

▲ DOW 34,466.24 +19.10	▲ NASDAQ 14,020.33 +108.58	▲ S&P 500 4,239.18 +19.63	▼ 30-YR T-BOND 2.15% -02	▲ CRUDE OIL \$70.29 +.33	▲ GOLD \$1,894.20 +1.00	▲ SILVER \$28.02 +.03	▼ EURO \$1.2172 -0007
---	---	--	---	---	--	--	--

BRIEFING

State scrambles as disabilities firm plans closures

An Oregon company is closing its group homes and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities after years of state and federal scrutiny for abuse and neglect, state officials said this week.

Advocates and a top state official said Mentor Oregon's departure will be the largest of its kind in memory, and will likely challenge Oregon's already-strained disability services system, The Oregonian reported.

The closure means 1,300 people will need new service providers by Aug. 31. It's unclear if other case management companies in Oregon have the capacity to take on Mentor's workload.

"We're not too focused on 'why,' at this point," Lilia Teninty, director of Oregon Developmental Disability Services, said of Mentor's abrupt decision to leave. Instead, she said, the state is "focused on continuity" for people receiving services through Mentor.

Consumer prices surge in May

American consumers absorbed another surge in prices in May — a 0.6% increase over April and 5% over the past year, the biggest 12-month inflation spike since 2008.

The May rise in consumer prices that the Labor Department reported Thursday reflected a range of goods and services now in growing demand as people increasingly shop, travel, dine out and attend entertainment events in a rapidly reopening economy.

The increased consumer appetite is bumping up against a shortage of components, from lumber and steel to chemicals and semiconductors, that supply such key products as autos and computer equipment, all of which has forced up prices.

Unemployment claims fall to 376K

The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits fell for the sixth straight week as the U.S. economy, held back for months by the coronavirus pandemic, reopens rapidly.

Jobless claims fell by 9,000 to 376,000 from 385,000 the week before, the Labor Department reported Thursday. The number of people signing up for benefits exceeded 900,000 in early January and has fallen more or less steadily ever since. Still, claims are high by historic standards. Before the pandemic brought economic activity to a near-standstill in March 2020, weekly applications were regularly coming in below 220,000.

— Bulletin wire reports

CENTRAL OREGON

Hundreds of workers are needed

BY SUZANNE ROIG
The Bulletin

Central Oregon's Walmarts and more than 100 other employers are looking for hundreds of workers to fill open positions during a job fair on Friday.

Mt. Bachelor ski area is looking for dishwashers and drivers with a commercial drivers license and is willing to pay

\$1,000 bonuses for anyone filling the position. In all, the ski area seeks to fill 30 positions, according to its website, from cooks to servers to zip line guides.

The summer season kicks off Saturday.

And Medline ReNewal in Redmond is looking to fill 30 entry-level positions at its repurposing facility.

"The job market for the hourly workforce has been tough throughout the past year and has only gotten more difficult as of late," said Chris Headley, Medline chief recruiter, in an email.

Central Oregon's labor shortage was around before the pandemic 15 months ago and is back again as employers look to add workers to meet the

demands of their businesses. Economists predicted the Central Oregon region would have recovered all the jobs lost due to the COVID-19 restrictions put in place during the pandemic to thwart the spread of the virus.

Deschutes County's unemployment rate in March was 6.6%, but added 1,880 jobs since February, according to

the state unemployment report.

"If you drive down Third Street in Bend you'll see more signs for hiring than not. It's an unprecedented area in staffing needs," said Chris Petty, Express Employment franchise manager. "If we fill half the positions we have, we'd set records."

See **Jobs** / A8

Clatsop County

MORATORIUM WEIGHED ON VACATION RENTALS



Clatsop County may place a moratorium on new vacation rental licenses while commissioners go over revisions to the rules. Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

BY NICOLE BALES • The Astorian

Clatsop County commissioners have unanimously supported a six-month moratorium on new vacation rental licenses while the county reviews two ordinances that regulate short-term rentals. The move comes after months of conversations and discussions on proposed revisions to the rules.

Commissioners agreed during a work session in April to pause work on the revisions after strife in Cove Beach and Arch Cape.

During a work session in early June, the board agreed a moratorium was the best way to move forward while the county looks at ways to revise and possibly consolidate the ordinances.

The moratorium is expected to begin in September, and the review process could be completed by February. The county has scheduled two town hall meetings in July to get public input on the moratorium.

"What we would like to have as the goal for any revisions that we do end up making is developing a better balance between the quality-of-life concerns and the impacts that short-term rentals can have on a residential neighborhood," Gail Henrikson, the county's community development director, said. "But also recognizing that there are investments that short-term rental owners have made, and trying to find a better balance between the two."

