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# The Bulletin

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SPORTS PULLOUT, A7

MADRAS

## Gunfire at truck stop called an accident

*Man injures himself, woman next to him during breakfast rush; police investigating*

BY GARRETT ANDREWS  
The Bulletin

The breakfast rush at the Madras Truck Stop was interrupted abruptly Sunday morning when a 19-year-old man accidentally shot himself, blowing off several fingers and injuring the woman seated next to him.

Just before 9 a.m., employees and patrons in the Madras Truck Stop at 955 SW U.S. Highway 97 called 911 to report a gunshot, according to Madras Police Department.

People heard a small pop and afterward could see smoke and smell gunpowder, according to Jesse Israel, manager of the truck stop.

An unnamed man and a woman, also 19, had been hit by a single bullet, suffering injuries not considered life-threatening, said Madras Police Sgt. Steve Webb.

"It was fairly quickly learned that it was probably an accidental discharge of a firearm," Webb said.

The two were members of a party preparing to eat breakfast, Israel said.

"He had a loaded gun in his hoodie, his front pocket," Israel said. "And he was playing with it, and his phone, and switching his phone from one pocket to another pocket. It was not on safety and it fired."

See **Truck stop** / A13

## Complex legal issues swirl in Klamath water debate

BY ALEX SCHWARTZ  
(Klamath Falls) Herald & News/Report for America

The fringe group of irrigators and People's Rights Oregon volunteers who plan to forcibly open the Klamath Project's A Canal say the law is on their side when it comes to who's entitled to the water in Upper Klamath Lake.

As it turns out, the law may be on many people's sides.

Led in part by irrigators Dan Nielsen and Grant Knoll, the group is operating a "water crisis info center" adjacent to the canal headworks. The red-and-white tent, along with signs criticizing federal water management, are visible from Nevada Street.

The encampment has hosted several speakers, including participants in the 2001 Bucket Brigade and BJ Soper, a Redmond resident and state assistant for the People's Rights Network who was with Ammon Bundy during his takeover of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in 2016. Recently, Soper provided a crash course on the Constitution to about 100 people gathered under the tent.

Soper focused on the Fourth and Fifth amendments to the Constitution, which protect individuals from unreasonable searches and seizure and from being deprived of property without due process or just compensation.

See **Water** / A5



Submitted photo  
**Says Realms High School senior Devan Fine: "I'm so happy to have seen it go from plywood rooms ... to a fully functional school with four grades in it. I adore this school."**

## Realms' first-ever graduating class includes an advocate for the homeless

BY JACKSON HOGAN  
The Bulletin

About three years ago, Bend-La Pine Schools opened two small magnet high schools: Realms and Skyline.

This month, those schools are honoring their first graduating classes, including standout graduates like Devan Fine, an activist and student leader who hopes to become an acupuncturist.

Fine, who enrolled at Realms High after the school opened in her sophomore year, said she thrived

with the school's emphasis on student-guided, real world-focused learning.

"I'm so happy to have seen it go from plywood rooms ... to a fully functional school with four grades in it," said Fine, 18. "I adore this school."

One of Realms High's unique teaching strategies even helped Fine develop a desire to advocate for Bend's homeless population.

At Realms, curriculum is filtered through "expeditions," where all subjects are taught through the lens

of a specific topic, like homelessness. The goal is to connect school-work to real-world issues.

During the fall of her sophomore year, a group of homeless people lived behind Realms High's northeast Bend building, and officials said they had to be moved, Fine said. So her group's expedition was focused on homelessness, and specifically helping that group move safely, she said.

Now, Fine is passionate about helping locals experiencing homelessness, she said.

See **Realms** / A13

# Making CONNECTIONS

*Phone-call program offers comfort to Central Oregon's isolated seniors*



Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin

BY KYLE SPURR • The Bulletin

Carol Allison looks forward to her weekly calls from a friend she's never met.

The 85-year-old writer and illustrator in Madras has talked regularly over the phone for the past three months with Kelli Bradley, a volunteer with Caring Connections, a program that connects volunteers with seniors experiencing isolation through the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I just thought it would be fun to do that and meet somebody new and talk," Allison said. "Since I live by myself."

Allison, who moved from Portland to Madras in 1956, has lived alone since her husband died of cancer in the mid-1960s. But she is not as lonely as other seniors. She has three sons, including one in Madras, and nine grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Still, Allison lights up when she talks with Bradley, a Sunriver resident who works in consulting and owned an in-home care company for several years. The two talk for hours about cooking, computer problems and how much Central Oregon has changed since Allison arrived.

*"It helps people and it brings people together. I think it would be great for elderly people who can't get out or don't have anything at home to keep them busy."*

— **Carol Allison, 85, of Madras, pictured above with her 20-year-old parrot, Missy. Allison benefits from the Council of Aging's Caring Connections program.**

They both feel grateful they were matched through the program.

"It helps people and it brings people together," Allison said. "I think it would be great for elderly people who can't get out or don't have anything at home to keep them busy."

Denise LaBuda, director of communications

for the Council of Aging of Central Oregon, said the council started the Caring Connections program last fall. The organization started to notice seniors were more isolated than usual due to the pandemic. More than 50 seniors across the region signed up for the program.

"It was pretty clear people were growing less connected," LaBuda said.

For many of the seniors, the phone call from a volunteer is the only social interaction they get each week, LaBuda said. The phone calls are also a way to check on a senior and make sure they are staying healthy, she said.

Social isolation was an issue for seniors even before the pandemic, LaBuda said. National studies identified loneliness in seniors as a growing epidemic with higher health risks than obesity or smoking. An AARP study found one-third of seniors nationwide reported feeling a lack of companionship. LaBuda believes the same is true locally.

"It's not that this was new," LaBuda said. "COVID just made it all worse."

The council on aging hopes to grow the Caring Connections program beyond the pandemic.

See **Connections** / A5

