

KKNU-FM 93.3

SPRINGFIELD, OREGON

**QUARTERLY POSTING OF COMMUNITY PROBLEMS, NEEDS AND
INTERESTS**

First Quarter, 2022: January 1 through March 31

Posted: April 10, 2022

KKNU-FM: Springfield, Oregon, 93.3 mhz

McKenzie River Broadcasting Co., Inc.

Each quarter, on January 10, April 10, July 10 & October 10, we place in our public inspection file a list of what are considered to be the most significant Problems, Needs and Issues of the Springfield-Eugene, Oregon, community.

Along with this list are the programs that were aired to deal with these problems, needs and issues.

ASCERTAINMENT METHODS

To ascertain these problems, needs and issues, McKenzie River Broadcasting Co., Inc., employs a Public Affairs Director who, within the natural course of news gathering, is made aware of problems, needs and issues in the community. The views of citizens of the community and civic leaders regarding community problems, needs and issues are also ascertained during meetings and interviews. Problems, needs and issues are also ascertained during interaction with members of the public.

PROGRAMMING

To air information about these problems, needs and issues, McKenzie River Broadcasting Co., Inc., relies on the following methods:

1. Bona Fide Newscasts: These include news stories and segments that target these problems, needs and issues.
2. Community Forum: This is a 15-30 minute weekly program that offers in-depth examinations of community problems, needs and issues.

McKENZIE RIVER BROADCASTING 1Q, 2022, ISSUES LIST:

KKNV-FM / KMGE-FM / KEUG-FM

Quarter	January 1, 2022, through March 31, 2022
	<i>*Note: Major breaking news stories during the quarter that fall under these categories will be added as is appropriate and reflected in daily news and public service postings</i>
1	<u>ECONOMY, EMPLOYMENT, LABOR, FINANCES, BUSINESS, GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING, UTILITIES, COLLEGE & PRO SPORTS, EVENTS, ENTERTAINMENT:</u> Economic reopening and pandemic recession recovery; Inflation: Rising housing, fuel, food, and other prices; Unemployment, workforce training; Economy; Economic, downtown development, urban renewal, urban density; Affordable housing; UO-OSU Athletics teams, funding; Sports events; Rural development, urban growth boundary; Road improvements; Local tech; Personal finance; Consumer prices; Legal cannabis; Immigration economics; Retirement concerns; County courthouse, city hall; Agriculture and farms; Technology; Energy prices, development; Cybersecurity and breaches.
2	<u>HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, PANDEMIC:</u> COVID-19; Omicron and BA.2 variants; Vaccine mandates and other rules eased and lifted; Mental health; Opioid epidemic, drug abuse; Legal cannabis products; Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid) and CCOs, ACA battles; Prescription drug prices; Obesity, diabetes & healthy eating; Food and product recalls; Legal battles over abortion and reproduction; The childcare shortage Women's health; Flu, STDs; Measles, other outbreaks, debate over vaccines; Immunizations; Environmental health, wildfire smoke, overall air quality; Safe water; Assisted suicide.
3	<u>CRIME, SAFETY, POLICING, LAW ENFORCEMENT, ILLEGAL DRUGS:</u> Drug & alcohol abuse, opioid epidemic; Addiction treatment amid reduced criminal penalties and charges; Mental health; Police funding and policing guidelines; Community enforcement, social service funding shift; Illegal cannabis farms and businesses; Traffic safety; Human trafficking; Youth protection; School safety; Child abuse; Gangs; Cybersecurity; Severe weather, storms, natural disasters; Terrorism.
4	<u>SOCIAL SERVICES, LOW-INCOME, HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS, CHARITY:</u> Homelessness and Safe Sleep sites issues; Neighborhood, business, and community impacts; Crime, substance abuse, and homelessness; CAHOOTS and other alternate enforcement; Affordable housing; Homeless veterans, individuals, families, youth; "The Working Poor"; Minimum wage and living wages; Community agencies; Mental health; Older adults: Protection, health, housing, finances; Wildfire housing /

5	<u>DISASTERS, WILDFIRES, WILDFIRE RECOVERY, ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY, WEATHER, CLIMATE CHANGE, AGRICULTURE, WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, RECREATION:</u> Continued 2020 and 2021 wildfire recovery; 2022 wildfire season budgeting and preparations; Community and residential “hardening” against wildfires; Climate change and the prolonged drought; Aftermath of the 2021 record heatwave; General disaster preparedness; Earthquake preparedness; Severe weather preparedness; Air quality; Climate change and health; Legislative “cap & trade” debate; Agriculture, Horticulture, Sustainable landscaping; Cannabis & hemp; Pollinators; Pesticides, herbicides; Cougar, wolves; Ocean health, Fisheries; Forest, wildlife, habitat; Power generation; Alternate energy; Hazardous materials; Offshore drilling; Wind and Solar farms; Pipelines; Oil trains.
6	<u>SCHOOLS, STUDENTS, & EDUCATION:</u> Schools and students, post-pandemic; Academic recovery post-pandemic and amid wildfire rebuilding; Community college and higher education funding and program adjustments; College affordability; Curriculum, academic standards; Student honors; Student activism; Teacher contracts; New schools; Families; The childcare shortage.
7	<u>POLITICS, ELECTIONS, GOVERNMENT:</u> Mid-term elections and the political divide; Legislative control and local races; Secession movements; Follow-ups on Oregon revenues and Legislative Emergency Board funding; Federal stimulus, state and local programs; Racial justice & policing; School funding; Biden Administration, Congressional, and federal and state courts decisions impacting Oregon; Cybersecurity, data breaches /
8	<u>RACIAL JUSTICE, RACISM, BIPOC (BLACKS, INDIGENOUS, PEOPLE OF COLOR), LATINX, IMMIGRATION, CIVIL RIGHTS, CIVIL LIBERTIES, HUMAN RIGHTS, DISABILITIES, LEGAL, COMMUNITY, FAMILY, YOUTH, ELDER, RELIGION, WOMEN, LGBTQ, GENDER ISSUES, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, ANIMALS:</u> Racial equality and administration of justice; Civil rights, Civil liberties; COVID-19; Older adults; Families and children; Youth programs & protection; Domestic-sexual violence; Immigration-DACA, LatinX community; LGBTQ; Fair housing; Privacy, cybersecurity; Religion, churches; Community and charitable events; Older adults; Pets, animal rights.
9	<u>TRANSPORTATION:</u> COVID-19; Infrastructure needs and projects; Road and gas fees and taxes; Pedestrian, biker, rider safety; Hiking-biking trails; Airlines; Eugene’s airport; Lane Transit District; Hybrid, electric vehicles; Airline disruptions; Boeing 737 investigations; Spring-summer travel; Rail safety; Infrastructure bills.
10	<u>MILITARY, VETERANS, WAR ON TERRORISM:</u> COVID-19; Veterans, jobs, mental health (PTSD, suicide, etc.) and homelessness; Military families; Homeland and local security; Balancing terrorism with civil rights; National Guard deployments; Oregonians in the military; hacking and privacy.

The 1st Quarter, 2022, Issues List was formulated by Tracy Berry - KGNU-FM and from previous quarters' ascertainments, conversations, phone calls, and emails with listeners and community leaders. As always, the list is updated to reflect developing issues over the course of the quarter.

KKNU-FM KMGE-FM KEUG-FM ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

ISSUES:

NAME OF PROGRAM: COMMUNITY FORUM

Locally produced / Regularly scheduled

DATE: 01/02/22

TIME: 6:30 a.m.-KKNU / 7:00 a.m.: KMGE & KEUG

LENGTH: 30 minutes

GUEST:

Name, Title, Organization: Kim Giansante, Co-Director, Early Childhood CARES

Contact information: 541-346-2578

City and State: Eugene, Oregon

TOPIC AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION: For children with learning and other disabilities, early childhood education and early intervention services can be critical in preparing youngsters for success in school. But the pandemic has kept many young children out of preschools with parents working to protect their families. But even during these challenging times Early Childhood CARES has continued to screen, evaluate and, if eligible, provide early intervention or early childhood special education services to children in Lane County under the age of five who have special needs. Co-director Kim Giansante tells us about the program. While based on the University of Oregon campus, the organization is funded by federal and state grants and education funds. The funds flow from the Oregon Department of Education to the Lane Education Service District (ESD) to Early Childhood CARES. Anyone can refer a child to the program. The majority of the referrals come from parents, doctors, preschools and Oregon's Department of Human Services. Developmental information is collected and reviewed by a developmental specialist. If the child is referred for an evaluation and found eligible, services are designed to meet the needs of the child and family. Services provided may include but are not limited to home visits, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and preschool placement for children over the age of three. The services are provided to children and their families free of charge. Early Childhood CARES has hundreds of employees who regularly serve children in community preschools, Head Start, Pearl Buck and Relief Nursery. The organization also runs its own classrooms throughout Lane County including in Florence, Cottage Grove and Oakridge. Studies have shown

that starting services and supports to children and families early helps to build the foundational skills needed for success in school and later in life.

KKNU-FM KMGE-FM KEUG-FM ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

ISSUES: *FAMILY, COMMUNITY, HOUSING, ECONOMY, EDUCATION*

NAME OF PROGRAM: COMMUNITY FORUM

Locally produced / Regularly scheduled

DATE: 01/09/22

TIME: 6:30 a.m.-KKNU / 7:00 a.m.: KMGE & KEUG

LENGTH: 30 minutes

GUEST:

Name, Title, Organization: Ross Kanaga, Financial Innovation Manager, DevNW

Contact information: ross.kanaga@devnw.org

City and State: Springfield, Oregon

TOPIC AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION: As we ring out 2020 and ring in 2021, it's time for our annual New Year's financial resolutions. Ross Kanaga joins us from Dev NW. The local non-profit teaches financial literacy and financial independence, offering classes on topics ranging from saving and responsible spending to first-time homebuying, starting a business or side hustle, and eliminating debt. The organization has moved to all online or by-phone operations during the pandemic but still offers financial and debt counseling. Dev NW offers an annual pass: \$75 gives your entire household unlimited access to its classes and counseling. Some of the course target young adults ages 16-24 and people preparing for retirement. Kanaga says many people are adjusting to the end of pandemic-related stimulus payments and the possible end of a moratorium on federally backed student loan payments. He offers advice on ways to put any remaining savings to work, and how to design a spending and savings plan for the future. He says it's always important to put some money into an emergency savings fund to help tide you over for at least a month should you have a disruption to your life or employment. And for those who struggled last year with financial disruptions, he encourages them to receive financial counseling on how to deal with any lingering debt and prepare for the future.

KKNU-FM KMGE-FM KEUG-FM ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

ISSUES: *CRIME, SAFETY, WOMEN, YOUTH, COMMUNITY*

NAME OF PROGRAM: **COMMUNITY FORUM**

Locally produced / Regularly scheduled

DATE: 01/16/22 and 01/23/22

TIME: 6:30 a.m.-KKNU / 7:00 a.m.: KMGE & KEUG

LENGTH: 30 minutes

GUEST:

Name, Title, Organization: Rae LaMarche, Steve Wheeler, Springfield Rotary Club

Contact information: via Springfield Rotary, P.O. Box 55, Springfield, OR 97477 / 541-915-1608

City and State: Springfield, Oregon

Name, Title, Organization: Joni Wilkinson, Rhonda Riddle, One's Purpose

Contact information: onespurpose.com

City and State: Eugene-Springfield, Oregon

TOPIC AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION: January 11th was National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. There were local observances and calls for increased awareness, education, and action. That includes pushing for individuals, businesses, and law enforcement to step up efforts to shut down websites that support sexual exploitation. No child grows up saying they want to be trafficked, exploited, and abused. So how does it happen? This morning, we learn more about a local anti-trafficking campaign sponsored by the Springfield Rotary Club and the non-profit One's Purpose. The goal is to educate people about how to spot human trafficking and better protect those who might be the next victims. We hear from two Rotary Club members and two survivors of human trafficking about the scope of the problem locally, how victims are targeted, groomed and forced into exploitation, and how to help them escape.

KKNU-FM KMGE-FM KEUG-FM ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

ISSUES: *HEALTH, FAMILY, EMPLOYMENT, SAFETY, TRANSPORTATION*

NAME OF PROGRAM: COMMUNITY FORUM

Locally produced / Regularly scheduled

DATE: 01/30/22 and 02/20/22

TIME: 6:30 a.m.-KKNU / 7:00 a.m.: KMGE & KEUG

LENGTH: 30 minutes

GUEST:

Name, Title, Organization: Carla Petitti, PeaceHealth Riverbend Sleep Lab and Neurodiagnostics

Contact information: 541-222-2402

City and State: Springfield, Oregon

TOPIC AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION: So how are you sleeping these days? A lot of people are preoccupied with what's happening with their finances, the economy, the pandemic. And then there are the general stresses of life. Sleep is a critical aspect of your physical and mental health. A lot of us are more aware of our sleep habits because of the prevalence of smart watches and sleep apps. For many with sleep disruptions, the question is whether they just have poor sleep habits or is there some underlying clinical cause? This morning, we sit down with Carla Petitti, the supervisor with the "Sleep Lab and Neurodiagnostics" (or Sleep Disorders Center) at PeaceHealth Riverbend. She discusses various causes of sleep disorders, how they test for and detect them, and the various therapies. She also offers tips for getting a better night's sleep.

KKNU-FM KMGE-FM KEUG-FM ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

ISSUES: *YOUTH, FAMILY, DISABILITIES, RECREATION, SOCIAL SERVICES*

NAME OF PROGRAM: COMMUNITY FORUM

Locally produced / Regularly scheduled

DATE: 02/06/22 and 02/13/22

TIME: 6:30 a.m.-KKNU / 7:00 a.m.: KMGE & KEUG

LENGTH: 30 minutes

GUEST:

Name, Title, Organization: Laura Dahill, Angela Phinney, The ARC of Lane County

Contact information: 541-343-5256 / info@arclane.org

City and State: Lane County, Oregon / Springfield, Oregon

TOPIC AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION: There's a new park that's taking shape in Springfield off 42nd and E Streets. It's designed for kids and grownups of all abilities. The ARC Park is affiliated with The ARC of Lane County. The organization serves children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Organizers are continuing to raise funds for the effort. We get an update on the project, the evolution of the design, its offerings, and how to get a community membership when we speak to Angela Dahill and Laura Phinney.

KKNU-FM KMGE-FM KEUG-FM ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

ISSUES: *YOUTH, RACIAL EQUITY, EDUCATION, SOCIAL SERVICES, BUSINESS*

NAME OF PROGRAM: COMMUNITY FORUM
Locally produced / Regularly scheduled

DATE: 02/27/22

TIME: 6:30 a.m.-KKNU / 7:00 a.m.: KMGE & KEUG

LENGTH: 30 minutes

GUEST:

Name, Title, Organization: Noreen Dunnells, Executive Director, United Way of Lane County

Contact information: 541-741-6000, unitedwaylane.org

City and State: Lane County, Oregon

Name, Title, Organization: Rikki Wright, Director of Marketing, Comcast Business Northwest

Contact information: via Amy Keiter, amy_keiter@comcast.com

City and State: Beaverton, Oregon

Name, Title, Organization: Byron Myles, Westside Stamp & Printing

Contact information: 541-686-0919 / www.westsiderubberstamp.com

City and State: Eugene, Oregon

TOPIC AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION: Two topics on today's program:

--It's a way to reach out to local youth; to support their health, well-being, mental health, and ultimate success. United Way of Lane County, as part of its 75th anniversary celebration, is holding a big, virtual event next week featuring Olympic medalist and philanthropist Jackie Joyner-Kersey. She's one of the most decorated female athletes of all time but she's also inspirational as a woman who overcame racism and other issues to succeed in life. She brings that message to the students for an interactive discussion. Noreen Dunnells of United Way previews the event and discusses how it fits in with other efforts across Lane County to support young people and their families.

--After the last two years of the pandemic, you don't have to tell small business owners that they're living in a challenging environment. But there are growing ways they can access financial and other assistance. And not just through the federal, state, and local governments along with charities and non-profits. Some major businesses are stepping up, with a focus on expanding equity, growing small businesses into bigger ones, and developing some good communities and customers along the way. Comcast, for example, is now one year into its RISE program. Rikki Wright with Comcast talks about the program and their efforts to provide logistical and technical grants to small business owners. Byron Myles with Eugene's Westside Stamp & Printing is one of the most recently recipients. He says his Black-owned business struggled to stay open and it meant letting a lot of technology needs slide. Comcast's RISE program is providing him with free equipment and a year of free service and support to help him jumpstart his online presence and ordering system and streamline production at the shop. We learn how other BIPOC and female-owned businesses may apply for the grants.

KKNU-FM KMGE-FM KEUG-FM ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

ISSUES: *CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITY, HEALTH, AGRICULTURE, SAFETY, DISASTERS, ECONOMY, EDUCATION*

NAME OF PROGRAM: COMMUNITY FORUM
Locally produced / Regularly scheduled

DATE: 03/06/22

TIME: 6:30 a.m.-KKNU / 7:00 a.m.: KMGE & KEUG

LENGTH: 30 minutes

GUEST:

Name, Title, Organization: David Wrathal, College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences, Oregon State University

Contact information: 541-737-3504

City and State: Corvallis, Oregon

TOPIC AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION: A new United Nations report outlines how climate change is harming us and the planet. One international scientist says the report's key message to the world is, "Your House is On Fire. The huge research effort focuses on what climate change means in our daily lives, from heat waves and floods, to droughts, rising seas, species extinctions, growing human hunger, and worsening health. The report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concludes that nearly half the world's population already faces significant risk from global warming. The IPCC puts out this series of global reports every five to seven years. Scientists say there's still hope that some of the worst can be prevented, or we can adapt to it. But they say the world needs to act fast and make difficult choices. Climate activists are renewing calls for rich countries to step up both their efforts to curb emissions and provide financial aid to the poor. Many world leaders use the IPCC reports as a roadmap in international negotiations on trying to curb global warming. But not all countries are on board or following up on their commitments. One of the lead authors on this week's groundbreaking United Nations report on climate change is a researcher at Oregon State University. David Wrathall is an expert on environmental change and human migration. He played a key role in writing several sections of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change or IPCC report, which looks at the human dimensions of climate change. That can include loss of housing and jobs, forced migration, and economic issues. Wrathall says one of the key questions about climate change is in which places will people no

longer be able to live because it is too dangerous. Oregon's 2020 wildfires, for example, displaced more than 4,000 people and many still are struggling to rebuild or have moved elsewhere. Similarly, more frequent heatwaves, prolonged drought, large storms, flooding, and rising sea levels have potentially large impacts across big portions of our state. Scientists say many large-scale weather disasters have been stoked by human-caused climate change— and fueled by temperature increases and changes in rain and snowfall. Since 1980, Oregon has had 35 weather disasters that have caused at least \$1 billion in damage when adjusted for inflation. Eight of those disasters occurred in the last five years, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Researchers say that over the past four decades, Oregon's average annual temperature has increased 1.7 degrees but in terms of annual average rainfall things have gotten 3.8 inches drier. Scientists say there's still hope that some of the worst can be prevented, or we can adapt to it. But they say the world needs to act fast and make difficult choices.

KKNU-FM KMGE-FM KEUG-FM ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

ISSUES: *COMMUNITY, RECREATION, FAMILY, SOCIAL SERVICE, HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH*

NAME OF PROGRAM: COMMUNITY FORUM
Locally produced / Regularly scheduled

DATE: 03/13/22 and 03/20/22

TIME: 6:30 a.m.-KKNU / 7:00 a.m.: KMGE & KEUG

LENGTH: 30 minutes

GUEST:

Name, Title, Organization: Christina Bentrup Kelsey Irvine, Eugene Parks & Open Space Volunteer Program Coordinators, City of Eugene

Contact information: eugeneparkvolunteers@ci.eugene.or.us

City and State: Eugene, Oregon

TOPIC AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION: Last year alone, they planted more than 5600 trees; more than 17,900 shrubs and native plants; collected 180 cubic yards of litter; and maintained more than 28 miles of trail and 631 miles of waterways. We're talking about the thousands of volunteers who help out in Eugene's parks and open space. Our guests, Christina Bentrup and Kelsey Irvine, talk about how the efforts attract individuals and families, school and community groups, businesses and others. All share a love of Eugene's outdoors. Among the areas they discuss: the native plant nursery, regular maintenance efforts at Hendricks Park and the Owen Memorial Rose Garden, trail crews, and the new bike crew working on a new trail that parallels the popular Ridgeline hiking trail segments.

KKNU-FM KMGE-FM KEUG-FM ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

ISSUES: *HOUSING, LOW-INCOME, COMMUNITY, FAMILY, HEALTH, SAFETY, SOCIAL SERVICES, ECONOMY*

NAME OF PROGRAM: COMMUNITY FORUM
Locally produced / Regularly scheduled

DATE: 03/27/22

TIME: 6:30 a.m.-KKNU / 7:00 a.m.: KMGE & KEUG

LENGTH: 30 minutes

GUEST:

Name, Title, Organization: Tess Fields, Executive Director; Judy Smith, Lane County representative; Home Share Oregon.

Contact information: homeshareoregon.org

City and State: Portland and Lane County, Oregon

TOPIC AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION: It started with a pressing question: What can we do to increase affordable housing in Oregon? This morning, we learn about the non-profit group Home Share Oregon. The program brings together those who have spare rooms with those needing an affordable place to rent. Home Share Oregon assists with the matches, helping prospective home shares ensure both parties are compatible and have a clear understanding of the rental agreement. The organization also can assist with background checks, mediation, and agreements that include reduced rent in exchange for assistance and chores around the home. Coordinators say the program took on added urgency during the pandemic, as many people lost at least one source of income and needed ways to either cut back on expenses or make a bit more money by renting extra space. Home Share Oregon leaders say the state has 1.5 million owner-occupied homes that have a spare bedroom. They felt if they could persuade two percent of that population to consider renting the space, they could help provide affordable housing for 30,000 people. The average home-sharing rental agreement is \$735 a month. The average one-bedroom apartment is anywhere from \$1,100-\$1,700 per month. Home Share Oregon officials say the program appeals to students, seniors, people with medium and lower incomes, people who have divorced and need to make ends meet, and others. They say their research indicates one in every three Oregon homeowners are mortgage-burdened, so this provides relief for those who offer space for rent.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF
BROADCAST 01/03/22

TIME OF
BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KGNU-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

WEATHER, SAFETY, TRANSPORTATION: The National Weather Service says a Flood Watch remains in effect through this afternoon across portions of the Central Coast, Cascade Foothills, and Southern Willamette Valley. It comes amid concern that excessive runoff from the rainstorm combined with snowmelt at lower elevations could swell low-lying locations with poor drainage as well as some small creeks, streams, and rivers. Additionally, a Coastal Flood Advisory remains in effect along the Central Oregon Coast because of heavy runoff during today's high tide. The advisory is in effect between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Forecasters say there is a chance of minor flooding up to one foot above ground level along the Central Coast during high tides in low-lying areas near bays, sloughs, and the lower reaches of coastal rivers. Travel into the Oregon Cascades remains very hazardous through at least midnight tonight. Heavy snow is expected, with accumulations from this storm totaling between 15 to 32 inches on the passes and higher amounts in some locations. Gusty winds can create widespread areas of blowing snow, significantly reducing visibility. Very strong winds could bring down trees or powerlines. Crews may have difficulty maintaining roads in heavy snow zones until conditions ease. Interstate 84 through parts of Eastern Oregon has seen multiple closures over the weekend, particularly east from the Blue Mountains through Union County and toward Baker City. Consider delaying travel into and through snow zones. If you must travel, go to www.tripcheck.com or dial 5-1-1 on your mobile phone or device for the latest road conditions and closures and to see images from statewide traffic cameras. Practice winter safety: Slow down. Allow extra time for travel. Conditions can deteriorate rapidly. Keep an eye on the forecast for updates. Keep an extra flashlight, food, water, and warm clothing in your vehicle for an emergency. / UTILITIES, WEATHER: Lane Electric reports the vast majority of its outages are at the Fox Hollow Substation in Eugene. Crews found the wire down and broken arms that caused this specific outage. It will take 2-3 more hours to restore power in that area. The rest of the outages are more scattered and will take some time to find and repair. / SCHOOLS, WEATHER: There are multiple school delays and closures in rural areas, including delays for the Mapleton Schools and a closure for the day of the Siuslaw Schools. / SOCIAL SERVICES, WEATHER: L-COG's Senior & Disability services Office in Florence is closed today. / CRIME: Some

alarming moments yesterday morning near the 700 block of South B Street in Springfield. At about quarter to seven, police dispatchers began receiving calls from citizens who reported hearing what sounded like possible shots being fired. Officers quickly determined they were coming from the bike path near South B Street, where they saw commercial-grade mortar-type fireworks exploding. But as they began to approach the suspect and tried to communicate with him, they say he turned the fireworks toward the officers and their patrol cars. Police say portions of the exploding fireworks struck some officers and the concussion of the explosions also affected their hearing. Officials say the suspect, whose name has not yet been released, made statements saying he wanted the officers to shoot him. Police say officers continued to try to communicate with the man while also using less-than-lethal means to try to subdue him. But they say the suspect at one point turned toward an officer and began trying to ignite what appeared to be a vintage device designed to set off explosive blasting caps. After several attempts to detonate the device, officials say he threw it in the direction of the officers without igniting it and moments later was taken into custody. The Eugene Police Explosive Disposal Unit was called in and those experts later indicated the blasting caps were operative, and that had they successfully detonated they would have been instantly lethal to the suspect and likely the officer. Detectives overnight served search warrants on an address in the Thurston area, and a vehicle in the Mohawk Boulevard area, with the assistance of the Explosive Disposal Unit, which was asked to evaluate the residence prior to entry to ensure there were not any rigged devices. / MILITARY: Close to 120 soldiers with the Oregon Army National Guard mobilized for deployment to Poland yesterday during a ceremony at Camp Withycombe, southeast of Portland. The soldiers are assigned to Charlie Troop, 1st Squadron of the 82nd Cavalry Regiment. They are deploying to Poland to support the European Deterrence Initiative as part of Operation Atlantic Resolve. The unit was deployed in 2009 to Iraq and later to Afghanistan in 2014 as part of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team. In April of last year, nearly 130 members assigned to Alpha Troop also deployed to Poland. / SAFETY, WEATHER: Officials say they did a lot of things right. And with the help of a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter team, two 19-year-old men are home and safe after being snowbound in the Oregon Cascades about four miles west-southwest of Oakridge. The man went winter camping and but failed to return as expected on Wednesday. They were reported missing Friday and search crews led by the Lane County Sheriff's Office worked to locate them. Officials say the two signaled for help by creating an "SOS" sign in the snow, stayed near their vehicle, and stayed near logging roads. Rescuers with the helicopter crew say that helped them locate the two fairly quickly. They were evacuated by the Coast Guard helicopter and transported to Eugene's airport. The two were uninjured. During the search for the two men, the aircrew identified two additional persons in distress and passed their position to Lane County crews. Experts recommend people planning to hike and camp in the backcountry carry personal locator beacons should conditions worsen during their outing. / TRANSPORTATION, WEATHER: Wintry weather and a surge in COVID cases among flight crews combined to frustrate air travelers whose return flights home from the holidays were canceled or delayed in the first days of the new year. The tracking service FlightAware said more than 2,600 U.S. flights were grounded Sunday and more than 2,700 on Saturday. For many of those returning from holiday travel or

gatherings, the first order of business was getting tested to ensure they didn't bring back a case of COVID-19. That meant long lines over the weekend at some popular testing sites, including at Eugene's Hult Center. / EDUCATION, HEALTH: Classes resume this week at the University of Oregon and Oregon State University. And as Winter Term begins, officials at both schools are requiring that all students and staff receive a COVID-19 booster. At the U-of-O, officials note that vaccination levels are close to 95 percent and with that and masking they've seen no evidence of in-classroom transmission of the virus. But with the omicron variant causing high levels of infection nationwide, they are requiring proof that students, faculty, and staff have received a booster by the end of this month or as soon as they become eligible. / HEALTH: Oregon has recorded its second-highest single day of coronavirus cases, fueled by the highly contagious omicron variant. Officials at the Oregon Health Authority reported 2,948 cases on Thursday. Currently the record number of daily cases in the state is 3,207 on Aug. 27. Although the number of cases is rapidly rising — prior to this week, the average number of daily cases in December was 854 — a new projection from Oregon Health and Science University shows that the state is expected to see far fewer omicron-linked COVID hospitalizations than originally feared. ; As the COVID-19 omicron variant surges across the United States, top federal health officials are looking to add a negative test along with its five-day isolation restrictions for asymptomatic Americans who catch the coronavirus. That's according to Dr. Anthony Fauci, the White House's top medical adviser. He says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is considering including the negative test as part of its guidance after it received significant “pushback” on its updated recommendations last week that shortened isolation restrictions from 10 days to five days. Under that Dec. 27 guidance, isolation restrictions for people infected with COVID-19 were shortened from 10 days to five days if they are no longer feeling symptoms or running a fever. After that period, they are asked to spend the following five days wearing a mask when around others. The guidelines have since received criticism from many health professionals for not specifying a negative antigen test as a requirement for leaving isolation. ; The fast-moving omicron variant is complicating a key question: How does the COVID-19 pandemic end and the world coexist with this virus? Experts agree that the coronavirus is here to stay. Ending the pandemic won't be like flipping a light switch. Nor do scientists expect omicron to be the last mutant. But at some point, different parts of the world — probably at different times — will tamp down the virus enough to ease up on the constant state of red alert and to consider it another of the health threats we live with. ; The U.S. is a step closer to expanding COVID-19 booster eligibility as it confronts the omicron surge. The Food and Drug Administration this morning okayed Pfizer booster doses for children as young as age 12. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will weigh the recommendation and make the final decision. Boosters already are recommended for everyone 16 and older, and an FDA panel finds they also are warranted for 12- to 15-year-olds. The FDA also wants everyone eligible for a booster to receive one as early as five months after their last dose rather than six months. / GOVERNMENT: Need to do business today with the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles? Quick reminder that the opening of the new DMV office in Eugene's Valley River Center is being delayed. It was originally set to open today but not all the equipment is in place. It will reopen as soon as it is

ready. In the meantime, DMV officials are attempting to call customers who have appointments today at the new location to reschedule them. Eugene-area residents who need to visit a DMV in person may consider visiting the Springfield DMV office at 204 N. 30th St. DMV has moved staff there to maximize that office's capacity during the Eugene office closure. The Eugene DMV is moving to a temporary space near the food court at Valley River Center until a permanent office in a building outside the mall is ready later in 2022. / COMMUNITY, GOVERNMENT: The second and final round of the City of Eugene's 2021-22 leaf collection and delivery season starts today. Crews will work over the coming weeks to reach all neighborhoods a second time. The second round of leaf season is expected to last until Friday, January 21. Residents throughout the city can use the holiday weekend to safely place leaves in the streets for collection. Eugene stormwater user fees help fund leaf collection and delivery. The service is intended to ensure storm runoff into nearby streams and rivers is clean. An excess of decaying leaves can reduce the level of oxygen fish need. For more information about leaf collection and delivery season go to eugene-or.gov/leaf/

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ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED WEATHER, TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY: Heavy mountain snow is complicating driving over the passes. On Santiam Pass, sensors report two feet of new snow, seven-and-a-half feet of roadside snow. On Willamette Pass, you'll see close to a foot-and-a-half of new snow and almost seven feet of roadside snow. / SCHOOLS, WEATHER: Oakridge Schools are on a two-hour delay. McKenzie Schools are on time, but buses are on snow routes. And Fern Ridge Middle School and Elmira High School are closed today, but Veneta and Elmira Elementaries are open and on their regular schedules. / WEATHER, TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY: A number of Oregon roads and highways were closed for much of the night due to heavy snow or standing water. That prompted highway officials and state police to encourage drivers to delay travel or take alternate routes. Most sections of closed highways have reopened. A 13-mile stretch of U.S., Highway 20 was closed going over Santiam Summit because of heavy snow, blowing snow, a snow slide located a few miles west of the pass, and multiple accidents. Another section, farther west near the Tombstone Sno-Park, also was closed for a time because of a crash. A big section of Interstate 84 through the Columbia Gorge also was closed for 19 hours between Troutdale and The Dalles due to heavy snow, blizzard conditions, and ice. It reopened overnight. In Eastern Oregon, a stretch of Interstate 84 between Pendleton and Ontario was closed for much of the day into last night because of heavy snow in some places and black ice in others. It eventually reopened, although conditions remain challenging through the Blue Mountains and other sections. A section of Oregon Highway 126 near Cushman was closed for several hours as extra-high tides known as King Tides combined with storm runoff to create high water underneath the railroad bridge that crosses the roadway. Several streams and rivers experienced minor flooding during the storm. Near Corvallis and Philomath, the Mary's River crested slightly above flood stage, affecting some mostly rural areas. There also were small debris slides on some highways along the coast and in the Coast Range. Crews worked to clear the mud and rocks and ensure the slope above the roadway was stable. While major highways have reopened, officials remind you that conditions remain snowy in many places and debris removal is continuing alongside some sections of roads. If you must travel, go to www.tripcheck.com or dial 5-1-1 on your mobile phone or device for the latest

road conditions and closures and to see images from statewide traffic cameras. Standing water was an issue on some local streets, as storm drains clogged with leaves or were briefly overwhelmed by runoff and snowmelt. Crews continued working into the night to restore power to some residences around the region. Many lost electricity when gusty winds ahead of the rain brought down limbs on powerlines. The Eugene Water and Electric Board reported that at the peak of the storm, close to 2,600 customers had lost power. All had service restored by midday yesterday. / SCHOOLS, HEALTH: Students, teachers, and staff are returning to schools across Oregon this week after their holiday break. But amid a new wave of COVID-19 cases, leaders of the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority said yesterday that student access to in-person instruction is under serious threat. They warn that rapid transmission of the omicron variant is expected in indoor settings if people do not wear masks or follow other safety protocols, like maintaining physical distances and washing hands. They suggest schools consider suspending extracurricular activities for now. But they are leaving that decision to individual school districts. There are concerns among educators, parents, and students that a large number of COVID cases could force some schools back into remote learning. Few are comfortable with that: Online education during the 2020-21 school year was challenging for everyone. State officials say they know students learn when they meet in-person and have access to other critical services at their school sites. Schools that offer testing for the virus are awaiting an influx of rapid-testing kits ordered recently by the state. Some of those six million kits will also be distributed by the Oregon Health Authority to local public health departments, health care teams, Native American tribes, and those who work with agricultural workers and other vulnerable workers. / SCHOOLS, EVENTS, HEALTH: Amid the surge in virus cases, coordinators of a statewide reading contest—the Oregon Battle of the Books—have announced that this year's tournament will take place online. Members of the event's executive board called the decision painful but said the health of students and families is paramount. They also were concerned some venues that host regional tournaments might have to cancel at the last minute if there is an outbreak of COVID cases. / HEALTH: Yesterday, the Oregon Health Authority reported more than 9,700 new cases of COVID-19 from the Thursday through Sunday holiday weekend. They also said Oregon smashed a previous record for weekly coronavirus infections with an average of about 2,400 new daily cases as the omicron variant took hold. The state also hit a single-day high for new cases on Thursday, with 3,534 confirmed or presumptive infections. According to the Oregon Health Authority, more than 18 percent of all COVID test samples administered over the holiday weekend were positive for the virus. That is the highest positivity rate to date. But while omicron is making more people sick, it appears to be resulting in fewer hospitalizations. Statewide hospitalizations hovered at just under 500 people (498), less than half the number at the previous peak. Eleven deaths were reported over the four-day period. According to Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, a COVID-19 surge driven by the omicron variant is expected to peak at the end of this month with around 1,650 people hospitalized statewide. That is about 500 higher than Oregon's previous peak in early September during the surge of infections caused by the delta variant. ; Lane County also is seeing the surge from cases believed tied to the contagious omicron variant. Public health officials reported 143 new infections over the

holiday weekend. The number of those considered infectious and still shedding virus grew to 1,053. Officials also track a seven-day average of case numbers. That figure, 1,260, is more than twice the level of infections being reported locally one month ago. The average daily case number of 180 is more than twice the figure reported in early December. Thirty-two patients are hospitalized around Lane County for complications of the coronavirus. Officials say six are being treated in local intensive-care units, but that currently none are on ventilators. ; Lane County Public Health, the Oregon Health Authority, and PeaceHealth continue to host walk-in clinics for those needed their initial series of COVID doses, booster doses, or pediatric doses. Today through Sunday, there's a drop-in clinic from noon to 7 p.m. at the PeaceHealth Annex Clinic. That's at 123 International Way in Springfield. There also is a walk-in clinic at the Florence Events Center. It runs from noon to 7:00 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays, then 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Other vaccination opportunities are offered through health clinics, primary care providers, and pharmacies. / SPORTS, HEALTH: Last night's Oregon men's basketball game with Colorado was postponed because of COVID protocols within the Ducks' program. The game at Matthew Knight Arena had been previously postponed because of COVID protocols in Colorado's program. The two teams will attempt to reschedule—again. / CRIME: Springfield Police yesterday released the name of the man who investigators say threatened officers early Sunday morning with commercial-grade mortar-type fireworks and blasting caps. It happened on the bike path off South B Street. They say 56-year-old Darrell Long faces multiple charges of Attempted Assault, as well as Unlawful Use of a Weapon, Unlawful Possession of a Destructive Device, Assault on a Police Officer, and Felon in Possession of a Firearm. Police say the firearm was discovered during a search of an apartment in the 100 block of 54th Street. No additional explosives were found. After his Sunday arrest, Long was initially taken to the hospital for treatment of a pre-existing, unrelated medical condition. Then he was taken to the Lane County Jail. ; Eugene Police are seeking leads from an incident reported late on New Year's Eve. A driver says they were seeking directions to a party from a group of people standing near 15th and Mill Streets when someone shot at them. Eugene Police investigators are asking for leads from anyone who might have relevant information in the case. Call 541-682-5111 and reference case 22-00024. / CRIME, SCHOOLS: No class today for students at Fern Ridge Middle School and Elmira High School. It comes after two threats of violence against Elmira High School were posted Monday on social media. Officials say they canceled today's classes because investigators yesterday still were trying to determine the viability of the threats, which were reported yesterday afternoon and evening. Veneta Elementary and Elmira Elementary remain open on their normal schedules today. But in an abundance of caution, district officials say law enforcement will provide an enhanced presence at those sites. No threats directed at these schools. Fern Ridge Middle School and Elmira High School staff are being asked to report to their buildings. / WILDFIRE RECOVERY, SOCIAL SERVICES: They say they want to continue providing key services to those recovering and rebuilding from 2020's Holiday Farm wildfire. But to do that well, they need to learn more about the obstacles residents are facing. Members of the non-profit McKenzie Valley Long-Term Recovery Group are launching an online survey intended to help service providers learn more about the obstacles to rebuilding and recovery. That, in turn, should lead to improvements in how those

services and resources are delivered to Holiday Farm Fire survivors. The survey should take most people about 15 minutes to complete. Respondents are asked to share information on where they were living before the fire, where they are living now, the progress they have made, and what they still need to complete their wildfire recovery. The first 500 households to submit a survey will receive a \$10 Walmart gift card. To participate in the survey, wildfire survivors may go to the non-profit's webpage before the end of the month. There will also be some opportunities in the coming weeks to fill out the surveys at locations in the McKenzie Valley. Go to www.McKenzieValleyLTRG.org to learn more. / YOUTH, EDUCATION: More than two decades ago, country legend Dolly Parton launched an effort to inspire the love of reading among preschool children in her part of rural Tennessee. She called it the "Imagination Library" and over the years it's spread across the country and internationally. How does it work? You register your young child, from birth through age four. Once you register, your child gets a free book delivered to their home every month. Each child in your household may register. They each receive their own book, each month. On January 1, ALL of Lane County's youngest children became eligible for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Northwest Community Credit Union has committed to donate \$250,000 over five years to pay for the expansion. The new partnership brings together the Eugene Public Library, Eugene Public Library Foundation, Northwest Community Credit Union, and United Way of Lane County to cover all Lane County addresses that are not already included in an Imagination Library service area. The first book each child receives is "The Little Engine That Could." When a child turns five, they receive "Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!" Supporters of the Imagination Library say that when kids learn to read and love reading, they're better prepared for success in school and later in life. To learn more, visit imaginationlibrary.com / ELECTIONS, GOVERNMENT: Former New York Times journalist Nicholas Kristof has told Oregon's top election official that his having voted in New York state in 2020 does not disqualify him from being a candidate for governor in Oregon. According to Oregon law, a candidate must have been a resident of the state for at least three years before an election. Kristof's having voted in New York in November 2020 has raised questions in the Oregon Secretary of State's office about his eligibility to run in the November 2022 election. Kristof is running in a crowded field for the Democratic nomination for governor and has raised some \$2.5 million for his campaign war chest. / EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMY, HEALTH: A record 4.5 million American workers quit their jobs in November, a sign of confidence and more evidence that the U.S. job market is bouncing back strongly from last year's coronavirus recession. The Labor Department also reported that employers posted 10.6 million job openings in November, down from 11.1 million in October but still high by historical standards. In its monthly Jobs Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) the Labor Department also reported that employers hired 6.7 million people in November, up from 6.5 million in October. / HOUSING, ECONOMY; Average home sale prices surged more than 18 percent between November of 2020 and November of last year, according to new numbers from housing market analyst CoreLogic. The price run-up continued as Americans bought homes during the pandemic. But CoreLogic predicts the climb will flatten a bit this year as demand eases and more homes become available in some areas. /

