

DOW 34,207.84 +123.69	NASDAQ 13,470.99 -64.75	S&P 500 4,155.86 -3.26	30-YR T-BOND 2.33% -01	CRUDE OIL \$63.58 +1.64	GOLD \$1,876.70 -5.10	SILVER \$27.47 -.58	EURO \$1.2181 -0.038
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BRIEFING

U.S. recalls bottles of Real Water

Federal authorities have ordered a complete recall of Las Vegas-based bottled water brand Real Water and ordered the company to surrender records in investigations of at least one death and multiple cases of liver illness.

Brent Jones, company president, and attorneys for the company and the bottler, AffinityLifestyles.com Inc., did not immediately respond Friday to email messages about a U.S. District Court order issued Wednesday. The order stopped the production and distribution of the product marketed primarily in Nevada, Arizona, Utah and California.

Jones and the company did not contest the order, called a consent decree, or admit wrongdoing pending further hearings.

The product is sold as premium alkalized drinking water in distinctive boxy blue bottles touting "E2 Electron Energized Technology." Labels say it is "infused with negative ions" and offers healthy detoxifying properties.

Home sales fall with low inventory

Sales of previously occupied U.S. homes fell for the third straight month in April as the number of properties for sale hit a record low, driving prices to new highs.

Existing home sales fell 2.7% last month from March to a seasonally-adjusted rate of 5.85 million annualized units, the National Association of Realtors said Friday. Sales jumped 33.9% from April last year, when the pandemic caused sales to slow sharply.

April's sales pace was the slowest since last June and well below the 6.01 million sales rate economists expected, according to FactSet.

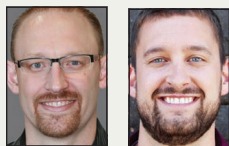
"Even with home sales declining modestly, one can describe the market as being hot," said Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist. "All indications is that buyer demand remains strong."

Sales through the first four months of this year are running 20% higher than they were a year ago, the NAR said.

Homes were typically snapped up within just 17 days of hitting the market last month, the fastest turnaround time on records going back to 2011, NAR said.

— Bulletin wire reports

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE



Olson **Stephen**

• Steele Associates Architects of Bend has promoted **Adam Stephen** and **Darek Olson** to principal. Also promoted were: **Chanda Villano**, **Chris Thome**, **Tristan Shepherd** and **Andy Harmon** to senior associate.

• EXIT Realty Bend has hired as sales associates: **Joaquin Garcia**, **Marcus Glassow**, **Hannah Stuebgen**, **Nichole Pineda**, **Valerie Ward**, **Nathan Geldermann**, **Kirk Acey**, **Crystal Clute**, **Tamera Veek** and **Lynndee Hargous**.

Apple CEO faces tough questions about app store competition

BY MICHAEL LIEDTKE

The Associated Press

Apple CEO Tim Cook described the company's iron-clad control over its mobile app store as the best way to serve and protect iPhone users, but he faced tough questions about competition issues from a judge Friday about allegations he oversees an illegal monopoly.

The rare courtroom appearance by one of the world's best-known executives came during the closing phase of a three-week trial revolving around an antitrust case brought by Epic Games, maker of the popular video game Fortnite.

Epic is trying to topple the so-called "walled garden" for iPhone and iPad apps that welcomes users and develop-

ers while locking out competition. Created by Apple co-founder Steve Jobs a year after the iPhone's 2007 debut, the App Store has become a key revenue source for Apple, helping power the company to a \$57 billion profit in its last fiscal year.

The trial focuses on Epic's contention that Apple has turned its store into a

price-gouging vehicle that not only reaps a 15% to 30% commission from in-app transactions, but blocks apps from offering other payment alternatives. That ban extends to showing a link that would open a web page offering commission-free ways to pay for subscriptions, in-game items and the like.

See **Apple** / A6

PacifiCorp gives its employees two weeks to return

BY JAMIE GOLDBERG

The Oregonian

Power company PacifiCorp told employees at its Lloyd District headquarters Thursday afternoon that they must return to the office full time on June 1 or take a 10% pay cut to continue working remotely.

Several PacifiCorp employees told The Oregonian they were caught off guard by the sudden announcement and felt frustrated and upset that they were being given less than two weeks to either make accommodations to return to work or take a cut in pay.

An email sent to employees announcing the return-to-office plan did not directly reference a pay cut but said employees who wish to continue working remotely must enroll in the company's voluntary work-from-home program. PacifiCorp confirmed that the program comes with a 10% reduction.

Stefan Bird, president and CEO of Pacific Power, the subdivision of PacifiCorp serving Oregon, California and Washington, told employees in a Thursday afternoon email that the company had decided to set a return-to-office date of June 1 after Multnomah County announced it expects to move into the state's lower-risk level for COVID-19 spread by May 28.

"Positive vaccination rates coupled with lower infection rates give us confidence that office work can be safely done with appropriate provisions for social distancing and mask wearing," PacifiCorp spokesperson Tom Gauntt said in an email. "Managers and human resources staff are working with our employees to provide guidance, workplace safety training, and individualized plans to return to work in person."

