

## OBITUARY

## Leila Mae (Hickerson) Vernor

Seaside

March 9, 1933 — May 11, 2021



“Welcome, I’m glad you’re here!” This was the warming demeanor Leila carried at any community event she volunteered for.

Leila Mae (Hickerson) Vernor was born on March 9, 1933, in Alton, Illinois. At home with family and friends by her side, Leila quietly passed away on May 11, 2021, in Seaside. Leila had a smile on her face with peace, knowing she was going to be greeted by God welcoming her home.

Leila was the fourth of five children, and was preceded in death by sisters, LaVelle Hair, Emma Jane Boschert and Eva Jean Rose, and baby brother, Clarence “Sonny” Hickerson. All of the siblings were born to their late parents, Leila Viola (Perrings) and Clarence Davis Hickerson, in Alton.

Leila graduated in the last “January class” from Alton Senior High School in 1951. She was in French Club, Future Business Lead-

ers of America, FDA, student council, on the dean’s list and played the alto sax in the band. After graduation, she went on to the Rubicon Business School for accounting in St. Louis.

Leila’s older sister, Emma Jane, and her brother-in-law, set up a blind date with someone who would become Leila’s future husband, and they played “Cootie.”

It worked, because on June 20, 1953, in 102-degree weather, she married Oliver W. Vernor (former Seaside mayor from 1995 to 1998) from Wood River, Illinois, at the Cherry Street Baptist Church in Alton.

Leila and Oliver (Ollie) later moved to South Bend, Indiana, where they were blessed with two wonderful children, Robert Wayne Vernor and Cathy Jo (Vernor) Opher.

They moved to Chicago Heights, Illinois, after a few years. There, Leila discovered Robert could not see

well. Leila’s compassion and understanding helped Robert overcome the challenges of being legally blind. She was an amazing mother, and took great pride in helping Robert.

The Vernors moved to Louisville, Kentucky, then Florissant, Missouri. In these moves, Leila became the president of the PTA for the school of the blind, president of the local garden club, participated in county fairs and made lifelong friends.

Leila and Ollie took a visit to see her oldest sister, LaVelle Hair, who lived in Seaside, and they were

hooked! “We’re moving to Seaside!” they said.

They continued their activism in Seaside, starting with church. Being warmly welcomed when they walked into Seaside United Methodist Church, they knew they were home.

Leila made great friends in her numerous groups in Seaside, like the ambassadors, the Bob Chisholm Community Center, Elks Lodge No. 1748, being Mrs. Mayor, Sunset Empire Park and Recreation, the Seaside Museum, TOPS Club and her home away from home, Seaside United Methodist Church. Leila also absolutely loved her annual excursion to choir camp at Camp Magruder.

Leila loved being in church. There she was a devout member, pie maker, seamstress, award-winning counted-cross stitch artist, bread pudding chef, cookie maker, choir singer and United Methodist Women leader. She exemplified all

that good “church” is meant to be and stand for.

Many of Leila’s friends have shared how their lives were enriched by her kindness and empathy that would radiate from her. She would make you feel “seen,” and make sure you felt welcomed. Her wishes would be to please continue sharing kindness to others.

Leila was an amazing wife, and was married 59 years to Oliver (1953-2012). Facing life and all its obstacles together, they persevered and were determined to make this world a better place through fairness in truth and kindness.

She believed in the power of prayer. She loved her husband, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, church, friends and neighbors. She was able to love all these people because she loved Jesus, and always put God first.

Leila is survived by her son, Robert W. Vernor, and his wife, Shirley, of Den-

ver, Colorado; her daughter, Cathy “Cj” Opfer; her grandchildren, Joshua and Karina Hedegaard, of Silkeborg, Denmark, and Jessica and Rasheed Raines, of Roanoke, Virginia; and her great-grandchildren, Matthew, Autumn, Chloe, Carter, Kianna, Katie and Jack.

A memorial is being held at 11 a.m. on June 26 at the Seaside United Methodist Church, 241 N. Holladay Drive. There will be a link to join the service via Zoom. Contact the church office by email before noon on June 25 at seasideunitedmethodist@gmail.com to receive the link.

There will be a gathering after the service at 725 Second Ave. in Seaside.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be given to the Seaside United Methodist Church.