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WEATHER, TRANSPORTATION: High water closed Oregon Highway 126 for several hours yesterday afternoon at Cushman, west of Florence. That's where the highway dips below a railroad overcrossing. Days of rain coupled with higher-than-normal King Tides created a pool of standing water on the roadway too deep for most vehicles to safely navigate. Crews reopened the roadway around 4:30 p.m. Oregon is waking up this morning to more wintry weather—rain on the coast and in the valley, snow at higher elevations—and messes on some state roads. Many roads over mountain passes reopened yesterday. But U.S. Highway 20 over Santiam Pass has been closed the past couple of hours after a number of semis spun out on the grade on the east side of the pass, near Suttle Lake. A section of Highway 20 east of Sweet Home remained closed overnight over Tombstone Pass because of downed trees and heavy snow. In Douglas County, a 39-mile stretch of Oregon Highway 138, east of Tokatee Falls, is closed all the way past Diamond Lake to Central Oregon's Highway 97. Travel experts encourage you to prepare for potential delays. That means going to Tripcheck.com to check conditions for your route and any closures. Keep your car stocked with the supplies you might need if you get stuck in a closure, from a first aid kit to a flashlight, tire chains and an ice scraper. Make sure you pack blankets, have extra clothing, an emergency supply of food and water. Keep your cellphone charged. Traveling with kids? Have some toys and books. Most state roads are open in Eastern Oregon although OR 334 west of Athena in Umatilla County will remain closed for the next few days while crews attack six-foot high snow drifts. ; The heavy snow is prompting a safety reminder from the Oregon Department of Transportation: Do not pass snowplows on the right. Not only is it unsafe, but it's also illegal when there is no available lane and you don't have a clear view ahead. Most plows have retractable wing plows that extend eight feet into the right lane. Some dual-wing plows have plow blades that extend off the left side of the truck. When you pass snowplows, you run the risk of hitting the plow blades, damaging your vehicle, or even going off the road. Also, plowed snow might contain rocks and other debris. Stay several car lengths behind plowing operations. Plows travel slowly, but their drivers pull over periodically to let traffic pass. / HEALTH: The Oregon Health Authority reported 4,540 new COVID-19

cases on Tuesday. That shatters by more than 1,000 the state's previous record of daily cases, set just five days earlier. In addition, close to one in every five (18.2 percent) COVID-19 tests administered over the New Year's holiday weekend were positive for the virus. Officials say that is the highest positivity rate seen in the state so far. Cases are up more than 140 percent from last week. If there's any silver lining, it's that while 510 people yesterday were hospitalized for complications of the coronavirus across the state, it is less than half the number recorded last year during the surge tied to the delta variant. But data experts project close to 1,650 COVID patients could be hospitalized statewide during the predicted peak in late January because of the highly contagious nature of the omicron variant. The Oregonian and OregonLive reports that Oregon—one of only a handful of states with an indoor mask mandate—on Monday had the sixth-lowest case rate of coronavirus infections per capita over the past week among all states. Across the U.S., omicron has led to record daily case counts. There were one million new infections nationwide yesterday. The state yesterday reported 44 new COVID-19 related deaths. Two of those were in Lane County, which yesterday received reports of 437 new infections—a new daily infection record. The county also reported that more than 1,360 (1,361) residents are currently considered infectious. That's another record high. As the surge arrives, some primary care providers in Oregon are already altering their operations. Some are returning to a mostly telehealth model to help protect staff from illness or to adapt if they're already seeing more of their personnel falling ill or needing to quarantine. Some hospitals are once again looking at postponing some elective surgeries to ensure they have enough hospital beds for coronavirus patients during the surge. In Tuesday's tally, 94 percent of Oregon's staffed adult non-ICU beds were occupied by COVID and other patients, with only 59 available adult intensive care unit beds statewide. / SCHOOLS. HEALTH: Chicago schools canceled classes today for its 330,000 students after the teachers' union voted to switch to remote learning amid record levels of COVID-19 infections. The move in the nation's third-largest school district comes amid an escalating nationwide battle over health safety protocols in schools. Officials in many districts across the U.S. are grappling with similar challenges as coronavirus cases surge. Many education officials say they don't want to switch back to online instruction districtwide, because it was devastating both to children's learning and their mental health. Some school systems around the country have extended their holiday break or switched back to online instruction because of record numbers of COVID-19 cases. Others are pressing ahead with in-person classes amid a seemingly growing sense that Americans will have to learn to co-exist with the virus. Many parents want their children back in school, saying remote learning will force many of them to cut back on work hours or quit their jobs, triggering a ripple effect for employers. As students, teachers, and staff this week returning to Oregon schools after their holiday break, leaders of the state Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority suggested schools consider suspending extracurricular activities for now to help limit the virus' spread. But they are leaving that decision to individual school districts. / HEALTH: Lane County Public Health, the Oregon Health Authority, and PeaceHealth continue to host walk-in clinics for those needed their initial series of COVID doses, booster doses, or pediatric doses. Today through Sunday, there's a drop-in clinic from noon to 7 p.m. at the PeaceHealth Annex Clinic. That's at 123 International Way

in Springfield. There also is a walk-in clinic at the Florence Events Center. It runs from noon to 7:00 p.m., Mondays through Saturdays, then 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Other vaccination opportunities are offered through health clinics, primary care providers, and pharmacies / SPORTS, DEVELOPMENT: It was built to last, with a fair amount of concrete and steel. So when it comes time on Friday to demolish the west side of Oregon State University's Reser Stadium to make way for expanded facilities, the structure will go out with a bang. OSU officials say demolition crews will use a controlled implosion on January 7 to take down the westside section of Reser. They say the decision came down to safety: The traditional demolition process would involve taking apart the large structure—including pieces of the tall roof canopy. But they say implosion by a licensed contractor will avoid putting crews at additional risk. Construction crews spent the past month making preparations by removing some steel and concrete. On Friday—Demolition Day, as it's being called—licensed contractors will use explosive charges to implode the stadium's west side. They're make sure there's a clear area within 500 feet of the structure before setting off a series of explosives. That includes temporarily evacuating nearby residential, commercial, and campus buildings, along with streets and sidewalks. Those up to 1,000 feet away will be asked to remain indoors for about ten minutes. Then, over the course of just two seconds people will hear a series of pops as the charges detonate the westside stadium structure will drop to the ground. OSU is planning a livestream. The \$153-million Reser Stadium project is expected to be completed before the start of the 2023 football season. The west side of the stadium will include a new Welcome Center for prospective students and their families, and a Wellness Clinic for current students, OSU employees and community members. The stadium project is being funded through donations led by the OSU Foundation, including a \$50 million gift from an anonymous donor, the sale of premium seating, and game day revenues. Campus officials say the new Welcome Center is being funded by revenues from enrollment growth and the wellness center by a number of revenue sources. / ENVIRONMENT, GOVERNMENT: U.S. officials say they have almost completed a lengthy project to dig up and remove radioactive and hazardous waste buried for decades in unlined pits at an eastern Idaho nuclear facility that sits atop a giant aquifer. The U.S. Department of Energy announced last week that it removed the final amount of specifically targeted buried waste from a 97-acre landfill at its 890-square-mile site that includes the Idaho National Laboratory. The waste includes plutonium-contaminated filters, graphite molds, sludges containing solvents and oxidized uranium generated during nuclear weapons production in Colorado. Some radioactive and hazardous waste remains in the landfill that will be covered with an earthen barrier. / HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: President Joe Biden is urging concern but not alarm as the United States set records for daily reported COVID-19 cases and his administration struggles to ease concerns about testing shortages. Biden spoke from the White House about the omicron variant Tuesday before a meeting with his COVID-19 response team. He wants to convey his administration's urgency and convince wary Americans that the current situation bears little resemblance to the onset of the pandemic or last year's deadly winter. Biden is emphasizing that vaccines, booster shots and therapeutic drugs have lessened the danger for the overwhelming majority of Americans who are fully vaccinated. ; The explosive increase in U.S. coronavirus case counts is raising

alarm, but some experts believe the focus should instead be on COVID-19 hospital admissions. And those aren't climbing as fast. Each measurement has its value, health experts say. Keeping an eye on COVID-19 hospital admissions shows the virus is still causing severe disease and threatening fragile hospital capacity. On the other hand, case counts are still crucial for monitoring where hot spots will arise and how fast, keeping in mind that the true number of cases is likely many times higher than the official count. ; U.S. health officials are explaining why they recently shortened their COVID-19 isolation and quarantine recommendations. They also clarified that the guidance applies to school kids as well as adults. However, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention maintained that, for people who catch the coronavirus, testing is not required to emerge from five days of isolation. The CDC released the documents Tuesday. Agency officials previously said the changes were in keeping with evidence that people with the coronavirus are most infectious in the two days before and three days after symptoms develop. / ECONOMY: Looking for a used car? You might have to take a good, long look at your bank account first. Prices for new cars are skyrocketing, pricing many people out of the market for a previously owned, reliable set of wheels. Edmunds reports the average price of a used vehicle in the U.S. in November was \$29,000, up 39 percent over last year. More than half of American households have less income than they need to buy an average-priced used vehicle. /

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HEALTH: Lane County set a shocking record yesterday, logging reports of 570 new COVID-19 infections. That shattered the record of 437 set one day earlier. Local hospitalizations also jumped, from 33 on Tuesday to 57 on Wednesday. The number of people considered infectious and being asked to isolate rocketed by more than 300, to just shy of 1,700 residents (1,699). It came as the surge in cases tied to the omicron variant of the coronavirus continued to hammer the country. The Oregon Health Authority also reported another huge statewide case jump: more than 6,200 (6,203) new infections yesterday. To put things in perspective, it was just mid-November—after the delta surge—that Lane County was reporting between 20-40 new cases daily. But things began to change as people traveled and gathered for the holidays—first Thanksgiving, then Christmas and New Year's, spreading the highly contagious omicron variant. Now, with daily case totals leaping from 143 on Monday to 437 on Tuesday and 570 yesterday, Lane County Public Health officials are struggling to track how infections are spreading. Public COVID-19 test sites are seeing long lines. And home test kits are sold out on most local shelves. Lane County Public Health officials say they know infection numbers are even larger than what they've recorded, because their totals are based on reports from health care providers and local testing sites. What the figures don't capture is positive results from rapid home testing kits. But yesterday, county public health officials urged those who test positive using an at-home test kit to promptly report their results online at Lane County's COVID-19 website. They say that will provide a more complete picture of how severely the omicron surge is affecting the county. With so many positive cases being reported daily, Lane County Public Health this week is also changing how it handles contact tracing. Instead of trying to contact every person infected with the coronavirus, officials say if you test positive, please call them and speak with a case investigator. That person can help you understand your symptoms, explain isolation recommendations, and help with any resources you might need. The county's contact tracing hotline number is answered weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Call 541-682-1380. Lane County Public Health's "Positive At-Home Test" online form may be completed at <https://lanecounty.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=3585881&pageId=16752664> ; With demand for COVID-19 test kits soaring, the Oregon Health Authority this week

received its first shipment of what will eventually be more than one million rapid test kits. Over the next five weeks, state health officials say five trucks per week will deliver additional shipments of the kits from iHealth Labs to the agency's warehouse in Wilsonville. Those kits will be sent to local public health and tribal agencies, health care providers, school districts, Head Start and other high-risk early learning settings, community organizations—including those that work with agriculture, seasonal, and Migrant farmworkers, shelters, and other agencies for distribution to individuals. Officials say as the number of omicron-related cases increases, rapid testing will be critical in helping people know when to isolate and take other steps to reduce transmission. In its weekly report, state health officials say last week's new COVID cases were up 140 percent from the previous week and hospitalizations were up 57 percent. Positive test rates also soared, with roughly 20 percent of all tests coming back positive for the virus. ; Lane County Public Health, the Oregon Health Authority, and PeaceHealth continue to host walk-in clinics for those needed their initial series of COVID doses, booster doses, or pediatric doses. Today through Sunday, there's a drop-in clinic from noon to 7 p.m. at the PeaceHealth Annex Clinic. That's at 123 International Way in Springfield. There also is a walk-in clinic at the Florence Events Center. It runs from noon to 7:00 p.m., Mondays through Saturdays, then 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Other vaccination opportunities are offered through health clinics, primary care providers, and pharmacies. ; Hospitals across the U.S. are dealing with the surge in cases tied to the omicron variant and encountering challenges different from earlier COVID-19 waves. They are grappling with serious staff shortages because so many workers are getting sick. People are showing up at emergency rooms in large numbers in hopes of getting tested for COVID-19. And a surprising number of patients are testing positive for the virus while in the hospital for other reasons. At the same time, hospitals say the patients aren't as sick as those who came in during the last surge. Intensive care units aren't as full, and ventilators aren't needed as much as they were before. ; The U.S. is strengthening its COVID-19 booster campaign, endorsing an extra dose of vaccine for everyone age 12 and older. Boosters already were permitted at age 16 and urged for most adults as the nation battles the omicron surge. Earlier this week, regulators authorized an extra Pfizer shot for kids ages 12 to 15 as well. Now the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has agreed, recommending that younger teens — and those 16 and 17 — should get a Pfizer booster five months after their last shot. ; Parents of children too young to be vaccinated are facing difficult choices as COVID cases fueled by the omicron variant rise to record levels and every encounter seems risky. Families are rethinking visits with grandparents, playtime with other toddlers and trips to the park or library. A setback last month in Pfizer studies of a vaccine for kids under 5 dimmed hopes that shots for tots might come soon. Efforts are ongoing. Public health authorities say surrounding young kids with people who are vaccinated and masking those 2 and older can help keep them and others safe. ; U.S. health officials say they are not changing the definition of being “fully vaccinated” against COVID-19. But they are urging Americans to stay “up to date” on their virus protection by getting booster shots when eligible. The move to keep the existing definition of fully vaccination — either two doses of the mRNA vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna or a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine — comes as health officials warned of waning protections from the initial doses. The decision to keep the

initial definition means that federal vaccination mandates for travel or employment won't require a booster dose. / SPORTS, HEALTH: The Oregon Men's Basketball team has postponed its Saturday game at Oregon State because of COVID issues within the Ducks' program. Athletics department officials say they will work to reschedule. The Oregon Men also postponed its game earlier this week against Colorado because of COVID-related issues. ; In Corvallis, the Oregon State Women's Basketball team has indefinitely postponed its weekend games against Cal and Stanford, originally set for Friday and Sunday, because of COVID issues within OSU's program. The Beavs still hope to play next week's games against the Arizona schools. / POLITICS, GOVERNMENT, CRIME: One year after the Jan. 6 the violent attack on the U.S. Capitol by supporters of President Trump that interrupted the certification of President Biden's victory, Congress is more deeply divided than ever, and it shows in how lawmakers are choosing to mark the day. Some members are planning a moment of silence. Others will spend the day educating Americans on the workings of democracy. And still others don't think the deadly siege on Congress needs to be remembered at all. The ceremonies were widely attended by Democrats, but almost every Republican on Capitol Hill was absent. It's a stark reminder of the rupture between the parties. Biden says that "at this moment we must decide what kind of nation we are going to be." / POLITICS, GOVERNMENT: Oregon's longest-serving lawmaker and current Senate President, Peter Courtney, is retiring. Oregon Public Broadcasting reports that Courtney, a Democrat in his 38th year as a lawmaker, informed colleagues on Wednesday afternoon that he would not seek re-election this year. His office confirmed his decision. The Democrat, who represents Salem, served in the Oregon House for a decade before joining the Senate. He won election as Senate president in 2003, and maintained control ever since, often winning praise from minority Republicans who see him as an evenhanded leader. The 78-year-old Courtney has long been one of the more captivating and mercurial figures in Oregon politics. / EVENTS: No, you did not win last night's \$632-million Powerball lottery drawing. But two people who purchased tickets—one in California, the other in Wisconsin—did. They'll be sharing the jackpot, which grew to the seventh-largest in history after nobody had won in 39 consecutive drawings. /

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WEATHER, SCHOOLS: Gusty winds created scattered power outages across Western Oregon. The Monroe schools are running two hours late because of a local outage. The Mapleton Schools are on a two-hour delay because of transportation issues. / HEALTH: For the fourth consecutive day Oregon has shattered previous high marks of daily COVID-19 cases. The Oregon Health Authority received reports of more than 7,600 new cases (7,615) on Thursday. Lane County Public Health received reports of 552 new infections, just shy of Wednesday's single-day record, as the number of people considered infectious and being asked to isolate rose to a new level: close to 2,000 people (1,984). Health officials in the Portland area yesterday warned that the number of coronavirus-related cases and hospitalizations likely will continue to rise during the next several weeks. Testing facilities across Oregon continue to see long lines. In some parts of the state, medical calls to 9-1-1 have surged 40 percent over their average volume and some hospital emergency departments are seeing large numbers of walk-ins with possible COVID-19 symptoms. The surge in cases tied to the omicron variant of the coronavirus continues across the country. / HEALTH, EDUCATION, COMMUNITY: Some of the surge in Lane County's COVID-19 cases is among students at the University of Oregon—many of whom live in the community. Yesterday, the U-of-O reported more than 400 students who live off-campus (402) and more than 80 who live in residence halls (84) have tested positive for the virus this week. Thirteen staff and faculty members also have been diagnosed with cases of COVID-19. University of Oregon leaders say close to 95 percent of students, faculty, and staff are vaccinated and a new campus policy requires booster doses by the end of this month. But as infections surge across Eugene-Springfield and within the campus community, officials are making contingency plans. They say if student absences climb to 20 percent or more in a classroom, instructors may temporarily move their courses online. Similarly, if a faculty member or instructor needs to quarantine, isolate, or help care for a family member who is ill because of the coronavirus, they may conduct remote learning during that time. But U-of-O leaders emphasize that, for now, the campus remains open. They anticipate the omicron surge easing by February 7. / HEALTH: Leaders of the state's largest nurses' union are sounding the alarm over the surge in COVID-19 cases tied to the omicron variant. The Oregon

Nurses Association is urging state leaders and hospital administrators to enhance their emergency response, return to limiting hospital visitors, ensure healthcare facilities have sufficient staff, and put N-95 mask requirements in place at all facilities experiencing coronavirus outbreaks. ONA leaders also say frontline nurses and caregivers—who've spent the past two years battling COVID surges—should receive increased mental health supports, expanded employee assistance benefits, and retention bonuses. ; Lane County Public Health, the Oregon Health Authority, and PeaceHealth continue to host walk-in clinics for those needed their initial series of COVID doses, booster doses, or pediatric doses. Today through Sunday, there's a drop-in clinic from noon to 7 p.m. at the PeaceHealth Annex Clinic. That's at 123 International Way in Springfield. There also is a walk-in clinic at the Florence Events Center. It runs from noon to 7:00 p.m., Mondays through Saturdays, then 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Other vaccination opportunities are offered through health clinics, primary care providers, and pharmacies. / SCHOOLS, HEALTH: It hasn't been a big issue here. Yet. But principals, superintendents and counselors are filling in as substitutes in some classrooms across the country as the surge in coronavirus infections further strains schools. In many cities, a growing number of districts are moving back to online classes, including in Detroit, Michigan; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Cleveland, Ohio; and Newark, New Jersey. Chicago teachers remain off the job amid concerns of unsafe conditions, which forced the 330,000 students in the nation's third-largest district back into remote learning. In Portland, the Oregonian and OregonLive report two high schools are closed today because of a "significant increase" in COVID-19 infections among students and staff. / HEALTH, YOUTH, FAMILY: Hospitalizations in U.S. children under age 5 with COVID have soared dramatically to unprecedented levels, a worrisome trend in youngsters too young to be vaccinated. That's according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data released Friday. Since early December, as the highly contagious omicron variant has spread furiously around the country, the hospitalization rate in these kids has surged to above 4 in 100,000 children. Authorities say the numbers include kids with underlying health conditions. They say the trend underscores the need for vaccinations in all who are eligible. ; Across the country, parents of children too young to be vaccinated are facing difficult choices as COVID cases fueled by the omicron variant rise to record levels and many encounters carry a risk of infection. Families are rethinking visits with grandparents, playtime with other toddlers, and trips to the park or library. A setback last month in Pfizer studies of a vaccine for kids under age 5 dimmed hopes that doses for tots might come soon. Public health authorities say surrounding young kids with people who are vaccinated and masking those age 2 and older can help keep them and others safe. / HEALTH, TRANSPORTATION: The surge in omicron-related cases continues to affect schedules for major U.S. air carriers. Alaska Airlines said Thursday it will trim its schedule by about 10 percent for the rest of January as it deals with "unprecedented" numbers of employees calling in sick. That's similar to a decision last week by Delta, Southwest, American, JetBlue, and others. Airlines have canceled more than 1,000 flights each of the past 12 days because of the virus surge and bad weather. Many passengers are scrambling to rebook, often being forced to push back their planned departures by days. / HEALTH: As we headed into the winter, health experts warned of the risk of people being infected simultaneously with

COVID-19 and influenza. Across the country, health care providers and hospitals are starting to see a handful of patients with these dual infections, which have been dubbed “flurona.” (flu-rona). Symptoms of common colds, the flu and COVID-19 can overlap, so experts say testing is the best way to determine what you have. The flu and COVID-19 can share symptoms including cough, fever, and tiredness. Symptoms unique to COVID-19 include the loss of taste or smell, but experts say that’s not showing up that often among those who have been infected with the omicron variant. Colds tend to be milder with symptoms including a stuffy nose and sore throat. / LEGAL, HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: The U.S. Supreme Court is taking up two major Biden administration efforts to bump up the nation’s vaccination rate against COVID-19 at a time of spiking coronavirus cases because of the omicron variant. The justices on the conservative-oriented court are hearing arguments today about whether to allow the administration to enforce a “vaccine or testing” requirement that applies to large employers and a separate vaccine mandate for most health care workers. Legal challenges to the policies from Republican-led states and business groups are in their early stages, but the outcome at the high court probably will determine the fate of vaccine requirements affecting more than 80 million people. / ECONOMY: Inflation is surging and new omicron infections are spiking. But analysts say America’s employers kept right on hiring in December on the strength of solid consumer spending. U.S. employers close to 200,000 jobs last month. The nation’s unemployment rate fell to a healthy 3.9 percent. Wages also rose sharply, a sign that companies are competing fiercely to fill their open jobs. The hiring figures will reflect the state of the job market for the first half of December, before omicron viral cases spiked. It was a period when businesses were struggling to fill jobs ahead of the holidays, but many Americans remained reluctant to return to the workforce. Still, 651,000 more people reported that they were employed in December compared with November. / CRIME, BUSINESS: A Lebanon, Oregon, man yesterday was sentenced to 48 months in federal prison and five years’ supervised release after stealing millions of dollars in loans intended to help small businesses during the pandemic. 51-year-old Andrew Aaron Lloyd appeared in Eugene federal court. He also must pay more than \$4 million in restitution and forfeit 25 properties and more than 15,000 shares of Tesla, Inc. stock seized by law enforcement. Prosecutors say Lloyd took advantage of economic relief programs administered by the Small Business Administration, including Economic Injury Disaster Loans and the Paycheck Protection Program. According to court documents, beginning in April 2020, Lloyd began submitting CARES Act loan applications using numerous business names and personally identification information of relatives and business associates without their consent. Prosecutors say he the proceeds from his fraud to purchase more than 25 properties in Oregon and California and invest in securities. The securities and cash seized from Lloyd’s accounts are presently valued at more than \$18 million. An accomplice of Lloyd’s, 39-year-old Russell Anthony Schort of Myrtle Creek, earlier pleaded guilty to bank fraud and was sentenced to federal prison and ordered to pay \$294,552 in restitution. / SCHOOLS, WEATHER: A soggy mess yesterday morning at Walterville Elementary School. After days of heavy rains, the creek behind the school overflowed—sending several inches of water into the school building. Contractors, building crews and staff spent the day working to remove the standing water from ten classrooms, the library, and the main office,

along with some other areas. If everything dries over the weekend, Springfield School District officials anticipate reopening Walterville Elementary on Monday morning. / ELECTIONS, GOVERNMENT: A shake-up yesterday in the race for Oregon Governor. State elections officials ruled that former New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof—considered a leading contender for the Democratic nomination—is not eligible to run because he does not meet the state's residency requirement. Secretary of State Shemia Fagan said it was obvious Kristof had been a New Yorker until recently, citing in particular his having voted in New York in the November 2020 election. Kristof responded on Twitter that he plans to appeal. He was raised on a family farm near Carlton, Oregon, which he owns and where he now lives. His lawyers said he has paid taxes on the properties since they were purchased and that he filed Oregon income tax returns for 2019 and 2020. Questions about Kristof's residency had dogged him even before he announced his candidacy in October, the same month that The New York Times announced he had resigned. The 62-year-old Kristof, a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner, was a globe-trotting foreign correspondent and columnist. His announcement that he would run for Oregon governor generated a lot of interest and he raised more than \$1 million in less than a month. An appeal over his eligibility as a candidate could wind up before the Oregon Supreme Court. The primary elections are in May, in which voters choose their party's candidates for governor and other offices. In the meantime, Oregon House Speaker Tina Kotek announced Thursday she will resign from the Legislature to focus on her gubernatorial run. The last day for the longest-tenured speaker in state history will be Jan. 21. Dozens of candidates have filed to run for the spot being vacated by a term-limited Governor Kate Brown. Democrats have held Oregon's governor's office since 1987, and others in the party running for the state's high office include state Treasurer Tobias Read. Republicans seeking their party's nomination include state Rep. Christine Drazen, former Republican nominee Bud Pierce and Sandy Mayor Stan Pulliam. Former Democratic state Sen. Betsy Johnson is running as an independent. / RACISM, BUSINESS: A new policy covering Airbnb hosts in Oregon is being closely watched to see if can help prevent discrimination against Black customers. The policy will keep those who rent their homes from seeing the full names of would-be clients — instead, they'll only be able to see prospective renters' initials. In 2017, three Black women in Oregon sued Airbnb, claiming that the company's requirement that customers post full names and photos enabled hosts to discriminate based on race, in violation of the state's public-accommodations law. Airbnb changed its policy the following year so that hosts could only see a photo after they accepted a booking. The San Francisco-based company settled the lawsuit in 2019 and posted a message about the new Oregon policy on its site late last month. The new Airbnb takes effect at the end of the month — and will only cover rentals in Oregon and will last at least two years. But if the policy shows promise, it might be used elsewhere. Airbnb has previously said it would begin to measure and reduce discrimination that people encounter when booking or hosting on the site. / SPORTS, DEVELOPMENT: With shouts of "Here we go!" and "Fire in the hole!" demolition specialists just imploded the West Grandstand at Oregon State University's Reser Stadium. The event livestreamed on OSU's webpage and on YouTube. The controlled implosion was designed to quickly bring down the structure and protect nearby campus buildings and neighborhoods. This is part of a \$153 million project to

complete Reser Stadium. The new west side of the stadium will feature a welcome center for prospective new students and their families, along with a wellness clinic for students, OSU employees, and community members. The project is expected to be completed before the start of the 2023 football season. The bulk of the project is being funded by more than \$90 million in donations and by revenues from football stadium activities. Various revenue sources will fund the wellness center, and new revenues from enrollment growth will fund the student welcome center. / WEATHER, SAFETY, TRANSPORTATION: Snow turned to rain and continued to fall across the Pacific Northwest, causing flooding on highways and some roads near Seaside and Warrenton on the northern Oregon Coast. Mountain passes are plowed and reopened. Only one secondary Eastern Oregon highway remains closed while crews remove 6-8 foot snowdrifts. East of Seattle, Washington, parts of downtown Issaquah were closed after a creek sent water over some roads and into neighborhoods. Many Washington state mountain passes continue to be closed because of blowing and drifting snow, zero visibility and avalanche concerns. / HEALTH, WILDLIFE: Health officials say five Americans died of rabies last year — the largest number in a decade. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Thursday released a report focusing on three of the deaths, all stemming from contact with rabid bats. CDC officials said the deaths were tragic and could have been prevented. They say some of the deaths occurred because people didn't realize they'd been infected or refused life-saving shots. Those shots must be given within two weeks of exposure to the virus. There were no rabies deaths reported in 2019 or 2020. /

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SCHOOLS, WEATHER: The water damage was more severe to than they anticipated. That means children, teachers, and staff will not be able to return to Walterville Elementary School for the remainder of the school year. The school's principal shared an update Friday evening with Walterville School families after two days of cleanup. Last week's heavy rains caused a creek behind the building to overflow, sending water into a number of classrooms, the library, and the office. Contractors, district crews, and staff worked to drain and divert the high water away from the school and try to dry out the structure. But officials say the clean-up is complicated by the type of the water that entered the building and the old school's porous structure. Walterville Principal Nicki Gorham says Springfield school officials were told it will take many months to make repairs. Starting tomorrow, Walterville kids and teachers are returning to remote learning. District leaders are working on developing ways to return to in-person learning at another location. Walterville school officials say they're offering school breakfast and lunch pick-up in the short term and are working on a meal delivery service for students. / CRIME: Eugene Police say they've arrested a 29-year-old man in connection with Saturday's fatal hit-and-run crash at West 11th Avenue and Oak Patch Road. 29-year-old Parker William Vollberg was arrested Sunday near the intersection of Clear Lake Road and Territorial Highway after his vehicle, a white van, was spotted nearby. Police used a K-9 unit and a drone team during the apprehension. The suspect was reported to be suicidal and had access to a firearm but was detained without incident. A female pedestrian died in Saturday's hit-and-run. Her name has not yet been released. ; Springfield Police arrested a criminal suspect Saturday evening with the help of bystanders. It came after two people fled the Springfield Walmart after being confronted by employees about allegedly shoplifting. Police said members of the public helped provide descriptions of the suspects and point officers in their direction of travel. The first person was taken into custody after being located a few blocks away. But the second, identified as 22-year-old Izaak Vaughn Watson, continued running through parking lots of fast-food businesses along Olympic Street. Police say as Watson rounded the corner toward the Sonic, he ran alongside cars waiting at the drive-thru. As an officer closed in, one driver opened their door to slow the suspect. It worked and Watson was safely taken into custody. He also faces

charges in an unrelated domestic violence case. Springfield Police say they were grateful, although they add they do not recommend citizens directly engage with criminal suspects, since it's unknown how they might react. / SAFETY: Interstate Meat Dist. Inc., a Clackamas, Oregon, establishment, last week recalled approximately 28,356 pounds of ground beef products that might be contaminated with E. coli. The products are carried by retailers including Winco, WalMart, Fred Meyer, and Albertson's. See the details on my TracyKKNU Facebook page. The raw ground beef products from Interstate Meat Distributors, Inc. were produced on Dec. 20, 2021, and shipped to Oregon, California, Washington, and other U.S. West states. The recalled products have establishment number "EST. 965" inside the USDA mark of inspection or printed next to the time stamp and use or freeze by date. Anyone who has purchased the recalled products is urged to throw them away or return them to the place of purchase. / HEALTH: Another jump in Lane County's and Oregon's coronavirus cases as we headed into the weekend. Lane County received reports of 591 new infections on Friday morning and 624 on Saturday. Amid the continued surge, officials say four in every five people hospitalized are unvaccinated or not fully immunized. More than 2,500 Lane County residents are considered infectious and are being asked to isolate. Oregon set a new single-day infection record on Friday, reporting more than 10,400 cases (10.451). Officials with the Oregon Health Authority add that some of those cases were delayed reports from December. But they say the number of infections tied to the omicron variant continues to be staggering. Health officials have warned that the number of coronavirus-related cases and hospitalizations likely will continue to rise during the next several weeks. Many have only mild symptoms. But others have more severe cases requiring hospitalization. Testing facilities across Oregon continue to see long lines. Some hospitals across the state are asking you to avoid calling or going to emergency departments unless your symptoms are severe. They say they're being overwhelmed at times with non-emergency calls. ; [Oregon](#) hospitals have new interim guidelines to help them determine which patients should get lifesaving care if the current COVID-19 surge forces them to choose between people because of a lack of beds, staff, or critical medical equipment. The guidelines will only come into play if a hospital has exhausted all other options to treat every patient, including transfers to other facilities, delaying non-urgent surgeries and care, stockpiling supplies, and repurposing existing beds and spaces for critical care patients. The new policy comes as Oregon faces a wave of the highly contagious, but milder, COVID-19 omicron variant. The state set new records for new cases of COVID-19 every day this week; on Friday, health officials announced 10,451 new and presumptive cases, a 373 percent increase over last month. Hospitalizations were rising more slowly but there were only 47 available adult intensive care unit beds and 95 percent of the state's staffed adult non-ICU beds are full, the Oregon Health Authority said. Gov. Kate Brown announced Friday she will deploy up to 500 Oregon National Guard members to help at hospitals, with the first 125 members arriving at some of the hardest-hit hospitals next week. The agency acknowledged that the surge of omicron cases did "not allow time for the robust, comprehensive and fully inclusive community and clinician engagement needed" and that the interim standards are "imperfect." A new committee to be established this winter will review the policy and make revisions and additions as needed, OHA said in a preface to the guidelines. The

standards are based on those developed in Arizona, Massachusetts and Washington amid the COVID-19 pandemic. They replace previous ones that were scrapped after Disability Rights Oregon, an advocacy group, filed a federal civil rights lawsuit alleging the rules discriminated against the elderly, the disabled and those with serious pre-existing illnesses. The guidelines direct hospitals to rank patients by evaluating the likelihood of their short-term survival without judgment about their overall quality of life or long-term survival before the current illness. In a tie between two patients who need the same resources, the person already receiving care would continue to get it, unless their condition had worsened. In ties between two patients with similar conditions presenting at the same time, hospitals would use a blind drawing to decide who gets care. Unlike other states, Oregon's standards do not prioritize any particular groups of people for lifesaving care. Other states, for example, award more points to pregnant people, those under 18, health care workers, or single parents, Oregon Public Broadcasting reported. The prior standards allowed hospitals to exclude some people from critical care during a crisis, like those with certain stages of cancer or other serious illnesses. Hospitals in Oregon can create their own crisis standards of care, but they must adhere to the state's rubric. The standards are based on similar guidelines developed in Arizona, Massachusetts, and Washington amid the pandemic. The policy replaces a previous one that was criticized by groups that said they discriminated against the elderly, the disabled and those with serious pre-existing illnesses. / EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH, BUSINESS: Millions of workers whose jobs don't provide paid sick days are having to choose between their health and their paycheck as the omicron variant of COVID-19 rages across the nation. While many companies instituted more robust sick leave policies at the beginning of the pandemic, some of those have since been scaled back with the rollout of the vaccines, even though the omicron variant has managed to evade the shots. Low-wage workers are especially vulnerable. Nearly 80 percent of all private sector workers get at least one paid sick day, according to a national compensation survey of employee benefits conducted in March by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Only 33 percent of workers whose wages are at the bottom 10 percent get paid sick leave, compared with 95 percent in the top 10 percent, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. / LEGAL, HEALTH: The U.S. Supreme Court's conservative majority on Friday appeared skeptical of the Biden administration's authority to impose a vaccine-or-testing requirement on the nation's large employers. Fully vaccinated themselves for the day's arguments, the court's six conservative justices appeared to view the administration's requirement for businesses with at least 100 employees as overstepping government authority. However, the court seemed more open to a separate vaccine mandate for most health care workers. Seven of the nine justices heard arguments wearing masks for the first time, and an eighth was phoning in. Rulings on legal challenges to the policies from Republican-led states and business groups probably will determine the fate of vaccine requirements affecting more than 80 million people. ; Companies that would be affected by a Biden administration vaccine-or-testing requirement for workers have largely remained on the sidelines while the U.S. Supreme Court considers whether the rule can be enforced. The requirement has faced numerous court challenges and was upheld last month by a three-judge panel with the U.S. Court of Appeals. Since then, Starbucks has announced its own vaccine mandate. It said in

December that all U.S. workers must be fully vaccinated by Feb. 9 or face a weekly COVID testing requirement. The arguments Friday before the Supreme Court come as companies are grappling with labor shortages made more acute by the rapid spread of the highly contagious omicron variant of COVID-19. / HOUSING, GOVERNMENT: The Treasury Department says states and localities in November paid out the largest amount of rental assistance to cash-strapped tenants since the program began. The \$2.9 billion paid out is the latest sign that the program's early hiccups mostly have been resolved and it is now turning its focus to helping those places running short of cash. To do that, it is working to reallocate money within states to places that need it most and shifting money from states that don't need it to other states. Congress authorized \$46.5 billion in emergency rental assistance late last year. / ELECTIONS, ECONOMY: The pandemic has receded as a top priority in many voters' minds to start 2022, with the economy and rising worries about inflation overshadowing coronavirus concerns. That potentially spells political trouble for Democrats heading into the midterm elections. A poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds that just 37 percent of Americans say COVID-19 is a top priority for the government to work on in 2022, compared with 53 percent who said it was at the start of last year. Instead, 68 percent of Americans polled named the economy as government's top concern, while 14 percent mentioned inflation — including 18 percent of Republicans and even 10 percent of Democrats. / ECONOMY, TRANSPORTATION: The average U.S. price of regular-grade gasoline dropped 2 cents over the past three weeks to \$3.39 per gallon. Industry analyst Trilby Lundberg of the Lundberg Survey says Sunday that prices at the pump could start increasing again because crude oil costs are rising. Nationwide, the highest average price for regular-grade gas is in the San Francisco Bay Area, at \$4.74 per gallon. The lowest average is in Houston, at \$2.79 per gallon. The survey says the average price of diesel is \$3.64 a gallon, down a penny. / ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE: Central Oregon irrigators will participate in a water bank this summer under a pilot program designed to help drought-stricken farmers get by. Because of low Deschutes River flows and environmental protections, there's not enough water for all users — and those with more recent water rights have seen their pipes turned off with crops still in the ground while those with older water claims have water. The program, facilitated by the Deschutes River Conservancy, will pay farmers with more senior water rights \$100 for every acre they don't water, and that water will go to those in the North Irrigation District. / ELECTIONS, LEGAL: Former New York Times columnist Nick Kristof filed a petition with the Oregon Supreme Court, asking justices to quickly overturn Secretary of State Shemia Fagan's determination he does not meet the state Constitution's three-year residency requirement to run for governor. Oregon Public Broadcasting reports that while such a matter would typically first work its way up through the court system, beginning at the circuit level, Kristof argued Oregon's high court should put an end to questions about his residency well before a March 17 deadline to qualify for the May Democratic primary ballot. If justices do not find reason to force Fagan to overturn her decision, Kristof requested that she be forced to explain in court why she would not approve his candidacy. /

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TRANSPORTATION, WEATHER, SAFETY: Watch for flaggers and daytime single lane traffic on Oregon Highway 126 east of Walton starting today (Jan. 11). Crews are repairing a portion of the north hillside that slid in recent heavy rains. This is in the area where they recently widened the highway. Workers will build a rock pad for access, then place rock to stabilize the slope. The drainage ditch below the slope will also be cleared and repaired. Construction should be complete early next week. The recent project between Milepost 36 and Milepost 36.7 widened the highway and installed concrete barrier and guardrail to make the section safer for travel. / HOMELESSNESS, COMMUNITY, SOCIAL SERVICES, CRIME, BUSINESS: It was always intended to be a temporary camp. But the recent heavy rains forced a move earlier than expected. A City of Eugene-supervised temporary camp off West 13th Avenue and Chambers Street is being closed. During the rest of this week, its unhoused residents are being assisted with a move to a longer-term indoor Safe Sleep site. The St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County is helping to coordinate the relocation. The transition should be wrapped up by Monday. Officials say conditions at the 13th Avenue temporary camp degraded steadily during the rainy season. City crews regularly delivered bark and other materials to try to control the moisture. Site managers also worked with the camp's occupants to relocate their tents to drier areas and to replace tents that became unusable. But officials say the recent heavy rains inundated much of the site and made it clear there is no easy way to keep things habitable. The non-profit is offering the use of an indoor "hoop building" at its Dawn-to-Dawn site on Highway 99 north of Four Corners (717 Highway 99 North). St. Vinnie's officials say the facility will be heated and have access to food, showers and laundry. Each occupant will be provided with a new sleeping bag, sleeping pad, and tent (with standing room), along with storage for personal belongings. St. Vincent de Paul already is managing two Safe Sleep sites in a business and industrial district on the north end of Eugene's Garfield Street. Coordinators say hoop building has space for roughly three dozen tents. The agency also will make some beds available to those from the temporary camp. Organizers say the new spots will provide a healthier, safer shelter option for the people at relocating from the 13th Avenue site. Crews from the city and St. Vincent de Paul are assisting the 13th Avenue occupants with packing their

campsites and moving. Once the temporary camp is closed, the site will be rehabilitated. Some of the unhoused campers have pets and will be relocating to a different site that allows animals. Eugene city staff say they are working to find different shelter options for those camp occupants that wish to keep their pets with them. In some cases, which might involve coordinating with St. Vincent de Paul and Greenhill Humane Society staff for temporary pet accommodations. /

HEALTH: A record number of Lane County residents are considered infectious with cases of the coronavirus and are being asked to isolate themselves until they are no longer experiencing symptoms. Yesterday's numbers from Lane County Public Health noted that more than 2,800 people are currently infectious (2,809). Some are showing few, if any, symptoms. But they are being encouraged to stay home to avoid spreading the virus to others. But close to 70 are currently hospitalized. That's either because they are experiencing complications from COVID-19 or were admitted for another reason and tested positive during the admission screening process. Eleven of those patients are in intensive care unit beds. Lane County received reports of a combined 1,385 new coronavirus cases from Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. Statewide, the Oregon Health Authority over the same three-day period was notified of more than 18,500 new infections (18,538). It comes amid the spread of the highly contagious omicron variant. Amid the surge, officials say four in every five people hospitalized in Lane County are either unvaccinated or not fully immunized. Officials with the Oregon Health Authority say better than one in every five COVID-19 tests is coming back positive. But while the number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 increased to 692, hospitalizations remain about 40 percent below their peak during the summer surge of the delta variant. ; Starting Saturday, private health insurers will be required to cover up to eight home COVID-19 tests per month for those on their plans. The Biden administration announced the change Monday as it looks to lower costs and make testing for the virus more convenient amid rising frustrations. Under the new policy, Americans will be able to either purchase home testing kits for free or submit receipts for the tests for subsequent reimbursement, up to the monthly per-person limit. A family of four, for instance, could be reimbursed for up to 32 tests per month. Only tests purchased on or after Jan. 15 will be required to be reimbursed. ; Many Lane County residents with COVID-19 have only mild symptoms. But they face a challenge if they want to be tested to confirm their infection: Many test sites don't allow them to book an appointment if they have any symptoms. Yesterday, coordinators of the free public testing program at the University of Oregon said they now are offering limited free testing to those whose symptoms are mild. Those would be symptoms similar to a common cold, where you don't feel like you need to see a doctor, but need to know whether you are infected. On weekdays, people with those mild symptoms may be tested at the outside ticket booths on the west side of MacArthur Court, off University Street. Testing hours are 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. No appointment is required, but the daily testing slots are limited. The U-of-O is continuing its free public testing for those with no symptoms inside Mac Court. But if you are feeling or showing symptoms, you're asked not to enter the building. Instead, line up for the testing at the outside ticket windows. The U-of-O's program offers PCR testing using saliva samples. Results are usually returned within two to four days—sometimes within 24 hours. Coordinators say they can offer up to 3,000 testing slots per week. People who

are asymptomatic may go online and use the online registration process to set an appointment time. Search online for “University of Oregon free COVID testing” or go to <https://coronavirus.uoregon.edu/map-testing> With high demand for COVID testing, allow for a wait time of close to one hour. Walk-ins are permitted, but you might have to wait longer. Those who registered have priority. If you have severe symptoms, do not go to the testing site. Instead, contact your health care provider. A COVID-19 test is not a substitute for medical care. The University of Oregon’s testing program, in partnership with Lane County Public Health, launched in the spring of 2020 as a tool to help identify and suppress the community spread of COVID-19. The public health program has administered more than 160,000 free COVID tests to UO students and staff, as well as Lane County community members and K-12 students during the pandemic. /