Approximately 1,000 employees work at the company's Lloyd district headquarters, some of whom have already been working in the office voluntarily.

An internal document describing the voluntary work-from-home says the 10% pay reduction "is considered an equitable trade off in exchange for the elimination of commute time, additional flexibility, transportation cost savings and even potential tax breaks."

A manager at PacifiCorp who asked The Oregonian not to publish her name so she could speak freely about company policy said the sudden announcement had put some employees, especially those who are caring for children or family members, in a difficult situation.

She said she doesn't understand why the company is so intent on forcing people back to the office when they've praised employees for their productivity working from home.



With the new app Struum, users can purchase credits to watch individuals shows that appear on one of the many channels available in the app.

Jay L. Clendenin/
Los Angeles Times

Too many streaming services? New app gives access to the many smaller services

BY RYAN FAUGHNDER • Los Angeles Times

With the growing number of streaming services, viewers have an unprecedented level of choice over what they want to watch.

But they also face the daunting task of keeping all those services straight. Not to mention the growing cost.

A cadre of former Disney and Discovery executives has proposed a solution to help relieve streaming overload.

Their upcoming app, Struum — pronounced "stroom," which is "stream" in Dutch — uses a credit-based system similar to the fitness app ClassPass to let subscribers access shows and movies from dozens of niche streaming services.

The Los Angeles-based company, backed by former Walt Disney Co. Chief Executive Michael Eisner's Tornante Co., has finalized deals to feature content from more than 50 smaller streaming services, studios and programmers. For a monthly fee, users get access to programming from providers including BBC Select, Tribeca, Mag-

nia Pictures, Cheddar, Indieflix, Filmbox, Cinedigm, Docurama and Revolt in one place, rather than by jumping from app to app.

Struum this month is expected to launch its app through the iOS app store, the web, and Google's Chromecast, with content from about 25 initial partners. The app organizes content from multiple providers by categories, such as "indie hits," "stranger than fiction" and "true crime." Struum will also make recommendations across programmers based on users' activity.

"For the consumer, it's so hard to find things," said Chief Executive Lauren DeVillier, a former Discovery Ventures and Disney/ABC TV Group executive who cofounded

the company with Paul Pastor, Eugene Liew and Thomas Wadsworth. "Everything's so disaggregated. We're sort of rebundling for consumers. Our goal is to say, 'You really love cooking? Here are 10 different services that are going to conquer it for you.'"

Struum, founded in April 2020, is far from the first company to notice that consumers need help organizing their streaming lives. More than half of consumers said in a recent Deloitte survey that they are frustrated that they need multiple subscriptions to access the content they want to watch.

A Parks Associates survey found that 31% of households had four or more streaming subscriptions in the third quarter of last year, up from 14% a year earlier. The number of streaming platforms has passed 300 in the U.S., more than double the number in 2014, the consultancy said.

Companies are trying several different ways to streamline the market.

See **Struum** / A6

California to drop social-distancing mandates

BY DON THOMPSON

The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — California no longer will require social distancing and will allow full capacity for businesses when the state reopens on June 15, the state's top health official said Friday.

"We're at a place with this pandemic where those requirements of the past are no longer needed for the foreseeable future," Secretary of California Health and Human Services Dr. Mark Ghaly said.

He said dramatically lower virus cases and increasing vaccinations mean it's safe for the state to remove nearly all restrictions next month. The state of nearly 40 million people has administered nearly 35.5 million vaccine doses, he said, and more than three-quarters of residents over age 65 have received at least one dose.

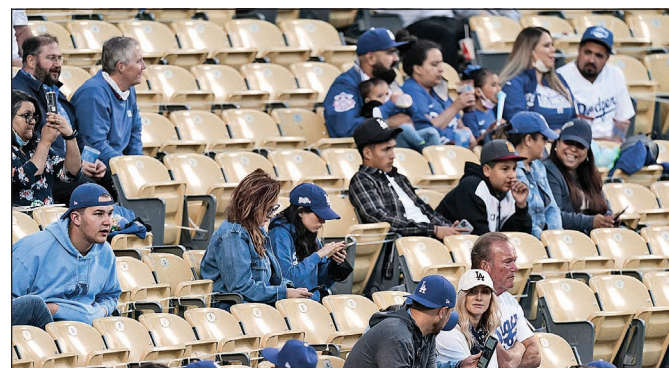
"Vaccines are widely available, and we're proud of where we are," Ghaly said.

"Something very important

happens on June 15 in California" when the state ends its color-coded four-tier system that restricts activities based on each county's virus prevalence, he said.

Limits on how many people can be inside businesses at any one time, "which have been a hallmark" of the safety plan, will disappear, he said. "There will no longer be (physical distancing) restrictions for attendees, customers and guests in business sectors," Ghaly said.

See **California** / A6



Mark J. Terrill/AP
Socially distanced fans watch the Miami Marlins play the Los Angeles Dodgers on May 14 in Los Angeles.