Please feel free to leave a note of a special memory to share with Leila’s family in her guest book at caldwells-mortuary.com

## Brown sets June 21 target to end COVID-19 limits in Oregon

By GARY A. WARNER  
Oregon Capital Bureau

Nearly all COVID-19 restrictions could be lifted in as early as just over two weeks, Gov. Kate Brown said last week.

The state is about 127,000 adults short of the goal of getting at least one shot of vaccine into 70% of eligible residents.

Once the state crosses the threshold, Brown said she would lift masking, business capacity, event size, social distance and other limits that Oregonians have dealt with for most of the past 15 months. “We can fully reopen — we can all look forward to that,” she said.

Brown and top state health leaders made the announcements during a press call last Friday.

After the vaccination goal is met, Brown said local health officials would take over the daily decision-making and operations in counties from the

Oregon Health Authority.

Brown listed what the changes would mean to the state’s 4.24 million resident:

Fourth of July barbecues, eating popcorn in a movie theater, getting a beer after work at the local brewery with your friends,” she said. “Restaurants and bars able to welcome a full house. The Pendleton Round-Up? Yes, that, too.”

Oregon’s statewide mark stood at 66.2% on Wednesday.

The first full day of summer — Monday, June 21 — was the optimistic target that state was trying to reach, Allen said.

“This is not a slam dunk,” Allen said.

Allen said a June 30 estimate earlier this spring was well within reach.

“It will take a lot of work by a lot of people to get it done,” Allen said.

Lifting restrictions would include:

- Ending the risk level system for counties of

lower, moderate, high and extreme.

- Ending a state requirement for masks and face coverings in almost all settings. Exceptions would be airports, public transit, and health care settings that follow federal agency guidelines.

- End requirements for individuals to show vaccination verification in public venues and businesses.

- Allow K-12 students to attend school in-person, full time, five days per week.

K-12 guidance is being revised to support schools in safely delivering in-person instruction throughout the school day.

Current health and safety standards, including indoor mask requirements, will remain in place in workplaces, schools and child care settings.

Colleges and universities can make their own decisions on protocols after considering guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Brown said lifting restrictions did not mean the public health crisis in Oregon was close to over. Because there are few curbing options for those under age 16, only a little more than half of the state population is vaccinated today.

Brown will re-examine whether or not to lift her emergency order that gave her a wide latitude on public health decisions.

“The pandemic will not be over,” Brown said.

To try to increase the vaccination rate toward the goal, many pharmacies will extend hours to reach out to more people who want shots.

“Some people are not vaccine resistant, but vaccine inconvenienced,” Allen said.

Brown also reiterated plans to give away \$1 million to a vaccinated Oregonian, along with \$10,000 to a vaccinated person in each of the 36 counties. Scholarships worth \$100,000 are also being offered to lucky vaccinated youth.

Brown and the health authority officials said it was time to push past the current levels of inoculation as medical evidence and state statistics show the impact of the virus has separated residents into two groups with very different likely futures.

“This has really become a tale of two pandemics,” Brown said. “If you are vaccinated then you’re safe, you can carry on safely without wearing a mask and social distancing. If you are not vaccinated, this virus still poses a very real threat.”

Children, immunocompromised, cancer patients and those who have not been able to get vaccinated for any reason must still be considered when communities decide what steps to take.

“There are still Oregonians who need to take extra precautions to feel safe and stay safe,” Brown said.

If someone is unvaccinated, they remain a danger to family, friends and

others in their communities who could get sick or die.

“So, it will remain incredibly important for Oregonians to continue making smart choices,” Brown said.

The health authority will continue to monitor the global pandemic and provide assistance and resources, but will increasingly advise local officials on measures to take.

The health authority and CDC are expected to issue more guidance in coming days as the state nears the 70% goal.

June 4 was the 500th day since COVID-19 was first reported in the United States in Snohomish County, Washington, on Jan. 21, 2020.

Oregon reported its first COVID-19 case on Feb. 28, 2020 in Washington County.

Over 33.4 million infections have been reported since then, with over 598,707 deaths, the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center reported.

## PUBLIC SAFETY LOG



May 29

**12:11 a.m.**, 2400 block U.S. Highway 101: Emergency medical response.

**12:39 a.m.**, 2400 block U.S. Highway 101: A person is arrested on a warrant.

**8:24 a.m.**, 1900 block S. Roosevelt: A woman called police to say she would be breaking into her daughter’s home after her daughter threw her out and changed the locks. She said she was breaking in to retrieve her washer and dryer. She warned police her daughter might call them. Police advised they would not respond unless there was a disturbance.