GOVERNMENT: Budget cuts, backlogs, and pandemic-related closures. Officials with the U.S. Treasury Department officials said yesterday the Internal Revenue Service will face “enormous challenges” during this year’s tax filing season. They’re warning of delays to refunds and other taxpayer services. Treasury officials are predicting a “frustrating season” for taxpayers and tax preparers because of the delays. They say years of budget cuts to the IRS reduced their workforce by 25 percent. That combined with closures of some IRS facilities during the pandemic mean fewer staff members are available to review and process returns and refunds. Add to that the changes to tax code: There was the third Economic Impact Payments to many taxpayers and creation of the expanded Child Tax Credit. Then there’s a long-term processing backlog that shows no signs of diminishing: At the end of last year, the IRS website noted there were close to six million unprocessed individual returns and another two million unprocessed amended tax returns. Nine out of ten taxpayers file electronically. The bulk of the backlog affects those who file paper returns. This year, the tax-filing deadline is Monday, April 18, because IRS offices in Washington, D.C., are closed on April 15 to observe a District of Columbia holiday. Treasury officials are encouraging you to file your returns online and create an account at IRS.gov. The IRS’ tax-filing season begins on January 24th. Your Oregon income tax returns may be filed now, with the Oregon Department of Revenue issuing refunds starting on February 15. / WILDFIRE RECOVERY, GOVERNMENT: Some good news yesterday from Oregon U.S. Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden: Federal disaster officials are sending more than \$1.5 million dollars to our state. It’s to reimburse the costs of the Oregon National Guard deployment during the catastrophic 2020 wildfires. The money comes from FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The National Guard deployments helped shore up overwhelmed first responders, state and local law enforcement, and operations through the Oregon Office of Emergency Management. / MILITARY, HEALTH: It’s been a busy past couple of years for the Oregon National Guard, between wildfires, flooding, and the pandemic. And the work isn’t over. On Friday, Governor Brown announced she is deploying up to 500 Oregon National Guard members as Oregon hospitals face a surge of hospitalizations due to the rapid spread of the omicron variant of the coronavirus. Beginning this week, the first 125 Guard members are being deployed to hospitals around the state to provide logistical support as materials handlers and equipment runners, as well as assisting with COVID-19 testing and other non-clinical services. It’s almost identical to the Oregon National Guard deployment

last year during the delta surge. The Oregon Health Authority and National Guard commanders are working with hospital systems to assess their ongoing needs and determine where to deploy personnel. / SPORTS: Oregon's new head football coach, Dan Lanning, arrives in town today. Yesterday, as Georgia's defensive coordinator, he helped lead the Bulldogs to a National Championship with a win over Alabama, 33-18, in the College Football Playoff title game. / ANIMALS, FAMILY, LEGAL: Who will take your pet when you die? The question often doesn't have an easy answer. That's especially true for ill or older people headed to residential nursing care or assisted living. Specialized rescue, advocacy and adoption services run by volunteers are trying to fill the void. Leaders in the small movement say the pandemic has opened many people's eyes to the need for making a plan for pets. The number of pets surrendered to shelters due to caretaker health or death is up from 7.3 percent in 2009 to 10.2 percent during the pandemic. That's according to the Best Friends Network of thousands of public and private shelters, rescue groups and other animal welfare organizations. /

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TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY: There's a new metered on-ramp in town. Drivers on the northbound Delta Highway taking the exit to westbound Beltline will see new metering traffic lights at the bottom of the new onramp. The light began operating yesterday. The new metered light is intended to help smooth the traffic flow on Beltline Highway by releasing cars from the onramp one at a time. The same system is used on the onramp from Green Acres Road to westbound Beltline Highway, and at the River Road onramp to eastbound Beltline Highway. The metering light is only switched on when traffic is heavy on the Beltline. Flashing lights at the beginning of the onramp indicate when to expect the light to be on. / BUSINESS, LABOR: Employees of a South Eugene Starbucks store have become the first in Oregon seeking to unionize. The organizing petition was filed last week with the National Labor Relations Board. The workers are seeking to become members of Workers United, an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union or SEIU. Last month, Starbucks workers voted to unionize at a store in Buffalo, New York, making that the first to unionize in the coffee chain's 50-year history. Workers at a second Starbucks near Buffalo this week also voted to unionize. Organizing votes also have taken place among workers at individual Starbucks locations in five other states, including in Seattle. A Starbucks official says the company is evaluating its options. It has ten days to file any appeal with the NLRB. / ECONOMY: December was an expensive month for shoppers. Prices paid by U.S. consumers jumped seven percent last month from one year earlier. That's the highest inflation rate since 1982. It is the latest evidence that rising costs for food, gas, rent and other necessities are heightening the financial pressures on America's households. Inflation has spiked during the recovery from the pandemic recession as Americans have ramped up spending on goods ranging from cars and furniture to appliances and electronics. The surge in buying has aggravated supply chain clogs at ports and warehouses and fueled continued shortages of semiconductors and other critical parts. ; Shortages at U.S. grocery stores have grown more acute in recent weeks. New problems like the fast-spreading omicron variant and severe weather are piling on to the supply chain struggles and labor shortages that have plagued retailers since the coronavirus pandemic began. The shortages are widespread, impacting produce and meat as well as packaged goods like cereal. And they're being reported nationwide. U.S.

groceries typically have 5 percent to 10 percent of their items out of stock at any given time. According to the Consumer Brands Association, the unavailability rate is hovering around 15 percent. Experts are divided on how long grocery shopping will sometimes feel like a scavenger hunt. / SAFETY: Dole Fresh Vegetables yesterday expanded its recall of all branded and private-label packaged salads containing iceberg lettuce processed at its Soledad, CA, and Springfield, OH, production facilities. There is a possible health risk from *Listeria monocytogenes*. The salads produced in California were distributed to various retailers in Oregon and other Western states. / HEALTH: Scientists are seeing signals that COVID-19's alarming omicron wave might have peaked in Britain and is about to do the same here in the U.S. If that happens, cases might begin to drop off dramatically. Scientists say the variant has been so contagious that in some areas it might be running out of people to infect. Ali Mokdad, a professor of health metrics sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle, says omicron is "going to come down as fast as it went up." ; More hospitalizations, fewer people considered infectious. Lane County Public Health yesterday was notified of 512 new COVID-19 cases. It comes amid the spread of the highly contagious omicron variant. While the number of residents considered infectious and being asked to isolate fell a bit to 2,744, the number of people hospitalized climbed from 69 to 85. That's either because they are experiencing complications from COVID-19 or were admitted for another reason and tested positive during the admission screening process. Fourteen of those patients are in intensive care unit beds. More than seven in ten of those hospitalized either are unvaccinated or not fully immunized. Statewide, the Oregon Health Authority yesterday was notified of more than 8,000 new coronavirus infections (8,040). / ELECTIONS, LEGAL: Oregon's attorney general is urging the state Supreme Court to promptly decide if former New York Times journalist Nicholas Kristof is eligible to run for governor, after elections officials declared he wasn't. Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum said in a memorandum to the Supreme Court that the justices should take the case as Kristof has requested. Last Thursday, Secretary of State Shemia Fagan announced that Kristof was ineligible to run in this year's election because he didn't meet the three-year residency requirement. Kristof won two Pulitzer Prizes as a foreign correspondent and columnist for The New York Times. / LEGAL, RELIGION: The children of a deceased Oregon man who said he was molested as a child by a priest have sued the Roman Catholic church under a new California law. It allows survivors to bring lawsuits for the suffering a loved one endured. The family of Jim Bartko filed the lawsuit last week against the Diocese of Oakland, California. Bartko, a University of Oregon athletic department administrator, sued the church in 2020. But the case was dismissed when he died a few days later. His estate sued under a law that allows survivors to collect the emotional damages he could have claimed if he prevailed in his case. / YOUTH, SCHOOLS. POLITICS; Oregon's 2022 Kid Governor, Pleasant Hill 5th Grader Emerie Martin (say: emery), was sworn into her ceremonial post yesterday during a virtual inauguration. The Kid Governor program is part of the curriculum that teaches fifth graders about Civics. Every candidate chooses a platform on which to campaign. More than 2,200 students registered to nominate and vote for a candidate in last year's election. Emerie's focus is on preventing animal abuse and helping to educate new pet owners. She created a short video in which, among other things, she visits an animal shelter and later holds a dog. Two other local fifth graders

who were finalists for the Kid Governor title: Andy from Eugene's Adams Elementary campaigned on a platform of helping the homeless. And Kinley with Junction City's Territorial Elementary School focused on reducing food waste. / AGRICULTURE, ECONOMY: A big week for hemp news in Oregon: The USDA has signed off on the Oregon Department of Agriculture's plan to regulate hemp production statewide. That includes licensing and testing requirements for growers and processors. There now are mandatory background checks for key participants, including growers but not handlers. The change brings Oregon into compliance with federal guidelines. Under those rules, anyone convicted of a felony cannot participate in growing hemp crops for 10 years. The background checks will be conducted by the state agriculture department in partnership with the Oregon State Police. Hemp growing was legalized nationwide under the 2018 Farm Bill. Hemp is a source of fiber, food, and animal feed. Multiple hemp extracts and compounds are added to cosmetics, body lotions, dietary supplements, and food. / EDUCATION, HEALTH, AGRICULTURE: New research at Oregon State University has identified a pair of hemp compounds, known as cannabinoid acids, which show the ability to prevent the virus that causes COVID-19 from entering human cells. Using a chemical screening technique invented at OSU, researchers found that the substances, known as CBDA and CBGA, bind to the virus' spike protein. That, in turn, blocks a critical step in the process the virus uses to infect people. Lead researcher Richard van Breemen and his collaborators both in Corvallis and at the Oregon Health Sciences University say the substances are abundant in hemp and many hemp extracts. Combined with vaccination, he says the compounds helped block virus-receptor interaction against two early COVID variants, alpha and beta. / POLICING, LEGAL: The city of Portland and the Oregon Department of Justice have reached agreement on changes that could bring the city back into compliance with a 2014 settlement meant to curb police use of excessive force. The Oregonian/OregonLive reports after a judge directed the parties to return to mediation, all involved have reached a pact that will go before City Council for a vote. Two main clauses added include that the city agreed that not only higher-ranking, command officers would be investigated and held accountable for improper authorization or use of force during 2020 protests but so would rank-and-file officers. Second, the Justice Department has final approval on any body camera policy negotiated between the city and police union. /

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HEALTH: The surge in cases tied to the omicron variant of COVID-19 continues across the state. Lane County Public Health yesterday received reports of a record-setting 789 new infections and two additional deaths. In another all-time high, the number of local residents considered infectious climbed to more than 2,900. The Oregon Health Authority was notified of 8,760 new cases, the second-highest daily total of the pandemic. State health officials say last week's case numbers also set new records for daily cases, surging hospitalizations, a sharp rise in deaths, and testing positivity rates. Across Oregon, there were 47,272 new cases last week. That number was six times higher than the week before and three times higher than the previous record for weekly coronavirus cases. Last week's statewide hospitalizations were up by 68 percent. The percentage of positive COVID-19 tests was up to 15.7 percent. The Oregon Health Authority's [Weekly Outbreak Report](#) also lists 128 active coronavirus outbreaks in senior living communities and congregate living settings, where many residents are vaccinated but are more vulnerable to breakthrough cases because of their age and weakened immunity. / HEALTH, MILITARY: Close to 1,200 soldiers and airmen with the Oregon National Guard mobilized yesterday to help at hospitals dealing with reduced staffing and increased cases of COVID-19 tied to the omicron surge. They'll be deployed to more than 40 hospitals across the state, including those in Lane County. The soldiers and airmen will serve in non-clinical support roles. They'll provide logistical support as materials handlers and equipment runners. They will assist with COVID-19 testing and other non-clinical services. The duties are similar to the Oregon National Guard deployment of close to 1,500 personnel last year during the delta surge. That deployment began in August and ended in December. / HEALTH: The Oregon Health Authority is launching a new website and telephone hotline to assist residents who test positive for COVID-19 either through an at-home testing kit or after providing a sample to a testing provider. Hospitals, health care providers, laboratories and local public health authorities are required to report test results. But without information on where people are testing positive using at-home kits, there still is no accurate way for health officials to get a sense of the virus' true spread. Just last week, Lane County Public Health asked those who test positive with an at-home test contact them for advice on isolation and other ways to keep

themselves and others safe. The county can also assist with connecting people to resources while they recover. Across Oregon, so many cases are being reported that contact tracers can't keep up and reach everyone. For many who are vaccinated, omicron symptoms are relatively mild. But others need advice on how best to care for themselves or a family member. The hotline and website staff can provide general health information; answer questions about isolation and quarantine; discuss how to tell close contacts they might have been exposed; provide information to help people during isolation; and help record information about positive tests. The new state website is at [Oregon.gov/positivecovidtest](https://oregon.gov/positivecovidtest). It contains a link with a quick survey to help direct you to the proper resources. The COVID-19 Case Support Hotline, at 866-917-8881, is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. ; It's not yet clear when people infected with omicron become contagious but early data suggests it might be sooner than with earlier variants. In general, people with the coronavirus are most infectious in the few days before and after symptoms develop. But some researchers say that window might come earlier with omicron. That's because omicron appears to cause symptoms faster than earlier variants. Some experts say that could mean people with omicron become contagious within a day after infection. But researchers note it's too soon to know whether omicron's faster onset translates into earlier contagiousness. / HEALTH, BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT: State officials have launched an investigation into a suspicious COVID-19 testing company and are warning you to be alert to testing sites that seem suspicious, or vendors that are selling at-home tests for sky-high prices. The Oregon Department of Justice and the Better Business Bureau already are investigating one company, calling itself the "Center for COVID Control," after media reports in Florida and Texas determined the company was faking results and not sharing data with state and local health authorities. Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum says there are "red flags" to watch for: Be cautious about pop-up testing sites that charge out-of-pocket fees, do not display logos, don't let you know which laboratory is performing the test, are not affiliated with a known organization. If someone at a testing site asks for sensitive financial information, like your Social Security number, leave. Insurers do not need that information. The Oregon Health Authority maintains a list of legitimate testing vendors and locations. Go to <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ERD/Pages/OHA-Announces-New-Online-Testing-Locator.aspx> for details. The Oregon Department of Justice also wants to hear from you if you've encountered any dubious testing sites or vendors. Report your concerns [online](https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/opr_fraud_ref/index.cfm?act=evt.subm_web) at https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/opr_fraud_ref/index.cfm?act=evt.subm_web or call the Oregon Attorney General's Consumer Hotline at 1-877-877-9392. / HEALTH, SPORTS: Today's Oregon Women's Basketball game against Arizona State has been postponed because of COVID issues in ASU's program. The schools are working to reschedule. The Duck women have a game on Saturday against Arizona at Matt Knight Arena. On Monday afternoon, they host Connecticut. / GOVERNMENT, HEALTH, EMPLOYMENT: Oregon Gov. Kate Brown is proposing a \$200 million legislative package to bolster the state's workforce during the pandemic. Oregon Public Broadcasting reports the program, titled "Future Ready Oregon," aims to prioritize key populations disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and existing disparities. They include Oregonians of color, women, low-income individuals, rural communities, veterans, and those who are

incarcerated or formerly incarcerated. Three specific sectors would benefit from the program: Health care, manufacturing, and construction. The total \$200 million would be composed of both state general fund monies made up of personal and corporate income taxes, as well as American Rescue Plan Act dollars. / CRIME: Lane County Sheriff's deputies are asking for your help in identifying a suspect involved in a commercial burglary that took place on Christmas Eve morning in the Cedar Flat area. Investigators say the suspect used a hammer to break into Mather's Market on the McKenzie Highway. The suspect stole a large volume of vaping products valued at nearly \$5,000. The suspect was wearing a dark colored ski mask but appears to be a white male. Surveillance images indicate their vehicle is a blue 1990s model Ford F-Series standard cab pickup. If you know anything about the case or can provide a lead on the suspect's identity, contact the Lane County Sheriff's Office. Dial 541-682-4150, press option 1, and ask for Deputy Russ Olson. / WILDFIRE RECOVERY: Amid legal challenges from four environmental groups, officials with the Willamette National Forest are pulling back from hazard tree removal along more than 400 miles of forest roads in areas burned by 2020's catastrophic wildfires. Forest Supervisor Dave Warnack announced the decision yesterday morning, saying it is in the best interest of the public to limit the continued time and expense associated with the litigation. Instead, he says his staff will conduct a fresh review of the project with a new round of input from residents and other interested parties affected by the Holiday Farm, Lionshead, and Beachie Creek Fires. The Willamette National Forest's "Roadside Danger Tree Reduction" project cleared the way for the felling of fire-killed or damaged trees which pose a danger to roads and those traveling along them. But there were legal challenges claiming salvage logging was being allowed without enough public input, and that crews were harvesting far more trees than necessary. Willamette National Forest officials say the purpose of the project was to provide access and improved safety along Forest Roads within the burn areas and reopen them to the public and others as quickly as possible. While the new review is being conducted, officials say some forest roads will remain closed to the public until safety concerns are addressed. / POLITICS, ELECTIONS, LEGAL: The Oregon Supreme Court has agreed to determine whether former New York Times journalist Nicholas Kristof is eligible to run for governor, less than a week after election officials declared him ineligible because he failed to meet the three-year residency requirement. Both Kristof's attorney and Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum had asked the state's highest court to take the case and to move quickly, with a March 17 deadline for finalizing the list of candidates for the primary ballot looming. The court said briefs are due before it begins deliberating the matter on Jan. 27, with no oral arguments. / MILITARY: The U.S. Army, for the first time, is offering a maximum enlistment bonus of \$50,000 to highly skilled recruits who sign up for six years. The service is struggling to lure soldiers into certain critical jobs amid the continuing pandemic. Maj. Gen. Kevin Vereen, head of Army Recruiting Command, tells The Associated Press that shuttered schools and the competitive job market over the past year have posed significant challenges for recruiters. Heading into the most difficult months of the year for recruiting, the Army is hoping that some extra cash and a few other changes will entice qualified young people to sign up. / HEALTH, FAMILY: Distrust, misinformation and other factors have combined to produce what authorities say are alarmingly low COVID-19 vaccination rates in U.S.

children ages 5 to 11. As of Tuesday, only slightly more than 17 percent of those youngsters were fully vaccinated. It's been more than two months since they became eligible for vaccination. There was a pre-holiday surge after the shots were introduced last fall, but the numbers have climbed slowly since then, and omicron's out-of-control spread appears to have had little motivating effect. One doctor calls low pediatric vaccination rates and rising hospitalizations among children are a "gut punch." /

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Soil testing overseen by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality shows “concerning levels” of dioxins in the yards of several residential properties near J.H. Baxter & Co., a wood preserving facility in West Eugene. Officials say the levels are high enough at some properties to prompt removal of contaminated soil. That process will be completed this summer. The action plan comes after third-party consultants took yard soil samples in September and October of 2021 as part of a continuing investigation into dioxin contamination near the Baxter facility south of Roosevelt Boulevard. Experts say that, depending on the level of exposure, dioxins can increase the risk of cancer and the risk of other health effects. The consultants who sampled soil from seven properties on the other side of Roosevelt Boulevard determined that: Three properties need cleanup through the removal of contaminated soil as soon as possible. Three properties need cleanup to reduce long-term health risks. One property does not require cleanup. The DEQ has delivered letters to residents to inform them of the findings specific to each property and advise them of the next steps of the investigation and cleanup. The letters include precautions those residents they can take until cleanup occurs. The Oregon Health Authority also provided the recommended precautions that should allow those residents to minimize the amount of dirt that gets into their homes. These recommendations include removing shoes and wiping feet before entering the house, washing hands with soap and water after gardening, and avoiding activities that disturb large amounts of soil—such as digging holes or leaving piles of exposed soil. A second phase of soil sampling on residential properties is expected to take place soon. That will help determine the extent of the contamination north, west, and east of the initial seven properties. The DEQ and Oregon Health Authority first began testing soil samples around the J.H. Baxter’s facility in Eugene in late 2020. ; The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality also required soil tests at sites away from the J.H. Baxter site to provide background data. Sampling at one of these background sites – Trainsong Park in West Eugene’s Bethel area – unexpectedly showed elevated levels of dioxins. Trainsong Park is located on Edison Street, west of Bethel Drive. The source of this contamination is currently unknown, and it does not appear to be related to Baxter. But because of the test results, the City of Eugene

is temporarily closing Trainsong Park until further testing and evaluation have been completed and officials deem the park safe for all users. According to the Oregon Health Authority, people are exposed to soil in parks less often than they are exposed to soil from their own yards, because they typically spend more time at home than they do in a park. State officials say a family with young children would have to visit the park four days per week for an entire year before there would be any risk of health effects. Children under age three would be at greatest risk because they swallow more soil per body weight than older children. /

HEALTH: The surge in cases tied to the omicron variant of COVID-19 continues across the state: Lane County Public Health yesterday received reports of 644 new infections. The Oregon Health Authority was notified of 9,796 new cases. More than half a million Oregonians now have been infected with COVID-19. State health officials also say they're seeing a record volume of coronavirus testing, with more than 300,000 COVID-19 tests during the past seven days. Officials with the Oregon Health Authority have ordered 12 million tests kits that they are working to get into the hands of many considered most at risk for infection. To do that, they are prioritizing distribution to hospitals, schools, and organizations that work with communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. /

HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: Starting tomorrow, private health insurers will be required to cover up to eight at-home COVID-19 tests per month for those on their plans. The Biden administration announced the change Monday. Under the new policy, Americans either will be able to get home testing kits for free through their insurers, or submit receipts for the tests for reimbursement, up to a monthly per-person limit. A family of four, for instance, could be reimbursed for up to 32 tests per month. PCR tests and rapid tests ordered or administered by a health provider will continue to be fully covered by insurance with no limit. ; You have until the end of the day Saturday, January 15, to enroll in health coverage through the Oregon Health Insurance Marketplace. More than 140,000 people already have. Originally designed for those who do not have job-based coverage, or do not qualify for the Oregon Health Plan or another program, the Marketplace now has expanded eligibility. More than 75 percent of people who signed up in 2021 received financial help for plans that include essential benefits such as doctor visits, prescriptions, emergency care, and mental health services. Officials say the federal stimulus program known as the American Rescue Plan Act has made health insurance purchased through the Marketplace more affordable than ever: Individuals and families will pay only a certain percentage of their income on health insurance thanks to financial help available through [OregonHealthCare.gov](https://www.oregonhealthcare.gov). Even if you think you make too much money, Marketplace experts say it's worth looking into your health coverage options because eligibility rules are broader and, for many, the savings are larger. Among the examples they shared: A 26-year-old living in Eugene making \$28,000 per year can get health coverage for as low as \$1 per month; a 40-something couple in the Portland area making \$70,000 can get health coverage for as low as \$300 per month; and parents in their 30s with two children in La Grande earning \$80,000 can get health coverage for as low as \$145 per month. The website can also connect you with health insurance experts who can offer one-on-one help with the application and enrollment process by phone, email, or in person. /

LEGAL, GOVERNMENT, HEALTH: Two major rulings yesterday from the U.S. Supreme Court on the Biden Administration's COVID-19 vaccination mandates. The high court threw out a

requirement that employees at large businesses with 100 or more workers either be vaccinated against the coronavirus or be tested regularly and wear a mask on the job. The court's conservative majority concluded the administration overstepped its authority by seeking to impose the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's vaccine-or-test rule on larger U.S. businesses. President Biden said he was disappointed by the ruling, saying the decision blocked "common-sense lifesaving requirements for employees at large businesses that were grounded squarely in both science and the law." The ruling affects more than 80 million people at large U.S. companies. OSHA officials had estimated that the rule would save 6,500 lives and prevent 250,000 hospitalizations over six months. For large companies, it's now up to them to decide whether to require employees be vaccinated. While some earlier told workers to follow the initial OSHA rules, many others waited for guidance from the Supreme Court. Some groups, like the National Retail Federation, are praising the ruling but many labor advocates say they are dismayed. More than 80 million people would have been affected. OSHA officials had estimated that the rule would save 6,500 lives and prevent 250,000 hospitalizations over six months. ; But in separate ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court is allowing the Biden administration to proceed with its vaccine mandate for most health care workers across the U.S. The mandate covers virtually all health care workers in the country, applying to providers that receive federal Medicare or Medicaid funding. That's an estimated 10.4 million workers at 76,000 health care facilities as well as home health care providers. The rule has medical and religious exemptions. A separate vaccine mandate for federal contractors, on hold after lower courts blocked it, has not been considered by the Supreme Court. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 208 million Americans are fully vaccinated. That's close to two-thirds of the population. More than one-third of Americans have received booster shots, according to the CDC. / EDUCATION, LEGAL: Tens of thousands of people who took out student loans over the past 20 years could see their loans canceled or receive a small check as part of a \$1.85 (b) billion nationwide settlement with Navient, a major student loan collecting company. Officials say borrowers will receive restitution or debt cancellation. Officials say the loans were taken out primarily between 2002 to 2014. The suit was filed by attorneys general in 39 states, including Oregon. They claimed Navient led student borrowers into long-term forbearances instead of giving them advice on less costly repayment plans. Close to 5,500 Oregon borrowers (5,488) would receive a combined \$1.5 million in restitution. Another 864 would have \$22 million in student debt canceled. Many borrowers who struggled to make payments said they never were told about a federal "income driven" program that could lower their payments. Others say the company never told them about a federal program that forgives some student debt for public-sector workers. Navient said it did not act illegally, and it did not admit any fault in the settlement. The company also agreed to pay more than \$140 million in other penalties. / LOW-INCOME, FAMILY, ECONOMY, GOVERNMENT: Families who for the past half-year have received a monthly Child Tax Credit deposit will not get one this month. The monthly tax credits were part of Biden's \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package. The president had proposed extending them for another full year as part of a separate measure focused on economic and social programs. But that bill is stalled in the U.S. Senate. More than 36 million families received the payments in December. /

HOUSING, LOW-INCOME, GOVERNMENT: There's another \$100 million in emergency housing assistance that is being made available to Oregon renters later this month. But state officials anticipate the money will go fast once the application window opens on Wednesday, January 26. State lawmakers set the money aside last month. The action came shortly after officials with Oregon Housing and Community Services announced they were temporarily halting applications because the agency had used or allocated \$289 million in available federal rental assistance. When the emergency rental assistance portal reopens on January 26, program managers estimate it only will accept applications for three to five weeks before the new funding is exhausted. The agency estimates the rental assistance money cover between 6,700 and 9,300 additional applications. Households with the most need will have priority. Tenants who apply for the aid can receive "safe harbor" eviction protections until their application is processed. But tenants must show proof to their landlord that they applied for the program to receive the protections. / CRIME, WILDFIRES: An Ashland man has pleaded guilty in Jackson County Circuit Court to first-degree arson and was sentenced to serve four years in prison with three years of post-prison supervision. The Mail Tribune reports 46-year-old Vance Phuc Nguyen set his vehicle on fire on Sept. 8, 2020, near Emigrant Lake "as the Almeda fire raged," the Jackson County District Attorney's Office said Thursday. The District Attorney's office says a fire truck on its way to assist with the Almeda fire diverted to the vehicle fire. Nguyen admitted to police that he used gasoline on the fire, which was set near homes. / LEGAL: The Oregon Supreme Court has okayed a proposal that would give would-be lawyers the option to skip the bar exam and instead become licensed to practice law through experience or supervision. The Oregonian/OregonLive reports the state's highest court in a unanimous vote "expressed approval in concept" to alternative pathways designed for law students and postgraduates seeking admittance to the state bar, according to draft minutes from the court's Tuesday business meeting. The Board of Bar Examiners' committees will begin drafting proposals for the two programs and will report back to the Oregon Supreme Court in six months at the earliest. / ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, WEATHER: Two U.S. science agencies say 2021 was the sixth hottest year on record globally, part of a long-term warming trend. NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration released measurements showing how hot last year was. It wasn't record hot, but the year's 58.5-degree average is not much behind the record. The last eight years have been the eight hottest years on record. Last year, 1.8 billion people in 25 Asian, African, and Middle Eastern nations had their hottest years on record. Scientists say heat-trapping gases from the burning of fossil fuels have warmed Earth about 2 degrees since the late 1800s. / WILDLIFE, CRIME: Oregon State Police are asking for the public's help as they search for someone who illegally shot and killed a wolf in northeast Oregon. The Oregonian/OregonLive reports a resident called state troopers Saturday after finding a 2-year-old female wolf fitted with a tracking collar dead southeast of the town of Wallowa. The wolf was known as OR 106 and was not traveling with other animals after dispersing from the Chesnimnus Pack. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists was determined the wolf died of a gunshot wound. On Thursday, conservation groups announced a \$16,500 reward for information that leads to a conviction. The wolf is one of several poached in eastern Oregon in the past year. /

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RACIAL JUSTICE, COMMUNITY, EVENTS: Today is Martin Luther King, Jr., Day—the federal holiday honoring the slain civil rights leader. But the surge in cases tied to the omicron variant of COVID-19 is forcing many in-person events across the country to cancel or move online. That's the case locally, where the Eugene-Springfield chapter of the NAACP and other members of the local MLK Committee announced on Friday they've reluctantly canceled the in-person part of the 24th annual MLK March and Celebration. But they say the online offering is going strong: Event organizers received more than 160 entries from Springfield students in the Kindergarten through 12th Grades. They are posted on the event website. See the entries at <https://safer1214.wixsite.com/website> / EVENTS, RECREATION: As part of the federal observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday, all national parks, national forests, national wildlife refuges, and other federal sites are waiving entrance and parking fees. This is the first of a handful of "fee-free days" in 2022 for federal recreation sites. The National Parks Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service all take part. / ANIMALS, SOCIAL SERVICES: The late Betty White was a tireless advocate for animals for her entire life, from caring for homeless animals as a child to launching her own weekly TV show "The Pet Set" dedicated to her celebrity friends and their pets. Today would have been White's 100th birthday. Fans are honoring her memory and celebrating her volunteer work with animals by donating to local animal shelters as part of the #BettyWhiteChallenge. Here in Lane County, the Greenhill Humane Society is among those with a donation link on their website. Go to www.green-hill.org to contribute. / CRIME: Eugene Police set up a tip line over the weekend and continue to seek leads in Friday night's shooting outside a hip-hop concert taking place at WOW Hall. Six people were wounded. Investigators said over the weekend that one victim remains in critical condition, and the remaining five are stable. The incident occurred near the walkway and back entrance to the venue around 9:30 p.m. on Friday. Police say it was a hectic scene with a loud and frantic crowd. As officers and medic units began providing aid to victims, investigators worked to speak with witnesses and collect evidence. The victims included four men and two women. Five of the six are from out of town and appeared to have traveled to Eugene for the concert. Investigators are working to determine whether the shooting was

targeted or random. Information from witnesses was limited, describing the shooter as a male in a hoodie. The Eugene Police Tip Line is 541-682-5162. The emergency response included 25 Eugene Police Patrol Units and multiple detective units, along with units from the Lane County Sheriff's Office, Oregon State Police, Springfield Police, and University of Oregon Police Department. The FBI is assisting. Eugene Springfield Fire responded with five medics, four paramedic engine companies and four chief officers. Eugene Police Forensic Evidence Unit responded as well. Central Lane 911 received at least 30 emergency calls. / SAFETY, EARTHQUAKES: Oregonians and people up and down the West Coast were advised to stay off the beach on Saturday after an underwater volcanic eruption in Tonga in the South Pacific prompted a Tsunami Advisory Saturday morning for the shorelines of Oregon, Washington, California, Hawaii, Alaska, and British Columbia. Damage was relatively minor along the West Coast: Some surging waves caused local flooding in parts of Hawaii and California. Beaches remained closed as a precaution for much of the day. As we learned during the 2011 Japanese earthquake, tsunami-related rough surf and strong currents can last for several hours. That's why officials warned people to stay well away from low-lying coastal areas and harbors to ensure any threat had passed. As for the Tongan volcano, the sonic boom of its eruption was heard as far away as Alaska. / HEALTH: Coronavirus cases are rising sharply among children under age four and between the ages of 12 and 17. Oregon health officials say they are closely monitoring the trends in pediatric cases, which made up more than 20 percent of the state's overall known caseload in the week that ended Jan. 8. The state says hospitalizations are also increasing in children. Overall, the Oregon Health Authority reported 8,672 new confirmed or presumptive cases Friday and 13 new deaths. Six percent of staffed adult intensive care unit beds are open statewide. ; COVID-19 infections are soaring again at U.S. nursing homes because of the omicron wave, and deaths are climbing too. That's leading to new restrictions on family visits and a renewed push to get more residents and staff members vaccinated and boosted. Nursing homes were the lethal epicenter of the pandemic early on, before the advent of the vaccines allowed many of them to reopen and welcome visitors again. Now the highly contagious variant has dealt them a setback. Nursing homes reported about 32,000 COVID-19 cases among residents in the week ending Jan. 9, a nearly sevenfold increase from about a month ago. A total of 645 COVID-19-related deaths were reported during the same week, a 47 percent increase from a month earlier. / CRIME: A fatal vehicle-versus-pedestrian crash Saturday evening on Highway 58 in Oakridge. Oregon State Police and emergency personnel responded shortly after 6:30 p.m. Preliminary investigation revealed a westbound passenger vehicle operated by 53-year-old Robert Anthony Fraser of Oakridge, struck a 71-year-old Dale Michael Roberts of Oakridge, who was crossing the lanes of travel. Roberts died from his injuries. Fraser was arrested for Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants with further charges expected. /

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RACIAL JUSTICE, COMMUNITY, EVENTS: During yesterday's federal holiday honoring slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Junior, the City of Eugene honored King and former City Councilwoman Andrea Ortiz. Volunteers planted a tree at a park that was renamed in Ortiz' honor. The park is located in the Bethel area, off Royal Avenue on Elizabeth Street. Ortiz, who died in 2017, was the first Latina to serve on the Eugene City Council. She worked for 28 years at PeaceHealth and had served on the Bethel School Board, Eugene Human Rights Commission, the board of Children First, and others. / CRIME: Eugene Police continue to seek leads in Friday night's shooting outside a hip-hop concert at WOW Hall that left six people wounded, one critically. Investigators are working to determine whether the shooting was targeted or random. Witnesses described the shooter as a male in a hoodie. The Eugene Police Tip Line is 541-682-5162. ; A Springfield man was arrested yesterday morning in the Pleasant Hill area after investigators say he was spotted with a stolen vehicle and fled, barricading himself in a stranger's home. The incident began around 8:30 Monday morning in the area of Edenvale Road and Filbert Lane. Officials with the Lane County Sheriff's Office and Oregon State Police say a citizen reported their vehicle had been stolen from a location in Eugene and loaded onto a flatbed trailer. The victim said they followed the vehicle until it became stuck in the mud at an address off Edenvale Road. Deputies and troopers say the suspect, identified as 45-year-old Joey Lee Whittaker of Springfield, fled as they arrived and barricaded himself in a nearby house. Deputies and troopers tried hailing the suspect over a loudspeaker. The Eugene Police Explosives Disposal Unit used a remote-controlled robot to approach the residence. Investigators say the robot located Whittaker hiding near a couch. They say he eventually surrendered and was taken into custody without incident. Officials say charges against Whittaker are being determined and that a rifle was also located inside the suspect's vehicle. / WILDFIRE RECOVERY: The Biden administration plans to significantly increase efforts to stave off catastrophic wildfires that have been torching areas of the U.S. West by more aggressively thinning forests around areas called hotspots where nature and neighborhoods collide. Officials want to more than double their use of controlled fires and logging operations to reduce vegetation that can feed fires. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack tells The Associated Press the work will focus

on regions where out-of-control blazes wiped out neighborhoods, including California's Sierra Nevada mountains and Colorado's Rocky Mountain foothills. Experts say climate change is heating and drying out the West. That makes wildfires more intense even as people increasingly move into fire-prone areas. /

HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: Having trouble finding rapid COVID-19 tests in stores? Americans are just one day away from being able to order free COVID tests from the federal government. Starting tomorrow, a new website will be up and running with the goal of getting free test kits into the hands of citizens. The first of the kits will be sent out at the end of this month and be delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. There will be no shipping fee and because the tests are free you will not need to enter any payment information. Government website for ordering the free test kits is <https://www.covidtests.gov>. Initially, only four rapid tests will be available per residential address. That's to meet expected demand. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends at-home testing when people experience COVID-19 symptoms including fever, cough, sore throat, respiratory symptoms, and muscle aches; five days after a potential COVID-19 exposure; or as part of test-to-stay protocols in schools and workplaces.; On Saturday, most Americans became eligible to be reimbursed by their private insurers for tests they purchase themselves. The new Biden administration rule requires private health insurers to cover the cost of up to eight at-home COVID-19 tests per month for those on their plans. People will have the option of buying tests at a store or online, then seeking reimbursement from their health insurance provider. But details of the reimbursement program are still being finalized. If you qualify for the reimbursement, you're being urged to hang onto your purchase receipts and keep an eye out for updates from your health insurance provider. And remember, the reimbursement for up to eight at-home COVID tests per month only applies to those purchased on or after Saturday. Insurers are not required to reimburse the cost of any tests purchased before then. Insurers are receiving incentives to work with pharmacies and retailers to develop plans to cover the cost of the tests with no out-of-pocket cost to customers. But in most cases, those procedures are still being finalized. Once things are up-and-running, you will either will be able to get home testing kits for free through your insurer, or submit receipts for the tests for reimbursement, up to a monthly per-person limit. A family of four, for instance, could qualify to be reimbursed for up to 32 tests per month. PCR tests and rapid tests ordered or administered by a health provider will continue to be fully covered by insurance with no limit. If you receive public health insurance through Medicare, or are without insurance, you'll need to go to the government's free COVID-19 test website at www.covidtests.gov to order your rapid tests. You might also contact community health centers in your area that offering free testing. /

HEALTH, MILITARY: Members of the Oregon National Guard continue to arrive at hospitals across Oregon, part of another deployment to shore up staffing amid the latest surge in COVID-related cases. That includes personnel heading for PeaceHealth RiverBend Sacred Heart Medical Center and PeaceHealth's University District Medical Center, and McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center. PeaceHealth officials said over the weekend they anticipate welcoming service members to their facilities in Springfield and Eugene by Friday. The National Guard personnel will be serving for 30 days in nonclinical roles, with a priority on shoring up staffing in Food Services and Environmental Services. Additional National Guard service members may be assigned to RiverBend, and

possibly to Cottage Grove Community Medical Center. Close to 1,200 soldiers and airmen with the Oregon National Guard mobilized last week to help at hospitals across the state. The facilities are dealing with reduced staffing and increased cases of COVID-19 tied to the omicron surge. At other Oregon hospitals, the National Guard members will provide logistical support as materials handlers and equipment runners. They also will assist with COVID-19 testing and other non-clinical services. The duties are similar to the Oregon National Guard deployment of close to 1,500 personnel last year during the delta surge. That deployment began in August and ended in December. /

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DISCUSSED WILDFIRE RECOVERY: Officials say there will always be forest fires; the question is how catastrophic those blazes will be. The Biden administration yesterday announced it is significantly expanding efforts to prevent the types of catastrophic wildfires that have been burning across broad swaths of the West. The plan calls for more aggressively thinning forests and setting controlled burns to rid areas of highly flammable underbrush. The focus would be around “hot spots” where communities and neighborhoods have expanded into forested settings. They say it also would make forests healthier in the long run. Forest Service planning documents indicate those “hotspots” might only make up 10 percent of fire-prone areas but account for 80 percent of the risk to communities because of population densities and locations. Officials say their \$50 billion plan would more than double the use of controlled fires and forest thinning to reduce vegetation that feeds fires. The projects are expected to begin this year. During Oregon’s Bootleg fire last July, the Forest Service noted the blaze burned across more than 600 square miles but did less damage in parts of the forest that had been thinned over the past decade. Details aren’t immediately available on the specific projects. But the recently passed federal infrastructure bill set aside \$3.2 billion over the next five years to help get work going quickly. Long-term, officials say the projects would require an estimated \$20 billion over 10 years for work on national forests and \$30 billion for work on other federal, state, tribal and private lands. The effort would take place across almost 80,000 square miles — an area almost as large as Idaho. About half that area is privately-owned or controlled by states or tribes, making their participation in the plan crucial. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack tells The Associated Press the work will focus on regions where out-of-control blazes wiped out neighborhoods. That includes zones that saw catastrophic fires in portions of Oregon, Washington state, California’s Sierra Nevada mountains, Colorado’s Rocky Mountains, and parts of Arizona. Experts say climate change is heating and drying out the West, making wildfires more intense even as people increasingly move into fire-prone areas. Vilsack says now is the time to change the trajectory of the West’s wildfire seasons. Agency experts conclude a combination of tree thinning and intentionally-set fires would clear undergrowth through prescribed burns to make the forests healthier in the long run. Vilsack acknowledges that the new effort will require a “paradigm shift” within

the U.S. Forest Service, from an agency devoted to stamping out fires, into one that uses what some native Americans call “good fire” on forests and rangeland to prevent even larger blazes. / CRIME: Still not a lot of leads as the Eugene Police continue to investigate Friday night’s shooting outside a hip-hop concert at WOW Hall. Six people were wounded, but officials said yesterday that all are in stable condition or have been treated and released. The concert attracted many out-of-town performers and attendees. Officials say four of the victims are from Pendleton, one is from San Francisco, and the sixth is a Eugene resident. All are between the ages of 21 and 30. Investigators are working to determine whether the shooting was targeted or random. Despite receiving some tips in the case, the witnesses’ descriptions of the shooter remain “a male in a hoodie.” Investigators continue to ask for leads in the case and urge those who might have more information to contact the Eugene Police, either through their main line or via a special “Tip Line” at 541-682-5162. ; A motorcyclist was hospitalized with life-threatening injuries last night after when investigators say was a hit-and-run crash with another vehicle on Highway 99 in Eugene, north of Fairfield Avenue. It happened around 7:45 p.m. Police say they located the driver of the vehicle a short time later and a short distance away. They say the driver is cooperating in the investigation. Police have not released the names of the driver or the motorcyclist and there is no word on the rider’s condition. The Eugene Police Major Collision Investigation team is analyzing evidence from the scene. / HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: The Biden administration yesterday quietly launched its website for Americans to request free at-home COVID-19 tests, one day before the site was scheduled to officially launch. The first of the kits will be sent out at the end of this month and be delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. The government website for ordering the free test kits is <https://www.covidtests.gov> Initially, only four rapid tests will be available per residential address. That’s to meet expected demand. The effort marks the latest step by President Biden to address concerns about low inventory and long lines for testing during a nationwide surge in COVID-19 cases due to the omicron variant. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends at-home testing when people experience COVID-19 symptoms—including fever, cough, sore throat, respiratory symptoms, and muscle aches; when they are five days after a potential COVID-19 exposure; or as part of the test-to-stay protocols required by in schools and workplaces. ; The Biden administration begins making 400 million N95 masks available for free to Americans starting next week. The step comes after federal officials emphasized the masks’ better protection against the omicron variant of COVID-19 over cloth face coverings. The masks will come from the government’s Strategic National Stockpile, which has more than 750 million of the highly protective masks on hand. They will be available for pickup at pharmacies and community health centers across the country. The White House says the masks begin shipping this week for distribution starting late next week. ; Health experts suggest stepping up protection against omicron by wearing N95, KN95 or similar masks. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently updated its guidance to recommend those kinds of masks used by health care workers. There are different sizes, shapes, and styles. But experts say it is important to have a good seal all the way around your face. CDC experts also noted the importance of picking a mask that fits well so you will wear it consistently. To avoid counterfeits, purchase masks directly from verified sources and stores. /

