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The Bulletin

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Prineville Railway restores track for new business



Crews move rail cars Thursday onto a section of the repaired track near Lamonta Road in Prineville.
Ryan Brennecke/Bulletin photos

Crews finished restoration this week on \$200,000 in repairs

BY KYLE SPURR • The Bulletin

Prineville Railway, the oldest city-owned rail line in the nation, is reopening a dormant 3,800-foot section of track to allow access for a new industrial business park that will need railcar deliveries. The railway is partnering with Prineville Campus, a development company that is transforming the old Woodgrain Manufacturing site into a space for industrial businesses.

The city and company invested about \$200,000 in repairs to the track from Lamonta Road to the Prineville Campus on the corner of N. Main Street and Peters Road.

City-hired crews finished the work this week and the section is expected to open to train cars by June 1. The crews replaced 1,200 rail ties, re-surfaced the track with gravel and replaced the gates and arms at one of the crossings.

Railway Manager Matt Wiederholt said the upgrades will allow the track to accommodate a variety of freight, such as lumber and ethanol.

"The track will be in a condition that we won't have any kind of weight restrictions or

commodity restrictions," Wiederholt said. "It's going to be a great opportunity for Prineville Campus because they won't have any restrictions on what goes in there."

Charles Bauman, the chief operating officer for Prineville Campus, said his partners Bill Parris, Rutger Parris and Trygve Duryea negotiated with the city railroad over the past year to bring rail traffic to the old mill site.

See **Railway** / A4



Railroad tracks lead from the former Woodgrain Manufacturing site and cross N. Main Street in Prineville.

COVID-19 in Central Oregon

Virus remains a threat

At St. Charles, the number of patients needing a ventilator is about as high as during a surge in December, January

BY SUZANNE ROIG
The Bulletin

On the first day Deschutes County moved into the lower risk category, opening up bars and restaurants to more people, St. Charles Bend reported a surge of younger patients coming in sicker with COVID-19.

May is turning out to be the third most deadliest month for COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic, coming in behind the winter surge that occurred in December and January, said Mike Johnson, St. Charles Health System senior data scientist.

"What we see here is different from what we're seeing in the rest of the nation. We're not out of the woods yet."

— Lisa Goodman, St. Charles Health System spokeswoman

"I don't know one county official or one hospital worker who isn't horrified by going down to low risk," said Dr. Cynthia Maree, St. Charles Health System medical director of infection prevention services.

"It's a real scary reality for us. We don't feel like we're past this even though the rest of the nation feels that way. We're in the middle of a surge, and we're worried about more people getting sick."

The hospital reported it has 13.6% of the state's hospitalized patients for COVID-19, yet Central Oregon only represents 5.9% of the state's overall population. On Friday, there were 41 COVID-19 patients, of which nine were in the intensive care unit with eight people on a ventilator, according to the St. Charles Bend website.

Statewide the Oregon Health Authority reported 285 people were hospitalized for COVID-19.

See **COVID-19** / A7

COVID-19 | School relief

Survey finds Oregonians are split

Participants divided on how to spend virus relief money

BY JACKSON HOGAN
The Bulletin

Politically, Oregon has a clear divide between its urban and rural residents. This is particularly true in Central

Oregon, where Bend is a dark blue splotch in a sea of red.

A statewide survey conducted in early May shows Oregonians have a similar urban/rural split on how school districts should spend millions of COVID-19 relief dollars from three aid packages passed by U.S. Congress since the spring of 2020.

There are also divides in

what young and elderly Oregonians prioritize for education funding.

The survey was conducted by the nonprofit, nonpartisan polling organization Oregon Values and Beliefs Center from May 4-10, according to a press release from the group.

When asked if state and local school leaders should emphasize spending COVID-19

relief dollars to help low-income students and students of color, 54% of all respondents answered "yes," compared to 28% who said "no" and 18% who were undecided.

About 60% of urban and suburban Oregonians each answered "yes," compared to only 42% of rural residents.

See **Relief** / A7

With a COVID-19 shot, you also get a shot at \$1M

Lottery prizes are intended to boost state vaccination rate

BY AIMEE GREEN
The Oregonian

Gov. Kate Brown announced Friday lottery prizes ranging from \$10,000 to \$1 million for Oregonians vaccinated against

COVID-19 — a strategy meant to address the dramatically decreasing numbers of residents inoculated each day.

All residents 18 and older who've received at least one shot of COVID-19 vaccine by June 27 will be entered into the "Take Your Shot Oregon" lottery, which will be held on June 28.

See **Prize** / A4

TODAY'S WEATHER



Sun and clouds
High 60, Low 40
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HOME & GARDEN SECTION

INSPIRING IDEAS FOR HOME IMPROVEMENT

Our biannual Home & Garden sections highlight ideas and suggestions from experts on landscaping, gardening, home projects and decorating ideas.

In The Bulletin Sunday, May 23.

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