

OSHA

Continued from A5

PCUN recently conducted surveys with 50 farmworkers in the Willamette Valley to assess how well they felt employers were complying with the rules. The vast majority, Lopez said, indicated they were being provided with enough water and shade during the extreme heat.

“Overall, people feel like there are steps being taken to follow the rules,” she said.

Since July 9, Oregon OSHA has fielded 971 workplace complaints from across the state, according to the agency’s records. Of those, 136 were marked as “heat-related.”

A Capital Press review found that, of the 136 heat-related complaints, 18 complaints were made against 12 different farms and food processing companies. Complaints ranged from not providing access to



Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press File

The new emergency rules adopted by Oregon OSHA are intended to protect workers.

water or breaks, to workers not being trained to recognize the

signs of heat-related illnesses. Each of those complaints are

“in progress,” according to Oregon OSHA.

Pot farm

Continued from A5

“And then, they are transported up to the location. From what we are understanding, these workers are not paid until the end of the year when the shipment goes out and the money is brought in. There’s not like a weekly payroll going on here.”

Investigators are looking

into an operation that involves more than 1,300 acres of property and 200 workers. Due to the size of the farm and the scope of the investigation, the Josephine County Sheriff’s department was joined by 16 other state and federal agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI.

These agencies seized ten firearms and \$140,000 in cash

this week. In addition, officials destroyed 72,283 cannabis plants along with 6,000 pounds of processed cannabis and 373 greenhouses.

More than 250 law enforcement officers entered the property on Tuesday, they found the workers living in squalid conditions, sleeping on cardboard mats or in tents. Although the workers denied that they had been trafficked,

Daniel, the sheriff, suggested that this could be because they were scared to talk.

The Department of Homeland Security offered victim services to the workers, but they all turned the services down. This could be for various reasons, including fear of their employers and fear of immigration authorities.

No arrests have been made since the raid.

Labor

Continued from A5

The number of union members has long been in decline. Private-sector union membership hit a new low of 6.2% in 2019. Yet, labor remains a powerful force in Washington, D.C. It has a vocal ally in the White House in Joe Biden.

Shuler said she will continue to work to get an infrastructure bill passed. Some economists have estimated the legislation could create 650,000 jobs.

Beyond that, Shuler said the union needs to “look inward” and determine how to make unions relevant to more Americans. The AFL-CIO needs to show that “the labor movement is the path to a good, sustainable job.”

Shuler had served as AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer since 2009.

The AFL-CIO also elected Fred Redmond, international vice president of the United Steelworkers, to replace Shuler as secretary-treasurer. Redmond is the first African American to hold the No. 2 job.

Shuler is generally seen as a shrewd politician and talented team-builder. Last winter, Redmond lauded Shuler for tackling the deep divisions within the 56 unions that belong to the AFL-CIO.

“Liz is tenacious; she has an ability to pull people together,” he said. “Look, we have a lot of work to do in our union and throughout all of labor. But there ain’t no one else trying to tackle this, getting the Black workers, the beat cops,

giving them very little time to accomplish what is mandated in each of these rules.”

For example, Dresler said farms in Southern Oregon were struggling to find N95 masks on short notice as the AQI rose above 200 because of nearby wildfires.

“I was just getting endless calls saying they couldn’t find these masks,” she said. “People just panicked.”

Lesley Tamura, who grows 42 acres of pears at her family’s orchard near Hood River, Ore., said the rules are also costing money, such as buying window air conditioners for workers living in on-farm housing.

“Because the rules are constantly changing ... it’s definitely difficult to keep up, and it’s definitely a financial burden,” Tamura said. “At the same time, we have to figure out what we can realistically do to protect (workers).”

Dutch Bros

Continued from A5

Dutch Bros, which had grown rapidly by franchising its drive-thru coffee stands in prior years, has moved over the past four years to expand through company-owned outlets. Dutch Bros reported Friday that it no longer franchises at all, and nearly half its stores are now company-owned. And the company indicated it believes it could grow to as many as 4,000 locations.

In its filing, Dutch Bros said it sees a big opportunity among coffee drinkers who want their beverages on the go. But it warned its “substantial debt” — and more debt it may take on in the future to support its expansion — poses a risk to the business if it runs into trouble with its ambitious growth plans.

And the filing hints at some of the growing pains Dutch Bros will face as it moves to the public markets.

The company reported in Friday’s filing that audits of its financial statements for the past two years found “a material weakness” in its internal accounting, because it lacked “personnel capable of appropriately accounting for complex transactions we undertake.”

Dutch Bros said it hired more accountants this year, but warned that a weak-

nesses in its internal controls continued through the end of 2020 because the company has a “limited number” of employees with adequate expertise.

No Oregon company has raised \$100 million in an IPO since 2004. Founded with a single pushcart in 1992 in Grants Pass by brothers Dane and Travis Boersma, Dutch Bros is now positioned to be one of Oregon’s largest businesses.

In a state known for fancy coffees, Dutch Bros has gone the opposite direction by offering a range of mass-market drinks, from simple drip coffee to energy drinks and frothy coffee shakes.

Dutch Bros (it’s pronounced “bros,” not “brothers”) has built an avid following with a reputation for friendly, outgoing “broistas” who rush from the coffee kiosk to greet people waiting in line at its drive-thrus.