HEALTH: More big numbers from over the holiday weekend about the surge in Oregon's COVID-19 cases driven by the virus' omicron variant: Lane County Public Health received reports of a combined 969 new infections on Sunday and Monday. There were no new deaths. But 53 residents remain hospitalized, six of whom are in intensive care. The Oregon Health Authority released a four-day case total for Friday through Monday. The more than 28,000 new reported cases average to slightly more than 7,000 per day. / HEALTH, SPORTS; The University of Oregon's men's basketball game vs. Washington State scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 20 at Matthew Knight Arena has been postponed because of COVID-19 protocols within the Cougars' program. The two schools are working to reschedule the game. / HEALTH: The fast-moving omicron variant may cause less severe disease on average, yet COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. are climbing. Modelers forecast 50,000 to 300,000 more Americans could die by the time the omicron wave subsides this spring. The seven-day rolling average for daily new COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. has been trending upward since mid-November. COVID-19 deaths among nursing home residents started rising slightly two weeks ago, although still at a rate 10 times less than last year before most residents were vaccinated. The unprecedented level of infection means vulnerable people will become severely sick. But the notion that a milder disease on average could still take thousands of lives is difficult for health experts to convey. / SCHOOLS, HEALTH: Some sobering educational news out of Washington state, where students took their first statewide exams since the pandemic began last fall. Their scores dropped. The Seattle Times reports that between 2019 and 2021, the overall percentage of Washington state students who met state standards on the math portion of the exam fell by 20 percentage points. Just 30 percent of Washington state children — public school students enrolled in grades 4 through 11 — met standards in math. In English, the portion of kids who met the standard fell by 9 percentage points. / COMMUNITY: You can now carry a bit of public art in your pocket when you get a new Eugene Public Library card. The new three new card designs feature works from the 20x21 EUG Mural Project. Sure, you can renew your existing card. But if you prefer one of the new cards featuring the mural designs, trade your old card in for free between now and the end of the summer. The mural images feature everything from culture and agriculture to a friendly honeybee. Eugene Public Library cards are free of charge to everyone who lives in Eugene. Students enrolled in Eugene School District 4J and Bethel School District are also eligible for free library cards, regardless of address. Learn more at 541-682-5450 or visit eugene-or.gov/library / CRIME: Eugene Police say they've received a report from a man in another part of the state noting he had gotten a call on his caller ID from "City of Eugene" and the caller was trying to get his credit card information. These calls generally use an automated system but occasionally they will come from an actual person who attempts to alarm or scare the recipient. Eugene Police investigators remind you to follow your instincts and never feel embarrassed about confirming the identity of a caller. This can be accomplished by contacting the represented agency directly via a published contact phone number and asking to speak with the individual directly or confirm the information with the agency's non-emergency phone number. If you receive a phone call and recognize that the call is a scam, please hang up immediately and report the information to www.ic3.gov If you are the victim of a scam and have incurred a loss, please call the EPD non-emergency at 541.682.5111. If someone

asks you for your cash, credit card numbers or other personal information- especially if you don't know them well-the safest move is to refuse their request and check with the police or find an independent way to contact a legitimate business and follow up rather than responding right away to the caller. Don't give out personal or financial information to someone who calls you. If you are unsure, hang up and independently find the phone number of the alleged represented agency and call yourself. A law enforcement agency will not ask you for this type of information or request that money be sent by way of money order for any reason. Beware of high-pressure techniques, such as the need to give information or make a decision on the spot. If it sounds quirky or weird, it probably is. See a list of some common scams on the Eugene Police website at <https://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/View/59589/Scams-and-Fraud-EPD-Website-1-1-21?bidId=> This document covers some of the most common scams we've seen in our area, but new ones are popping-up all the time. It is easy to get taken in, even if you are usually suspicious of scams. /

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SUBJECT
DISCUSSED EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMY: Oregon continues to see more job openings than there are job seekers. Analysts with the state say employers added 100,000 jobs between January and November of last year, which is an unprecedented hiring pace. That includes many openings in the health sector. Experts with the Oregon Employment Department say there's been a shortage of job applicants for health care positions since at least 2013. But the pandemic has intensified the situation. But in every other job sector, employers also are competing for workers. Now, analysts say there is a new dynamic at play: How do companies recognize and compensate those who stayed with them throughout the pandemic? And how do they ensure those longtime workers don't quit for another job? The coronavirus remains a big contributor to worker shortages. A survey early last month of people who have stepped away from Oregon's workforce found 46,000 said their primary reason was fear of getting or spreading COVID. Another 34,000 said they had contracted COVID or were caring for someone with symptoms. Before the pandemic, one in every six adults lived in households where all of the grown-ups worked and there were children who also were part of the family. But childcare issues and schools going to remote learning forced many parents and caregivers to cut back their hours on the job or leave the workforce completely. That survey was taken before the surge in omicron cases hit the state, so officials suspect those numbers grew at the end of the year. ; The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits rose to the highest level in three months as the fast-spreading omicron variant disrupted the job market. Jobless claims rose for the third straight week — by 55,000 to 286,000, highest since mid-October, the Labor Department reported. The four-week average of claims, which smooths out weekly volatility, rose by 20,000 to 231,000, highest since late November. A surge in COVID cases has set back what had been a strong comeback from last year's short but devastating coronavirus recession. ; Tax time is coming. Later this month, the Oregon Employment Department is sending out roughly 400,000 1099-G forms. Those are forms that show any unemployment payments you might have received from the state last year. In addition to the paper forms, you'll be able to access copies of the 1099-G tax form online when you log into your account with the state employment department. But if you receive one of the forms and you did not receive benefits, officials say might mean someone's been

trying to steal your identity. Leaders of the Oregon Employment Department encourage you to call their fraud hotline. You may also go to the agency's website to see more resources for those who believe they've been targets of employment benefit fraud. Oregon employment officials say they prioritize fraud and ID theft cases. But because their workload remains high, they say it could take time to complete any investigation. That said, they say anyone affected by suspected ID theft do not need to hold off on filing their tax returns. Instead, file using the actual amount you received—including if that amount is zero—not the incorrect amount reflected on the 1099-G form. Last year during tax season, about 200 people contacted the department after receiving a 1099-G form, even though they had not received unemployment benefits in 2020. / HEALTH: The omicron variant continues to drive the high number of new COVID-19 cases across Oregon: Lane County Public Health received reports of a combined 604 new infections yesterday. There were no new deaths, but 53 residents remain hospitalized, ten of whom are in intensive care. The Oregon Health Authority received reports of more than 8,500 new infections yesterday and 15 additional deaths. That puts the state's pandemic death toll at just over 5,900. / HEALTH, BUSINESS, RECREATION: The surge in COVID-19 cases driven by the omicron variant is continuing to affect staff levels at some local businesses and agencies: Willamalane yesterday closed its Willamalane Park Swim Center and Splash! At Lively Park because of COVID-related staffing issues. The closures will continue at least through next Thursday, January 27. On Tuesday, Lane County Public Health's Brookside Clinic on Chambers Street temporarily closed because of the continued omicron surge in the community. For now, clinic patients and staff are being reassigned to other agency facilities. COVID-19 cases within the Washington State Women's Basketball program are forcing a postponement of Friday's game with the Oregon State women and Sunday's game with the Duck women in Pullman, Washington. The schools will work to reschedule the contests. / CRIME: Eugene Police yesterday arrested the man they say was the driver of a car that crashed into a utility pole on East 30th Avenue at Onyx Street, causing a power outage. Investigators say 30-year-old Gino Jordan Hinojos-Castle of Eugene called to report his vehicle had been stolen from a tavern. But when officers located him a few blocks from the crash they say he appeared intoxicated, and they suspected he had been at the wheel. Police say Hinojos-Castle was advised against filing a false stolen vehicle report but that he signed it. The suspect was arrested after officers completed their initial investigation. ; Eugene Police yesterday more details on Tuesday night's hit-and-run crash on Highway 99 north of Fairfield Avenue in Eugene that left a motorcyclist hospitalized with life-threatening injuries. They say they located the driver of the vehicle, 32-year-old Amanda Marie Kierce, a short time later and a short distance away. They say Kierce is cooperating in the investigation. The motorcyclist, 55-year-old Daniel Ekstrand of Eugene, remains hospitalized. ; Eugene Police say it's pretty easy to recognize the latest scam making the rounds. The caller claims you're being cited for a driving violation after being recorded by a Eugene Police traffic camera. Thing is, Eugene does not have any of that type of traffic cams. Don't fall for the scam. Don't share any personal information or financial information by phone or online. Remember: If it sounds fishy, it probably is. / SAFETY: The northbound lanes of Interstate Five, four miles south of Albany, were closed for three hours yesterday after a truck transporting a load of lumber

caught fire. Oregon State Police say there were several crashes in the traffic backup. The smoke also affected southbound traffic. The northbound lanes of the freeway reopened around 1:45 p.m. / **LEGAL, CRIME, GOVERNMENT:** Lane County's District Attorney is joining her counterpart in Linn County and four crime victims and families in filing a legal petition accusing Governor Kate Brown of unlawfully freeing close to 1,000 incarcerated people. The lawsuit seeks to halt more than 70 proposed commutations. District attorneys Patricia Perlow of Lane County and Doug Marteeny of Linn County are among those who allege Brown has violated clemency procedures that require victim notification. The lawsuit also asks a judge to stop the governor from allowing those convicted of crimes as minors from applying for commutation. A spokeswoman for the governor said the office "generally does not comment on matters of pending litigation." Under the commutation plan, the affected inmates would be eligible to seek parole or in some cases be released outright. About three-quarters of those who meet Brown's criteria were sentenced under Measure 11, the state's mandatory minimum sentencing law, which applies to the most serious crimes, including sexual abuse, rape, and murder. But the move would apply to some notorious young killers, including several in Lane County. But the governor's criteria do not apply to people convicted of crimes as juveniles whose projected release dates are in 2050 or later. That means Thurston High School shooter Kip Kinkel is not on the list for clemency review. Kinkel was sentenced to nearly 112 years for fatally shooting his parents and then killing two students at the high school in Springfield in 1998 and wounding 24 others. / **CRIME, AGRICULTURE, BUSINESS, LAW ENFORCEMENT:** How pervasive is Southern Oregon's illegal marijuana industry? Officials in Josephine County offered a snapshot yesterday: Last year alone, they say they raided 52 suspected illegal cannabis operations, seizing more than 680,000 plants, 157 firearms, and close to \$1.3 million in cash. That's in addition to water pumps, generators, and heavy machinery used to illegally cultivate marijuana, often on public lands and often while illegally diverting water from nearby streams. Investigators across parts of Southwest Oregon are asking the state to provide millions of dollars this year in additional funding, along with personnel and other resources, to help them carry out more drug busts and prosecutions. They say criminals are cultivating and selling (b)illions of dollars in illegal marijuana and cannabis products and law enforcement crackdowns are only affecting a small percentage of those operations. /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF
BROADCAST 01/21/22

TIME OF
BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KGNU-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

HEALTH: Is the surge in infections related to the omicron variant of COVID-19 beginning to peak here in Oregon? In California, experts in Los Angeles and San Francisco say they're starting to see it happen, although daily case totals remain extremely high. While we continue to log large numbers of new daily infections, health analysts with Oregon Health and Science University in Portland predict the omicron peak will arrive at the end of the month. Yesterday, the state reported more than 10,000 new COVID-19 cases and Lane County logged 794. According to state and local numbers, fewer people are in intensive care units during this surge, but more are showing up for emergency care and winding up in regular hospital beds. While the number of new deaths has slowed, leaders with the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Care Systems yesterday warned that in the next few weeks emergency departments might be overflowing with patients. Becky Hultberg, speaking for the hospital group, said even though COVID cases remain below record levels from the early days of the pandemic and last year's Delta surge, staffing shortages are adding to the challenge. She adds that even when severely ill COVID patients recover and become eligible for discharge, hospitals increasingly have a tough time finding care facilities with available beds that can take them. Hultberg adds that hospitals continue to deal with shortages of things like blood donations and monoclonal antibody treatments. This week, members of the Oregon National Guard continued to arrive at hospitals across Oregon and here in Lane County, part of another deployment to shore up non-clinical staffing amid the latest surge in COVID-related cases. Meantime, some local medical practices are taking steps to better protect their staff and patients from the omicron surge. Yesterday, the leader of Oregon Medical Group said patients now must wear medical-grade surgical masks to their appointments. Patients who do not have one will be provided with one when they arrive. ; There are two new reports out this morning from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. They find that Pfizer and Moderna booster shots are extremely effective in protecting against severe disease from the omicron variant of COVID-19, especially among Americans ages 50 and older. The booster doses also reduced the likelihood of a visit to an emergency department or urgent care clinic. ; More detail on yesterday's local reported COVID-19 cases: Lane County Public Health yesterday was notified of 794 new infection and one new death, bringing

our pandemic death toll to 364. Fifty-eight 53 residents are hospitalized, up five from a day earlier. Eleven of those patients are in intensive care units. The Oregon Health Authority was notified of more than 10,000 new infections (10,034) and eight deaths, raising the pandemic death toll to 5,916. / HEALTH, LABOR: Bargainers for Springfield's McKenzie Willamette Medical Center and close to 300 of its union workers have reached agreement on a tentative contract. Their last pact expired at the end of August. Union officials said the deal includes increases to worker pay, health subsidies, and their education fund. SEIU Local 49 represents those in a range of hospital jobs, including certified nursing assistants, respiratory therapists, pharmacy technicians, housekeepers, and others. / HEALTH: The omicron surge this winter has swamped U.S. hospitals with record numbers of patients with COVID-19. But it has also caused frightening moments and major headaches for people trying to get treatment for other ailments. Less-urgent procedures have been put on hold around the country, from cochlear implant surgeries to steroid injections for rheumatoid arthritis. And people with all sorts of medical complaints have had to wait in emergency rooms for hours longer than usual. For instance, Mat Gleason said it took 48 hours for his 92-year-old father to get a blood transfusion at Los Angeles-area emergency room. The procedure is needed to treat a blood disorder. Gleason said the transfusions usually take 10 hours at most. / EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS: It was a snapshot of the labor market taken just before the arrival of the omicron surge: State employment analysts say Oregon's December jobless rate fell one-tenth of a point, to 4.1 percent in December. It was the 20th consecutive month of declines to Oregon's unemployment rate as, during the early part of the month, employers across the state added a net 8,200 jobs. Ahead of the holidays, the Leisure and Hospitality saw some of the biggest gains, adding more than 2,600 jobs. While the sector has regained close to four in every five jobs it lost amid 2020's COVID-19 recession, it remains more than 23,000 before its pre-pandemic peak. Other increases came in Health Care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing, and Professional and Business Services. / SCHOOLS, HEALTH: The pandemic has been a huge challenge for schools and students. Yesterday, the Oregon Department of Education reported that while last year's high school graduation rate was down two percent from the year before, it was still the second-highest ever recorded by the state. State education leaders say the graduation rate of just more than 80 percent is cause for celebration. Oregon School Superintendent Colt Gill notes that teachers, students, and parents worked hard to keep kids and teens engaged during remote learning and the cautious return to the classroom. Gill says the pandemic was a challenge for many, as were the devastating 2020 wildfires—which displaced many families and disrupted education. But others say the numbers don't capture the whole picture: They point to Oregon's loosening of grading standards during the past two years, and say many students had less homework and fewer exams than they would in a normal academic year. / HOUSING, LOW-INCOME, GOVERNMENT: As they continue to process a backlog of applications, state officials say close to 35,000 Oregon households have received pandemic rental relief money. The total disbursed so far: \$243-million dollars. The numbers come from Oregon Housing and Community Services. The agency is working with its partners in all 36 Oregon counties to make another \$100 million in emergency housing assistance available to renters next week. State lawmakers set the money aside last month. Officials anticipate

the money will go fast once the application window opens on Wednesday. They estimate the money will cover between 6,700 and 9,300 additional applications. Households with the greatest need have priority. Tenants who apply for the aid can receive “safe harbor” eviction protections until their application is processed. But tenants must show proof to their landlord that they applied for the program to receive the protections. / BUSINESS, AGRICULTURE: Oregonians are continuing to buy a lot of booze and a lot of pot during the pandemic. And the taxes collected by the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission are helping to fund a range of public services. Sales were already strong during the economic boom ahead of the arrival of the coronavirus. Alcohol sales at state-licensed liquor stores were up six percent last year. A new report from the OLCC estimates total tax collections on alcohol sales between July of 2019 and June of 2021 came in at more than \$600 million dollars. That money helped fund schools, public safety, and addiction services. The OLCC also generates revenue by collecting alcohol licensing fees and overseeing the state’s alcohol privilege tax program where brewers and wineries pay an alcohol production fee. Those two programs generated \$58 million dollars over the past two years. Analysts say liquor sales trail only Oregon Lottery sales and personal and corporate taxes as a state revenue-generator. In addition, sales at Oregon’s 756 OLCC-licensed cannabis retailers topped \$1.1 billion dollars during the past biennium. Officials say that generated more than \$170 million dollars in tax revenue. That money also is divided between helping to fund addiction services and other state programs. / HEALTH, GOVERNMENT, LEGAL: Hundreds of Oregon residents say they are concerned about government overreach as officials at the state’s health authority consider whether to indefinitely extend the current indoor mask requirement. There currently is no set expiration date or specific data targets outlining when the rule would be lifted. More than 350 people—ranging from stay-at-home parents, registered nurses, a speech language pathologist, teachers, business owners and life-long residents, both in rural and urban areas—attended a virtual public hearing Thursday and vehemently opposed the rule. / CRIME, GOVERNMENT: Two Oregon district attorneys and the relatives of three homicide victims have filed a lawsuit accusing Governor Kate Brown of unlawfully freeing nearly 1,000 incarcerated people. The Oregonian and OregonLive reports the lawsuit filed Wednesday seeks to halt more than 70 proposed commutations. District attorneys Patricia Perlow of Lane County and Doug Marteeny of Linn County are among the parties alleging Brown has violated clemency procedures that require victim notification. The lawsuit also asks a judge to stop the governor from allowing those convicted of crimes as minors from applying for commutation. A spokeswoman for the governor said the office “generally does not comment on matters of pending litigation.” / UTILITIES, ENERGY: Two public electric utilities and a federal energy agency with millions of customers in eight western states have reached a tentative agreement centered on a proposed energy transmission line connecting their power grids. Idaho Power, PacifiCorp and the Bonneville Power Administration say the plan announced Wednesday will help them meet increasing demand and support their clean-energy goals. The plan anticipates the 2026 completion of a 500-kilovolt, 290-mile transmission line from eastern Oregon to southwestern Idaho. The energy entities say the Boardman to Hemingway transmission line will increase reliability and safety of the region’s transmission system. The agreement still needs to be finalized and approved by regulators. / SPORTS: NCAA member

schools have ratified a new, pared-down constitution. It clears the way for a decentralized approach to governing college sports that will hand more power to schools and conferences. The NCAA's three divisions will now be empowered to govern themselves, a move that college sports leaders hope will reduce legal exposure after a resounding rebuke from the Supreme Court last year. It means little change for Division II and III, but there could be a massive overhaul in Division I, which has hundreds of big schools and millions of dollars tied closely to football and basketball. / WOMEN, POLITICS, LEGAL: Anti-abortion protesters began to gather this morning in the nation's capital with spirits high and a sense that the country has reached a pivotal moment that could lead to a sweeping rollback of abortion rights in many states. The March for Life arrives as the Supreme Court appears likely in the coming months to let states impose tighter restrictions on abortion. The court is considering a Mississippi case and could overturn the landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling that affirmed the constitutional right to an abortion. Members of the anti-abortion movement say they are not finished fighting for restrictions even if the court's conservative majority rules in their favor later this year. / ECONOMY, SAFETY: The interest in digital currency is kind of like the early days of the internet and World Wide Web: everyone talks about it, but relatively few know what it is. The Federal Reserve is out with a report aimed at making some sense out of cryptocurrency and its digital cousins. The highly anticipated report says for now, the Fed would rather have banks and other financial firms manage digital accounts, instead of doing that itself. The Fed's paper, while noting no decision's been made, says it would likely follow an "intermediate model" for a digital dollar under which banks or payment firms would create accounts or digital wallets. / ECONOMY, HOUSING: Sales of previously occupied homes fell in December for the first time in four months. Many would-be buyers were frustrated by a lack of available houses, which fell to the lowest level in more than two decades. The National Association of Realtors says existing home sales dropped 4.6 percent last month from November to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of nearly 6.2 million. The realtors group says demand for homes remains healthy, with median prices jumping nearly 16 percent from a year ago to \$358,000. Homes sold in an average of 19 days, slightly higher than in the summer but still quite rapid. /

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NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

CRIME: The pursuit started yesterday morning in Eugene, headed into Springfield, then back into Eugene. It ended after some harrowing moments on a bicycle and pedestrian path behind Valley River Center. Now, investigators with the Oregon State Police are seeking anyone who might have been on the Valley River Path when the suspect drove his vehicle down it. The chase ended when an Oregon State Police Fish & Wildlife officer used their pickup to make intentional contact with the suspect's vehicle, forcing the driver to lose control and spin to a stop on an embankment by the Willamette River. The pursuit began shortly after 10:30 yesterday morning after callers reported the driver of a Black Nissan Pathfinder, later identified as 45-year-old Timothy Wayne Emra of Eugene, was assaulting a female passenger. Investigators say the female passenger is a missing 17-year-old juvenile, who was released to the Oregon Department of Human Services. As for the suspect, Emra: Officials say he's facing charges eluding, reckless driving, reckless endangering, being a felon in possession of a weapon, kidnapping, coercion, assault 4, possession of methamphetamine, DUII, criminal driving while suspended, tampering with physical evidence, and interfering. Oregon State Police want to hear from you if you were on the bike path and witnessed the pursuit. Contact the Oregon State Police Dispatch at 1-800-442-2068 or *OSP (*677). Reference Case # SP22018204. The Oregon State Police were assisted by Lane County Sheriff's Office, Eugene Police Department, Springfield Police Department, and the Oregon Department of Transportation. / GOVERNMENT, ECONOMY: The federal tax-filing season begins today. But a mix of budget cuts, backlogs, and pandemic-related closures are making for a complicated outlook. Officials with the U.S. Treasury Department officials say the Internal Revenue Service will face "enormous challenges" after years of budget cuts reduced the IRS workforce by 25 percent. That, combined with closures of some IRS facilities during the pandemic, mean fewer staff members are available to review and process returns and refunds. Add to that the changes to tax code: There was the third Economic Impact Payments to many taxpayers and creation of the expanded Child Tax Credit. Those who are eligible to claim the child tax credit and have received advance payments throughout the year might get a smaller refund than they would normally see. Treasury officials are encouraging you to file your returns online and create an account at IRS.gov

The Oregon Department of Revenue will begin issuing refunds on February 15. This year, the tax-filing deadline is Monday, April 18, because IRS offices in Washington, D.C., are closed on April 15 to observe a District of Columbia holiday. / HEALTH: As the surge related to the omicron variant of the virus continues, state health officials predict that the number of COVID-19 cases in Oregon will reach its peak within the next week. Friday was a record-setting day across the state, as the Oregon Health Authority reported 10,947 new coronavirus cases. But experts say it is likely that the number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 is much higher. More people are using at-home self-test kits. But they are not required to report their results to the state, which analysts say is likely resulting in a significant undercount of infections. Over the weekend, Lane County Public Health was notified of a combined close to 1,700 new COVID-19 infections but no new deaths. ; On Friday, three new studies found that Pfizer and Moderna booster shots are extremely effective in protecting against severe disease from the omicron variant of COVID-19, especially among Americans ages 50 and older. The reports, released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, found that booster doses also reduced the likelihood of a visit to an emergency department or urgent care clinic. The results echo previous research — including studies in Germany, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. / HEALTH, ENTERTAINMENT: Amid the surge in coronavirus cases, the Dierks Bentley concert scheduled for February 11 at Eugene's Matthew Knight Arena has been canceled. There is no rescheduling date. If you purchased tickets, you will receive a refund from Ticketmaster. / HEALTH: The omicron surge this winter has swamped U.S. hospitals with record numbers of patients with COVID-19. But it has also caused frightening moments and major headaches for people trying to get treatment for other ailments. Less-urgent procedures have been put on hold around the country, from cochlear implant surgeries to steroid injections for rheumatoid arthritis. And people with all sorts of medical complaints have had to wait in emergency rooms for hours longer than usual. / SCHOOLS: An analysis shows high school graduation rates dipped in at least 20 states after the first full school year disrupted by the pandemic. The analysis of data from 26 states by Chalkbeat suggests the coronavirus may have ended nearly two decades of nationwide progress toward getting diplomas to more students. The drops came despite at least some states and educators loosening standards to help struggling students. Most states waived outstanding graduation requirements in 2020 and saw graduation rates tick up. But graduation rates fell last year in 20 of the states that released data. Comprehensive data is not yet available. / LOW-INCOME, SOCIAL SERVICES: Food banks are among the nation's non-profit organizations experiencing a critical shortage of volunteers as the omicron variant prompts people to avoid group activities. Individual volunteers are pausing their volunteer shifts, and many companies and schools that regularly supply large groups of volunteers are suspending their participation over infection concerns. Because fewer people are available to prepare food, many food banks are spending money to purchase items already packaged for distribution. / ECONOMY, TRANSPORTATION: The average U.S. price of regular-grade gasoline is up a bit over the past two weeks, to \$3.33 per gallon. That reflects the recent climb in crude oil prices despite reduced demand. Fuel is more expensive in Oregon and across the West. Our average price for a gallon of regular gas is \$3.92 this morning. Lane County's average is a penny cheaper, at \$3.91. That's 15 cents

per gallon more than this time last month and a whopping \$1.25 more than this time last year. The current average price for diesel locally is \$4.13 per gallon. Nationwide, the Lundberg Survey reports the highest average price for regular-grade gas is in the San Francisco Bay Area, at \$4.74 per gallon. The lowest average is in Houston, at \$2.86 per gallon. According to the survey, the average price of diesel is \$3.70 a gallon, up 6 cents. / HOUSING, ECONOMY: The nation's red-hot housing market might be cooling a bit. Sales of previously occupied homes fell in December for the first time in four months. But many would-be buyers said they were frustrated by a lack of available houses, which fell to the lowest level in more than two decades. The National Association of Realtors says existing home sales dropped 4.6 percent last month from November to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of nearly 6.2 million. The realtors group says demand for homes remains healthy, with median prices jumping nearly 16 percent from a year ago to \$358,000. Homes sold in an average of 19 days, slightly higher than in the summer but still quite rapid. / HOUSING, LOW-INCOME, GOVERNMENT: As they continue to process a backlog of applications, state officials say close to 35,000 Oregon households have received pandemic rental relief money. The total disbursed so far: \$243-million dollars. The numbers come from Oregon Housing and Community Services. The agency is working with its partners in all 36 Oregon counties to make another \$100 million in emergency housing assistance available to renters next week. State lawmakers set the money aside last month. Officials anticipate the money will go fast once the application window opens on Wednesday. They estimate the money will cover between 6,700 and 9,300 additional applications. Households with the greatest need have priority. Tenants who apply for the aid can receive "safe harbor" eviction protections until their application is processed. But tenants must show proof to their landlord that they applied for the program to receive the protections. / AGRICULTURE: For all the talk about rising U.S. home values in cities and suburbs, they have nothing on the skyrocketing price of farmland. While median existing-home prices rose by 15.8 percent in the U.S. last year, farmland values went up about double that rate in places like Iowa. The rising values, especially in the Midwest, are due to high prices being paid for the key commodity crops of corn and soybeans, plentiful harvests in recent years coupled with low interest rates and optimism the good times will continue. But it's a mixed blessing. The soaring prices enrich farmers who already have a lot of land, but it makes it harder for young farmers to get started unless they happen to inherit land. / CRIME: Federal prosecutors said Friday that a Springfield man has pleaded guilty to distributing marijuana on the dark web and laundering his cryptocurrency proceeds. The U.S. Attorney's Office in Portland announced that 59-year-old Robert Kelly O'Neill waived indictment and pleaded guilty last week to possession with intent to distribute marijuana and money laundering. Court documents say in 2016, Homeland Security Investigations and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service began investigating the importing and online distribution of controlled substances on dark web marketplaces. As part of the investigation, prosecutors say the agencies exposed widespread laundering of illicit digital currency proceeds in Oregon and across the country. / LEGAL: Oregon has only roughly one-third of the public defense attorneys it needs to provide reasonably effective assistance to low-income defendants. A committee of the American Bar Association and a major accounting firm concluded that in a new report. The Oregon Project report

was requested and financed by the Legislature and found that Oregon only has 31 percent of the public defenders it needs to provide professional representation for their clients. Researchers also found that the Oregon Office of Public Defense Services has significant data deficiencies that prevent the agency from providing meaningful oversight. They recommended the state invest in a centralized data system for all public defense attorneys. /

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SCHOOLS, EDUCATION: The administrators of the SAT exam say that over the next two years they'll move the college entrance test from a paper-and-pencil format to a digital one that may be taken on a laptop computer or tablet. The shift is intended to boost the test's relevancy in an increasingly test-optional college admissions landscape. Students will be able to use their own devices but will still have to take the test at a monitored site or in school. During the pandemic, more colleges began letting students decide whether to include test scores in their college applications. But The College Board, which administers the SAT, says most students still want to take the test so they have the option of including the scores in their college submissions. The format change is scheduled to roll out internationally next year and in the U.S. in 2024. / CRIME: Authorities say six men have been charged with plotting to smuggle assault weapons and hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition to one of Mexico's most violent drug cartels. The U.S. attorney's office says a California man led the ring. But they say the criminals purchased weapons, gun parts, and ammo—including armor-piercing bullets—from locations in Oregon, Nevada, and other states. Three pleaded not guilty last week in Los Angeles to conspiracy to violate export laws and other charges. Federal prosecutors say the men used drug money to buy weapons intended for the notorious Cártel Jalisco Nueva Generación. / HEALTH: Pfizer has begun a study comparing its original COVID-19 vaccine with doses specially adjusted to match the omicron variant. Vaccine makers have been updating their doses should global health authorities decide a change is needed. The original vaccines still offer good protection against severe illness and death. But studies have made clear that adding a booster dose strengthens that protection, especially against omicron. The Pfizer study will include 1,420 healthy adults. Most already are vaccinated and will get boosters of the omicron-based vaccine or the original version. Some unvaccinated volunteers will get three omicron-based doses. ; The Oregon Health Authority yesterday shared weekend reports of new COVID-19 infections, saying it was informed of 19,400 combined cases on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Experts say it is likely that the number of people who have tested positive for coronavirus is much higher: More people are using at-home self-test kits but are not required to report their results to the state. / SCHOOLS. HEALTH: Officials with the Alsea Schools hope to resume classes

tomorrow. On Friday, the Alsea superintendent announced that, effective this week, parents could decide whether their children would wear masks at school. But in a letter to families, the superintendent says staff shortages related to the omicron variant of coronavirus forced the two-day shutdown. The letter notes that some staff members are COVID-positive, have someone in their households who is quarantining, or are dealing with preschool and daycare closures. / HEALTH, EDUCATION: As Lane County's and Oregon's COVID-19 case count continues to grow, a pandemic program at the University of Oregon continues to assist with supporting people who are self-quarantining. This month, members of the U-of-O's student-based "Corona Corps," learned they've received a \$1-million grant from the state to expand their program across Oregon. It began in July of 2020. The students serve as contact tracers, assisting those with campus connections and others who either had the virus or been exposed to someone who was infected. The students receive an hourly wage and tuition-free credits for their training. They say the program blends learning and public service. They make daily check-ins calls with those who were self-isolating. They help to coordinate support services ranging from arranging testing and grocery deliveries to other resources and assist those who are vaccine-hesitant. With the new state funding, the Corona Corps is being renamed the Oregon Public Health Corps. Students will receive university training to help with concerns such as communicable disease containment, health education campaigns, and mental health support in the aftermath of public health challenges such as wildfires. The expanded program also will strengthen public health resources in underserved communities by enlisting students from those communities, or those with the personal and educational background, to help bridge cultural and language barriers. / GOVERNMENT, FAMILY, LOW-INCOME: The federal government has launched a revamped website to help people who are eligible for the expanded child tax credit. Some who qualified for the credit as part of last year's pandemic relief bill didn't get the second half of the money due them. The site steers taxpayers toward information that can help them know if they're eligible for the credit, and if so, how to get it. Go to <https://ChildTaxCredit.gov> to learn more. / ECONOMY, SAFETY: More Americans are buying and trading in cryptocurrencies. But this month, officials with The Oregon Division of Financial Regulation are warning you to use caution when investing in cryptocurrencies, nonfungible tokens, or other new or volatile products. They remind you that cryptocurrencies are digital assets that have no government backing. And with close to 10,000 active cryptocurrencies, regulation is still evolving. Experts warn that while there are often promises of big returns, consumers often lose money when investing in them. State financial regulators urge you to do your homework if you're considering purchasing crypto, NFTs, or similar products: They warn that many things labeled "investment opportunities" are speculative in nature. Before engaging in a transaction, make sure that you understand what you are purchasing, the value of the item purchased, the reason for the valuation, and how easy it is to sell the investment if you want to get out your money. Use a digital currency exchange that is licensed with the state to transmit cryptocurrency to someone else. Oregon law requires companies that transfer digital currency from one person to another to be licensed as money transmitters. Digital currency exchange companies that purchase or sell cryptocurrency from their own inventories are not required to be licensed. And do not spend money you need.

The volatility of the digital currency and NFT markets means that you should not purchase cryptocurrency with money that is needed for essential purposes such as food, housing, and gas. Have questions about these unregulated assets? Call the Oregon Division of Financial Regulation's advocates at 866-814-9710 (toll-free). /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF
BROADCAST 01/26/22

TIME OF
BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KGNU-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED HOMELESSNESS, SAFETY: With cold weather in the forecast, the Egan Warming Center will activate three sites tonight and tomorrow to provide emergency shelter. All three sites are accessible and welcomes guests with pets: The Lane Events Center site is located at the fairgrounds in Eugene. The site opens at 7 p.m. both nights. Access is off 13th Avenue. The Springfield Memorial Building is located 765 "A" Street. It opens at 6 p.m. both nights. Access is through the entrance on 8th Street. The youth site will be at First United Methodist Church at 1376 Olive Street in Eugene. It opens at 6 p.m. both evenings. Lane Transit District offers free rides to people going to the Egan Warming Centers to get warm. Tell the driver you are heading to an Egan Warming Center. Bus passengers must wear a face mask while riding that covers their nose and mouth. The Egan Warming Center also is recruiting new volunteers and has scheduled an online training for February 8. Egan Warming Center is a program of St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County. The program receives funding from Lane County and support from a broad coalition of community members, service providers, nonprofits, faith and social communities, and local government. The Egan Warming Center is named in honor of Major Thomas Egan, who froze to death during a cold spell in 2008. / HEALTH: Three more Lane County residents have died from COVID-19 related causes, raising our local pandemic death toll to 367. Lane County Public Health yesterday received reports of 346 new infections. Sixty-three people are hospitalized, with 15 of those in intensive-care units. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 6,904 new COVID-19 infections and 41 coronavirus-related deaths. / HEALTH, SCHOOLS: Officials with the Alsea Schools say they are canceling classes today and tomorrow. In a letter to families, the Alsea superintendent says staff shortages related to the omicron variant of coronavirus forced the two-day shutdown. He notes that some staff members are COVID-positive, have someone in their households who is quarantining, or are dealing with preschool and daycare closures. He anticipates classes resuming on Monday. On Friday, the Alsea superintendent announced that, effective this week, parents could decide whether their children would wear masks at school. / SCHOOLS: Eugene's Interim School Superintendent is one of two finalists for the top job with the Greater Albany Public Schools. The Corvallis Gazette-Times reports Cydney Vandercar is a finalist along with Stayton's school

superintendent, Andy Gardner. Vandercar has worked at Eugene District 4J for 29 years, first as a high school math teacher, then as a school administrator and later as assistant superintendent for operations. She became interim superintendent in 2020, when Gustavo Balderas left for a top job with a district in Washington state. The Albany School Board is expected to announce its decision next week. The new superintendent would take the helm July 1.

POLITICS, TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMY: How do you feel about pumping your own gasoline? The Oregonian and OregonLive report that when state lawmakers convene next week in Salem for a 35-day session, they'll consider whether to give drivers the option to pump their own gas at service stations. Reporter Jayati Ramakrishnan writes that under the plan (House Bill 4151), gas stations would offer you a choice: You could use a self-service pump or pull up to pumps staffed by a station attendant. Oregon is one of only two states in the U.S. that does not allow self-service gasoline pumps, although the state relaxed those rules for some rural counties in 2015, allowing customers to pump their own fuel at night. The state also allowed self-serve gas pumps for a few months in 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic, and briefly during a heat wave last summer. Gas station owners and the legislators sponsoring the bill said the workforce shortage from the pandemic has led to long lines at the pump, overworked attendants and some stations struggling to remain open to comply with the attendant requirement. According to proponents of the bill, it would preserve the availability of assistance for people with disabilities or others who need or want help from an attendant. The bill requires that prices would remain the same whether pumped by a customer or a station attendant.

/ POLITICS, GOVERNMENT: Affordable housing, education, public safety, and continued recovery from the pandemic and 2020's devastating wildfires. Oregon's governor and Democratic leaders say there's plenty on their agenda when state lawmakers convene in Salem on Tuesday for a 35-day legislative session. Among the area of focus: a \$100 million package of investments for childcare services; a \$200 million plan to bolster the state's workforce; and \$38 million to help small businesses through a combination of a recovery fund, expanding technical assistance, and increasing funding to regional economic development organizations. Backers in the legislature also want to advance that landmark state private forest management compromise.