May 30

**10:16 a.m.**, N. Roosevelt: A person is arrested on a warrant.

**11:33 a.m.**, Edgewood and Broadway: Caller reports dog inside a vehicle on a hot day. Police go to check on the dog who is in a Tesla with the air conditioning running. The dog, police say, is living the good life.

**2:57 p.m.**, Ninth Avenue: Two fully-grown adults as described in the police report are trespassed from each other’s property after getting into an argument over the property line.

May 31

**8:45 p.m.**, 900 block S. Holladay: A disturbance is reported.

June 1

**8:25 a.m.**, Nike and Roosevelt:

Caller reports an injured cat in the road. On arrival police met with the owner of the now deceased cat. Police transported the cat to the clinic.

**6:15 p.m.**, 300 block S. Roosevelt: Subjects reported loitering on property are told to leave.

June 2

**12:25 a.m.**, 800 block Avenue B: A couple reported having an argument are warned of disorderly conduct.

**11:52 p.m.**, 900 block S. Holladay: A disturbance is reported.

June 3

**11:50 p.m.**, Safeway: A disturbance is reported.

**11:56 p.m.**, 900 block 15th Avenue: Suspicious circumstances are reported.



May 30

**9:17 p.m.**, N. Roosevelt near the Welcome Sign: Fire investigation.

May 31

**7:30 a.m.**, 90000 Manion Drive: Emergency medical response.

June 1

**12:17 a.m.**, Avenue A and Downing: Odor of gas reported.

**2:49 a.m.**, 400 block Second Avenue: Emergency medical response.

June 2

**12:10 a.m.**, 1100 block Avenue A: Emergency medical response.

**7:54 a.m.**, 1200 block Avenue A: Emergency medical response.

**9:18 a.m.**, 300 block 12th Avenue: Fire alarm.

**11:25 a.m.**, 1100 block S. Downing: Emergency medical response.

**8:50 p.m.**, 400 block Fourteenth Avenue: Fire investigation.

June 3

**8:17 a.m.**, 1200 block Avenue B: Emergency medical response.

**9:29 a.m.**, 2500 block Pine: Emergency medical response.

**1:04 p.m.**, 300 block Fourth Avenue: Emergency medical response.

**5:56 p.m.**, 1100 block Avenue B: Emergency medical response.

**6:03 p.m.**, Shilo Inn: Emergency medical response.

**11:32 p.m.**, 400 block S. Roosevelt: Fire investigation.



Arrested

Troopers and deputies from the sheriff’s office responded May 29 at 8:19 a.m. to a two-car collision on U.S. Highway 30 at milepost 92.5. Arrested on scene was Jay Richard Wilson, 58, from Seaside. Police say he was driving while under the influence of intoxicants; he also had no insurance. The other driver, a 63-year-old Warrenton man, was not injured. Affordable Towing removed both cars from the scene. Knappa Fire

and ODOT assisted at the site. Wilson was also cited for driving with a revoked or suspended license and failure to drive within his lane.

**Gearhart man involved in crash**

A 32-year-old Gearhart man was involved in a car crash on U.S. Highway 30 near Harmony Lane June 4 at 8:11 a.m. State police witnessed the accident as it happened. They said an unrelated car slowed down and pulled off the highway traveling westbound. Another car in traffic slowed down and was hit by the car

traveling behind who failed to brake in time to avoid collision. Both cars were able to be driven from the scene. The other driver was a 56-year-old woman from Astoria.

**Warrant arrest**

A Los Angeles man was arrested June 6 at 6:31 p.m. on U.S. Highway 26 at milepost 15 heading eastbound during a traffic stop for observed violations. The driver identified himself and a records check came back with a warrant for his arrest. Francisco Javier Barajas, 43, was transported to the county jail.



May 1

**7:55 a.m.**, emergency medical service, Drummond.

**12:50 p.m.**, system malfunction, U.S. Highway 101, Gearhart.

**4:14 p.m.**, emergency medical service, Fifer.

**10:12 p.m.**, emergency medical service, Pine Ridge.

Hey Friend!  
Let's talk about  
your health

COLUMBIA  
MEMORIAL  
HOSPITAL

[columbiamemorial.org/mens-health](http://columbiamemorial.org/mens-health)