is a felony if committed in the presence of a minor child.

"You think of 4-H programs, and people who have artificial insemination programs, and all of a sudden anybody helping them with their projects could be considered a felon," Cooper said. "That's just wild."

Supporters say the initiative would not ban the sale of meat, leather and fur in Oregon.

"It would require that animals be allowed to truly live a good life free from abuse, neglect and sexual assault," the campaign website states.

Prices shot up 0.8% in April as worries escalate

BY MARTIN CRUTSINGER
Associated Press

A worrisome bout of inflation struck the U.S. economy in April, with consumer prices for goods and services surging 0.8% — the largest monthly jump in more than a decade — and the year-over-year increase reaching its fastest rate since 2008.

The acceleration in prices, which has been building for months, has unsettled financial markets and raised concerns that it could weaken the economic recovery from the pandemic recession.

Wednesday's report from the Labor Department showed sharply higher prices for everything from food and clothes to housing. A 10% surge in the prices of used cars and trucks — a record jump — accounted for roughly one-third of last month's overall increases.

The cost of new cars was up 0.5%, the largest increase since last July. Prices for vehicles, both used and new, have been soaring as a result of heavy demand and a computer chip shortage that has slowed auto production and reduced dealer supplies.

Over the past 12 months, consumer prices have jumped 4.2% — the fastest rise since a 4.9% gain in the 12 months that ended in September 2008. Excluding volatile food and energy, core inflation rose 0.9% in April and 3% over the past 12 months.

After years of dormant inflation, with the Federal Reserve struggling to increase it, worries about rising prices have shot to the top of economic concerns. Shortages of goods and parts related to disrupted supply chains have been a key factor.

The Fed, led by Chair Jerome Powell, has repeatedly expressed its belief that inflation will prove temporary as supply bottlenecks are unclogged and parts and goods flow normally again. But some economists have expressed concern that as the economic recovery accelerates, fueled by rising demand from consumers spending freely again, so will inflation.

"It looks like inflation pressures are not only building but are likely to be here at least through the rest of the year," said Joel Naroff, chief economist at Naroff Economic Advisors. "With growth robust, firms have a measure of pricing power that they haven't had in decades, and they appear to be using it." The April inflation report showed that food prices rose 0.4%, the biggest such increase since a 0.5% rise last June.

See **Prices / A13**

Toyota's good planning helps it roar back as other automakers stumble

BY RIVER DAVIS
Bloomberg

Toyota unveiled a 250 billion yen, \$2.3 billion, share buyback and expects to return to pre-pandemic profitability in the current fiscal year as its ability to keep churning out vehicles amid a global shortage of automotive chips puts it in a prime position to capitalize on swiftly recovering demand for cars.

The Japanese automaker forecast 2.5 trillion yen in

operating profit for the 12 months that will end in March, compared with a 2.4 trillion yen profit in fiscal 2019, before the pandemic. Analysts were predicting, on average, an operating profit of 2.7 trillion yen.

In a tumultuous period for the auto industry, Toyota quickly pulled ahead of the pack, straightening out its supply chain and ramping up production in order to meet rising demand for cars. The world's

No. 1 automaker now stands primed for the V-shaped COVID-19 recovery eluding many of its peers, which are having to scale back because of the global chip shortage.

"Toyota has overcome the chip shortage," Seiji Sugiura, an analyst at Tokai Tokyo Research Institute Co., said. "The forecast is conservative, and there could be an upward revision, maybe up to 3 trillion yen of operating income."

By maneuvering through

the disruptions of the pandemic, Toyota rose to become the world's largest automaker last year, wresting the title back from Volkswagen. Japanese rival Nissan by contrast reported an operating loss of 151 billion yen for the fiscal year on Tuesday. Honda is set to announce earnings Friday, with analysts predicting, on average, a profit of 549 billion yen, down about 13% from the previous year.

See **Toyota / A13**