; As Oregon lawmakers prepare to return to the state Capitol next week, for the 35-day legislative session, Democrats and Republicans have differing opinions on what that time should be used for. While Republicans say traditionally the short legislative session should be used to address budget fixes and technical issues that have come about from the previous year's long session, Democrats say some larger issues—including the pandemic and wildfire recovery—cannot wait two years between long sessions. Both parties are cautiously optimistic that they can get along, especially as there have been major leadership changes from the previous session. Republicans have relied on delay tactics, specifically walkouts, halting action at the state Capitol in recent years. House Minority Leader Vikki Breese-Iverson, said recently that among the "tools" are on the table for her caucus are walkouts. Tensions, specifically in the House, were aggravated during Oregon's special session on political redistricting. The session was marked by a broken deal, another Republican walkout, and accusations of gerrymandering. But two months later, lawmakers met for a special session and passed a number of key bills, including one to prevent thousands of evictions in Oregon. /

WILDLIFE, ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE, LEGAL: The U.S. government plans to capture a record number of wild horses and burros on federal lands this year. The plan is being applauded by ranchers who say Western rangelands cannot sustain the fast-growing herds. But the effort is drawing sharp criticism from mustang advocates who hoped the Biden administration would curtail widespread gathers of thousands of horses annually. Critics say it's a continuation of a decades-old policy that puts cattle and sheep ahead of wild horses for limited forage on Bureau of Land Management rangeland in 10 states, including Oregon. The BLM plans to permanently remove at least 19,000 horses and burros by September 30. An estimated 86,000 horses roam federal lands. That's down from 95,000 in 2020, which government experts said was triple what the land can sustain ecologically. Wild horse advocates dispute that claim. Agency officials say recent drought conditions have reduced forage and harmed the herds and that the roundups help protect the animals' health. When horses and burros are gathered in the roundups, many are put up for adoption. But adoption interest has declined in recent years. Those who do not find homes are kept in holding pens managed by the government. As of last month, the BLM's website noted the agency was holding more than 59,000 horses and burros in off-range corrals and pastures. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association says lawsuits filed by wild horse activists threaten the future of rangeland ecosystems and the wellbeing of the horses themselves. But opponents complain taxpayers are subsidizing both the long-term holding corrals and below-market grazing fees for the livestock industry. The agency's 2022 strategy includes treating at least 2,300 animals with fertility control and releasing them back to public lands to stem the growth of herds that otherwise double about every five years. That approach is supported by some but not all wild horse advocates. Management of the animals is governed by the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act. /

EMPLOYMENT: Lane County's jobless rate dropped another notch last month, to 4.2 percent. It was a snapshot of the labor market taken just before the arrival of the omicron surge: State employment analysts say Oregon's December jobless rate fell one-tenth of a point, to 4.1 percent in December. Oregon continues to see more job openings than there are job seekers. Analysts with the state say employers added 100,000 jobs between January and November of last year, which is an unprecedented hiring pace. The coronavirus remains a big contributor to worker shortages. A statewide survey early last month of people who have stepped away from Oregon's workforce found 46,000 said their primary reason was fear of getting or spreading COVID. Another 34,000 said they had contracted COVID or were caring for someone with symptoms. Before the pandemic, one in every six adults lived in households where all of the grown-ups worked and there were children who also were part of the family. But childcare issues and schools going to remote learning forced many parents and caregivers to cut back their hours on the job or leave the workforce completely. That survey was taken before the surge in omicron cases hit the state, so officials suspect those numbers grew at the end of the year. /

HEALTH: The COVID-19 booster drive in the U.S. is losing steam. That concerns health experts, who have pleaded with Americans to get an extra shot to shore up their protection against the highly contagious omicron variant. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, only about four out of ten fully vaccinated Americans have received a booster dose. The average number of booster shots dispensed per day in the U.S. has

plummeted from a peak of one million in early December to about 490,000 as of last week. ; Lane County Public Health, the Oregon Health Authority, and PeaceHealth continue to host walk-in clinics for those needed their initial series of COVID doses, booster doses, or pediatric doses. Today through Sunday, there's a drop-in clinic from noon to 7 p.m. at the PeaceHealth Annex Clinic. That's at 123 International Way in Springfield. There also is a walk-in clinic at the Florence Events Center. It runs from noon to 7:00 p.m., Mondays through Saturdays. Other vaccination opportunities are offered through health clinics, primary care providers, and pharmacies. The University of Oregon is partnering with Lane County Public Health to offer another drive-through vaccination clinic to the campus community. It's taking place today and tomorrow in the parking lot of Autzen Stadium. The U-of-O requires staff and students to be fully vaccinated and boosted by the end of this month unless they have an approved exemption. Campus leaders say the University of Oregon's first- and second-dose vaccination rates are above 95 percent. ; Scientists and health officials are keeping their eyes on a subvariant of the omicron variant that has been found in at least 40 countries—including a handful of cases here in the U.S. It's called BA.2. It is widely considered stealthier than the original version of omicron because particular genetic traits make it somewhat harder to detect during testing. Some scientists also worry it could also be more transmissible. But they say much remains unknown about the subvariant, including whether it is better at evading vaccines better or causes more severe disease. As protection, doctors continue to urge vaccination and other coronavirus precautions. /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF
BROADCAST 01/27/22

TIME OF
BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KGNU-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

WEATHER, SCHOOLS: Icy roads have postponed the start of classes in the Junction City Schools by two hours this morning. Roads are icy on some of the bus routes, so district officials decided on the delay for safer travel. / HEALTH: A new, grim milestone for Oregon: More than 6,000 residents have died from complications of COVID-19 over the course of the pandemic. Officials with the Oregon Health Authority made the announcement, adding that yesterday they received reports of more than 8,200 new infections (8,207). Lane County Public Health yesterday received reports of 693 new infections. Seventy-three people are hospitalized with COVID-related complications, and 16 of those in intensive-care units. County health officials also say our pandemic-related death toll climbed by 36 yesterday, not because of a large number of deaths in recent days, but because state officials finished reviewing a backlog of death certificates. With the updated totals, Lane County's COVID-19 related deaths stand at 403. / SCHOOLS. GOVERNMENT, HEALTH: The Oregon Department of Education says it will withhold federal COVID-19 relief funds from the Alsea School District after the school board there recently voted to end a state masking requirement and let parents decide whether their children should wear masks in class. The Oregonian and OregonLive report a letter from Education Department Director Colt Gill went to the Alsea District's superintendent and school board chair this week saying federal funding "requires school districts to comply with all state laws and regulations." Gill wrote that by abandoning required face coverings, district leaders "should expect rapid transmission of COVID-19 that will prevent students from participating in in-person learning." The district's schools were closed this week because of a surge in cases. In a letter to families, Alsea superintendent Marc Thielman said staff shortages related to the omicron variant of coronavirus forced the four-day shutdown. Thielman wrote that some staff members are COVID-positive, have someone in their households who is quarantining, or are dealing with preschool and daycare closures. He anticipates classes resuming on Monday. / HEALTH, RECREATION: As the COVID-19 Omicron surge continues in Lane County, the Willamalane Park and Recreation District is extending pool closures due to staff shortages. Officials anticipate reopening Willamalane Park Swim Center on Monday, Jan. 31, and Splash! at Lively Park on Sunday, Jan. 30. The pool closures began last week. Willamalane leaders say the facilities were

operating at 34 percent of their pre-pandemic staffing levels and the omicron surge of the virus was causing further personnel shortages. The closure is continuing until Willamalane has enough lifeguards available to operate safely. Willamalane is looking to shore up its staff. The district has 70 open lifeguard positions and more than 100 other jobs available throughout Willamalane. Willamalane is holding another hiring event for lifeguards on Monday, Feb. 28, from 4-6 p.m. at Splash! At Lively Park. Candidates can learn more and sign up at willamalane.org/lifeguard For other job openings with the district, visit willamalane.org/jobs / HEALTH, SAFETY, BUSINESS, ENVIRONMENT, GOVERNMENT: The Register-Guard is reporting that Eugene wood-treatment firm J.H. Baxter & Co. is ending operations on Monday. It comes after soil testing overseen by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality showed “concerning levels” of dioxins in the yards of several residential properties near the 42-acre facility off Roosevelt Boulevard in West Eugene. Reporter Adam Duvernay writes an attorney for the company notified officials with the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency of the planned closure. A small crew is expected to remain at the site to wind down operations. The DEQ and Oregon Health Authority first began testing soil samples around the J.H. Baxter’s facility in late 2020. Officials say the dioxin levels are high enough at some nearby properties to prompt removal of contaminated soil. That process will be completed this summer. State officials say the company will pay for the work, and also faces some large fines. Experts say that, depending on the level of exposure, dioxins can increase the risk of cancer and the risk of other health effects. / ECONOMY, HOUSING: Will mortgage rates go up? Will financing for car loans climb? And what about interest rates on credit cards? Members of the Federal Reserve Board signaled yesterday that the Fed will begin raising its benchmark interest rate as early as March — and probably a few more times this year. That’s good news for savers hoping for better rates on bonds and CDs, but might create a challenge for consumers and businesses who’ve relied on low long-term interest rates for many other things. The Fed’s pandemic-era low-rate policies helped fueled hiring and growth — and stock market gains — but also contributed to the recent leap in inflation. Fed board members seem to agree that America’s job market is returning to normal. Their hope is to manage increasing interest rates through the central bank in a way that prolongs economic growth and keeps unemployment low. ; Americans, flush with stimulus checks and unemployment money, and weary of staying home during the pandemic, were on a spending spree last year. The U.S. economy grew last year at the fastest pace since 1984—when Ronald Reagan was president, and the U.S. was recovering from an earlier recession. It comes after spending stalled in 2020 during the early months of the pandemic, then came roaring back. The nation’s gross domestic product — its total output of goods and services — expanded 5.7 percent in 2021. The economy is expected to keep expanding this year, although at a slower pace. / HOUSING, LOW-INCOME, GOVERNMENT: Another \$100 million in emergency housing assistance is available to renters this week. Officials anticipate the money will go fast after the application window opened yesterday. The money will cover an estimated 6,700 to 9,300 additional applications. Households with the greatest need have priority. Tenants who apply for the aid can receive “safe harbor” eviction protections until their application is processed, but must show proof to their landlord that they applied for the program to receive the protections. /

HOMELESSNESS, SAFETY: With cold weather in the forecast, the Egan Warming Center will activate three sites again tonight to provide emergency shelter. The locations are on standby for Friday, should the cold overnight weather continue. The Lane Events Center site is located at the fairgrounds in Eugene. The site opens at 7 p.m. both nights. Access is off 13th Avenue. The Springfield Memorial Building is located 765 "A" Street. It opens at 6 p.m. both nights. Access is through the entrance on 8th Street. The youth site will be at First United Methodist Church at 1376 Olive Street in Eugene. It opens at 6 p.m. both evenings. All three sites are accessible and welcomes guests with pets. Lane Transit District offers free rides to people going to the Egan Warming Centers to get warm. Tell the driver you are heading to an Egan Warming Center. Bus passengers must wear a face mask while riding that covers their nose and mouth. The Egan Warming Center is named in honor of Major Thomas Egan, who froze to death during a cold spell in 2008. The program is recruiting new volunteers and has scheduled an online training for February 8. Egan Warming Center is a program of St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County, which operates with funding from Lane County and support from a broad coalition of community members and groups. / HEALTH: Moderna has begun testing an omicron-specific version of its COVID-19 vaccine in healthy adults. Moderna announced the study Wednesday. Earlier this week, competitor Pfizer began similar research with its reformulated shots. It's not clear whether global health authorities will decide vaccines need to be reformulated. Existing vaccines still offer strong protection against death and severe disease, especially when people receive a booster dose. ; A requirement to get vaccinated against COVID-19 kicks in today for millions of health care workers in about half the states. The mandate is starting first in states that didn't challenge the rule from the Biden administration. It will take effect later in February for 25 other states that had filed lawsuits. The U.S. Supreme Court earlier this month lifted injunctions that had put the vaccine mandate on hold, The federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services says it won't immediately resort to penalties for health facilities that have a plan to try to achieve full compliance by their staff. ; President Joe Biden says 14.5 million Americans got private health insurance for this year under the Obama-era health law, thanks to help from his administration. Biden says health care should be a right, not a privilege, and a record number of people now have coverage under the Affordable Care Act. But progress could prove fleeting if congressional Democrats remain deadlocked over Biden's social agenda package. Biden's earlier coronavirus relief bill has been providing generous subsidy increases. That enhanced financial assistance is temporary. The assistance will go away at the end of 2022 without congressional action. / TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY, GOVERNMENT: Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg is vowing to help to stem a rising U.S. epidemic of car fatalities. Buttigieg is pushing a broad-based government strategy released today aimed at limiting the speed of cars, redesigning roads to better protect bicyclists and pedestrians and boosting car safety features such as automatic emergency braking. Buttigieg says he envisions cities and states taking interim steps with federal support. Buttigieg indicated to The Associated Press that new federal data being released next week will show another spike in traffic fatalities through the third quarter of 2021. The transportation secretary calls the magnitude of deaths unacceptable. /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF
BROADCAST 01/28/22

TIME OF
BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KGNU-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED RECREATION, HEALTH: Oregon state park campgrounds were packed in 2021. The Oregonian and OregonLive say parks officials tallied more than three million “camper nights” last year. It’s a record total that reflects big changes with the pandemic, as Oregonians stayed closer to home and tourists sought an escape in nature. Some of the most popular locations were the Oregon Coast, which is home to several larger campgrounds. It was also the place many residents from the Willamette Valley headed during our extended heatwaves. The data also showed people continuing to enjoy mid-week camping in the summer, as well as weekend and holiday camping in the fall, winter and spring. Oregon State Park campgrounds were closed for months during the early phases of the pandemic, in part because many campground hosts were older and more vulnerable. That crimped the budget, since state parks largely are funded through user fees. But once things began reopening, campgrounds saw a big surge in visits. Reporter Jamie Hale explains that, in state park parlance, a “camper night” is one camper spending one night at a campsite. A family of four spending two nights in a tent, for example, would equal eight camper nights. / ECONOMY, EMPLOYMENT: The economy is expanding at its fastest pace in decades, and job creation reached a five-decade high last year. But the rebound occurred so quickly after the pandemic shutdowns that it left many companies flat-footed, with fewer workers and supplies than they needed. A new report from the Commerce Department finds consumer spending fell six-tenths of one percent in December. It happened as a wave of omicron cases discouraged many Americans from traveling, dining out or visiting theaters and other entertainment venues. Workers’ salaries and benefits grew an average four percent last year. But rising prices are eroding those gains. The measure of prices that is closely tracked by the Federal Reserve was up 5.8 percent last year, the sharpest increase since 1982. It came as brisk consumer spending collided with snarled supply chains to raise the costs of food, furniture, appliances and other goods. But at the same time, incomes rose 0.3 percent last month, providing fuel for future spending. / HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: Federal officials say 14.5 million Americans signed up for private health insurance coverage for this year under the Affordable Care Act. Better known as “Obamacare,” the program offers health insurance to people who lack job-based coverage. That’s through a mix of subsidized private plans and

expanded Medicaid efforts. The most recent federal pandemic stimulus bill includes generous subsidy increases. The enhanced financial assistance is in place through the end of this year, unless Congress extends it. ; State health leaders say during the open enrollment period for the Affordable Care Act, more than 146,000 Oregonians signed up for coverage. That's the highest total in years, due in part to an extended enrollment period. Officials with the Oregon Health Insurance Marketplace say anyone who missed the open enrollment deadline still have an opportunity to get health coverage if they lose their job, have a child or adopt a child, get married, move to another location, or experience other significant life changes. Enrolled tribal members and Alaska natives can enroll in health coverage at any time throughout the year. Learn more about the program and its offerings at OregonHealthCare.gov The website also can help you find a health insurance expert who can provide one-on-one help with the application and enrollment process by phone, email, or in person. / HEALTH: Case numbers remain high and hospitalizations are climbing as surge of infections tied to the omicron variant of COVID-19 heads for a forecasted peak in Oregon during the next week or so. Lane County Public Health yesterday received reports of 860 new cases, as the number of residents hospitalized soared to 82. Twenty of those patients are in intensive care units and six of those are on ventilators. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of more than 7,800 new infections (7,871) and 19 additional deaths. ; It was a massive effort that drew on people from across the county. One year ago this week, Lane County Public Health began its mass-vaccination clinics at sites across Eugene-Springfield to better protect residents from COVID-19. County public health officials say more than 700 people volunteered at the clinics, contributing a combined 22,500 hours. The clinics provided more than 200,000 doses. The busiest month was April of last year, when 61,000 vaccines were given. That averages about 7,625 vaccinations per day at the clinics, or 14 doses per minute. Those clinics are continuing. But some of the locations and times are changing: The drive-up clinic has returned to the parking lot of Eugene's Autzen Stadium. It's operating daily from noon to 7 p.m. The PeaceHealth Annex Clinic at 123 International Way in Springfield also is continuing. Vaccination is being offered Tuesdays through Sundays from noon to 7 p.m. The clinics offer booster doses, 1st and 2nd doses, and pediatric doses. You may choose the Pfizer, Moderna, or J&J vaccine. As the focus shifts to the Autzen and PeaceHealth Annex sites, Lane County's longtime clinic at the Lane Events Center has ended its operations. ; Another longtime local vaccination partner is the White Bird Clinic, which early on offered doses to healthcare providers and other vulnerable members of the community. White Bird has consolidated its vaccination clinics into a single location, at White Bird's dental building at 1415 Pearl Street. The vaccination clinic has its own, separate entrance. White Bird's COVID-19 drop-in clinics take place Mondays from noon to 3 p.m. The clinics offer booster doses, 1st and 2nd doses, and pediatric doses to anyone ages 12 and older. You may choose the Pfizer, Moderna, or J&J vaccine. ; A new national report ranks Oregon first in the nation for funding tobacco prevention efforts at levels recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids analysis says much of that is because Oregon voters in 2020 approved a ballot measure to increase tobacco taxes. That, in turn, increased funding for the Oregon Health Plan and the effort to prevent tobacco addiction among young

people and other vulnerable groups, including communities of color. State health officials say it's a challenging effort. They note that the tobacco industry continues to introduce flavored tobacco products such as vaping and smokeless nicotine products that attract and addict youth who use them. They add that the tobacco industry is continuing to market menthol cigarettes, which are easier to start smoking and harder to quit. Looking to quit using tobacco products? Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for free help or visit <https://smokefreeoregon.com/im-ready-to-quit/> /

WILDLIFE, RECREATION: Couple of quick wildlife notes this morning: The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is reminding hunters that you have until Monday, January 31, to report the results of your 2021 deer and elk hunts. You can report online or at a license vendor. Learn more about how to report at <https://myodfw.com/articles/report-your-hunt> ; The Oregon Wildlife Foundation's "Watch for Wildlife" specialty license plate will be in Oregon Driver & Motor Vehicle Services offices on May 4th. Voucher holders can get their plates on or after that date. The "Watch for Wildlife" plate will also be available to the public for purchase at that time. Proceeds from the sale and renewal of the license plate will benefit the Oregon Wildlife Foundation and be used to support wildlife passage and habitat connectivity projects across Oregon. Those include dedicated wildlife under crossings, overpasses, and other investments that help animals of all kinds move more safely around Oregon's highways and roads. Learn more about the plates, and a VIP auction to sell the first 20 plates being issued, at <https://www.myowf.org/watchforwildlife> ; A federal judge is considering temporarily suspending the capture of wild horses in Nevada where their advocates say the federal government is "needlessly and recklessly" killing free-roaming mustangs in violation of U.S. laws. The judge in Reno says she expects to rule by Monday, maybe sooner, on the horse advocates' request for an emergency court order pending another hearing to learn more about the potential danger of roundup near the Utah state line. The Bureau of Land Management insists it must gather the mustangs before the end of February. It's one of several scheduled on an expedited basis across the West as a result of severe drought. /

LOW-INCOME, COMMUNITY, BUSINESS: Looks like a great menu for the 2022 Grilled Cheese Experience, a benefit for our FOOD For Lane County. During the month of February, a number of restaurants and food carts in Eugene, Springfield, Cottage Grove, and Pleasant Hill create a special grilled cheese sandwich. Two dollars from every purchase goes to our local food bank. Mmmm... grilled cheese... /

WEATHER: Thousands in the Portland metro area lost power Thursday morning due to high winds. KOIN reports that nearly 5,000 Portland General Electric customers had lost power around 6:30 a.m. According to PGE, most of the outages were caused by wind gusts of 30 mph. At least one outage reported is due to a tree on a power line. /

WILDLIFE, ENVIRONMENT: Scientists have come up with some tricks to make transplanted Western Burrowing owls feel like they are not alone in their new digs, playing owl sounds and scattering fake poop. The small, burrowing owls live in grasslands and have been losing ground to development in fast-growing regions in Southern California. Scientists have tried moving the owls to protected grasslands but the challenge has been getting the owls to accept their new homes. In a pilot program, the scientists created the impression that other owls already lived there. They played recordings of owl calls before and after the new arrivals were released at four locations in Southern California. And they used a syringe to squirt around fake owl poop — in reality,

white paint. And it worked. Most successfully settled into their new homes and established breeding colonies. At one key site in southwestern San Diego County, there were about 50 owl chicks in 2020. /

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WEATHER, SCHOOLS: The Fern Ridge Schools, Junction City Schools, and Monroe Schools are starting classes two hours late today because of some icy roads. Dean Chappell with Lane Fire Authority says black ice is an issue on the west side of the valley and has already caused at least three accidents this morning. / ENTERTAINMENT, COMMUNITY: He grew up in Oregon but earned fame playing a radio disc jockey in one TV series and an actor-turned-history-teacher in another. Howard Hesseman, who starred in "WKRP in Cincinnati" and "Head of the Class," has died at the age of 81 from complications of surgery. Hesseman grew up in Lebanon, Oregon, and briefly attended the University of Oregon before heading to California for an acting career. / POLITICS, GOVERNMENT: Oregon lawmakers are preparing to return to the state Capitol in Salem tomorrow for a 35-day legislative session. Among other issues, they'll consider proposed bills on affordable housing, education, public safety, and continued recovery from the pandemic and 2020's devastating wildfires. That includes a \$100 million package of investments for childcare services; a \$200 million plan to bolster the state's workforce; and \$38 million to help small businesses through a combination of a recovery fund, expanded technical assistance, and increased funding to regional economic development organizations. Backers in the legislature also want to advance that landmark state private forest management compromise. And lawmakers will weigh a proposal to give drivers the option to pump their own gasoline at service stations. If approved, drivers would have a choice of using a self-service pump or pulling up to pumps staffed by a station attendant. Oregon is one of only two states in the U.S. that does not allow self-service gasoline pumps, although the state relaxed those rules for some rural counties in 2015, allowing customers to pump their own fuel at night. The state also allowed self-serve gas pumps for a few months in 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic, and briefly during a heat wave last summer. / HEALTH, SCHOOLS: Leaders with the Oregon Health Authority said Friday they were filing permanent rules that keep in place requirements for masking indoors in K-12 schools, and requirements for school and school-based program staff to be vaccinated. State health officials emphasized that will maintain masking protections during the current Omicron surge. But they add they are developing measures to determine when it might be safe to lift the school mask rule. Also

expected to be filed today are permanent rules requiring health care workers to wear masks, and for health care workers in most health care settings to be fully vaccinated. / HEALTH, RECREATION: After a number of COVID-19 related staff shortages, Willamalane Park and Recreation District yesterday reopened its "Splash! At Lively Park" pool facility and today reopens the Willamalane Park Swim Center. And as the facilities reopen, Willamalane is looking to shore up its staff. The district has 70 open lifeguard positions and more than 100 other jobs available throughout Willamalane. Willamalane is holding another hiring event for lifeguards on Monday, Feb. 28, from 4-6 p.m. at Splash! At Lively Park. Candidates can learn more and sign up at willamalane.org/lifeguard For other job openings with the district, visit willamalane.org/jobs / HEALTH: Health officials say some Oregon hospitals are near their COVID-19 breaking point as the state is expected to reach peak hospitalizations in coming weeks. Fueled by the highly contagious omicron variant, hospitalizations in Oregon could soon surpass the pandemic high, officials said on Friday. As of Thursday, there were 1,130 coronavirus-related hospitalizations. The record is 1,178, from Sept. 1. As of Thursday, only 59 adult Intensive Care Unit beds were available, and 94 percent of non-ICU beds were filled. In addition, earlier this week health officials reported that Oregon surpassed 6,000 coronavirus-related deaths. ; Omicron's race across the globe has amped up concerns about long COVID, which some estimates suggest affects a third of COVID-19 survivors. Long COVID symptoms can include pain, fatigue and brain fog weeks or months after the initial infection. As coronavirus infections soar worldwide, scientists are racing to pinpoint the cause of the baffling condition and find new treatments before a potential explosion of cases. Could it be an autoimmune disorder? Could microclots in the bloodstream be causing some of the symptoms? And can vaccination reduce the chances of developing long COVID? / SCHOOLS, SAFETY, CRIME: Cybersecurity experts say that ransomware attacks on K-12 schools have increased during the pandemic. Cyberattacks have crippled schools in recent weeks as teachers become more reliant on computers to take attendance and deliver lessons. Before the pandemic, cyber hacks of schools rarely led to canceled classes. Snow days now are less frequent because children can learn from home when there's bad weather. But this month at least two schools in New Mexico and Wisconsin took "cyber snow days," canceling classes to repair the damage from attacks by hackers. Some school systems are being hit by cyberattacks that prevent access to grades, attendance reports and even the list of adults authorized to pick up kids. Other systems have had to shut down as they tried to recover their data. One sign of how disruptive such attacks have become: cybercriminals are demanding more money from schools to recover their swiped or locked-up data. / EDUCATION, LEGAL, ENVIRONMENT; A Central Oregon attorney is donating \$600,000 to the University of Oregon Law School to help launch a new effort to combat climate change. Roger Worthington lives in Bend. He has a law firm in Southern California that specializes in asbestos litigation and also owns Central Oregon's Worthy Brewing. He says he's making the gift to Oregon Law because climate change is an emergency. Worthington says Americans have a constitutional right to a stable climate system and that excessive carbon polluters violate that right and add to global warming. He says courts need to intervene. Worthington's gift will support the law school's Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center and the work of [Mary Christina](#)

[Wood](#), a professor whose work created the legal foundation for *Juliana v. US*, a landmark climate change lawsuit brought by 21 youth, through the nonprofit Our Children's Trust, against the federal government in 2015. The donation will help Wood and the environmental law center create a framework for atmospheric recovery plans for Northwest forests, wetlands, agricultural areas, and grazing lands that Wood says can help draw down and sequester atmospheric carbon. / WILDLIFE, LEGAL, AGRICULTURE: A federal judge will not rein in the roundup and capture of wild horses in eastern Nevada — rejecting advocates' claims the federal government was needlessly and recklessly killing free-roaming mustangs in violation of U.S. law. Facing a deadline for federal land managers to complete what they call a drought-prompted "gather," U.S. District Judge Miranda Du in Reno said Friday she wasn't convinced groups trying to stop the process would win their underlying lawsuit. The federal Bureau of Land Management insists it must round up the mustangs foaling season begins March 1. The roundup near the Utah state line is one of several operations scheduled on an expedited basis due to historically dry conditions on the Western range. / FAMILY, ECONOMY: A new study shows the ways members of Generation X and millennials differ in how they spent their time on an average day as young adults. The report released last week by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics says that many of the differences are due to changes in technology and patterns in forming families over the last two decades. Generation X women were more likely to do housework, care for children, read for pleasure and do lawn work, the study found. Millennial women were more inclined to exercise, spend leisure time on computers, take care of their pets and sleep. Millennials were more likely to have advanced degrees and were less likely to be married or have children than Gen Xers. Millennials also had technologies like smart phones and online shopping which were in their infancy when Gen Xers were their ages two decades ago. Both generations spent the same amount of time working, and men worked longer hours than women because women were more likely to work part time. The two generations spent about the same time on leisure and sports activities, but Gen Xers were more likely than millennials to have children and own homes. / HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: Patients worried about getting hit with an unexpected bill after emergency care have a new layer of protection. The No Surprises Act went into effect this month. It prevents doctors or hospitals in many situations from billing insured patients higher rates because the care providers are not in their insurer's coverage network. The law won't eliminate billing surprises. But it is expected to ease concerns, especially in emergencies where patients may not have time to choose an in-network doctor. The law also applies to some non-emergency care and gives patients help in figuring out how to contest a bill. / SAFETY, CRIME: Following a "concerning surge" in shootings in Portland, Oregon, police say that they deployed additional resources over the weekend. TV station KOIN 6 reports that there were seven reported shootings in Oregon's largest city between Thursday and Friday afternoon. So far this year there have been at least 89 shootings, 21 people have been injured by gunfire and seven have been killed in Portland. The surge in shootings follows a year of a record number of homicides in Portland. In 2021 the city recorded 90 homicides, shattering the city's previous high of 66 set more than three decades ago. / LEGAL: Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice Martha Walters in an unusual public request is asking members of the State Bar to take on clients in need of public defense. Oregon Public

Broadcasting reports in a letter Thursday, Walters asked members of the State Bar to “help in representing those who are accused of a crime and cannot afford counsel, calling it a very basic and fundamental right that Oregon is struggling to accommodate.” The Sixth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution affords people charged with crimes an attorney provided by the state if they cannot afford their own. /

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SCHOOLS, SAFETY: The Junction City Schools are closed today because of icy road conditions. The Crow-Applegate-Lorane Schools are on a two-hour delay. / WEATHER: Talk about something being "lit." Weather officials have logged a huge lightning strike as the biggest ever recorded on Earth. The bolt stretched nearly 500 miles and spanned three U.S. states. The flash occurred in April 2020 and launched a streak of light that covered parts of Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. That beat the old mark set two years earlier in Brazil. It wasn't the only lightning record put in the books in 2020. A single flash from separate bolts over Uruguay and northern Australia lasted 17.1 seconds, a half-second longer than the previous mark. / SPORTS: The Oregon Women's Basketball team remains at Number 19 in the latest Associated Press Top 25 Basketball Poll. The Ducks are back in action this afternoon when they host Arizona State. The rescheduled game tips off at 2 p.m. in Eugene's Matthew Knight Arena. There's no television broadcast, but the game is being carried on the Oregon Live Stream. ; The University of Oregon's Golf squads are upping their game. Duck Athletics officials announced yesterday they're working to develop a 6,000-square-foot, indoor/outdoor teaching facility at Emerald Valley Golf Club in Creswell. Partners in the project include the U-of-O Foundation and O&S Contractors. Construction of the facility is set to begin the middle of this year. Officials it will be privately funded through an estimated \$3 million in gifts to the Oregon Golf program and the University of Oregon Foundation. Designers say the new Peter and Jan Jacobsen Teaching Facility, nicknamed "The Jake," will offer state-of-the-art practice, instruction, and golf technology in a weather-protected environment. There will be three oversized driving range bays with integrated TrackMan technology, an indoor putting studio, and a covered outdoor heated driving range. The Jacobsens both were members of the U-of-O's golf teams. Peter Jacobsen went on to the PGA Tour and as a commentator with NBC Sports. Supporters say The Jake also will provide a "clubhouse" atmosphere including a covered outdoor fireplace, where Oregon Golf athletes may study and host prospective recruits. In addition to this project at Emerald Valley Golf Club, Duck golfers have existing partnerships with Eugene Country Club and Shadow Hills Country Club. / HEALTH: More indications that Oregon's wave of omicron-fueled COVID-19 cases might have peaked: State health officials say weekly cases fell by more

than 20 percent during the past seven days. Still, infection numbers remain far too high. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 13,443 combined new cases from Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. There were 15 new deaths. Lane County Public Health received reports of 1,340 new COVID-19 infections from Saturday and Sunday. Seventy-two local patients remain hospitalized, 16 of them in intensive-care beds. The county received word of one new death over the weekend, bring our pandemic toll to 407. But the number of residents considered infectious and being asked to isolate fell over the weekend by more than 300 over the weekend, to 2,646. While vaccines against the coronavirus remain widely available, the state's push to encourage one million Oregonians to receive their booster doses by the end of January fell far short. The Oregon Health Authority reports only about half that number received a booster dose over the past month-and-a-half of the campaign. ; U.S. health regulators have given full approval to Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine after reviewing additional data on its safety and effectiveness. The decision Monday by the Food and Drug Administration comes after many tens of millions of Americans have already received the shot under its original emergency authorization. Full approval means FDA has completed the same rigorous, time-consuming review for Moderna's shot as dozens of other long-established vaccines. Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine received full approval last summer. Public health advocates initially hoped the distinction would boost public confidence in the shots. But there was no discernable bump in vaccinations after the Pfizer decision. ; U.S. drug regulators are urging Pfizer to apply for emergency authorization for a two-dose regimen of its COVID-19 vaccine for children 6 months to 5 years old. That would clear the way for the shots to be administered to some of the nation's youngest kids by the end of the month. It's expected the application can be submitted as soon as today. Federal health officials have urged Pfizer to approve the two-shot routine, even as it awaits data on how a three-dose routine would do. Young kids are the last remaining age group in the U.S. without approved COVID-19 shots. /

HEALTH, AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION: The Oregon State University scientist who led the team that made the groundbreaking discovery that a pair of hemp compounds can block the coronavirus from entering human cells thinks preclinical trials will happen within the next few months. Lead researcher Richard van Breemen and his collaborators both in Corvallis and at the Oregon Health & Science University say the substances are abundant in hemp and many hemp extracts. Combined with vaccination, he says the compounds helped block virus-receptor interaction against two early COVID variants, alpha and beta. Using a chemical screening technique invented at OSU, researchers found that the substances, known as CBDA and CBGA, bind to the virus' spike protein. That, in turn, blocks a critical step in the process the virus uses to infect people. But the amount needed to be effective is far higher than what you can buy at the retail level. The preclinical trials will help determine the proper amount needed and the compounds' safety and efficacy as a new drug candidate. /

RECREATION, EDUCATION: The New York Times has bought Wordle, the free online word game that has exploded in popularity and become, for some, become a daily obsession. The purchase price is reported as being in the "low-seven figures," but officials did not disclose specifics. Wordle was created by Josh Wardle, a Brooklyn software engineer who graduated the University of Oregon in 2011. Wardle says he created an earlier version of the game in 2013 but began refining

it during the pandemic's early "stay home" period when he and his partner were spending a lot of time solving The New York Times' Crossword and Spelling Bee games. He adds that's one reason selling the game to The Times seems very natural to him. The simple puzzle gives players six chances to guess a daily five-letter word. Rows of color-coded bricks let players know how close they are to the correct answer. And talk about a viral sensation: On November 1, only 90 people played Wordle. That number grew to 300,000 by the middle of this month after people began sharing their scores on social media. The Times says Wordle now has millions of daily players. Officials with The New York Times say Wordle initially will remain free for new and existing players — and no changes will be made to gameplay. / EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS: U.S. employers stepped up their search for workers in December despite the looming impact of the omicron wave of coronavirus infections. The Labor Department said this morning that the number of posted jobs rose to 10.9 million on the last day of December, up one-and-a-half percent compared with the previous month. That is far higher than pre-COVID levels, though below the record number of openings posted last summer. The coronavirus continues to have an impact on the economy: 4.3 million Americans quit jobs in December as omicron variant surged, with millions of workers falling ill or caring for others. / POLITICS, GOVERNMENT: As Oregon lawmakers return to the state Capitol today for the 2022 legislative session, their list of priorities range from affordable housing, bolstering the state's workforce and a \$500 million cushion for the next biennium to tax cuts and limiting the emergency power of the governor. But how much money legislators are envisioning spending has yet to be determined, as lawmakers await an updated revenue and economic forecast for Oregon that will be presented on Feb. 9. /

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POLITICS, GOVERNMENT: Oregon lawmakers returned to the state Capitol in Salem on Tuesday to kick off the 2022 Legislative Session, while outside dozens of protesters rallied against COVID-19 mask rules and other coronavirus-related restrictions. While Democrats have proposed an ambitious agenda, but the question remains whether Republicans will again use tactics to slow or halt the short session in order to block bills they oppose. Leaders with both political parties say they are cautiously optimistic of a constructive working relationship as new leaders take center stage in the Capitol. The session comes in the midst of Oregon's omicron surge. With thousands of new COVID-19 cases reported in Oregon each day, lawmakers are keeping close watch on how it may impact the session. Quorum rules say at least 20 senators and at least 40 representatives must be present for their respective chambers to vote. There are COVID-19 safety measures in place in the Capitol, including a mask requirement, which some Republican lawmakers have routinely criticized and refused to follow. Those gathered outside the Capitol on Tuesday were protesting Oregon's statewide indoor mask mandate, COVID-19 vaccinations, and other pandemic-related restrictions. The Statesman Journal reported that the protesters marched around the Capitol, eventually attempting to enter without face coverings in violation of the mask mandate. At one entrance, they were rebuffed by Oregon State Police officers manning a security checkpoint. Those who put on masks were allowed inside, though many removed them once they were through the security checkpoint. The standoff eased after police allowed other protesters who claimed religious or medical exemptions to enter without masks. This session of the Oregon Legislature marks the first time the public is allowed to attend in-person since March 2020. Everyone entering the Capitol is expected to walk through a scanner and have their bags X-rayed. The security comes in response to a 2020 incident in which a Republican lawmaker allowed armed demonstrators into the locked building. A bill passed last year [bans](#) all firearms in the Capitol. (AP) – How much money Oregon lawmakers will allocate during this five-week session remains to be seen as they await an updated state revenue forecast due to arrive the second week of the session. Democratic lawmakers estimate there might be up to \$2 billion dollars to put toward various needs and programs. Gov. Kate Brown presented a list of spending packages during the legislative preview

— which has already garnered support from Democrats — including \$500 million set aside for the next biennium in case state revenues weaken, \$200 million to bolster the state's workforce and help historically underserved Oregonians find career paths and \$400 million to preserve and create affordable housing. This session will be the last for the governor, who cannot run again due to term limits. Over the past few years, the Legislature has faced a growing divide between Democrats and Republicans — marked by a broken deal to share redistricting power, accusations of gerrymandering and Republican walkouts. But this session both parties have new leadership. The 35-day session began with the House electing a new speaker: Representative Dan Rayfield. The Democrat replaces longtime House Speaker Tina Kotek, who stepped down last month to focus on her campaign for Oregon governor. In addition to Rayfield, Democratic Rep. Julie Fahey is the new House majority leader, Republican Rep. Vikki Breese-Iverson is the new House minority leader and Senator Tim Knopp is the new Republican leader for the Senate. This also marks the final session for Senate President Peter Courtney, a Salem Democrat, who is the Oregon's longest-serving state lawmaker with 38 years. ; Seven years after Oregon voters legalized the regulated production and use of recreational marijuana, state lawmakers will consider a number of measures intended to crack down on the explosive growth of illegal cannabis farms. In Southern Oregon alone, law enforcement authorities say they seized 52 tons of illegal marijuana last year. Many of the illegal growers claimed to be legal hemp farmers but instead were cultivating plants with illegal amounts of THC, the component that creates marijuana's "high." Some proposals increase financial penalties or limit some licensing for industrial hemp growers. Another would establish a special unit of the Oregon State Police to assist county sheriff's departments. Senate President Peter Courtney has said he's very concerned about the surge in illegal marijuana farms in southern Oregon, and even suggested the Oregon National Guard be sent in to help. The new bills are: SB 1587, which contains financial penalties; SB 1564 authorizes the Oregon Department of Agriculture to refuse to issue industrial hemp grower licenses, based on supply and demand for the product; and SB 1541, sponsored by Senate Minority Leader Tim Knopp, would lead to establishment of an Oregon State Police unit to assist overwhelmed county sheriffs' offices in uprooting the illegal pot farms. During this year's short legislative session, lawmakers have numerous bills to push through committees and send to both the House and Senate for approval. Many will die along the way in the limited time period, especially those that haven't been fine-tuned yet, leaders of the majority Democratic caucus said Tuesday. / EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS: Workers at six Starbucks locations in Oregon this week filed petitions with the National Labor Relations Board to unionize. In doing so, they joined a nationwide campaign to organize the Seattle-based coffee chain's workers. The Oregonian and OregonLive report workers with three stores in Eugene, two stores in Beaverton, and a Southwest Portland location all filed union petitions Monday. That's according to letters posted on Twitter by Starbucks Workers United, the group organizing the union push. The organization is a member of Workers United and an affiliate of the Service Employees International Union. Organizers said a total of 16 Starbucks locations across the country filed union petitions Monday. They say workers at 55 Starbucks locations across 19 states have now filed petitions to unionize. Reporter Jamie Goldberg writes that the National Labor Relations Board must

approve the petitions before ballots are sent to the Oregon stores for workers to vote on whether to unionize. That process could take more than a month. The new filings come after workers at a Starbucks at 29th Avenue and Willamette Street in south Eugene last month became the first of the company's Oregon shops to file a union petition. The union effort began last August when three stores in Buffalo filed petitions to unionize. One of the three Buffalo stores voted to unionize in December. The filings Monday coincided with the start of contract negotiations between the Seattle-based coffee chain and the unionized workers in Buffalo. ; Food delivery and ride-share share drivers are looking to win new rights. Groups representing about 100,000 app-based workers around the country have formed a new coalition. Justice for App Workers is pushing for new measures they say would "achieve dignity" for app-based drivers and delivery workers in New York City. The ride-sharing industry was hit hard by the pandemic — but remains a multibillion-dollar industry. Meanwhile delivery apps like DoorDash and UberEats have flourished as people shun in-person dining. Advocates for workers are upset that the employees who make all of this work — aren't getting their fair share of those profits. / HEALTH: Three more Lane County residents have died from complications of COVID-19, bringing our local pandemic death toll to 410. Lane County Public Health also received reports yesterday of 490 new infections. Eighty-eight local residents are hospitalized, with 15 of those in intensive-care beds. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 5,179 new cases of COVID-19 and 15 new deaths. ; Pfizer is asking U.S. regulators to authorize extra-low doses of its COVID-19 vaccine for children under 5. The move could open the way for the very youngest Americans to start receiving shots by early March. The nation's 19 million children under 5 are the only group not yet eligible for vaccination against the coronavirus. Many parents have been pushing for an expansion of shots to toddlers and preschoolers, especially as the omicron wave sent record numbers of youngsters to the hospital. If the Food and Drug Administration agrees, Pfizer shots containing just one-tenth of the dose given to adults could be dispensed to children as young as 6 months. / BIPOC, LEGAL, HEALTH, SAFETY: Native American tribes have reached opioid settlements worth over a half-billion dollars with drugmaker Johnson & Johnson and three distributors. A federal court filing Tuesday in Cleveland describes \$590 million in settlements with the New Jersey-based drugmaker along with distributors AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health and McKesson. Some tribes have been hit particularly hard by an overdose and addiction crisis that has been linked to more than 500,000 U.S. deaths. The leader of one tribe says the money will help its efforts to build a healing center. Johnson & Johnson says the settlement is not an admission of wrongdoing. AmerisourceBergen says the deal will expedite help for communities. / HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: President Joe Biden is committing to reduce the cancer death rate by 50 percent over the next 25 years. That's a new goal for the "moonshot" against the disease that was announced in 2016 when Biden was vice president. This is according to senior Biden administration officials who previewed today's announcement on the condition of anonymity. The issue is deeply personal for Biden, who lost his eldest son, Beau, to brain cancer in 2015. The American Cancer Society estimates there will be 1.9 million new cancer cases and 609,000 cancer deaths this year. / CRIME: The Eugene Police Department's Property Crimes Unit has received increased complaints regarding moving company scams. Many of these cases are complex because they cross

multiple state lines and jurisdictions. Among the complaints are that some movers falsify weight to increase the price and hold household goods over payment disputes. Eugene Police detectives have seen several variations of moving scams. One scam includes a moving company collecting an entire household for a move. They collect payment and then place the household goods into a storage unit to be left unpaid and abandoned. The storage unit eventually goes to auction, and the customer never receives their household goods. One moving company may make some deliveries to appear legitimate while forsaking others. Another moving company may continue to take on new customers, knowing they can't deliver or don't plan to, because it needs an inflow of cash to keep the business afloat. The customer's property is still in possession of the mover but held for a long time with false delivery promises or potential abandonment. Another scam involves the movers showing up to a victim's new home (often weeks after the promised delivery date) demanding more money to unload the property. Often these movers say they will only accept a cashier's check, or they will not deliver the property. At this point, many victims are so desperate for their property, they issue the payment. All of the complaints Eugene Police received involve a move scheduled through various brokers before being sub-tasked to a mover. A broker is a company that arranges for the transportation of a person's cargo, utilizing for-hire carriers to provide the actual truck transportation. Moving brokers are sales teams that book people's move and sell it to an actual moving company. A broker does not assume responsibility for and is not authorized to transport your household goods. Often these "brokers" charge several thousands of dollars and try to say part of the money goes to the movers, which is not true. Some brokers are offering a seven-day full refund in case of cancellation. However, the brokers call on the eighth day to raise the price or assign a mover. If the customer tries to cancel, they can no longer cancel due to a day past the refund policy. After a subcontracted mover comes to collect the household goods, it is now out of the broker's hands. When customers call the brokers for assistance, most respond that this is no longer their problem and to talk to the mover. If a consumer believes they are a victim of moving fraud they can contact their local law enforcement agency to possibly report it. Eugene residents can call the non-emergency number at (541) 682-5111. Victims should also file a complaint with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. The more complaints a company receives, the more likely an investigation gets triggered. Tips: Don't sign a blank or incomplete estimate. Don't sign a bill of lading without a deliver date estimate listed. Don't pay in cash (or Venmo, PayPal, etc.).