"What I saw was that the character of a neighborhood was changing, and I wanted to do something about it. We've all been working — I want to say, groping — toward a solution since then. I've seen some things that have given me hope."

— Lianne Thompson, Clatsop County Commissioner

Both ordinances are similar, but one is specific to Arch Cape, while the other covers the remaining unincorporated parts of the county. The key differences

deal with parking and length-of-stay requirements.

The Arch Cape ordinance requires a minimum seven-night stay, and only one reservation is allowed during a seven-day period. Street parking is not allowed.

There is no limit or minimum-stay requirement for other unincorporated areas, and street parking is allowed.

See **Rentals** / A8

BEND

Home prices decrease slightly

BY SUZANNE ROIG
The Bulletin

The median price of a Bend single-family home took a dip in May, but that's not an indication that the market is softening; inventory is still low and there's still strong demand, according to a monthly real estate data report.

"One month does not a trend make," said Lester Friedman, Coldwell Banker Bain real estate broker. "We often see this. When you're talking median price, it doesn't take many million-dollar sales to put the median up higher. I don't think it means our prices are going down. It was a matter of what the price range the sales were. A lot of that has to do with inventory."

On May 1, 2020, there were 555 active listings, but on May 1, 2021, there were 160 active listings, Friedman said.

"What's happened is we have people who want to buy in Bend and there's nothing for them to buy," he said. "That's why the pressure has been on prices."

Single-family home prices in Redmond made gains, growing by \$30,000 in May over April and were up more than \$100,000 over May 2020, according to the monthly sales report.

The spike was spurred by a third of the sales greater than \$500,000, according to the report.

The Beacon Report showed the median sales price of a single-family home in Bend dipped \$23,000 from \$651,000 in April to \$628,000 in May. Compared to May 2020, the median price of a single-family home in Bend is now \$183,000 higher.

The median price is the midpoint value of all transactions in a month.

The number of sales in Bend also leveled off in May to 228 sales, according to the Beacon Appraisal Group LLC.

See **Homes** / A8

WASHINGTON | COVID-19

'Joints for jobs' vaccine program is falling flat

BY GENE JOHNSON

The Associated Press

SEATTLE — It was designed as an innovative way to promote COVID-19 vaccinations, but Washington's new "joints for jobs" program is off to a rough start.

Officials announced Monday that the state's nearly 500 licensed marijuana retailers could begin hosting vaccine clinics and offering a single, free pre-rolled marijuana cigarette to any 21-plus adult who received a shot there.

It's one of many vaccine incentives being offered in Washington, including free pints of beer, sports tickets and prize money to lure those who have been hesitant or just lazy. Washington and Colorado in 2012 were the first states to legalize the adult use of marijuana, with regulated sales beginning in 2014. The industry brought Washington close to

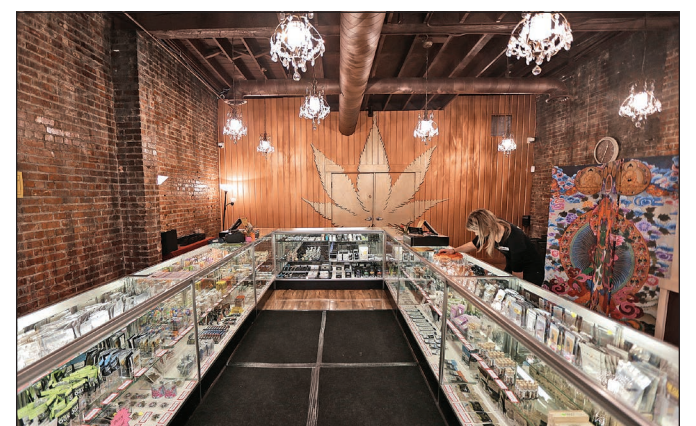
\$474 million in taxes in the last fiscal year.

But few things are simple in an industry that's illegal under federal law, and the hurdles to offering the free joints are substantial enough that few of the state's legal pot shops are saying they will participate, even if they would like to do so.

Retailers told the state Liquor and Cannabis Board during a meeting Wednesday that many don't have the

space to host a vaccine clinic. Some health care providers are queasy about setting up a clinic on the site of a marijuana business because they don't want to jeopardize federal funding by being involved in the distribution of an illegal drug.

And the program is set to expire July 12 — too soon for them to offer a second shot to customers who might show up for a first shot in mid- to late June.



A worker cleans a display case at the Ganja Goddess Cannabis Store in Seattle in 2015. Washington is offering a coronavirus vaccine incentive centered around the marijuana industry. Ted S. Warren/AP file