“The most important thing for us was building customer loyalty. If we could figure that out, we were winning,” Travis Boersma, now Dutch Bros’ chairman, wrote in a letter to prospective investors included in Friday’s filing.

“So when people would come back day after day, we rolled out the red carpet. Our broistas would have fun trying to make everyone smile and create a magnetic, contagious experience,” Boersma wrote. “That lives on in our company. It’s

our culture, what we look for in our employees and our differentiator.”

Dane Boersma died in 2009 of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Lou Gehrig’s disease.

The chain has 471 stores across the West, with the greatest number in Oregon and locations as far east as Texas and Oklahoma. Three years ago, when it took an investment from a private equity firm called TSG Consumer Partners, the coffee chain said it hoped to have 800 locations altogether by 2023.

Notably, Friday’s filing did not disclose how much of the business TSG owns, nor how much Travis Boersma and other family members own. Those details will become public if Dutch Bros proceeds with its offering.

No new, large businesses have emerged in Oregon for several decades. But the region now has a handful of big companies emerging, some in Oregon and others just across the Columbia River in Vancouver.

Vancouver marketing data broker ZoomInfo, for example, held its IPO last year and now has a market value of nearly \$24 billion. And Portland vacation rental powerhouse Vacasa plans to go public this fall by merging with a publicly traded investment fund in a deal that values that business at \$4.5 billion.

Insurance

Continued from A5

While it was also the right thing to do for the climate, the decision to ask for divestment and disclosure was based on the financial risk facing these investments, he said.

Jones’ office monitored insurers’ reserve portfolios, applied different climate-risk scenarios and performed stress tests to examine how certain investments might perform under various future greenhouse gas emission policies, he said.

Regulators in the U.S. don’t generally scrutinize insurers’ reserve portfolios for climate risk, but those practices are more common in other countries, he said.

“Those climate risk regulatory practices are the standard among financial regulators in Europe and Asia,” he said. “By and large, both the U.S. insurance industry and state insurance regulators are behind the curve.”

Climate risk assessments are something that more companies and regulators in the U.S. “ought to be doing,” Jones said.

IPCC’s sixth climate change assessment was published on Aug. 9, and its conclusions were stark. UN Secretary-General António Guterres called the report’s findings a “code red for humanity.”

“The alarm bells are deafening, and the evidence is irrefutable: greenhouse-gas emissions from fossil-fuel burning and deforestation are choking our planet and putting billions of people at immediate risk,” Guterres added. “Global heating is affecting every region on Earth,

with many of the changes becoming irreversible.”

Granville Martin, director of U.S. policy and outreach at Value Reporting Foundation, said the specter of rising payouts from environmental catastrophes demonstrates the need more robust climate disclosure.

“It’s unsustainable,” Martin said, noting that California’s property and casualty industry paid out more than \$26 billion in claims in 2017-18. Since then, officials have been expanding fire risk maps and the amount of destruction caused by wildfire appears to be wors-

ening, he added.

Affordable and reliable insurance is essential to managing risk and touches on every sector of the economy, Martin said.

Martin’s Value Reporting Foundation formed in June in a merger of the International Integrated Reporting Council and the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board. The group develops international standards for ESG disclosure.

Martin says companies in vulnerable sectors, including insurance, are more attuned to environmental risks, but there still aren’t adequate methods

for tracking this information.

“We need standards so investors can understand the prospects of particular companies but also so they can understand the sector-wide implications of climate risk,” Martin said.

Elizabeth Bieber, an attorney at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP in New York, said an investor’s attention to climate risk often depends on their time horizon. Bieber is head of share-

holder engagement and activism defense for the firm.

“There’s a tension between long-term and short-term investors on the relative importance of environmental factors,” Bieber said in an interview.

Institutional investors are more concerned with companies’ long-term financial risks, including sustainability factors, she said. On the other hand, short-term investors are less

willing to consider longer time horizons and would prefer immediate financial returns over significant long-term investment.

“I don’t think one can any longer deny this is occurring; the question is will we act quickly and strongly enough to reduce the impacts of climate change which we’re already seeing all around us,” said Jones, the former California insurance commissioner.

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OBITUARY

Linda Lee Pernell

December 07, 1942 - July 17, 2021

On Saturday, July 17th, Linda Lee Pernell lost her 12-year battle with cancer in her home in Bend, OR at the age of 78. Born 12/07/42 to Howard and Pauline Pernell, her dog Wimpy was her closest companion and inspired a lifelong advocacy for animals. She enjoyed high school, Tomahawk Ski Bowl, and waterskiing at Lake of the Woods. In 1961, she married James Kenneth Hall, became a loving mother and raised 3 children in Eugene. She remodeled homes in Eugene, Austin, TX, and Bend with the impeccable taste and attention to detail she was known for in everything. In Austin, her love of houses made her an exceptional real estate agent. Tragically, her son Greg Hall passed, but she is survived by daughters Karina Mayorga & Kristina Hall, and grandchildren Giovanna & Steven Mayorga. She is missed as mother, grandmother, friend, and neighbor. Linda’s ashes and animal companion’s will be interred next to her son in the historic Masonic Cemetery in Eugene. Gifts can be made to Defenders of Wildlife, PETA, or the Humane Society.