/ EVENTS, WEATHER: It's Groundhog Day and people are waiting to learn whether a furry critter in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, predicts an early spring or six more weeks of winter. People will gather today at Gobbler's Knob as members of Punxsutawney Phil's "inner circle" summon him from his tree stump at dawn to learn if he has seen his shadow. According to folklore, there will be six more weeks of winter if he sees his shadow. If he doesn't, spring comes early. Records dating to the late 1800s show Phil has predicted longer winters more than 100 times. The 2020 forecast called for an early spring. The event took place virtually last year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

/ BUSINESS, ENVIRONMENT: A complex deal is in the works to revive the Pacific Northwest's last remaining aluminum smelter, located in northwest Washington. Northwest News Network reports Alcoa idled its Intalco Works smelter near Ferndale a year-and-a-half ago and laid off

virtually all the workers. Labor leaders, elected officials, and economic development advocates from Whatcom County are urging the state Legislature to approve two budget line items put forward by Gov. Jay Inslee that would spend \$10 million to upgrade the Intalco smelter to improve efficiency and greatly reduce pollution emissions. Former Alcoa worker Brian Urban says it will enable Intalco to produce 'green' aluminum, one of only two plants in the U.S. which can do so. /

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CRIME: A remarkable announcement yesterday from Eugene Police that brings closure to the families of three local women who were brutally murdered in the late 1980s. With the development of sophisticated DNA analysis by outside labs and persistent work by investigators in multiple agencies over the past three-and-a-half decades, officials have identified the man they say is responsible for the killings. They say he is John Charles Bolsinger and that he died by suicide in March of 1988. But they want to hear from anyone who has information about Bolsinger that might help them enhance their investigations. Officials say Bolsinger killed 62-year-old Gladys May Hensley, whose body was discovered in June of 1986 in her apartment in the 200 block of High Street. Two weeks later, they say Bolsinger murdered 33-year-old Janice Marie Dickinson, whose body was found behind a car dealership just north of the Ferry Street Bridge. And they say Bolsinger also was responsible for the February 1988 killing of 73-year-old Geraldine Spencer Toohey, whose body was found in her residence off Franklin Boulevard in Glenwood. Police at the time said Dickinson and Toohey both had been sexually assaulted and died from brutal homicidal violence. Over the years, detectives with Eugene Police Violent Crimes Unit and Oregon State Police followed up on the cold cases, ruling out suspects, following up on leads, and sending evidence to labs as DNA analysis evolved and improved. Parabon Nano Labs, allowing the inference of physical characteristics of individuals based on DNA information. This service, Snapshot Phenotyping, was employed in this case and in September 2017 Eugene Police Investigators received the results. During the past few years, they narrowed their focus to John Bolsinger, who they say was in his late 20s and early 30s at the time of the murders. They were able to establish a timeline for his movements that further connected him to the Lane County killings. Investigators say Bolsinger had been arrested in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1980 for a separate murder and been paroled in March of 1986 to Springfield. The body of the first local victim was discovered three months later. Detectives learned John Bolsinger had been arrested for burglary in a Springfield case in 1986. The case, in retrospect, had some chilling similarities to the third murder. The woman who was the intended victim said she'd been at home trying to sleep when she heard her dog in the kitchen, spotted a man breaking in, and approached her as she was calling 911. The woman said she began screaming

and striking the man with the phone and a flashlight and he fled. Bolsinger was arrested a short time later by Springfield Police who sued a K9. Bolsinger claimed at the time he'd knocked on the victim's door and walked away and said he had memory loss when he was questioned further. John Bolsinger was ultimately convicted in that case and served time in an Oregon prison before being transferred from the Oregon Department of Corrections to the Utah State Prison in August 1987 for a parole violation. He was released in Utah in December 1987 and a few days later enrolled at Lane Community College for Winter Term. Two months after that, the first victim's body was found. Officials say the resolution in this case would not have been possible without the dedication of numerous police officers, detectives, crime scene investigators, and crime lab analysts over the last 35 years. If you have additional information about John Bolsinger, please contact Detective Jennifer Curry at 541-682-5166 or jcurry@eugene-or.gov / CRIME, WILDLIFE: Oregon State Police Fish & Wildlife troopers are working to identify a man who in early December shot a deer from a private driveway on Upper Camp Creek Road in Springfield, then fled when a passerby asked what he was doing. Troopers are not sure whether the poacher realized how close he was to nearby residences. But officials say he killed the animal near someone's house and along an active driveway that leads to multiple other houses. It happened on December 9. Investigators say the poacher left behind both the buck deer he'd shot on private property, and the head he had just cut off the animal as a trophy. The subject is described as being about five-foot-one with brown hair and a brown beard. His vehicle is described as a late 1990s white Chevy flatbed pickup. The truck is likely a 3500 diesel. A witness reported seeing several toolboxes or gang boxes on the bed of the truck. The poacher had difficulty starting the vehicle, so it might have mechanical issues. After State Police received the call, Senior Trooper Josh Wolcott and the unit's K9, named Buck, searched the scene for evidence that might have been left behind in nearby tall grass and woody shrubs. The K9 is trained to detect carcasses, human scent, gunshot residue, and other evidence of poaching. Senior Trooper Wolcott and nearby residents also worked to field-dress the deer and pack it out so the salvaged meat could be donated to a local church, which distributed the meat to families in need. There is a \$500 reward for information that leads to an arrest or citation in this case or you may receive four ODFW hunter preference points. Have any leads? Contact Oregon State Police Tip-line at 1-800-452-7888, *OSP (*677), or email at TIP@state.or.us Reference case #SP21-342721. Members of the public who wish to support the Conservation K-9 program may do so through the Oregon Wildlife Foundation. / CRIME: Oregon State Police investigators are seeking leads and anyone who might have witnessed a fatal hit-and-run crash involving a vehicle and a pedestrian on Interstate 5 near Glenwood on Tuesday night. It happened at about a quarter 'til nine near Milepost 191. Investigators say the pedestrian, identified as 61-year-old Gale Rodgers of Springfield, was struck by a southbound vehicle. It's believed the vehicle continued southbound on Interstate 5 or exited toward Highway 58. State Police say the vehicle likely is a dark blue pickup truck with damage to its passenger-side mirror that might appear minimal. Have any leads in the case? Contact Oregon State Police. Call at 1-800-442-2068 or OSP (677). Reference OSP Case #SP22-026314. / SAFETY: Investigators say an unattended candle caused that residential house fire yesterday morning in the 3900 block of River Road, north of Irvington. Officials

say the resident's dog raised the alarm and everyone got out safely, including the dog, but the house was heavily damaged. Lane Fire Authority was joined by units from Eugene-Springfield Fire in combatting the blaze. The emergency response shut down a busy stretch of River Road during the morning commute. Officials say the fire underscores the importance of having working smoke detectors and never leaving burning candles unattended. / HEALTH: Lane County Public Health is holding a pair of drop-in COVID-19 vaccination clinics on Friday and Saturday in Cottage Grove. The free, drive-through clinics are being held in partnership with the City of Cottage Grove, the organization "Be Your Best," and the Community Sharing Program. Doses are available to all who are eligible. No appointment is needed. The event is taking place at the Cottage Grove City Shops. Enter by turning north onto North 14th Street from East Main Street, adjacent to Safeway. On Friday, vaccine doses are being offered from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. On Saturday, the clinic resumes from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The clinics will be at the City of Cottage Grove City Shops – 425 N 14th Street in Cottage Grove. ; Three more Lane County residents have died from complications of COVID-19, bringing our local pandemic death toll to 413. Lane County Public Health also received reports yesterday of 490 new infections. Seventy-nine local residents are hospitals, with 14 of those in intensive-care beds. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 5,143 new cases of COVID-19 and 39 new deaths. / EDUCATION, BUSINESS, DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING: Some big changes coming to the business district at 13th and Kincaid, on the west side of the University of Oregon campus. There's going to be a complete reworking to the location that's home to The Duck Store and some nearby property. Later this year or in early 2023, construction will begin on a new complex that will include ground floor retail and dining, along with student housing. The Flagship Campus Duck Store will be updated to visually incorporate it into the new development. The store will otherwise be unaltered and will remain open throughout construction. Officials with Duck Store are working with deChase Miksis Development on the project. That's the same design firm that's working on the revitalization of the former Eugene Water and Electric Board Steam Plant in what is now the Downtown Riverfront development along the Willamette River. The Duck Store was founded as the University of Oregon Co-operative Store in 1920 by a group of students, faculty and staff to provide academic supplies to the campus community. A century later, The Duck Store remains a nonprofit organization. / HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: A consultant hired as part of a legal settlement has released recommendations for the Oregon State Hospital to at least temporarily ease a dual crisis of slow admissions and overwhelmed capacity. The Oregonian and OregonLive report Dr. Debra Pinals, a behavioral health director from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, delivered her first of two reports this week. It comes after a monthlong review of practices at the state-run psychiatric hospital. The 20-page report makes recommendations including making more efforts to discharge or avoid the admission of patients who don't need hospital-level care. It also advises the use of the hospital's Junction City unit for newly admitted patients and tracking patient admissions through a uniform data system. / WILDFIRE RECOVERY: An extension granted by the state will give survivors of the 2020 Labor Day wildfires in Southern Oregon an extra six months of FEMA housing. Housing programs in Marion, Lane, Lincoln, and Linn Counties were given similar extensions. FEMA

guidelines call for housing assistance only up to 18 months after a declared disaster, giving the survivors of the 2020 fires until mid-March to find new homes. FEMA spokesperson Paul Corah says finding permanent housing for people is slow going in an area with low housing inventory. Of 190 units supplied to fire survivor families, 154 are still in use in Jackson County. /

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TRANSPORTATION, SPORTS, ENERGY: Team Penske is making history at the Los Angeles Coliseum this weekend when it becomes the first NASCAR team to use an all-electric semi-truck to trailer its car 50 miles to the track. The No. 2 Ford will be pulled by Freightliner's eCascadia tractor. It marks the first time in NASCAR history an electric truck will be used by a team at an official venue. And there's a reason it's named "eCascadia": In 2018, Daimler Trucks North America teams built the first two battery electric Freightliner eCascadias at the company's Portland-based research and development center. They are "Class 8" trucks, which means they are big haulers that can be used in large fleet operations. / EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMY: U.S. employers added 467,000 jobs in January. Companies remain eager to hire, despite the surge in omicron cases of COVID-19 and continued worker shortages. The nation's unemployment rate ticked up a notch, from 3.9 to 4.0 percent. But that was because more people returned to the job hunt. Leisure and hospitality led the gains, while professional and business services and the retail sector also posted big numbers. Wages were up again, an average seven-tenths of one-percent higher than the previous month as companies tried to lure and retain employees who are paying higher prices for food, energy, shelter and other items because of inflation. January is traditionally a slower hiring month, as some businesses let go of seasonal holiday workers or reevaluate their cash flow with the New Year. Analysts were uncertain what to expect in this morning's report, amid concerns about omicron. The Labor Department reported close to nine million workers were home sick around the time the survey was taken, either ill with the coronavirus, quarantining after possible exposure, caring for a family member who was ill, or dealing with disruptions to their youngster's childcare or in-person schooling. Some of them could have been counted as unemployed based on the way the survey is conducted. But there are signs the labor market has improved since then, as most schools and businesses have returned to normal operations. / HEALTH: The last time this many Lane County residents were hospitalized with COVID-related illnesses was in early September, amid a surge in cases tied to the virus' Delta variant. Now, with the omicron surge, there are 100 patients in hospital beds across the county, with 20 of them in intensive-care units. Officials say four out of five hospitalized patients are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated. Lane County

Public Health yesterday received reports of 523 new infections and one additional death, which puts the pandemic toll at 414. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 5,417 new cases of COVID-19 and 18 additional deaths. ; Lane County Public Health is holding a pair of drop-in COVID-19 vaccination clinics on today and Saturday in Cottage Grove. The free, drive-through clinics are being held in partnership with the City of Cottage Grove, the organization "Be Your Best," and the Community Sharing Program. Doses are available to all who are eligible. No appointment is needed. The event is taking place at the Cottage Grove City Shops. Enter by turning north onto North 14th Street from East Main Street, adjacent to Safeway. Today, vaccine doses are being offered from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. On Saturday, the clinic resumes from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The clinics will be at the City of Cottage Grove City Shops – 425 N 14th Street in Cottage Grove. / HEALTH, EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT: A new study from University of Oregon researchers finds that while some Oregonians remain staunchly anti-vaccine, their numbers have declined from 24 percent to 18 percent. The study found also that those who say nothing will convince them to be vaccinated generally live in rural parts of the state. While some counties in the northwestern part of the state have vaccination rates exceeding 80 percent, a few southeastern Oregon counties remain below 50 percent. This is the third statewide survey conducted by Robert Parker and Benjamin Clark with the U-of-O's Institute for Policy Research and Engagement. The responses were collected in November before the omicron variant took hold across the state. But among the factors that contributed to some changing their stance was the pandemic's rapid progression during last summer's delta surge. That's 800,000 people who are unvaccinated, a big chunk of the population in a state that's has close to 4.2 million people. Clark's analysis also found that for each additional percentage point a county is fully vaccinated, the death rate decreases by more than five people per 100,000 in county population. The survey also showed that mandates were effective in encouraging people to get vaccinated, with 10 percent of Oregonians indicating that's what pushed them to get vaccinated. And the pandemic is affecting Oregon's workforce in other ways, as well: Twenty-seven percent of Oregonians reported a change in employment status during the pandemic. Eleven percent lost their job, give percent quit and a little more than two percent retired. Twenty-six percent of Oregonians indicated they were considering quitting their current job, and an additional 10 percent indicated they were unsure. The survey also found that a significant percentage of the state's workers are considering leaving their jobs in the wake of the pandemic. / HEALTH: COVID-19 vaccines still are saving untold lives, but omicron's easy spread has many wondering if they will need boosters every few months or even a new kind of shot altogether. The aim would be to not just save lives, but also avoid the disruption that even mild infections can bring. Researchers are working on shots that could target more than one strain at once, or even stop the virus no matter how it mutates. Vaccines squirted in the nose are also being tested. Still, many experts say it's unrealistic to expect the vaccines to forever protect against any infection, but it's important to remember they are preventing many hospitalizations and deaths. / COMMUNITY, RECREATION, SAFETY, BUSINESS: Trainsong Park in West Eugene's Bethel area partially reopens today. The park was closed in mid-January after traces of dioxin were identified in soil samples. The soil was being sampled for comparison as part of a separate

testing effort at another location. The cause of the dioxin levels in the park remains unknown. Crews are reopening Trainsong's Skatepark, the basketball court and other paved areas, as well as the playground. The playground and sand lot were topped off with at least four inches of new material, to meet a recommendation by the Oregon Department of Environment Quality and Oregon Health Authority. In other locations, officials say the reopened areas include paved surfaces that are covered with several inches of bark or sand, or are at spots where people using the park are very unlikely to come into contact the soil. For now, several grassy areas and areas with exposed soil in Trainsong Park will remain fenced off until the DEQ has completed further testing. The soil sampling began as part of a larger testing effort tied to the J.H. Baxter wood treatment facility, off Roosevelt Boulevard. But the DEQ does not believe that J.H. Baxter is the source, given that Trainsong Park is four-fifths of a mile away and on the other side of Highway 99. / FISHERIES: Calamari, anyone? It's a different kind of "squid game" taking place off the coasts of Oregon and Washington. The report finds that marine heat waves driven by climate change have fueled a dramatic increase in what are known as "market squid" over the past two decades. Researchers from Oregon State University and other institutions (U.C. Santa Cruz and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) say the squid are following seasonal blobs of warmer-than-normal water. How many more squid are we talking? According to a report published by the American Fisheries Society, a 25-fold increase in population density of squid during the past two decades. California market squid, to use their official name, reproduce quickly and don't live very long. But they can grow up to 12 inches in length. Since 1993, they've been California's top fishery. They've been a growing commercial fishery in Oregon since 2016. Scientists suspect as the oceans continue to warm we'll see more changes in the types of critters living offshore. The question is how much this "squid bloom," as it's known, affects the rest of the offshore habitat—and how much warming temperatures are driving longtime Oregon offshore species farther north as they seek colder ocean waters. The squid feed on fish, crab, mollusks, and smaller squid. But they're an important food source for seals, sea lions, sharks, Chinook salmon, and some diving seabirds. /

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SPORTS: In Pac-12 action: The No. 19 Oregon Women's Basketball team might slip from the national rankings after dropping two games on the road over the weekend. The Ducks lost to Arizona State yesterday, 55-49. On Friday, they were defeated by No. 8 Arizona. The Oregon women visit Washington State Wednesday. The noon game will be carried by the Pac-12 Networks. The Oregon State Women's Basketball team lost to No. 8 Arizona on Sunday in Tucson, 73-61. Wednesday's game with Stanford has been postponed. The Beavs host the Oregon women on Saturday in Gill Coliseum. The 8 p.m. game will be broadcast on the Pac-12 Networks. The Oregon Men's Basketball team defeated Utah in a close one Saturday in Salt Lake City, 80-77. The Duck men host Stanford on Thursday. The 6 p.m. game will be carried by ESPN2. The injury-riddled Oregon State Men's Basketball team lost to Colorado over the weekend, 86-63. The Beavs return to action on Wednesday when they host Cal. The 8 p.m. game will be carried by ESPNU. / SPORTS, HEALTH: Planning your Super Bowl menu? Make sure food-borne illness does not have a seat on the sofa. Some tips from the U.S. Department of Agriculture: Perishable foods, such as chicken wings, deli wraps and meatball appetizers, should be discarded if left out for longer than two hours. To prevent food waste, refrigerate or freeze perishable items within two hours. Keep cold foods at a temperature of 40 F or below by keeping food nestled in ice or refrigerated until ready to serve. Keep hot foods at a temperature of 140 F or above by placing food in a preheated oven, warming trays, chafing dishes or slow cookers. Divide leftovers into smaller portions and refrigerate or freeze them in shallow containers which helps leftovers cool quicker than storing them in large containers. Keep Takeout Food Safe: If you order food and it's delivered or picked up in advance of the big game, divide the food into smaller portions or pieces, place in shallow containers and refrigerate until ready to reheat and serve. You can also keep the food warm (above 140 F) in a preheated oven, warming tray, chafing dish or slow cooker. When reheating food containing meat or poultry, make sure the internal temperature reaches 165 F as measured by a food thermometer. If heating food in the microwave, ensure that contents are evenly dispersed. Because microwaved food can have cold spots, be sure to stir food evenly until the food has reached a safe internal temperature throughout. ; With Super Bowl weekend on the way, health officials across Oregon are encouraging

people to stay safe if partying with friends and family. They say large—and largely unmasked—gatherings have led to COVID outbreaks over the past two years. That can affect families, businesses, and schools. / **HEALTH:** The number of people hospitalized for COVID-19 in Oregon was expected to peak over the weekend, then steadily recede to pre-omicron levels by the end of March. The projections came in a report from the Oregon Health and Science University. Fewer people are testing positive for the coronavirus. The Oregon Health Authority reports last week's percentage of positive cases dropped to 19 percent from an all-time high of 24.5 percent the previous. Hospitalizations remain high across the state and here in Lane County but are expected to slowly decline over the rest of the month. On Friday, Lane County Public Health reported 101 people were hospitalized with COVID-related conditions and 21 of those were in intensive-care beds. The last time that many Lane County residents were hospitalized with COVID-related illnesses was in early September, amid a surge in cases tied to the virus' Delta variant. Officials say seven out of ten hospitalized patients are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated. We'll receive the local and statewide weekend case numbers later today. Lane County Public Health on Friday received reports of 533 new infections and two additional deaths, which puts the pandemic toll at 416. The Oregon Health Authority on Friday received reports of 4,872 new infections and 33 additional deaths. / **POLITICS, GOVERNMENT:** Oregon lawmakers are back at the State Capitol for Week Two of their short legislative session. On Wednesday, they receive the latest quarterly revenue forecast. That will let them know how much money is available for immediate needs and how much can be set aside to shore up Oregon's "rainy day fund." / **CRIME:** Eugene Police say a standoff Sunday afternoon with a man who barricaded himself in a vehicle after a family dispute ended safely. 27-year-old Corey Steven Lister was taken into custody two-and-a-half hours later. The incident occurred in the 3300 block of Paula Court, in a Santa Clara-area neighborhood off Wilkes Drive. Investigators say Lister had been in a verbal dispute, left in his vehicle, and returned at different times, with officers responding multiple times. Lister also was reported to be making suicidal statements. When contacted at one point by officers, he allegedly challenged them to shoot him. Crisis negotiators ultimately worked with Eugene Police's Drone Team to use a drone to communicate with Lister, who appeared to be holding some items and possibly had something tucked in his waistband—but ultimately determined he did not have a firearm. Lister was taken into custody shortly after 4:30 p.m. / **SPORTS, BUSINESS, EDUCATION:** Something about the phrase "heated ski shorts" just sounds funny. But if you're standing around in frigid conditions at the Winter Olympics, they might be the hottest item on the slopes. Two University of Oregon graduate students and an alumna have partnered to create heated ski shorts that keep athletes' muscles warm during training runs and during the wait times between events. Former student Colby Taylor created a patented process to sew conductive thread into a pattern created and designed by Oregon Sports Product Management students Josh Daniel and Lauren Samuels. The trio started their work after instructor Brett Kirby learned that the U.S. Alpine Ski Team was looking for a product to help team members stay warm. They originally considered creating a heated vest or jacket, but realized it was skiers' legs that needed the added warmth. Lithium-ion batteries energize the heating element. The shorts are sleek and aerodynamic for use during training but have breakaway

zippers that allow athletes to remove them quickly before a competition run. /
TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY, HEALTH: Delta Air Lines has told the U.S. Department of Justice that any person convicted of a disruption on board a flight should be put on the national “no fly” list. In a letter to the Justice Department, Delta’s CEO says there should be “zero tolerance” for any behavior that affects flight safety. The letter notes that such incidents of bad behavior represent a small fraction of overall flights on Delta, but the rate of incidents on the airline has increased nearly 100 percent since 2019. Unruly passenger cases have spiked during the pandemic, as unruly travelers attack others, including air crews. This year alone, The Federal Aviation Administration has received 323 reports—close to two-thirds tied to a federal rule that requires face masks on flights, but others attributed to intoxication or repeated bad behavior. In November, Attorney General Merrick Garland directed U.S. attorneys across the country to prioritize prosecution of federal crimes that happen on commercial flights. If convicted, fines can run up to \$37,000. /

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DISCUSSED HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: Oregon's statewide mask requirement for indoor public places and schools will be lifted no later than the end of March. Officials say they will consider lifting the general indoor mask requirement earlier than March 31 if hospitalizations decline sooner than expected. But because the surge in infections tied to the omicron variant is continuing and straining health care staff, Oregon health officials say mask requirements remain in place for now. In the coming weeks, education and health officials will meet to update their guidance to ensure schools operate safely after the mask rule is lifted. Once state masking rules are lifted, officials say employers and businesses may continue to establish their own mask requirements to protect employees and customers. And health experts strongly recommend that high-risk individuals continue wearing masks in indoor public settings after mask requirements are lifted, including anyone who is: Unvaccinated; Immunocompromised; At high risk of COVID-19 hospitalizations, including those with underlying health conditions and those 65 and older; Living with people at high risk. The March 31 deadline for lifting statewide mask rules is based on predictions from experts at the Oregon Health and Science University, who say COVID-19 related hospitalizations will decrease to 400 or fewer statewide by that time. The hospitalization numbers are slowly falling. But officials say capacities remain strained, with more than 9 in 10 intensive care unit and acute care beds occupied both by COVID and non-COVID patients. They say that puts a continuing strain on nurses, doctors, and other medical staff. Last month, 1,300 members of the Oregon National Guard were deployed to hospitals across the state to shore up the health care system. It was their second deployment in the past year. The state also has brought in more than 1,100 out-of-state contract nurses and other medical staff (1,179) to help care for high numbers of severely ill patients. State leaders say Oregon has the third lowest cumulative COVID-19 case rate in the nation and the seventh lowest COVID-19 death rate since the start of the pandemic. They believe the mask rules, along with widespread vaccination and boosters, are a big reason for that. According to data compiled by Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), more than 8 in 10 Oregonians report wearing masks in public settings. Over the past week, the Oregon Health Authority reports the average number of newly diagnosed coronavirus cases has dropped about 40 percent. But statewide

hospitalizations, which tend to climb in the wake of infections, remain above 1,000 per day. State officials say more than 100 people who testified at a recent public hearing regarding indoor mask rules and many others contributed written comments. They expressed concerns about Oregon being one of few states that require masks indoors and said mask rules override decisions made by local communities. Some also questioned the effectiveness of masks and complained that mask rules were at odds with their personal choices. But state officials presented data on the effectiveness of masks in preventing COVID-19 transmission and described the impact masks and vaccinations have had in slowing infections, hospitalizations, and deaths in Oregon. ; Hospitalizations remain high across the state and here in Lane County but are expected to slowly decline over the rest of the month. Yesterday, Lane County Public Health reported 120 people are hospitalized with COVID-related conditions and 22 of those are in intensive-care beds. The last time that many Lane County residents were hospitalized with COVID-related illnesses was in early September, amid a surge in cases tied to the virus' Delta variant. Officials say a combined 730 Lane County residents tested positive for the virus on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Three more people have died, putting our pandemic death toll at 419. The Oregon Health Authority received reports of a combined 7,928 infections on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and 30 additional deaths. ; Oregon was not the only state making announcements yesterday about COVID-related masking requirements. California will end its indoor masking rules for vaccinated people next week, but California school students still will need to wear masks. But New Jersey, Connecticut and Delaware will lift school masking requirements over the next month or two. The changes come as scientists and others say the coronavirus may never go away — and that Americans need to find a way to coexist with it. /

ECONOMY, FAMILY, EDUCATION: Looking for free tax-preparation assistance?

Specially trained students from the University of Oregon are ready to help. On seven Saturday afternoons between now and the tax-filing deadline, students with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program are working with members of the community who take their paperwork to the sessions at the U-of-O's Lillis Business Complex. The students prepare the return and call you to pick it up when it's ready for you to review and sign. Those students are members of the UO's Beta Alpha Psi—a national accounting honor society. They are specially trained in tax preparation and offer their volunteer services to the local community free of charge. The volunteer team processes many types of returns and is particularly well-versed in the tax needs of students. But they welcome non-student community members. You'll need to pull together your tax information: That includes things like your W-2 and 1099 forms, and proof of deductible costs. There's also an IRS form shared on the program's website you'll need to download and fill out before you swing by campus. You'll also need Photo ID, your Social Security card, and dates of birth for yourself and anyone with whom you're filing jointly. The drop-off takes place on Saturdays from noon to 4 p.m. in the Lillis Business Complex on each of the following dates. No new clients will be accepted after 2 p.m. and preparation will be done on a first-come, first-served basis. The dates are Feb. 12, 19, 26; March 5; and April 2, 9, 16 from noon to 4 p.m. No new clients will be accepted after 2 p.m. and preparation will be done on a first-come, first-served basis. ; The Biden administration is kicking off an outreach campaign to get millions of families to file their taxes so they can receive

the second half of payments from the expanded child tax credit. Vice President Kamala Harris, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and White House senior adviser Gene Sperling are hosting a virtual event today to encourage people to send their tax forms to the IRS. Administration officials estimate \$193 billion would go to 58 million eligible households that file taxes. This means families would receive credits on their taxes or refunds averaging \$3,330 from this provision. ; The IRS is ending its use of facial recognition technology to authenticate taxpayers who create online accounts. The tax-collection agency is pulling the plug on a collaboration with ID.me, a company it said it would hook up with for its facial recognition programs. But the idea got little traction as opponents raised privacy concerns. Oregon Senator Ron Wyden was among the most outspoken Congressional critics of the IRS facial-recognition effort. Critics feared the database from ID.me could become a target for cyberthreats — or that the data could be misused by other government agencies. /

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SUBJECT
DISCUSSED RECREATION, AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, WEATHER: There will be a delay this year in refilling Cougar and Fall Creek reservoirs and conducting spill operations at Foster Dam. That, in turn, will affect access to some popular boat ramps and other recreation sites. It comes after a federal judge in September ordered the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to take immediate action to improve fish passage at dams in the Willamette Basin. The judge said the agency for years had failed to provide adequate passage through its dams for threatened Chinook salmon and winter steelhead trout. At Fall Creek, that could mean limited or no access to the Cascara and Winberry boat ramps—although the North Shore ramp would remain available. At Cougar Reservoir, no boat ramps are expected to be available. And at Foster Lake, the lower levels mean no boating access until mid-May at Calkins Park or Gedney. Corps officials say there's always a degree of uncertainty with annual water forecasts—and the recent droughts haven't helped. In a normal year, Corps begins its storage reservoir refill in February and wraps up in late May. The judge noted last fall that the increased spill operations might affect hydropower generation and summer storage of water used for irrigation. Army Corps officials say they'll provide updates on the reservoir refill levels as they get a better sense of things. In the meantime, they warn of an increased risk of navigational hazards this boating season and encourage you to always wear a life jacket. Among other things, the court order directed the Corps to begin drawing down the water level in Cougar Reservoir on the South Fork McKenzie River to make it easier for migrating fish to find their way through "regulating outlets," toward the base of the dam. And the Corps also began overnight spill operations last fall at Foster Dam on the South Fork Santiam River near Sweet Home. The goal there was to prevent fish, who are more likely to migrate at night, from being swept into the power turbines. That improves their chances of survival. The 13 Willamette Valley reservoirs support a variety of purposes, most notably flood risk management, fish and wildlife, water quality, hydropower generation and recreation. The reservoirs are kept at a lower level in the winter to reduce downstream flooding and are refilled in the spring in preparation for the conservation season, where water upstream is used for recreation and downstream is used to maintain adequate summertime flows in the rivers for fish, water quality and irrigation. Corps officials say it is important to note

that the Willamette Valley is primarily a rain-driven system rather than a predominantly snow-melt system, as is common with other Northwest reservoirs. / WILDFIRE RECOVERY, RECREATION: A big fundraising effort to replant trees in several wildfire-damaged Oregon State Parks is continuing. Oregon Parks Forever, a statewide nonprofit, is working to plant at least one million trees to replace those burned in the September 2020 blazes. Every time someone donates a dollar, it pays for the planting of another seedling. Staff with Oregon Parks Forever said that by the end of January crews had planted 553,000 trees at locations including the Ben & Kay Dorris State Recreation Area up the McKenzie, popular Silver Falls State Park, and a handful of others. Want to help out? You can make a donation online at www.orparksforever.org or send a Text Message on your phone to REPLANT at 41444; or mail a check to Oregon Parks Forever, 1501 SW Jefferson Street, Portland, OR 97201. / HOUSING, LOW-INCOME, GOVERNMENT: The Secretary of State's office will audit Oregon's rental assistance program. Lawmakers have called for scrutiny of the effort that has distributed emergency funds to tens of thousands of households. The Oregonian and OregonLive report the program has been efficient compared to other states' rent aid rollouts. But it's has struggled to keep up with a backlog in applications. Some renters said they were left waiting for weeks with pending requests or without any updates. The Emergency Rental Assistance program has received more than 70,000 applications since June and paid out more than \$268 million to 38,000 households. But coordinators still are working to pay out funds to another 14,000 applicants. One challenge: Determining whether an applicant qualifies for the assistance. More than 19,000 applications were withdrawn or found ineligible for aid, according to a dashboard maintained by the state. / EVENTS, ECONOMY, GOVERNMENT. COMMUNITY: Last summer, Eugene hosted the U.S. Olympic Track & Field Trials. In July, the ten-day World Athletic Championships come to Hayward Field. The elite international meet will draw 2,000 athletes from close to 200 countries, along with thousands of coaches, media, family, and other spectators. It's expected to be a major economic boost for Lane County. And now, there's word Oregon has secured the last \$9 million of the state's \$40 million contribution to the World Athletics Championships in Eugene. The Oregonian and OregonLive reports the money is arriving in the form of a grant—part of last year's big federal stimulus package—from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Reporter Jeff Manning reports it's a relief for the organizing committee of the Eugene World Championships, known as "Oregon 22." The state's \$40 contribution represents about half the funding the group said it needs to pull off the 10-day event in July. Travel Oregon, the state's tourism agency, has provided \$20 million. Another \$10 million came from the Oregon Lottery. This year's World Championships will be held July 15-24. It is the first time the World Championships are being held in the United States and Eugene is the smallest city to ever host the event. / ECONOMY, TRANSPORTATION: You can blame winter weather and international tensions for the continued rise in gasoline prices. Analysts with AAA—the automobile club—say oil prices are up more than \$30 per barrel since August. And the recent cold weather across much of U.S. has increased demand for heating oil. The national average for a gallon of gasoline has surged to \$3.44, eight cents more than a week ago. But prices remain close to half-a-dollar more expensive here on the West Coast. This morning, a gallon of regular-grade gas will set you back an

average \$3.91 here in Eugene-Springfield. That's up six cents from a week ago, and a whopping \$1.19 from this time last year. This morning's average price for a gallon of diesel: \$4.19. / HEALTH: COVID-19 related hospitalizations are continuing to slowly decline across Oregon and Lane County. Yesterday, Lane County Public Health reported 82 people are hospitalized with COVID-related conditions and 11 of those are in intensive-care beds. Local officials say they received reports of 313 new infections yesterday and four additional deaths. Lane County's pandemic death toll stands at 423. The Oregon Health Authority received reports of 3,248 infections yesterday and 21 additional deaths. ; Hospitalizations fueled by the highly contagious omicron variant in the U.S. have begun falling after peaking at record levels in some communities. But doctors are warning that the wave is leaving behind lots of postponed surgeries and an increasingly worn-out health care workforce in its wake. Across the U.S., the number of people in the hospital with COVID-19 has tumbled more than 28 percent over the past three weeks to about 105,000 on average. ; Experts say it's too early to know whether people infected with the omicron variant will develop long COVID. Many doctors believe it's possible to have long-term effects from omicron. Long COVID is usually diagnosed many weeks after someone gets sick with COVID-19. Overall, some estimates suggest more than a third of COVID-19 survivors will develop some symptoms of long COVID. That can include fatigue, brain fog, shortness of breath, insomnia, anxiety, depression, and other problems. Scientists are racing to figure out what's behind the mysterious condition and whether vaccines could be part of the answer. / ECONOMY, HEALTH: Is it the pandemic or have Oregonians losing their taste for liquor? A new study from DrugAbuse.com found Oregon residents drank about one-quarter fewer alcohol beverages last year than the year before. But The Oregonian and OregonLive report we're not exactly abstaining: The study finds that a typical Oregonian still consumed 669 alcoholic drinks in 2021. That's close to two drinks per day and close to what the CDC defines as "heavy drinking." That said, reporter Lizzy Acker notes the survey mostly included regular drinkers and might not be representative of the population as a whole. / SPORTS, EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT: An advocacy group for college athletes has filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board. The intent: Give employee status to college athletes. That would give them the right to competitive pay, collective bargaining, and other benefits. The National College Players Association filed the unfair labor practice charges against the NCAA, Pac-12, UCLA and the University of Southern California as single and joint employers of Bowl Subdivision football players and Division I men's and women's basketball players. It claims college athletes meet the definition of employees under labor law — and should be afforded the same protections. The move comes after the NLRB's general counsel wrote in a memo that she views college athletes to be employees. / LOW-INCOME, FAMILY: Millions of Americans who have never filed a tax return need to do so this year to claim what's coming to them under the enhanced child tax credit. Previously, only people who earned enough money to owe income taxes could qualify for the full credit. But President Biden expanded the program in the coronavirus relief package, increasing the size of the payments and expanding who's eligible. Eligible families who didn't receive any advance child tax credit payments can claim the full amount on their 2021 tax returns. /

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ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

ECONOMY, BUSINESS: You're feeling it at the grocery store; at the gas pump; for rent and utilities; and when you buy everything from paper products to computers, building supplies to automobiles. The Labor Department reports consumer prices jumped 7.5 percent last month compared with 12 months ago, the steepest year-over-year increase since February 1982. Analysts say shortages of supplies and workers, heavy doses of federal aid, ultra-low interest rates, and robust consumer spending combined to send inflation accelerating in the past year. The price increases hammered consumers, offset recent pay raises, and reinforced the Federal Reserve's decision to begin raising borrowing rates across the economy. On Wall Street, the major indexes opened lower on the news. Interest-rate sensitive stocks, like those in the tech sector, took the biggest hits. / POLICING, CRIME, BUSINESS, COMMUNITY: Eugene Police say they are in the midst of a two-week saturation patrol across downtown to reduce criminal and disorderly conduct. The goal: Improve the downtown environment for businesses and individuals and create a safe and welcoming tone. The Street Crimes Unit and Downtown Team are coordinating the effort. Along with patrol officers on overtime, they're saturating downtown through Saturday. During the first week, they reported making arrests on 18 warrants. And there were multiple arrests and citations issued for offenses ranging from having an open container or public use of marijuana, to defecating in public, providing false information to police, and engaging in physical harassment. Because much of the unwanted behavior happens after 5 p.m., police say they assigned much of their overtime personnel to evening and night shifts, especially on weekends. Law enforcement personnel also are meeting with businesses and individuals in the area bounded by Lincoln Street and High Streets and 6th and 11th Avenues to hear their concerns. Eugene Police officials say one significant challenge is what they call a "revolving door" of persistent crime created by an increasing population, lack of critical mental health and addiction treatment options, and capacity in the justice system, which means a higher number of capacity-based releases from the jail. ; Lane County's leaders say you'll see more sheriff's deputies on patrol and responding to calls over the next five years. The Board of Commissioners is working with the Sheriff's Office to spend \$7.2 million in federal funds to add five

deputy sheriffs, two detectives, and a sergeant. Sheriff Cliff Harrold says that once the positions are filled, it will allow the agency to have one additional deputy on patrol during each shift, along with an additional detective to follow up cases of felony property crime. Officials say the Lane County Sheriff's Office currently falls far below the state average in the number of deputies per 1,000 residents. Across Oregon, the average is .30 deputies per 1,000 residents; in Lane County that ratio is .19, including the new positions. It would require an additional 42 deputy positions to reach the state average. The additional funding is coming from what is known as Secure Rural Schools payments. The federal funding is distributed to counties across the West in lieu of timber revenue receipts. The program was created in the early 1990s during a significant reduction in logging on federal lands. Lane County's share of the money goes into the county's Road Fund to support public safety and road maintenance activities. County leaders say the remaining \$6.5 million coming from the Secure Rural Schools Act funds will pay for continued improvements to Territorial Highway and replenish Road Fund Reserves. Lane County will use much of that money to maintain its more than 1,400 lane miles of roadways.

/ SAFETY: In Benton County, investigators want to hear from anyone who might have witnessed the events leading up to a fatal crash Tuesday afternoon on Highway 99-W, four miles north of Monroe. It happened around 2:15 p.m. Three Junction City women died when their southbound passenger car went into the northbound lane and struck an oncoming log truck head-on. The three who died were the driver, 49-year-old Shelene Lenore Parrish, and her two passengers—51-year-old Laynette Marie Taylor and Taylor's adult daughter, 31-year-old Brittany Sue Taylor. The trucks' driver was uninjured and is cooperating with the investigation.

/ GOVERNMENT, ECONOMY: Economists yesterday told Oregon lawmakers that the state's revenue collections remain strong, and they'll have close to one-(b)illion additional dollars to put toward critical programs and a reserve fund. The rosy revenue forecast also means Oregon taxpayers are likely to share in a "kicker" rebate when they file their state income tax returns next year. The kicker goes into effect whenever personal income tax revenues are at least two percent above initial projections during the biennium. We're already due a big, 17-percent kicker from our 2020 state tax payments because of last year's strong revenue picture. State economists say the latest quarterly revenue forecast estimates include an additional \$979 million to spend this legislative session. The growth in revenue projections since last quarter means a larger budget to work with. But how the money should be used remains up for debate. The forecast notes that tax revenues are up by \$800 million, coupled with \$179 million in unspent money from the last budget period. State lawmakers are one week into the five-week legislative session and need to finalize and pass their spending blueprint by March 7. Democrats, who hold the majority in both legislative chambers, have outlined an ambitious list of priorities including more funding for affordable housing, increasing childcare options, bolstering the state's workforce, addressing climate change, and setting aside a significant amount of money for the next biennium in case state revenues weaken. Legislative leaders say key areas of investment should be schools, job training, working families, housing, small businesses, and behavioral health services. Republicans have different priorities, saying they want to use the revenue to combat crime, including large illegal marijuana growing operations in southern Oregon. That would include funding

additional State Police efforts in the region to supplement local law enforcement operations. GOP lawmakers also want to spend \$50 million on forest thinning to prevent wildfires. Much of the predicted surplus comes from estimated corporate tax revenues, which have continued to surge as businesses raised prices amid supply shortages and found consumers prepared to pay more. Income taxes are also up, driven by wage increases. Estate taxes and lottery receipts have also exceeded expectations. / HEALTH: COVID-19 related hospitalizations remain high locally. Lane County Public Health yesterday reported that 92 people are hospitalized with COVID-related conditions and 11 of those are in intensive-care beds. Local officials say they received reports of 384 new infections yesterday and two additional deaths. Lane County's pandemic death toll stands at 425. The Oregon Health Authority received reports of 3,309 infections yesterday and 57 additional deaths. / DISASTERS: Scientists say Oregon faces a potential nightmare scenario unless work is done to fortify its main fuel storage facility against a major earthquake. More than 90 percent of Oregon's liquid fuels are stored at a facility next to the Willamette River in Portland. State lawmakers have begun taking steps to compel the owners and operators of the facility's aging storage tanks to make them earthquake resistant. The Critical Energy Infrastructure Hub is built on soils subject to liquefaction in an earthquake. Experts predict a massive earthquake could occur any time along the Cascadia subduction zone, which runs from offshore Northern California, Oregon, and Washington state to Canada. / HEALTH: As more places drop mask orders and other COVID-19 precautions, there's new urgency in finding ways to protect up to 7 million Americans with severely weak immune systems. Vaccines don't always work for people who are immune-compromised because of cancer, organ transplants or other conditions. There's a new option, the first drug that promises to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection for six months. Evusheld injections contain virus-fighting antibodies for people who can't make their own. But it's in short supply, restricted to the highest-risk patients. / SAFETY, FAMILY: You've heard of couples fighting over all kinds of things after a split. But there are some things that endure even after the last flame of a relationship goes out: online passwords. Harold Li of the encryption service ExpressVPN says nearly 8 in 10 Americans who are in a relationship share passwords across nearly every digital platform. That ranges from social media and streaming services to email, cell phones, and mobile wallets. Li says sharing passwords in the digital era is a sign of trust and affection akin to the gift of a letterman jacket or an exchange of school locker combinations in for an earlier generation. But the romantic gesture can pose serious risks to personal privacy when even the closest relationship ends. One expert suggests when people go their separate ways, they have a "digital divorce" for passwords. But some who keep their exes "in the stream," so to speak, say they do so to maintain a measure of post-breakup peace. One woman surveyed says she shares passwords with an ex-husband, a boyfriend who followed him, and her new hubby. /

