



NONPROFITS



Eric Alexander, CEO at **Partners In Care**, admires construction progress Tuesday at the Hospice House in Bend.

STAY AFLOAT in a pandemic

BY SUZANNE ROIG
The Bulletin

Early in the pandemic, Linda Stelle realized that Partners in Care needed help to meet financial goals during the pandemic.

The Powell Butte resident knew the nonprofit had canceled its 2020 gala created to fund the \$6 million needed for the 12-bed Hospice House facility. As one of the board of directors, Stelle realized that the community needed to pitch in.

She pulled out her checkbook and wrote her second check to the organization. Sometimes a nonprofit needs muscle and money to meet its goals.



Carly Sanders, **NeighborImpact** food program director, shows the NeighborImpact mobile food pantry in Redmond on Tuesday. Dean Guernsey/Bulletin photos

“With the pandemic, it put pressure on the organization, and I saw it was a good time for me to have support from their donors,” said Stelle, who founded AmeriTitle more than 40 years ago. “I wanted to make sure the organization has a strong foundation, great leader-

ship to prove they’d go into perpetuity.

“These are key things for me. Partners in Care fits all those components.”

For some nonprofits, like the Latino Community Association, the pandemic forced it to can-

cel outright the main fundraisers that fuel the work it does. And for other nonprofits, like the Deschutes Land Trust, the pandemic has been a boon for their finances, with people making heftier donations than normal.

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A tumultuous but productive 2021 legislative session

The 2021 legislative session was characterized by Zoom meetings, COVID-19 restrictions and disruptions. It was surprisingly productive, however. In a normal year, the legislative process is not one for the faint of heart, as over 3,500 bills are introduced in a long session addressing a vast range of issues. This year’s session proved to

INSIDE
BUSINESS
By Katy Brooks



be very different as lawmakers gathered virtually and the state Capitol was closed to the public due to COVID-19.

While the new format did make it easier to provide testi-

mony in lieu of traveling across the pass to Salem, it presented challenges with the flow of information and the opportunity to communicate with elected officials.

All told this was a very challenging session for lawmakers and advocates alike.

COVID-19 brought federal and state programs to the forefront this session for businesses

and employees alike. Foreclosure moratoriums, federal unemployment assistance and financial support for businesses like the Paycheck Protection Program were intermingled with legislation and pandemic state guideline development. And while this was playing out, businesses were concerned about whether additional taxes would be levied in a year of

struggle for so many.

If there has ever been a year to advocate for supporting the health of our business community, this was it.

The ongoing and often-changing list of COVID-19 requirements on businesses has been challenging and at times detrimental. Businesses showed up this session to share their stories of struggle

through the pandemic and successfully prevented several attempts to increase taxes.

In the end, the legislature passed bipartisan bills to assist the business community, including changes to the state unemployment insurance trust fund to decrease accelerating unemployment rate increases due to COVID-19.

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