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DISCUSSED BUSINESS, EVENTS: Valentine's Day falls on Monday. But retailers hope this will be a good shopping weekend, with last-minute gift buyers and early celebrations. Restaurants are expecting added business and there could be a nice increase in sales of chocolate, candy and flowers. Some wineries have special events. Many couples are planning weekend getaways. Add in the Super Bowl parties and people have plenty to celebrate. / SAFETY: With Super Bowl Sunday just days away, police agencies are keeping an eye out for drunken and impaired drivers. Patrols also will watch for people who are speeding, violating cellphone safety laws, engaging in seatbelt violations, and driving without an active license or insurance. And remember: If you drive without insurance or a license, your vehicle may be towed. / CRIME: Oregon State Police troopers yesterday arrested a man they say carjacked a BMW SUV in Woodburn and led law enforcement on a high-speed chase down Interstate 5 from Salem to a spot near the rest area north of Coburg. It wasn't easy. Investigators say the driver, D'Andre Eyler, at one point exited to turn around and head north on I-5, then exited a few minutes later to race south. State Police say they used spike strips near the Harrisburg exit to slow the vehicle and, when the driver continued to flee, used a patrol vehicle to push the stolen SUV off the roadway and to a stop near the Oak Grove Rest Area. Investigators say Eyler tried to run but was arrested and faces a wide range of criminal charges. / TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY: Oregon and other states are being given the go-ahead to build a nationwide network of electric vehicle charging stations. That would place new or upgraded stations every 50 miles along interstate highways. The money comes from that new infrastructure law. Oregon Congressman Peter DeFazio and U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley say we'll receive \$7.7 million in federal funds this fiscal year, with more in the future. They say electric vehicles mean cleaner air, healthier kids, and a lot less carbon pollution driving climate change. The U.S. currently has an estimated 100,000 electric vehicle chargers. But experts say that's not enough to adequately serve the growing numbers of EVs. The goal is to expand to half-a-million charging stations by the year 2030, when electric vehicles are expected to make up half of all annual sales. / HEALTH, SAFETY: Last month's death of actor-comedian Bob Saget from what officials say was a fall and accidental head injury is bringing new attention to the importance of seeking care

if you suffer head trauma and begin experiencing certain symptoms. Health experts say the severity of a brain injury often does not match what's visible on the outside. A skull fracture or bleeding can put dangerous pressure on your brain. Symptoms that might injury include an increasing headache, dizziness, unsteadiness on your feet, seeing double, or decreased awareness. Experts say the rule is: If you're not feeling or behaving normally after a bump on the head, take it seriously and get it evaluated. / SAFETY, WEATHER, LOW-INCOME, POLITICS: Pacific Northwest lawmakers are eyeing several emergency relief bills aimed at helping vulnerable people following last year's historic heat wave that killed at least 220 people. The measures would provide millions in funding for cooling systems and weather shelters during future extreme weather events. One of the bill's sponsors says swings in weather are getting more extreme, and nowadays a lack of air conditioning can be fatal. Extraordinary temperatures in Oregon and Washington sent public health officials scrambling between June 25 and June 28. Temperatures in Eugene-Springfield, Portland, and other communities reached into the triple digits for three days. Many of those who died were living alone in apartment units that had no fans or air conditioning. Some had health conditions that made them more vulnerable to extreme weather events. / WILDFIRE RECOVERY: The U.S. Forest Service in Oregon will receive more than \$262 million in federal disaster funding to help with wildfire recovery. It's part of a larger disaster assistance bill passed late last year in Congress to help states recover from a variety of natural disasters that occurred over the last three years. More than a million acres of land across Oregon burned in the Labor Day wildfires in 2020. / WILDLIFE, LEGAL: A judge has restored federal protections for gray wolves across much of the U.S. after they were removed in the waning days of the Trump administration. The federal judge said in Thursday's ruling that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service failed to show that wolf populations could be sustained in portions of the West and the Midwest without protection under the Endangered Species Act. Wildlife advocates have argued that state-sponsored hunting threatened to reverse the gray wolf's recovery over the past several decades. But that recovery has triggered bitter blowback from ranchers and hunters angered over wolf attacks on livestock and big game herds. They say federal protections are no longer needed. Attorneys for the Biden administration had defended the Trump rule that removed protections, arguing wolves were resilient enough to bounce back even if their numbers dropped sharply due to intensive hunting. Wolves once ranged most of the U.S. but were wiped out in most places by the 1930s under government-sponsored poisoning and trapping campaigns. And more than 2,000 wolves occupy six states in the Pacific Northwest and Northern Rockies. But wolves remain absent across most of their historical range. Wildlife advocates argue that continued protections are needed so they can continue to expand in Oregon, California, Colorado, and other states. / HEALTH: Lane County Public Health yesterday received reports of 254 new COVID-19 infections. There were no new deaths. 104 residents remain Hospitalized, 14 of those in intensive-care beds. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 3,176 new infections and 22 additional deaths. Infection numbers are continuing to fall slowly across the state, and officials say hospitalization total peaked at the end of January. But patient numbers remain high. And experts say death numbers tend to crest two weeks after hospitalizations, which has been happening during the past week. Oregon is set

to lift its indoor mask mandate by March 31 or earlier, once average daily hospitalizations drop below 400. More than 1,000 residents with COVID-19 complications (1,007) occupied hospital beds on Thursday. / HEALTH, RELIGION, EMPLOYMENT, LEGAL: The Register-Guard is reporting that two women claim PeaceHealth discriminated against them after they received religious exceptions to taking the COVID-19 vaccine. A Beaverton attorney filed the federal lawsuits last week on behalf of Shonna Hunter and Brenda Navarrete, who allege the health system putting them on indefinite and unpaid administrative leave was not based on an "unacceptable health and safety risk" but was religious discrimination. While the women both live in Lane County and make similar claims, their lawsuits are separate. Reporter Megan Banta writes that both women say they had not had any conflict between their work for PeaceHealth and their faith until the coronavirus pandemic. Hunter and Navarrete also claim they "scrupulously followed hospital rules and regulations to protect against infection" like wearing personal protection equipment, testing, handwashing, social distancing, and quarantining if necessary and were willing to continue doing and follow other regulations in lieu of getting a vaccine. Instead of accommodating their sincerely held religious beliefs, they say the hospital system placed them on unpaid leave and effectively terminated them, the legal complaints read. PeaceHealth officials said they are not letting unvaccinated employees work in patient care areas or other facilities "to ensure patient and employee safety." Officials with the health system would not comment on the lawsuits but confirmed both women remain on unpaid administrative leave. / SPORTS: In Pac-12 action: It's rivalry weekend for the Oregon and Oregon State Women's Basketball teams: The No. 24 Ducks are at Oregon State tonight. Tip-off is 8 p.m. on the Pac-12 Networks. On Sunday, the Beavs travel to Eugene for a rematch. That game begins at 1 p.m. and is being broadcast on the Pac-12 Networks. The Oregon Men's Basketball team defeated Stanford last night, 68-60, to win its fourth straight game. The Ducks host Cal Saturday at 1 p.m. The contest is being carried by the Pac-12 Networks. The Oregon State Men's Basketball team hosts Stanford on Saturday. The 7:30 p.m. game is being broadcast by the Pac-12 Networks. / CRIME, BUSINESS, EDUCATION: Oregon is one of three states to reach a settlement agreement with a California-based mortgage education course provider for his role in a multi-state fraud scheme that involved hundreds of mortgage loan originators. The Oregon Division of Financial Regulation brought administrative actions against Danny Yen and his family for providing false certificates and taking courses on behalf of mortgage loan originators through other education providers in violation of the Secure and Fair Enforcement for Mortgage Licensing Act (SAFE Act). As part of the settlement, the Yen family agreed to a lifetime ban from direct and indirect involvement in businesses that provide mortgage lending-related education. In addition to a \$75,000 fine, the Yen family agreed to fully cooperate with the investigations. If the Yens violate any term of the settlement agreement, they will be obligated to pay a \$15 million noncompliance penalty. Those who took classes from the Yens were fined \$1,000 per state they are licensed in and agreed to surrender their licenses for three months. In addition, they must retake all continuing education classes and additional classes beyond state and federal SAFE Act requirements. Forty-seven people with Oregon licenses were fined; however, not all resided in the state. The division continues to pursue its investigation with regulators from other

jurisdictions. / GOVERNMENT, MILITARY, TERRORISM, CIVIL RIGHTS: Two Democrats on the Senate Intelligence Committee say the CIA has a secret, undisclosed data stash that includes information collected about Americans. While neither the agency nor lawmakers would disclose specifics about the data, Oregon Senator Ron Wyden alleges the CIA has hidden details about the program from the public and Congress. There have long been concerns about what information the intelligence community collects about Americans. CIA officials would not comment on the program but say the agency strictly follows privacy guidelines intended to protect American data. The CIA and National Security Agency have a foreign mission — and are generally barred from investigating Americans or U.S. businesses. / ECONOMY, TRANSPORTATION, BUSINESS: High inflation and tangled supply chains have seeped into nearly every nook of the economy, forcing consumers and businesses to make painful decisions that many of them have never had to contemplate before. With the government reporting Thursday that consumer inflation reached 7.5 percent over the past year — a 40-year high — the acceleration of prices is leaving few unscathed. The key trends that have sent prices soaring — higher wages, parts shortages, rising rents, robust consumer spending, clogged ports, and warehouses — are not expected to fade anytime soon. That means it's unclear when, or how far, prices will actually decline. Inflation has become a financial strain for millions of Americans filling up at the gas station, lined up at the grocery checkout lane, shopping for clothes, bargaining for a car, or paying monthly rent. Even if you toss out volatile food and energy prices, what is known as "core inflation" jumped 6 percent over the past year. That was also the sharpest such jump in four decades. /

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SUBJECT
DISCUSSED BUSINESS, EVENTS: Valentine's Day today. Heading into the weekend, retailers were enticing shoppers with romantic items ranging from flowers to other gifts. Restaurants saw added business. Bonnie Glass with Euphoria Chocolate Company had perhaps the most direct marketing campaign: She stood at the corner of West 11th Avenue and Bertlesen with a giant red-and-white arrow sign. It had the word "CHOCOLATE" printed on it in big letters, pointed in the direction of the company's factory store. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates there are close to 20,000 jewelry stores across the country, 12,000 flower shops, and 3,000 candy and nut stores. / SAFETY: Officials still don't know who donated a box of items to the Junction City St. Vincent DePaul thrift store that contained what appeared to be a functional hand grenade. The staff at St. Vinnie's called police midday Saturday after making the alarming discovery. The building was evacuated and nearby streets closed for safety. Explosive Ordinance Technicians from the Eugene Police Department X-rayed the device and concluded it did not contain a detonator cap. They secured the device and took it away to be destroyed. / CRIME: Eugene Police said Friday they've extended their saturation patrol across downtown to reduce criminal and disorderly conduct. It'll continue through at least February 26. The goal is to improve the downtown environment for businesses and individuals and create a safe and welcoming tone. The Street Crimes Unit and Downtown Team are coordinating the effort. Along with patrol officers on overtime, they're saturating downtown. They're making arrests on outstanding warrants, along with arrests and citations for offenses ranging from having an open container or public use of marijuana, to defecating in public, providing false information to police, and engaging in physical harassment. Because much of the unwanted behavior happens after 5 p.m., police say many of their overtime personnel are working evening and night shifts, especially on weekends. / COMMUNITY, ENTERTAINMENT: You might not be familiar with Ivan Reitman's name, but he helped put Oregon on the movie map when he was one of the producers of the 1978 comedy "National Lampoon's Animal House." The film brought actor John Belushi and others to Lane County. They shot in and around the University of Oregon, in downtown Cottage Grove, and at the Dexter Lake Club during a whirlwind 32 days of production. Reitman directed and produced dozens of other films, including 1984's "Ghostbusters." His family says

he died Saturday night at age 75 at his home in California. / **HEALTH:** Public health officials hope the weekend numbers—expected later this morning—will show a continued sharp decline in new infections, hospitalizations, and deaths tied to the omicron variant of COVID-19. It appears Oregon is past the omicron peak and on Friday the state's Public Health Officer, Dr. Dean Sidelinger, said new COVID-19 cases have fallen 71 percent from their peak three weeks ago. Hospitalizations on Friday also dropped below 1,000 for the first time in three weeks. Last week, the Oregon Health Authority announced the state will lift general indoor mask requirements for public places no later than March 31. / **WILDLIFE, TRANSPORTATION:** The Oregon Wildlife Foundation's "Watch for Wildlife" specialty license plate will be in Oregon Driver & Motor Vehicle Services offices on May 4th. Voucher holders can get their plates on or after that date. The "Watch for Wildlife" plate will also be available to the public for purchase at that time. Proceeds from the sale and renewal of the license plate will benefit the Oregon Wildlife Foundation and be used to support wildlife passage and habitat connectivity projects across Oregon. Those include dedicated wildlife under crossings, overpasses, and other investments that help animals of all kinds move more safely around Oregon's highways and roads. Between now and the end of the day Thursday, there's an online VIP auction offering the first 20 plates being issued. And it's attracting some enthusiastic bidding. Big prices currently range from \$342 dollars for one of the lower numbers to \$1,700 Plate #1. See the auction at <https://www.myowf.org/watchforwildlife> / **FISHERIES, ECONOMY:** After starting on time for the first time in years, Oregon's Dungeness crab season is seeing a record-breaking haul. KGW quotes officials with the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission, who say crabbers have brought in about \$80 million so far in this season's catch. That's the most revenue since the 2017-2018 season, which brought in \$74 million, according to the commission. Crabbing season lasts until August. More than 15 million pounds of crab have been collected so far. There were only 12 million pounds of crab caught in all of last season. The strong season is a welcome change for those in the crabbing industry, which has been plagued by delays to the start of the season over recent years over a variety of factors — small crabs, toxins in the water, and contentious price negotiations. The fish and crab industries also were hit hard by restaurant closures during the pandemic. / **ECONOMY, TRANSPORTATION:** The average U.S. price of a gallon of regular-grade gasoline spiked 15 cents over the past three weeks to \$3.55 per gallon. Industry analyst Trilby Lundberg of the Lundberg Survey said Sunday that the price jump came after a rise in crude oil costs. Nationwide, the highest average price for regular-grade gas is in the San Francisco Bay Area, at \$4.75 per gallon. The lowest average is in Houston, at \$3.05 per gallon. The survey says the average price of diesel is \$3.91 a gallon, up 21 cents over three weeks. AAA, the automobile club, reports this morning's average price for a gallon of regular-grade gasoline in Lane County is \$3.93. That's only up three cents from one month ago but has climbed \$1.20 since this time last year. / **HOMELESSNESS, GOVERNMENT:** Some leading Oregon mayors are working together to lobby state lawmakers to increase funding for emergency homeless shelters. Eugene Mayor Lucy Vinis joined on Friday with the mayor of Portland and others working to pay for shelters that would replace temporary camps alongside busy roadways. They're working through the League of Oregon Cities, a coalition of municipal groups across the state. / **COMMUNITY, GOVERNMENT,**

RACISM, EVENTS: Today is Oregon Admission Day, celebrating the anniversary of Oregon becoming the 33rd U.S. state. According to Wikipedia: In 1843, an autonomous government was formed in the Oregon Country, and the Oregon Territory was created in 1848. Oregon became the 33rd state of the U.S. on February 14, 1859. Today, with 4 million people over 98,000 square miles, Oregon is the ninth largest and 27th most populous U.S. state. Oregon is one of the most geographically diverse states in the U.S., marked by volcanoes, abundant bodies of water, dense evergreen, and mixed forests, as well as high deserts and semi-arid shrublands. At 11,249 feet, Mount Hood, a stratovolcano, is the state's highest point. Oregon's only national park, Crater Lake National Park, comprises the caldera surrounding Crater Lake, the deepest lake in the United States. The state is also home to the single largest organism in the world, *Armillaria ostoyae*, a fungus that runs beneath 2,200 acres of the Malheur National Forest. Because of its diverse landscapes and waterways, Oregon's economy is largely powered by various forms of agriculture, fishing, and hydroelectric power. Oregon is also the top lumber producer of the contiguous United States, with the lumber industry dominating the state's economy during the 20th century. Technology is another one of Oregon's major economic forces, beginning in the 1970s with the establishment of the Silicon Forest and the expansion of Tektronix and Intel. Sportswear company Nike, Inc., headquartered in Beaverton, is the state's largest public corporation with an annual revenue of \$30.6 billion. In December 1844, Oregon passed its Black Exclusion Law, which prohibited African Americans from entering the territory while simultaneously prohibiting slavery. Slave owners who brought their slaves with them were given three years before they were forced to free them. Any African Americans in the region after the law was passed were forced to leave, and those who did not comply were arrested and beaten. They received no less than twenty and no more than thirty-nine stripes across their bareback if they still did not leave. This process could be repeated every six months. Slavery played a major part in Oregon's history and even influenced its path to statehood. The territory's request for statehood was delayed several times, as members of Congress argued among themselves whether the territory should be admitted as a "free" or "slave" state. Eventually politicians from the South agreed to allow Oregon to enter as a "free" state, in exchange for opening slavery to the southwest United States. Oregon was admitted to the Union on February 14, 1859, though no one in Oregon knew it until March 15. Founded as a refuge from disputes over slavery, Oregon had a "whites only" clause in its original state Constitution. At the outbreak of the American Civil War, regular U.S. troops were withdrawn and sent east to aid the Union. Volunteer cavalry recruited in California were sent north to Oregon to keep peace and protect the populace. The First Oregon Cavalry served until June 1865. /

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ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED RECREATION, EDUCATION, MENTAL HEALTH: Wordle, the wildly popular five-word guessing game, has been called “genius” and “the pandemic game we didn’t know we needed,” but don’t count on it to improve your brain power a UO psychology professor says. Ulrich Mayr, who researches aging and cognition says rather than making you smarter, stopping brain aging, or warding off dementia, people simply get better at playing the games. Mayr says a healthy diet, regular exercise, and social activity are better for staying mentally sharp than time spent on brain games. Having said that, Mayr admits to playing Wordle himself, concedes that without question the game is fun and addictive. He says whether it’s coffee with a friend or engaging in an online game, anything that puts people in a good mood has a positive effect. Wordle is the brainchild of Josh Wardle, a UO alumnus and software engineer in Brooklyn who created the game to entertain he and his wife during the pandemic. Once per day, players have six chances to guess the mystery five-letter word. It started with 90 people using the app in November. Fans now number in the millions. / WEATHER, DISASTERS: How bad is the prolonged drought across the American West? Scientists say it is a “megadrought” that got even drier last year and is becoming the deepest dry spell in more than 1,200 years. A new study says the megadrought is the worst-case brought to life. The drought deepened so much in 2021 that experts say it is five percent worse than the old record in the late 1500s. Scientists compare this megadrought to what would happen in a hypothetical world without human-caused climate change. And they calculate that 42 percent of this drought is due to global warming from the burning of fossil fuels. / WILDFIRE PREVENTION: The Oregon Department of Forestry has issued \$5 million in grants to close to two dozen owners of small private forestlands to help fund projects to reduce the risk of severe wildfires. One of the projects, up the McKenzie, will help restore and protect the watershed on several pieces of property impacted by 2020’s Holiday Farm Fire. The goal is to protect both the land and local water quality. Another effort targets vulnerable properties in and around the Spencer Butte Neighborhood Association, Cascade Raptor Center, and Bailey Hill areas. The effort will reduce hazardous fuels on the properties, leading to treatment of close to 4,000 acres in high-risk areas. It’s part of a larger state-funded effort to increase wildfire preparedness and reduce hazards in areas that either lie close to

communities or in locations considered especially vulnerable to destructive wildfires. ; Eugene-Springfield Fire is one of six fire districts across the state getting a new high-axle, all-terrain vehicle to assist with disaster preparedness and response. The rigs are being provided through a grant by the Oregon Office of Emergency Management. Officials say the vehicles are road-legal, can access flooded areas, navigate rugged terrain, and perform water rescues. They can also serve as "brush rigs" to fight small grass fires and other types of small, outdoor blazes. State emergency managers say recent floods and wildfires have increased the need for such vehicles, which are designed and manufactured in Bend by CORE (Commander Off-Road Equipment), a division of EarthCruiser. /

HEALTH: COVID-related hospitalizations are continuing to drop across Oregon and locally. Lane County Public Health officials say yesterday's coronavirus hospital numbers fell to 78, down from 120 patients one week earlier. The Oregon Health Authority said 865 residents were in regular and intensive-care unit beds across the state on Monday. That's 49 fewer than the day before. Oregon is set to lift its indoor mask mandate by March 31 or earlier, once average daily statewide hospitalizations tied to the omicron surge drop below 400. Still, the county received reports of 564 combined new infections on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and three additional deaths. The Oregon Health Authority was notified of more than 4,700 combined new cases from the weekend period and 18 deaths. ; Oregon has released draft rules for the therapeutic use of psilocybin. Voters approved a ballot measure in November of 2020, giving the state two years to set up the framework to regulate the substance's use. Researchers believe the product, known to some as "magic mushrooms," could help treat depression, PTSD, and addiction. The Oregonian and OregonLive report the proposed framework would allow for consumption of the substance in a therapeutic setting for anyone 21 years or older. No prescription or diagnosis would be required to take part in the program. The draft rules also outline how training programs for those administering psilocybin will be evaluated and credentialed, and how psilocybin will be tested. /

CRIME, TRANSPORTATION: What is the deal with people trying to force open the doors on commercial airline flights? An American Airlines flight on Sunday afternoon was diverted to Kansas City, Missouri, after a harrowing incident. Passengers and crew say a large, unruly passenger tried to force open a door. He was subdued by a coffee pot across the head, a punch to the jaw, zip ties, and duct tape. The 50-year-old suspect, Juan Remberito Rivas, faces federal charges. ; Officials say the Oregon man who on Friday tried to open an emergency exit door during a commercial flight from Salt Lake City to Portland has made his first court appearance. An affidavit from an FBI agent says the 31-year-old was seen removing the plastic cover on an emergency exit handle and yanking with his full body weight before a flight attendant intervened. The man told police he did it so passengers would videotape him and he'd have, quote, "the opportunity to share his thoughts on COVID-19 vaccines." The suspect faces charges of interfering with a flight crew and attendants and a judge has ordered a mental health evaluation. The man's public defender called the allegations "out of character" for his client. /

CRIME: Oregon State Police are seeking the driver of a red pickup truck that struck a woman Sunday afternoon as she was trying to remove a mattress blocking a traffic lane on the flyover from northbound Interstate Five to the westbound Beltline Highway. The woman suffered extensive injuries as a result of the collision. It happened around 3:30 Sunday afternoon.

Investigators say the female driver had turned on her hazard lights, pulled the mattress from the roadway, and was walking back to her vehicle when the red pickup came around the flyover curve at a high rate of speed. The suspect is described as an elderly white male. State Police say they were told he stopped about 50 feet from the crash scene, walked back to the victim, saw her lying on the ground, but ran back to his truck and fled. Investigators say it's unknown what damage the pickup truck sustained. Know anything about the case? Oregon State Police would like to hear from you. Contact the Oregon State Police Dispatch at 1-800-442-2068 or OSP (677). Reference Case # SP22035811. ; Eugene Police are looking for the suspect in a Sunday evening shooting in a West Eugene grocery store parking lot. The incident left the victim, a 44-year-old man, with non-life-threatening wounds. It happened shortly after 7:00 p.m. in the Albertson's parking lot at 18th and Chambers. Witnesses said there had been a dispute that led to the shooting. Investigators say the suspect fled in a late 1990s white Ford conversion van. Have any tips in the case? Contact Eugene Police. Contact Detective Trevor Hart at 541-682-5786 or email him at THart@eugene-or.gov Reference Case number 22-02572. ; Federal prosecutors say a Portland man affiliated with two Portland street gangs pleaded guilty Monday for the robbery of a Eugene marijuana dispensary. Thirty-year-old Timothy Christopher Gaines faces a seven-year mandatory sentence, a \$250,000 fine, and five-years' supervised release when he is sentenced in April. According to court documents, on December 20, 2019, Gaines and an accomplice robbed Green Therapy, a marijuana dispensary in Eugene, of several jars of marijuana and \$912 in cash. Gaines brandished a firearm during the robbery and pointed it at a store employee cowering on the floor. The case was investigated by the FBI with assistance from the Eugene Police Department and Portland Police Bureau. / BIPOC, HEALTH: Money that will flow to Native American tribes as part of an opioid drug settlement with a major manufacturer and three distributors won't come quickly. But tribal leaders say it will play a part in healing their communities from an epidemic that has disproportionately killed Native Americans. Tribes have responded to the opioid crisis with healing and wellness centers, additional tools for law enforcement and an emphasis on culture and tradition. Many of the financial resources have been thin. Each of the 574 federally recognized tribes will be eligible for a share of \$590 million from the settlement, even if they weren't part of lawsuits. /

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CRIME: Lane County Sheriff's officials say three people died in a shooting incident last night outside a residence off Highway 36 near Deadwood. The first calls came around 9:45 p.m. Officials are not releasing the victims' names until relatives are notified. Investigators say they want to speak with a 25-year-old man they describe as a "person of interest" in the case and hear his account of what happened. Jericho Jamison is described as a white male who stands about five-foot-ten and weighs about 160 pounds. He has brown hair and blue eyes. Investigators say Jamison should be considered armed and dangerous. Anyone with information regarding his whereabouts is asked to dial 911. Jericho Jamison is believed to have left the scene near Deadwood in a silver 1992 Geo Metro 2-door with an Oregon license plate, 158JZG. The rear window of the Geo might be broken. ; A weekend break in a stolen vehicle case has led to what officials say is stolen mail from locations across four Oregon counties. It came Sunday, when a Lane County Sheriff's deputy patrolling Marcola Road spotted a truck that matched the description of one that had been recently stolen from the Junction City area. The deputy made a traffic stop as the vehicle's driver was turning into a driveway on Old Mohawk Road and 35-year-old Rickey Lee Drummond, Junior, was taken into custody. In the truck, investigators say the deputy discovered stolen property including mail, identification, and checks from more than 35 victims in Lane, Linn, Benton, and Marion counties. Officials say some of the checks appeared to have been fraudulently altered. / SCHOOLS, HEALTH: Today is School Exclusion Day. Experts with the Oregon Health Authority and the Oregon Immunization Program remind parents that children will not be able to attend school or daycare starting today if their records on file show missing immunizations. But there have been challenges getting kids vaccination records up to date during the latest omicron surge of COVID. Fewer pharmacies across the state are operating and offering childhood immunizations. And many county health departments and school systems are struggling to update student records. The Oregon Health Authority is allowing public health authorities in seven counties to set later dates. While Lane, Benton, and Linn counties still have today as the deadline, Douglas County schools are being with an extension on their Exclusion Days until March 30. County health departments have sent letters to families to let them know if their children's records at their school or daycare

shows missing vaccines. Oregon's immunization requirements protect kids in school and childcare against 11 diseases. The state law applies to all children in public and private schools, preschools, Head Start, and certified childcare facilities. The children must have up-to-date documentation on their required immunizations or have an exemption. The COVID-19 vaccine is not currently required for children. Children must have immunizations for the following diseases, or an exemption, to be in compliance with state school immunization laws: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A, Varicella, and Hib. Parents seeking immunizations for their children should contact their health care provider, pharmacy, or local health department, dial 211, or go to 211info.org / HEALTH: COVID-related hospitalizations are continuing to drop across Oregon and locally. But Lane County yesterday received reports of eight more coronavirus-related deaths. The patients ranged in age from 48 to 92. That puts our pandemic death toll at 436. Lane County Public Health says it was notified of 188 new infections yesterday. Sixty-five patients remain hospitalized. The Oregon Health Authority said it received reports of more than 1,600 new infections yesterday and 20 deaths. Oregon is set to lift its indoor mask mandate by March 31 or earlier, once average daily statewide hospitalizations tied to the omicron surge drop below 400. / UTILITIES, DEVELOPMENT: Leaders with the Eugene Water and Electric Board made it official yesterday: They're putting their former headquarters site along the Willamette River near downtown Eugene up for sale. The location off East 4th Avenue has long been eyed by developers, community groups, and others. The 4.4-acre site is adjacent to the Riverfront commercial and residential development with a public plaza taking shape on the utility's former property located to the south and east. The EWEB headquarters site contains two buildings constructed in the late 1980s with a combined 100,000 square feet. The property is in a designated HUD Opportunity Zone and may be subject to preferential tax treatment. The site is adjacent to downtown, retail and office districts, Skinner Butte, the riverfront bicycle path, and the DeFazio Bridge to Alton Baker Park. Interested parties will be able to submit proposals later this spring. EWEB leaders say they're still outlining how they'll select a purchaser, but say they'll rate the offers based on community impact, economic benefit for EWEB's customers, intended uses, and the qualifications of those submitting the proposals. During the past five years, EWEB has consolidated nearly all employees and operations at the Roosevelt Operations Center in West Eugene. The utility's remaining administrative and customer service staff are moving to the Roosevelt location by the end of the year. / RECREATION, ENVIRONMENT: More permit opportunities and a simplified system. Some changes in the works for this year's Central Cascades Wilderness Permit System. Officials with the Deschutes and Willamette National Forests say they're making the updates after analyzing last year's data and comments from wilderness users. Wilderness permits are required for all overnight use within the Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Washington, and Three Sisters wilderness areas. Day use permits are required on 19 of 79 trailheads within those same three wilderness areas. One of the big changes: The permit season will be shorter, from June 15 to October 15, rather than the Friday before Memorial Day to the last Friday in September. Recreation specialists say that better reflects when people are really using the permits. Last year, for example, people had permits in early June that were unusable due to snow and road

conditions and closures while the wildernesses still were accessible in early October. Day use permits will not be available for full-season advance reservations. Rather, all day use permits will be released in a ten-day and two-day rolling window during the permit season. Wilderness managers say they're doing that because last summer there were a significant number of "no-shows" among those who made advance permit reservations but never used their reservations. Reservations for the overnight permits will begin on the first Tuesday in April (April 5, 2022), and 40 percent of overnight permits will be available for advanced reservation. Once the permit season begins, the remaining 60 percent of overnight permits will be available in a 7-day rolling window. The overnight permit system has changed the most. The overnight permit quota is now based on the date of entry—simplifying the reservation system so you don't have to block out all the days of your planned trip. In practice, that will create a daily entry quota for each trailhead, allowing new groups to start their trip each day. The 14-day maximum stay limit will remain in place. Permit quotas also will slightly increase for most trailheads. Hunters will continue to use their valid tag, issued through the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife without having to secure a separate wilderness permit. A valid hunting tag allows the hunter and up to three additional people into the wilderness permit area one day before, during and one day after the season for the species-specific tag. All reservations for Central Cascades Wilderness Permits must be made through Recreation.gov either on-line, via the Recreation.gov app on mobile devices, or by calling their call center at 1-877-444-6777 or TDD 877-833-6777. Search for "Central Cascades Wilderness." There continues to be a \$1 processing charge for day-use permits per individual and a \$6 processing charge for overnight-use permits per group. An overnight group can be from one to 12 people. /

TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY: Lane County officials are working to improve safety, travel ease, and traffic connections for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers along the 30th Avenue corridor from Agate Street to McVay Highway. The corridor serves as a critical transportation link to South Eugene, Lane Community College, Interstate 5, Springfield, and parks and recreation areas. This evening on Zoom, the county is hosting an online open house from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and again from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Login information is available at www.LaneCountyOR.gov/30thAvenue. The website also has information about the design effort that will help shape future road improvement projects. /

WILDFIRE PREVENTION: Do most wildfires start on public lands or private ones? A new study led by Oregon State University finds that wildfires are more likely to burn their way into national forests than out of them. The findings contradict the common belief that the biggest risk to rural communities is a blaze that starts on public land, according to OSU College of Forestry Dean Chris Dunn. The study examined data from more than 22,000 fires over more than a quarter-century and found that those crossing between public and private lands were primarily caused by people on private property. The research found that ignitions on Forest Service lands accounted for fewer than one-quarter of the most destructive wildfires. The U.S. Forest Service recently released its new 10-year fire strategy, which includes a focus on thinning trees on public lands to better prevent wildfires jumping into nearby communities. But this OSU-led study might lead to discussions about whether that's the best way to reduce risk to rural homes and businesses. Others involved in the research, including at Colorado

State University, say better management of fuels on private lands and fire-resistant design for rural homes and properties by states, local governments, and landowners might have an even greater effect. The scientists say that might also mean determining in advance where fire suppression is most likely to be effective and where it might make more sense from an ecological and safety standpoint to allow some fires or portions of fires to burn. / RECREATION: Make fishing part of your Presidents' Day Weekend plans. Everyone can fish, clam and crab for free in Oregon on Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 19-20. No fishing/shellfish licenses or tags are required those two days. Oregon residents and nonresidents can fish, clam and crab for free. All other Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife regulations apply including closures, bag limits and size restrictions. See the Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations for rules and remember to check for any in season regulation changes, especially for salmon and steelhead fishing. Trout fishing can be a great choice for beginners and stocking is picking up. The winter steelhead run usually peaks in mid-February, so it's a good time of year for existing steelhead anglers to take a friend or family member with them to give it a try. Bottomfishing could also be good if ocean conditions allow for boats to get out during Presidents' Day Weekend. Prefer to crab or clam instead? MyODFW has all the information you need to get started. Remember to check ocean conditions and take safety precautions: always clam with a friend and never turn your back on the ocean. Currently, crabbing is open in bays, beaches, estuaries, tide pools, piers and jetties along the entire Oregon coast and in the ocean. With the dry weather, crab are moving back into the estuaries so crabbing could be good. Razor clamming is currently closed from Cape Blanco, north of Port Orford, to the California border because domoic acid toxin levels are above the closure limit. The Oregon Department of Agriculture regularly tests shellfish and closes areas when naturally occurring biotoxins get to levels that make crabs and clams unsafe to eat. / TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY: Anyone who has ever been temporarily blinded by high-beam headlights from an oncoming car will be happy to hear this. U.S. regulators are about to allow new high-tech headlights that can automatically tailor beams so they focus on dark areas of the road and don't create glare for oncoming drivers. The adaptive headlights are common in Europe. They have LED lamps that can focus beams on darkness such as the driver's lane and areas along the roadside. They also lower the intensity of the light beams if there's oncoming traffic. Camera sensors and computers help determine where the light should go. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says a rule allowing the lights will go into effect shortly. /

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SUBJECT
DISCUSSED HOMELESSNESS, SAFETY, BUSINESS, CRIME, HEALTH: The City of Eugene is preparing to close the large homeless encampment in Washington-Jefferson Park and offer those at the camp spots in a new "Safe Sleep" site at 410 Garfield Street. The new location opens Tuesday and coordinators say it will provide 86 heated spaces with a variety of features to support unhoused residents' health and stability. The St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County will operate the location in partnership with the city. Representatives of the organizations begin meeting with long-term occupants of the temporary camp on Tuesday morning to provide details on the new location along with transportation and moving assistance. The new location at 410 Garfield Street is not able to accommodate pets, so coordinators are working to unhoused pet owners at another Safe Sleep site. City staff also are working with local youth shelter programs to offer safer spaces to any minors who have been staying at the temporary camp. The city will close Washington-Jefferson Park beginning March 16. The area will be fenced off to allow for restoration and reopened later this year for normal park use. All occupants of the temporary camp will need to have moved to the new Safe Sleep site or another location by that time. At the new Safe Sleep site on Garfield, each camp space is provided a mat, tent (8'x8'x8' canopy-style), sleeping pad and bag, two 38-gallon storage containers for personal items, one 18-gallon container for perishables, a radiator-style electric heater, chair, and side table. Basic services include restrooms, access to water, garbage service. There will be one meal provided on-site daily. A shower is on-site, laundry vouchers are available, and there is on-site access to medical and social services. The hope is to help those wanting to transition off the streets into more permanent housing and more stable lives. With the opening of 410 Garfield Street, the city will have three Safe Sleep sites in operation, including a site for those with vehicles at 310 Garfield Street, and a location on Dani Street known as "Everyone Village" that accommodates a mix of small shelters and vehicle campers. The three locations provide safe, legal shelter for nearly 200 people experiencing homelessness. A fourth site, the "Rosa Safe Sleep" site at 2243 Roosevelt Blvd., will add shelter for upwards of 20 more people later this year. / CRIME: Lane County Sheriff's investigators yesterday located the person they were seeking in connection with Tuesday night's shooting outside a residence off Highway 36 near Deadwood.

Three people died after a dispute. Deputies say they received a tip that led them to a nearby residence in Deadwood and located 25-year-old Jericho Jamison. He was taken into custody without incident. Jamison was jailed on charges including Second-Degree Murder, Unlawful Use of a Firearm, and being a Felon in Possession of a Firearm. Deputies are continuing to sort through witness accounts and evidence in the case. They have not said whether Jamison killed all three people. The names of those who died are being withheld while relatives are notified. / RELIGION, LGBTQ, CRIME: Eugene's mayor is condemning the actions of the person or persons who during the past week distributed flyers promoting anti-Semitic messages to residences across town. The flyers also include references that can be construed as being anti-transgender. Mayor Lucy Vinis says the messages are designed to divide the community and they have no place here. She also asks anyone who has leads on the identity of those distributing the fliers or involved in other potential criminal activity to contact Eugene Police. Hate speech and other acts of discrimination also may be reported by calling or submitting an online complaint to the city's Office of Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement. / HEALTH: COVID-related infections are continuing to drop across Oregon and locally. Lane County Public Health yesterday received reports of 212 new cases. The Oregon Health Authority logged slightly more than 1,700. Still, 84 local patients remain hospitalized with 14 of those in intensive-care beds. Lane County Public Health was notified yesterday of one additional death, a 55-year-old woman. A new weekly report from the Oregon Health Authority finds cases declined by 40 percent between Monday, February 7, through Sunday, February 13. The numbers also represented a 70 percent case drop over the past month. Hospitalizations fell by 18 percent during the week, and testing positivity rates fell from 16 percent to 13.7 percent. / HEALTH, EDUCATION: University of Oregon researchers looking at ways to make indoor spaces safer during the pandemic say increased filtration and ventilation significantly reduced viral loads. They add that higher relative humidity helped trap and reduce airborne viral particles by half. The researchers conducted experiments last spring, when they set up a small, self-contained, airtight modular building in a campus parking lot outside one of the Science Complex buildings (Barnhart Hall). They deployed a mixture of scientific instruments and air samplers along with humidifiers, dehumidifiers, HEPA filters, settling plates, particle counters, a stand-up desk and a treadmill. Over a period of two months, 11 UO students who had been diagnosed with COVID-19 entered the unit one at a time and were invited to sit, stand, talk, talk loudly, cough on purpose, and walk on the treadmill during a three-day set of experiments. They found that better ventilation and filtration can substantially reduce the number of viral particles in the air and should be a priority for those seeking to improve building health and safety. And they determined that increased building humidity caused viral particles to drop from the air onto surfaces. Because they were not airborne, those particles were less likely to spread disease. Finding the right combination of ventilation and humidity might be the next problem to be studied. The researchers said mid-range humidity of between 40 and 60 percent is probably optimal for removing viral particles from the air. Humid air is also good for the human immune system because it helps keep mucous membranes healthy and moist. If the air is too humid, it increases the risk of mold. Very dry air allows dry particles to float longer. / HEALTH, COMMUNITY: Oregon is set to lift its

statewide indoor mask mandate by March 31 or earlier, once average daily statewide hospitalizations tied to the omicron surge drop below 400. But officials at the University of Oregon say, for now, they're keeping their indoor mask requirements in place. Campus leaders are monitoring local numbers and will continue to evaluate. One reason is that not everyone in the U-of-O community has been able to receive their booster shots, which they have until March 18 to get. All U-of-O faculty, staff, and students are required to be fully vaccinated and undergo weekly testing. There are some exemptions, but campus officials say vaccination rates are above 95 percent. ; Health experts say the omicron wave of COVID-19 that swept the United States this winter also bolstered its defenses. Millions of individual Americans' immune systems now recognize the virus and are primed to fight it off if they encounter omicron, or even another variant. One influential pandemic prediction model looks at vaccinations, recent infections, and other factors and concludes to estimate that 73 percent of Americans are, for now, immune to omicron. The number could rise to 80 percent by mid-March. Experts hope that creates enough protection against immediate reinfection that future spikes might pose much less disruption to society. Still, while the overall U.S. population is better protected, tens of millions of individuals remain vulnerable because they are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated or have never been infected. ; The nation's top federal health official says the U.S. is moving closer to the point that COVID-19 is no longer a "constant crisis" as more cities, businesses and sports venues began lifting pandemic restrictions around the country. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said at White House briefing Wednesday that the government is contemplating a change to its mask guidance in the coming weeks. Walensky noted recent declines in COVID-19 cases, hospital admissions and deaths and acknowledged "people are so eager" for health officials to ease masking rules and other measures. With the omicron variant waning and Americans eager to move beyond the virus, government and business leaders have been out ahead of the CDC in ending virus measures. / RECREATION, SAFETY, WILDLIFE: New rules are in the works that will guide the take-off and landing of drones in Oregon State Parks and along the coast. The goal is to clarify where it's okay to fly the drones and where it's prohibited. The push for better rules comes after growing number of drone hobbyists are heading for the coast and flying their craft low over nesting seabird colonies. Officials say one colony of black oystercatchers on an offshore protected island scattered repeatedly as drones approached, harming survival of the chicks left behind. Hobbyists are encouraged to fly their craft at least 500 feet from protected wildlife and seabird areas. But there's no legal rule enforcing that guideline. Parks officials also want to clarify where drone launches and landings are allowed in other state park properties. While most hobbyists are well-meaning, other park users say they want to enjoy special and often quiet spots without drones interrupting their visit. Oregon Parks and Recreation Department accepting public comment on its proposed rules between now and April 7. A full copy of the proposed amendments is available at <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Pages/PRP-rulemaking.aspx> A final decision on the new rules is expected later this spring. /

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POLITICS: He was considered one of the top Democratic candidates for Oregon Governor. But Nicholas Kristof, the former New York Times columnist, is not eligible to run. That's according to justices on the Oregon Supreme Court, who says he doesn't meet the state's three-year residency requirement. Kristof has roots in Oregon. He was born and raised here and still manages the family farm in Yamhill County. But the secretary of state ruled earlier he did not meet the qualifications to run, because he'd voted in New York during the 2020 election. That leaves the former candidate with a sizable war chest and no plans for the future. Kristof has raised \$2.75 million in campaign donations and can give it to other candidates or use it himself in a future run for office. Kristof says he's not sure what he'll do. It's looking like a crowded field on both sides of the state's gubernatorial primary. Incumbent Kate Brown cannot run again because of the state's term limits law. / HEALTH, SAFETY: Concerns about possible bacterial contamination have led to the voluntary recall of several batches of powdered infant formula produced by a manufacturing facility in Michigan. The Food and Drug Administration shared the recall details on its website, urging consumers to stop using specific production lots of Similac, Alimentum, and EleCare powdered infant formulas contain particular packaging codes where: the first two digits of the code are 22 through 37; and the code on the container contains K8, SH or Z2; and the expiration date is 4-1-2022 (APR 2022) or later. The FDA is investigating complaints of four infant illnesses from three states. All four cases related to these complaints were hospitalized and Cronobacter may have contributed to a death in one case. See the full advisory, background on the investigation, and more at <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-warns-consumers-not-use-certain-powdered-infant-formula-produced-abbott-nutrition-facility> and <https://www.cdc.gov/cronobacter/infection-and-infants.html> / SAFETY: Springfield Police are asking for your help in locating a missing person. They say 22-year-old Shawn Leone was last seen on Wednesday evening around 10 p.m. at the Greyhound bus stop in the 300 block of Springfield's South "A" Street. Investigators say Leone was riding Greyhound to visit family in Lebanon. Officials say he is living with some mental health issues and may present as being closer to 14 years of age. Shawn Leone is described as a white male, about five-foot-five, medium build, with brown hair, a beard and moustache. He was last seen

wearing blue jeans and a dark jacket. If you've seen him, please contact Springfield Police. / RECREATION, MENTAL HEALTH, HEALTH: Lots of Oregonians took up hobbies or headed outdoors during the first two years of the pandemic. And new research from Oregon State University underscores how taking part in such leisure activities helps lower the risk of depression and improves mental well-being. The study revealed a general increase in at-home activities like reading, writing, and computer or video games, along with walking and gardening. Some of the participants in the research say they used such activities to combat stress, depression, and other challenges. But outside of walking and gardening, the study found a decrease in most physical and outdoor activities. That might be tied to the lack of in-person school and sports programs during the early phases of the pandemic, increased family commitments—especially for parents, and limited access to some locations. Still, the scientists say it's clear leisure time and leisure activities are crucial to our mental health and well-being, and a good way to cope with stress and navigate life during COVID-19. / WILDLIFE, COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENT: The Great Backyard Bird Count begins today and continues through Monday across the U.S. and Canada. It is a free, fun, and easy event for bird watchers of all ages, who count birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online at birdcount.org. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world. Each checklist submitted during the count helps researchers at the National Audubon Society, Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Birds Canada learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share. Recently, more than 300,000 participants submitted their bird observations online in one event. ; Challenging times for America's national bird, with nearly half of bald eagles tested across the U.S. showing signs of chronic lead exposure, according to a study published Thursday. Researchers report harmful levels of toxic lead were found in the bones of 46 percent of bald eagles sampled in 38 states. Similar rates of lead exposure were found in golden eagles, according to the study published online in the journal Science. Scientists say the raptors likely consumed carrion or prey contaminated by lead from ammunition or fishing tackle. The researchers hunters are among the best conservation groups in the country. They are encouraging more hunters to switch to non-lead ammunition, such as copper bullets and bismuth, tungsten, or steel shot. Bald eagles are one of America's most celebrated conservation success stories. But scientists say that high lead levels still suppress eagle population growth and reduce their ability to withstand future challenges, such as climate change and infectious diseases. Lead is a neurotoxin that even in low doses impairs an eagle's balance and stamina, reducing its ability to fly, hunt and reproduce. In high doses, lead causes seizures, breathing difficulty and death. / HEALTH: COVID-related infections are continuing to drop across Oregon and locally. Lane County Public Health yesterday received reports of 183 new cases. The Oregon Health Authority logged 1,844. Still, 86 local patients remain hospitalized with 19 of those in intensive-care beds—an increase of five in ICU units from the day before. Lane County Public Health was notified yesterday of one additional death. / ENERGY, UTILITIES, SAFETY: A report released Thursday says a new type of nuclear

reactor that would provide carbon-free energy to at least four states in the Western U.S. poses financial risks for utilities and their ratepayers. The analysis was immediately criticized as misinformed by the project's owner and the company developing the reactor. The report by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis said the small modular nuclear reactor being developed by NuScale Power is "too expensive, too risky and too uncertain." The NuScale design is the only small-scale reactor to win safety approval so far from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems, a cooperative representing utilities in seven Western states, wants to build and operate six of the company's reactors at the Idaho National Laboratory as part of a broader effort to reduce greenhouse gases and fight climate change. The first is projected to come online in 2029. In addition to Utah, utilities in Idaho, Nevada and New Mexico have signed on to receive power from the NuScale reactors. Utilities in Washington and Oregon are considering it, according to the cooperative. /

ECONOMY, AGRICULTURE: Experts say you may be paying more for your avocado toast in the short term, and distributors may be looking beyond Mexico to guard against future supply disruptions. Mexico is negotiating security guarantees for U.S. inspectors who certify avocados for export in western Mexico, where avocado pickers have been thrown out of work. The inspections were halted last week after one of the U.S. inspectors was threatened. While avocados that were already inspected can still be shipped north, there are signs Thursday that supplies will tighten, and companies that import avocados may have to look beyond Mexico, which currently supplies about 80 percent of U.S. imports of the fruit. ;

State officials say a strain of avian flu has been found at a third commercial turkey farm in southern Indiana. Pending test results should indicate if the virus is the same as that in previous cases and if the virus is highly pathogenic. Farms that raise turkeys and chickens for meat and eggs are on high alert, fearing a repeat of a widespread bird flu outbreak in 2015 that killed 50 million birds across 15 states and cost the federal government nearly \$1 billion. Indiana officials said Tuesday that close to 60,000 turkeys have been euthanized in an effort to stop the two earlier outbreaks. The USDA also confirmed the presence of bird flu in a flock of commercial broiler chickens in Kentucky, a second potential case nearby, and the presence of the virus in a backyard flock of mixed species birds in northern Virginia. /

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WEATHER: A big change is coming in the weather this week, including some frigid nighttime temperatures. Forecasters with the National Weather Service say dry, cold air is making its way into the region. Snow levels are around 1,500 feet this morning in the Cascades and Coast Range, and you'll see 4-8 inches of snow on the mountain passes. But dry Arctic air will cause skies to clear and temperatures to plunge, with a low forecasted to reach 17 degrees on Tuesday night. Daytime temperatures will climb to the upper-30s and low-40s Wednesday through Saturday, but nighttime lows will drop into the 20s Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights. The Oregon Cascades received a fresh coat of snow on Saturday into Sunday, dropping 6-14 inches on some locations above 3,500 feet. This morning, Oregon Highway 58 over Willamette Pass is reporting packed snow, snow flurries, and a temperature of 20 degrees. U.S. Highway 20 over Santiam Pass also is reporting packed snow and snow flurries, with a temperature of 18 degrees. In the Coast Range, the temperature is just above freezing on Oregon Highway 126 over Badger Mountain. But watch for icy conditions should the thermometer drop a bit during the next two hours. /

HOMELESSNESS, SAFETY: With cold weather in the forecast, the Egan Warming Center is activating four sites tonight and will be on standby Tuesday through Thursday night to provide emergency shelter. The locations are: Trinity Church at 440 Maxwell Road. It opens at 7 p.m. The Egan Warming Center in the Whiteaker neighborhood is at 1509 West 1st Avenue and opens at 7 p.m. The Springfield Memorial Building is located 765 "A" Street opens at 6 p.m. The youth site will be at First United Methodist Church at 1376 Olive Street in Eugene. It opens at 6 p.m. All sites are accessible and pets are welcome. Lane Transit District offers free rides to people going to the Egan Warming Centers to get warm. Tell the driver you are heading to an Egan Warming Center. Bus passengers must wear a face mask while riding that covers their nose and mouth. ; The Egan Warming Center is named in honor of Major Thomas Egan, who froze to death during a cold spell in 2008. The program welcomes new volunteers and holds online trainings. Learn more at www.eganwarmingcenter.com Egan Warming Center is a program of St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County, which operates with funding from Lane County and support from a broad coalition of community members, service providers, nonprofits, faith and social

communities, and local governments. / EVENTS, HEALTH: Today is President's Day. Federal and state offices are closed, there is no mail delivery. But most private employers are open. Lane Transit District is operating on its regular weekday bus schedule. Lane County's COVID-19 vaccination clinics at Autzen Stadium and the PeaceHealth Riverbend Annex are closed today but resume operation tomorrow. / HEALTH: Average daily COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are continuing to fall in the U.S., an indicator that the omicron variant's hold is weakening. On Saturday, total confirmed cases barely exceeded 100,000, a sharp downturn from the more than 800,000 in mid-January, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. Infectious disease specialists say vaccinations have helped blunt the surge. But they say omicron infected people so quickly that it's running out of new hosts to infect. Those who recover have short-term immunity. But there continue to be concerns about lingering symptoms of what's known as "long COVID." Public health experts say they are feeling optimistic that more declines are ahead as the country shifts from being in a pandemic to an "endemic" that is more consistent and predictable. But many remain concerned about low vaccination rates in many parts of the country, which could leave Americans vulnerable to a future variant. They say there are two sides to omicron's coin. The bad thing is that it can spread to a lot of people and make them mildly ill. The good thing is it can spread to a lot of people and make them mildly ill, because in doing so, it has created a lot of natural immunity. But as public health experts, they add they'll be more comfortable if the decline continues over another month or two. / HOUSING, LOW-INCOME: Rents have skyrocketed across the country during the pandemic. According to Realtor.com, median rents in the nation's 50 largest metro areas rose an astounding 19.3 percent from December 2020 to December 2021. The higher rents have caused many to fall behind on payments, dig deep into their savings, or downsize to subpar units. Experts say many factors are responsible, including a nationwide shortage of housing, extremely low rental vacancies. There also is an unrelenting demand as young adults continue to enter the crowded market. One housing expert says in the early phase of the pandemic a lot of young people moved back home with their parents. As the economy restarted and people returned to work, there was a lot of "pent-up demand" and rents in many areas with young adults climbed rapidly. Construction crews are also trying to bounce back from material and labor shortages that occurred at the start of the pandemic, but prices for those supplies are higher. And growing numbers of investors are buying and flipping rental homes, apartment complexes, and condo units, adding to price climbs. According to the National Multifamily Housing Council, only two states—Oregon and California—have some form of statewide rent control laws, while only three others—New York, New Jersey and Maryland—have laws allowing local governments to pass rent control ordinances. Economists worry about the impact of rent increases on inflation because big price jumps in new leases feed into the U.S. consumer price index, which is used to measure inflation. Inflation jumped 7.5 percent in January from one year earlier, the biggest increase in four decades. While many economists expect that to decrease as pandemic-disrupted supply chains unravel, rising rents could keep inflation high through the end of the year since housing costs make up one-third of the consumer price index. But construction of new rental units is increasing. Analysts say that could slow rent hikes in some areas. The number of homes for sale have

been at a record low, contributing to ballooning home prices that have caused many higher-income households to remain renters, further upping demand. /

CRIME: A 14-year-old boy is in custody after Springfield Police say he used what turned out to be a realistic-looking airsoft gun to rob a local beauty supply store. It happened Saturday evening around 7 p.m. Police say the suspect entered the Sally Beauty store in the 1900 block of Mohawk Boulevard and gave the cashier a note containing a homicidal threat. Police say the suspect took an undisclosed amount of cash and was located 14 blocks away, thanks to what investigators say was an excellent description provided by the store employee. The cash was recovered, and the youth was charged with Robbery Two and taken to the Serbu juvenile center. /

POLITICS, GOVERNMENT: Oregon lawmakers are past the mid-point of their short legislative session and working to consider a number of issues before the gavel falls and they adjourn by March 7. ; When he was first elected to the U.S. Senate in 1996, Oregon's Ron Wyden said he would hold a town hall each year in every Oregon county. Wyden, the state's senior U.S. senator, holds his 1,000th town hall on Thursday and it focuses on Lane County. The session will stream live on Facebook as Wyden fields questions submitted in advance by local constituents. Wyden said he ultimately chose Lane County for his 1,000th town hall because, as a law student at the University of Oregon, it's where he first fell in love with the state that became his home. Wyden has 970 in-person town halls during his tenure and another 31 virtual town halls during the pandemic. He's led an additional 15 regional virtual town halls during the past two years to answer questions from voters in multiple counties. /

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SCHOOLS, WEATHER, SAFETY: The potential for icy roads this morning prompted officials with several Lane County school districts to delay the start of classes this morning. The Oakridge Schools will begin classes three hours late. The Lowell, Pleasant Hill, Marcola, and Crow-Applegate-Lorane Schools are operating on a two-hour delay. There is no morning childcare available in the Crow-Applegate-Lorane district and no morning preschool today in Marcola. /

HOMELESSNESS, SAFETY: With cold weather in the forecast, the Egan Warming Center is activating four sites again tonight and will be on standby for Wednesday and Thursday night to provide emergency shelter. The locations are: Trinity Church at 440 Maxwell Road. It opens at 7 p.m.; The Egan Warming Center in the Whiteaker neighborhood is at 1509 West 1st Avenue and opens at 7 p.m.; The Springfield Memorial Building is located 765 "A" Street opens at 6 p.m.; The youth site will be at First United Methodist Church at 1376 Olive Street in Eugene. It opens at 6 p.m. All sites are accessible, and pets are welcome. Lane Transit District offers free rides to people going to the Egan Warming Centers to get warm. Tell the driver you are heading to an Egan Warming Center. Bus passengers must wear a face mask while riding that covers their nose and mouth. Egan Warming Center is a program of St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County, which operates with funding from Lane County and support from a broad coalition of community members, service providers, nonprofits, faith and social communities, and local governments. The Egan Warming Center is named in honor of Major Thomas Egan, who froze to death during a cold spell in 2008. The program welcomes new volunteers and holds online trainings. /

HOMELESSNESS, SAFETY, HEALTH, BUSINESS, COMMUNITY: The City of Eugene and its partners today begin closing that large homeless encampment in Washington-Jefferson Park. They're helping to relocate many of its occupants to spots in a new "Safe Sleep" site at 410 Garfield Street. Coordinators say the new location provides 86 heated spaces with a variety of features to support unhoused residents' health and stability. The city will close the park beginning March 16. The area will be fenced off to allow for restoration. It will reopen later this year for normal park use. The St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County is operating the location in partnership with the city. Representatives of the organizations begin meeting with long-term occupants of the temporary camp last week to provide

details on the Safe Sleep site and to offer transportation and moving assistance. At the new Safe Sleep site on Garfield, each camp space is provided a mat, tent (8'x8'x8' canopy-style), sleeping pad and bag, two 38-gallon storage containers for personal items, one 18-gallon container for perishables, a radiator-style electric heater, chair, and side table. Basic services include restrooms, access to water, garbage service. There will be one meal provided on-site daily. A shower is on-site, laundry vouchers are available, and there is on-site access to medical and social services. The hope is to help those wanting to transition off the streets into more permanent housing and more stable lives. With the opening of 410 Garfield Street, the city will have three Safe Sleep sites in operation, including a site for those with vehicles at 310 Garfield Street, and a location on Dani Street known as "Everyone Village" that accommodates a mix of small shelters and vehicle campers. Officials say the three locations provide safe, legal shelter for nearly 200 people experiencing homelessness. A fourth site, the "Rosa Safe Sleep" site at 2243 Roosevelt Blvd., will add shelter for upwards of 20 more people later this year. The new location at 410 Garfield Street is not able to accommodate pets, so coordinators are working to relocate unhoused pet owners at another Safe Sleep site. City staff also are working with local youth shelter programs to offer safer spaces to any minors who have been staying at the temporary camp.

/ TRANSPORTATION, WEATHER, SAFETY: It took most of the night, but crews have reopened a stretch of Interstate 84 over the Blue Mountains in Eastern Oregon. That said, there's still plenty of clean-up to remove wrecked vehicles along the side of the road, and repairs to extensive sections of guardrail. It came after a series of midday chain-reaction crashes involving close to 100 closed the freeway between Pendleton and La Grande. Oregon State Police began receiving reports of the crashes shortly after noon yesterday, along a stretch of I-84 atop the Blue Mountains known as Deadman Pass. Winter weather dropped a layer of ice on the roadway topped with blowing snow, as visibility decreased. Troopers arriving at the first crash scene said they could hear the sounds of other collisions occurring behind them. The chain-reaction crashes stretched for a mile along I-84, with the largest involving close to 20 cars and trucks. They closed an 86-mile stretch of I-84 to avoid big backups in La Grande, then shutdown the eastbound lanes going over the pass to create a staging area for emergency vehicles and tow trucks. Officials have not said how many people were injured. Some were treated on the scene, others taken to nearby hospitals. Those who were uninjured with vehicles that could not be driven were loaded on charter buses and taken to the Pendleton Convention Center. In all, three busloads of stranded motorists were transported. A few drivable passenger vehicles were routed to Pendleton or La Grande, along with a few semis. But by sunset, several dozen crashed semis and passenger vehicles remained on the freeway, as well as several dozen blocked but drivable semis, whose drivers were remaining with their rigs waiting to get unblocked. Crews initially shutdown an 86-mile stretch of the interstate. That, in turn, created big backups as commercial trucks and passenger vehicles clogged exits and parking lots as far away as Baker City to the east. The closure of westbound I-84 stretched from the Ontario on the Oregon-Idaho border to just east of Pendleton—largely because of a lack of overnight parking for commercial truckers in communities closer to La Grande. Interstate 84 eastbound also remains shut down from just east of Pendleton over the mountains to La Grande. Emergency crews are using those lanes for safe

access by emergency responders and tow trucks. But crews hope to have that eastbound section of I-84 reopened in the next few hours. In the meantime, some drivers are heading south to take winding U.S. Highways 26 and 20 across Eastern Oregon. But officials urge drivers to avoid using GPS apps to find other ways around the snarl, since many roads are closed by winter weather. ; It's also slow going on Interstate Five over the Siskiyou into California this morning. Winter conditions and blowing snow have contributed to multiple accidents, slowing travel both directions. Chains are required for all vehicles traveling over Siskiyou Summit, even though with traction tires. / CRIME: Lots of excitement late last night in the Barger area, after a vehicle pursuit ended off Golden Gardens Drive. Units from the Lane County Sheriff's Office, Eugene Police, and Oregon State Police were involved, and a K9 unit helped with the search. A suspect was taken into custody and there are no further safety concerns for neighbors. / SAFETY: A morning house fire damaged a residence near West "M" Street and Kelly Butte in Springfield. Two people had minor smoke inhalation but were treated at the scene. Investigators say it appears an issue with a woodstove sparked the blaze. / POLITICS, COMMUNITY, AGRICULTURE: Democrats who control the Oregon Legislature are proposing to give Republicans \$100 million to allocate as they see fit in their rural Oregon districts. With two weeks to go in the special session, the money would give the Republican minority more control as Democrats seeks to put an unexpected revenue windfall toward priorities such as housing, climate change, mental health and job training. The money offer could help ease tension between the parties as they hash out what to do with the more than \$2.5 billion revenue that wasn't taken into account when the state budget was passed last year. / AGRICULTURE, ECONOMY: The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture says America's wheat farmers will boost production and prevent global supply chain problems should a Russian invasion of Ukraine choke agricultural exports from that region. A Russian invasion and blockade of Ukraine could jeopardize that country's crucial wheat exports, which account for 12 percent of the world's total, according to U.S. estimates. Ukraine also is expected to supply 16 percent of the world's corn exports this year. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack says he does not expect any disruptions for American consumers, since we grow most of our wheat here. But he says many countries in Europe, South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East rely on Ukrainian wheat shipments. Oregon grows a number of types of wheat, but soft white winter wheat makes up more than 80 percent of the crop. Soft white winter wheat is sold domestically but also exported to many countries, especially in Asia, where it is prized for making noodles, pastries, cakes, and cookies. / WILDLIFE, TRANSPORTATION: An environmental group wants to study the feasibility of building bridges or tunnels to help wild animals safely cross Interstate 5 in southern Oregon and along the Oregon-California border. The Southern Oregon Wildlife Crossing Coalition says many animals are killed trying to cross the interstate and I-5 also disrupts the ecosystem by blocking access to key areas used by various species. The group is looking at seven sites. The creation of the wildlife crossing is dependent on the passage of a bill before the Oregon Legislature that would set aside \$7 million for such projects. /

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SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

WEATHER, SAFETY: A late-season push of arctic air is spreading into the region this morning, along with increasing east to northeast winds. Temperatures have already fallen into the lower to middle teens this morning on the Cascade passes, trending toward single digits for the ski resort elevations. Combined with winds gusting up to 40 mph, the resulting wind chills will be below zero at times for the passes through today. Even colder wind chills are likely for the higher ski resort elevations, where the combination of single digit temperatures and blustery winds will make it feel like 10 to 15 degrees below zero. Such wind chills can cause frostbite on exposed skin within 30 minutes. Anyone heading up to the Cascades should be prepared for colder temperatures than usual. Drivers should be sure to have a winter weather kit in their vehicle, along with blankets and plenty of fuel. / HOMELESSNESS, WEATHER: With cold weather in the forecast, the Egan Warming Center is activating four sites again tonight and will be on standby for Thursday night to provide emergency shelter. The locations are: Trinity Church at 440 Maxwell Road. It opens at 7 p.m.; The Egan Warming Center in the Whiteaker neighborhood is at 1509 West 1st Avenue and opens at 7 p.m. ; The Springfield Memorial Building is located 765 "A" Street opens at 6 p.m. ; The youth site will be at First United Methodist Church at 1376 Olive Street in Eugene. It opens at 6 p.m. All sites are accessible, and pets are welcome. Lane Transit District offers free rides to people going to the Egan Warming Centers to get warm. Tell the driver you are heading to an Egan Warming Center. Bus passengers must wear a face mask while riding that covers their nose and mouth. ; Egan Warming Center is a program of St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County, which operates with funding from Lane County and support from a broad coalition of community members, service providers, nonprofits, faith and social communities, and local governments. The Egan Warming Center is named in honor of Major Thomas Egan, who froze to death during a cold spell in 2008. The program is recruiting new volunteers and holds online trainings. Learn more at www.eganwarmingcenter.com / WILDFIRE PREVENTION, ENVIRONMENT: Could the last two seasons of Oregon wildfires become an annual occurrence? New computer modeling finds that the likelihood of the hot, dry, windy autumn weather that set the stage for severe fires in western Oregon and California has increased—significantly. The study looks at the role human-caused climate

change might have played in extreme fire weather conditions in the 2017 and 2018 seasons. The team focused on major wildfires that burned during September, October and November fires. And it found the likelihood of the weather conditions that lead to such blazes has increased 40 percent. Lead researcher Linnia Hawkins, along with David Rupp of the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute and others, say climate change has led to hotter, drier conditions during those months, when fuels are already parched after hot summers. When seasonal autumn winds kick up, they can quickly turn sparks into infernos. ; A warming planet and land use changes mean more wildfires will scorch large parts of the globe in coming decades. That's according to a U.N. report released this morning that concludes many governments are ill-prepared to address the problem. The Western U.S., northern Siberia, central India, and eastern Australia already are seeing more blazes. U.N. researchers say the likelihood of catastrophic wildfires globally could increase by more than 50 percent by the turn of the century. The report also calls for more awareness of the dangers from smoke inhalation, which can affect tens of millions of people annually as plumes from major wildfires drift thousands of miles across international borders. / HEALTH: There's more evidence that the surge tied to the omicron variant of COVID-19 is easing. Officials with the Oregon Health Authority say combined hospitalizations are continuing to drop: They fell below 600 yesterday, more than one week ahead of when they were forecasted to do so. State officials said earlier this month that they're set to lift the indoor mask mandate by March 31 or earlier, once average daily statewide COVID hospitalizations drop below 400. Once masking rules are lifted, employers and businesses may continue to establish their own mask requirements to protect employees and customers. Health experts strongly recommend that high-risk individuals continue wearing masks in indoor public settings after mask requirements are lifted. That includes anyone who is unvaccinated; immunocompromised; or at high risk of COVID-19 hospitalizations, including those with underlying health conditions and those 65 and older; or living with people who are at high risk. State officials yesterday released numbers from Friday through Monday—including reports of 3,400 new infections and 29 additional deaths. More than one-tenth of those—360—were in Lane County. The state also reported the coronavirus-related death of an 85-year-old local man. / TRANSPORTATION, BUSINESS: Eugene electric-vehicle startup Arcimoto (ar-kee-MOH'-toh) has opened its new 250,000 square-foot factory. Company officials say the location, in the 300 block of Chambers Street, better allows them to ramp up production of their three-wheeled electric vehicles. Congressman Peter DeFazio and Eugene Mayor Lucy Vinis took part in the ribbon-cutting with Arcimoto CEO Mark Frohnmayr, who projects the company will produce up to 50,000 vehicles annually by the year 2025. Frohnmayr says the new complex is five times the size of Arcimoto's current manufacturing facility. Arcimoto is working with industry experts to develop an automated assembly line. Arcimoto manufactures passenger electric vehicles and three-wheeled delivery vans. Arcimoto officials on Tuesday also unveiled their new driverless delivery vehicle, the Faction D1. Company officials say it can reach top speeds of 75 miles per hour and has the capacity to transport 500 pounds of cargo up to 100 miles. / TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMY: Gasoline prices are continuing to climb across the country, driven by a mix of factors ranging from concerns about the crisis in

Ukraine to continued shipping bottlenecks. This morning in Lane County, the average price for a gallon of regular-grade fuel is \$3.98. That's not a big change over the past week, but the price is up seven cents from one month ago and up a whopping \$1.13 from this time last year. Diesel prices in Lane County this morning average \$4.22 per gallon. ; Clogged U.S. ports are being given access to nearly \$450 million in federal money from that recently enacted infrastructure law. It's part of the Biden administration's stepped-up efforts aiming to ease supply chain congestion and lower prices for American consumers. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg today announced the availability of a first batch of competitive grants for ports that will be double last year's amount annually for five years. The grants are targeted specifically at reducing bottlenecks that have been hampering businesses and pushing up costs. The effort comes as the Biden administration has struggled with supply chain issues and rising prices. / FAMILY, ECONOMY: Tax experts are advising filers to expect the unexpected as mid-April's filing deadline approaches. During the second year of the pandemic, they say many taxpayers faced unexpected situations. You might receive a refund or a tax break you didn't anticipate. Or you might get an unpleasant surprise and owe more than you planned. Among the things that could dramatically alter your tax bill: Changing jobs, becoming a new parent, or dealing with big medical bills from COVID-19 or other illnesses. You might have made money in the stock or cryptocurrency boom. Whatever your situation, it might take longer than you expect to gather information and understand provisions that might not have applied to you before. IF YOU GOT A NEW JOB: You'll get W-2 forms from each employer, and the combined pay reported on those will help you calculate your total income for the year. It's pretty straightforward, as long as you withheld the correct amount. IF YOU STARTED WORKING FOR YOURSELF: People who became their own bosses will have to pay self-employment taxes; the federal rate is 15.3 percent. If you have people working for you, you'll be responsible for sending tax forms to contractors or employees. People working for themselves can also manage their tax liability by carefully accounting for both their income and their expenses. IF YOU JOINED THE INVESTING BOOM: Trading by individual investors, many using online platforms, reached historic highs during the early part of 2021, according to Nasdaq . Meanwhile, investments in cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin reached all-time records last year. If you didn't sell any assets, you won't have to pay taxes on them even if your portfolio did well. If you bought and sold investments for the first time in 2021, you'll soon get a crash course on capital gains taxes. You'll have to gather records of your gains and losses. You'll also want to distinguish between long-term capital gains (typically, for assets held longer than a year) and short-term capital gains (for assets held a year or less). If you bought or sold stock, your brokerage will send you a tax form detailing your activity. Cryptocurrency exchanges, however, are not yet required to do so. In any case, it's critical when filing your taxes to review any records sent by the investment platforms on which you've traded. If you don't receive any records, you can log in to review your history. IF YOU WERE AFFECTED BY COVID-19: Perhaps 2021's most discouraging surprise was the persistence of COVID-19, which continued to sicken Americans throughout the year. Even as vaccinations blunted some of the worst outcomes, many suffered from serious illness and significant medical costs. But if you spent more than 7.5 percent of your income on medical care, it may be possible to write off any

expense beyond that threshold. IF YOU HAVE KIDS: Anyone with kids — whether or not they joined your family in 2021 — will have to navigate the child tax credit, which saw a one-time expansion under the COVID-19 relief measures enacted early last year. The federal government distributed payments from the child tax credit in advance based on income tax data from the 2020 tax year. Taxpayers were able to opt out, choosing to claim the deduction on their tax returns instead, but many did not. The credit, with a maximum of \$3,600 per child age 5 or younger at the end of 2021 and \$3,000 for children ages 6 through 17, phases out at higher incomes. That means if you got a raise last year, you might no longer be eligible for the payment you received. /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF
BROADCAST 02/24/22

TIME OF
BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KGNU-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

CRIME: A former medic with Eugene-Springfield Fire was sentenced this week to 25 years in prison for rape and sodomy. Prosecutors say 45-year-old Edward Augustus Blake of Cheshire used his training to illicitly obtain controlled substances, then commit non-consensual sexual acts. In doing so, officials say he betrayed his colleagues, his profession, and the community. Springfield Police began investigating the case in September 2019, after a woman reported she had been drugged and sexually assaulted by a man she met online, whom she believed was a paramedic. Evidence in the case led to Blake's arrest. By October, two additional women had come forward. They said Blake had subjected them to sexual acts after administering intravenous controlled substances. Evidence at trial noted Blake had acquired substances such as fentanyl, ketamine, and morphine through his employment, which he then used for the crimes. In sentencing him to 25 years in prison, the judge in Blake's case also ordered 140 months of post-prison supervision. Blake also must register and report as a sex offender. In a statement, Lane County District Attorney Patty Perlow said she appreciated the courage it took for one of Blake's victims to come forward and testify. ; Reckless driving is one thing. Reckless driving in a U-Haul van is quite another. On Tuesday during the evening commute on the McKenzie Highway, the Lane County Sheriff's Office got a call about a box van that struck a parked vehicle near Blue River and left the scene, headed west. A deputy spotted the vehicle near Vida, but said the driver rabbited from the attempted traffic stop which led to a pursuit with lights and sirens. After a mile, the deputy said the guy braked and put the box van in reverse, intentionally striking the patrol vehicle before continuing to speed toward town. The deputy's vehicle was able to continue the pursuit and the driver of the U-Haul was arrested after crashing the van near the intersection of 69th and Main Street in Springfield. 30-year-old Jeffrey Feaster, whose last known address is Chicago, Illinois, faces a whole bunch of charges. ; Shortly after seven on Tuesday night, a Eugene Police sergeant spotted an erratic driver on westbound Interstate 105, whose Jeep Grand Cherokee struck the center median, then crossed over two lanes of traffic and striking the right guard rail. The vehicle took the exit to the northbound Delta Highway, almost colliding with another guardrail. Police say the driver refused to pull over even though he had a flat tire and was actively striking and dragging

along the center median. Additional Eugene Police units joined the chase and, as the suspect neared the Delta-Beltline highway interchange, the median ended and the Jeep veered into the oncoming lane, nearly causing a head-on crash. That's when police used a tactical move with one of their vehicles to stop the driver and other units moved in to prevent him from escaping. 24-year-old Michael Singh Sandhu of Eugene was unresponsive at first with a handgun on the floorboard under his feet. He began resisting after being removed from the vehicle and was treated at the hospital for suspected drug intoxication issues before being charged with DUI, of Reckless Endangering, Reckless Driving, and Criminal Mischief. ; The Lane County Sheriff's Office is seeking leads after reports of gunshots fired early yesterday morning in the 800 block of Elm Drive in Eugene, off Maxwell Road. It happened around 2:00 a.m. Wednesday. Deputies say someone fired multiple shots, some of which struck a parked vehicle. Another round went through the wall of a nearby residence and entered a bedroom where a person had been sleeping. No one was injured during the incident. Investigators say it is likely the gunshots came from the street and possibly from within a vehicle. There is no suspect vehicle description at this time. But if you have any leads in the case, the Lane County Sheriff's Office would like to hear from you. Call 541-682-4150 and, when prompted, select Option 1. / TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMY: Russia's attacks on Ukraine are driving up crude oil prices across the globe and are expected to lead to another jump in gasoline prices here in the U.S. Russia is one of the world's leading oil producers, behind Saudi Arabia and the U.S. Should Russia withhold its oil from the global market, it could drive prices even higher. Saudi officials recently said they do not plan to increase their output, nor do many U.S. operators. Overnight, the price of Brent crude—a major benchmark for world oil prices—leaped to more than \$100 per barrel. This morning in Oregon and here in Lane County, the average price for a gallon of regular-grade gasoline is up to \$4.00. Diesel is up to \$4.23. / RECREATION, ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORTATION: Planning to drive Oregon's scenic Columbia Gorge Historic Highway this summer? Heavy traffic has been a challenge the past few years-- making it tough for many to truly enjoy the scenery, waterfalls, and trails. This summer, the Oregon Department of Transportation is creating a system of timed-entry permits between May 24 and September 5. Learn more at <https://www.oregonlive.com/travel/2022/02/permits-will-be-required-to-drive-historic-columbia-river-highway-this-summer.html> and <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/waterfall-corridor-permits/Pages/default.aspx> / HEALTH, SAFETY, FAMILIES: Officials with the Oregon Health Authority are warning participants in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program to check any infant formula they have at home. Oregon WIC is one of many state WIC programs in the U.S. that have contracts that with the Abbott corporation, with some of the company's infant formulas on the approved foods list. But amid a national recall, there's a chance some lots of Similac and EleCare—might be contaminated with Cronobacter or Salmonella bacteria. The recalled lots were produced under various brand names at a facility in Michigan. Products included are all sizes of these powdered formulas: Similac Advance, Similac Sensitive, Similac Alimentum, Similac Total Comfort, Similac for Spit up, EleCare Infant, EleCare Junior. The Food and Drug Administration shared the recall details on its website, urging consumers to stop using specific production lots of Similac, Alimentum, and EleCare powdered infant formulas contain particular packaging

codes where: the first two digits of the code are 22 through 37; and the code on the container contains K8, SH or Z2; and the expiration date is 4-1-2022 (APR 2022) or later. Learn more at www.similacrecall.com or call 1-800-986-8540 to see if their formula is affected. Participants can take affected products to the store where they bought them for exchange or refund. The FDA is investigating complaints of four infant illnesses from three states, including a death in one case. See the full advisory, background on the investigation, and more at <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-warns-consumers-not-use-certain-powdered-infant-formula-produced-abbott-nutrition-facility> and <https://www.cdc.gov/cronobacter/infection-and-infants.html> Those concerned about their infant's health should immediately contact their health care providers. Oregon WIC also recommends parents and caregivers never dilute infant formula, or make or feed homemade infant formula to infants. Oregon WIC has communicated with participants, stores and vendors to assist families affected by the recall. It also has obtained waivers from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service, which funds WIC, to provide other formulas and allow vendors to exchange WIC formula during the recall. Oregon WIC is working with vendors and stores so participants can purchase Mead Johnson, Gerber, and store brand formulas with their eWIC card. The WIC Shopper App that participants use to purchase supplemental foods includes all information about the recall in multiple languages. The WIC Shopper App is available in the Apple Store or Google Play: <https://ebtshopper.com/download/> WIC participants can contact their local WIC agency for assistance. / HEALTH: Six more Lane County residents have died from COVID-19, even as the surge in infections from the omicron variant continues to ease. Lane County Public Health yesterday reported 114 new cases of the coronavirus. But 94 local patients remain hospitalized—23 of those in intensive-care beds. With the six additional COVID-related fatalities, the county's pandemic death toll has climbed to 448. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 1,160 new infections and 35 additional deaths statewide. ; The vaccination drive against COVID-19 in the U.S. is grinding to a halt, and lagging demand is especially stark in conservative corners of the country where many people weren't interested in the shots in the first place. In Alabama's Marion County, just 14 people showed up at the Health Department for their initial shot during the first six weeks of the year. Government and employer vaccine mandates have faced court challenges and may have gone as far as they ever will. And with COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths subsiding across the U.S., people who are against getting vaccinated don't see much reason to change their minds. ; The coronavirus mutant widely known as stealth omicron is now causing more than a third of new omicron cases around the world. But scientists still don't know how it could affect the future of the pandemic. New research is slowly revealing clues about the strain, a descendant of omicron called BA.2. Early research suggests it spreads faster than the original omicron and in rare cases can sicken people even if they've already had an omicron infection. There's mixed research on whether it causes more severe disease, but vaccines appear just as effective against it. / POLITICS, EDUCATION: Republican gubernatorial candidate Marc Thieman has announced his resignation as superintendent of the Alsea School District at an emergency meeting of the school board in western Oregon. The Gazette-Times reports the superintendent made waves in January when he announced that at his direction, the school board had passed a

resolution to return “local control” to the board and make indoor masking optional during the COVID pandemic. The resignation comes a week after three formal complaints were filed against him, alleging a hostile work environment, illegal firing practices and disregard for any viewpoint that is not his own. /

HOMELESSNESS, SAFETY: The Egan Warming Center is activating four sites again tonight and will be on standby for Friday night to provide emergency shelter. The locations are: Trinity Church at 440 Maxwell Road. It opens at 7 p.m.; A site in the Whiteaker neighborhood is at 1509 West 1st Avenue, across from the Eugene Mission. It opens at 7 p.m. ; the Springfield Memorial Building is located 765 “A” Street opens at 6 p.m.; and the youth site will be at First United Methodist Church at 1376 Olive Street in Eugene. It opens at 6 p.m. All sites are accessible, and pets are welcome. Lane Transit District offers free rides to people going to the Egan Warming Centers to get warm. Tell the driver you are heading to an Egan Warming Center. Bus passengers must wear a face mask while riding. /

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DATE OF
BROADCAST 02/25/22

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BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KKNV-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

WEATHER, SAFETY: The National Weather Service warns sneaker waves are possible along the Central Oregon Coast from midday Saturday into Sunday afternoon. Waves can run up significantly farther on a beach than normal, including over rocks and jetties. Sneaker waves can suddenly knock people off of their feet and quickly pull them into the ocean, which may lead to serious injury or drowning. The sneaker wave threat will be highest during the high-tide period 8 am to 11 am Sunday morning. / HEALTH: Oregon's mask requirement for indoor public places and schools is being lifted on Saturday, March 19. And Governor Kate Brown will rescind her statewide COVID-19 emergency declaration on April 1. The announcement of the earlier dates came yesterday, amid more evidence COVID-19 hospitalizations and case numbers are continuing to fall across the state and soon will reach the levels we saw before the arrival of the Omicron surge. Daily COVID-19 hospitalizations have declined 48 percent since peaking in late January. Over the past two weeks, hospitalizations have fallen by an average of more than 30 a day. Yesterday, there were 579 people hospitalized with coronavirus-related complications across the state. Reported COVID-19 infections also have dropped steeply in recent weeks. During the past month, new infections have declined by more than 80 percent. The seven-day moving average for new cases is 84 percent lower than at the peak of the Omicron surge. State health officials thanked Oregonians for making the collective commitment to public safety that helped lead to the reduced hospitalization and case numbers, including wearing masks, limiting gatherings, and being vaccinated. Officials say the March 19 date for lifting the indoor mask requirements gives local communities and schools time to prepare for the transition. Once masking rules are lifted, employers and businesses may continue to establish their own mask requirements to protect employees and customers. Health experts also strongly recommend that high-risk individuals continue wearing masks in indoor public settings after mask requirements are lifted. That includes anyone who is unvaccinated; immunocompromised; or at high risk of COVID-19 hospitalizations—including those with underlying health conditions and those 65 and older; or living with people who are at high risk. State officials also continue to strongly recommend universal masking in K-12 settings where children are required to attend. Those settings bring together vaccinated and unvaccinated

individuals, as well as individuals who are at higher risk for severe COVID-19 illness. As for the April 1 planned lifting of the governor's emergency declaration, it was first announced in March 2020. The declaration, which has been extended multiple times, has been the legal underpinning for executive orders issued throughout the pandemic. Those included guidelines for the state's economic reopening, vaccine mandates, childcare requirements, liability protections for schools, and operations of the state's higher education institutions. The pandemic still hasn't ended: State officials say they're working with feedback local leaders, school districts, and others to develop updated safety protocols for things like quarantine, contact tracing, and testing. Oregon School Superintendent Colt Gill says those guidelines will be critical in ensuring schools are able to continue in-person learning while protecting students and their families, teachers, and staff. ; Lane County Public Health yesterday received reports of 62 new infections and four additional coronavirus-related deaths, raising our pandemic toll to 452. Sixty-two local patients remain hospitalized—16 of those in intensive-care beds. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 856 new COVID-19 cases across the state and 59 additional deaths. State officials also provided basic details on seven recent Lane County coronavirus-related deaths, saying those patients ranged in age from 51 to 94. / HEALTH, BIPOC: A free COVID-19 vaccination clinic is part of a Saturday event in downtown Eugene honoring Black History Month. It takes place at 125 West Broadway in Eugene and is sponsored by the organization "8:46 Justice Today" and local businesswoman Betty Snowden. Everyone receiving a vaccine or booster dose between 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. will also get a \$50 gift card. The Paul Biondi Trio is performing. There's also a complimentary lunch being served at 11:30 a.m., during which six local Black women who are business owners are being honored. The 1 p.m. program includes remarks by Betty Snowden and by keynote speaker Aaron Dixon, a longtime activist and former captain of the Seattle chapter of the Black Panther Party. Dixon will sign copies of his memoirs afterward. / HEALTH: A pair of drop-in COVID-19 vaccination clinics continue today, sponsored by Lane County Public Health and its community partners. They include the clinic in the parking lot of Eugene's Autzen Stadium from noon to 5 p.m., and the walk-in location at PeaceHealth's Riverbend Annex off International Way in Springfield from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. / HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS, LOW-INCOME, HEALTH: The state officials overseeing Oregon's Emergency Rental Assistance Program say they've so far paid out a combined \$289 million in federal emergency assistance to support more than 40,000 households. They say despite a slow start, the program's 265 staff members are one month ahead of where they expected to be in handling the application backlog. They say Oregon currently is ranked fourth in the nation in the percentage of federal emergency rental assistance funds paid out or allocated. But there's still a lot of work ahead: The program continues to work through thousands of assistance requests and field questions from tenants and landlords. One program that expires on Monday is the protection for rental debt accrued between April 1, 2020, and June 30 of last year. But there's another state program that remains in effect which allows eligible renters to receive what are known as "safe harbor" protections from eviction while their rental assistance application is being processed. Eligible renters are encouraged to apply today if they have not already. Landlords with tenants with outstanding rent debt who have applied for rent assistance may be eligible for the statewide Landlord

Guarantee Program (LGP) administered by Home Forward. Oregon's LGP reimburses landlords for eligible non-payment costs, like rent and late fees, incurred during the statewide "safe harbor" period. Find out more at <https://www.oregonlgp.org/> The state application portal remains open for renters but may close in the coming weeks. Applications are prioritized based on need. Tenants may apply at oregonrentalassistance.org or call 211 for more information. While much of the money comes from federal pandemic-relief funds, Oregon lawmakers also set aside \$100 million for rental assistance to aid tenants and landlords. ; Democrats in Oregon's Legislature yesterday outlined a proposed \$400 million package of investments to rapidly address some of the state's biggest challenges — homelessness and affordable housing. Backers say the goal is not only to provide relief to people currently experiencing homelessness across the state, but also to address some of the root causes that lead to people becoming unhoused. They say Oregon has a higher rate of people experiencing homelessness than nearly every other U.S. state. Legislative sponsors are proposing setting aside \$165 million of the spending package for things like more and expanded shelters, along with rapid rehousing and additional outreach. ; The mayors of Oregon's eight largest cities yesterday sent their thanks to Oregon lawmakers for providing direct financial assistance to programs that aid those who are unhoused. The \$25 million package focuses on needs in Willamette Valley cities including Eugene, Salem, Portland, Beaverton, Hillsboro, and Gresham. But money is also set aside for efforts in Medford and Bend. The money will help pay for the operation of safe temporary-stay shelters, provide services to the unhoused, and help keep communities clean. The cities already have dedicated millions of dollars from their own budgets, along with several thousand hours of staff time, to respond to the growing need. But creating and providing year-round shelters, emergency camping areas, day centers, site clean-up and sanitation, and increased outreach and counseling services has taken a toll on municipal budgets. The mayors say their eight cities combined have allocated close to \$110 million toward meeting those needs. They say they hope the legislative investment builds on the momentum of other local, state, and federal government efforts. / HOMELESSNESS, WEATHER: The Egan Warming Center is activating four sites again tonight to provide emergency shelter to those who are unhoused. The locations are: Trinity Church at 440 Maxwell Road. It opens at 7 p.m.; a site in the Whiteaker neighborhood is at 1509 West 1st Avenue, across from the Eugene Mission. It opens at 7 p.m.; the Springfield Memorial Building is located 765 "A" Street opens at 6 p.m.; and the youth site will be at First United Methodist Church at 1376 Olive Street in Eugene. It opens at 6 p.m. All sites are accessible, and pets are welcome. Lane Transit District offers free rides to people going to the Egan Warming Centers to get warm. Tell the driver you are heading to an Egan Warming Center. Bus passengers must wear a face mask while riding. / CRIME, RACISM: Eugene Police say they arrested a juvenile yesterday in connection with extortion, committing a bias crime, and harassment. No details on the suspect's age or gender. But investigators say the case began in December, when they received reports from North Eugene High School of several offensive, vulgar and threatening social media posts aimed at their students and faculty. During the same time period, one of the students reported being singled out and harassed online because of their race. Since that time, investigators with the Eugene Police with the help of Eugene School District 4J has continued to

investigate this case. / CRIME: Prosecutors say an Oregon man faces federal charges after twice breaking windows and destroying property at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Grants Pass. Investigators say that in late November 26-year-old Devin Friedrich Kruse of Grants Pass intentionally broke security cameras and a window, then returned three days later and threw a concrete block through a window at the clinic and tore down the clinic's intercom system. The clinic has remained closed since the incidents occurred. Kruse will make his first appearance in Eugene federal court on March 14. If convicted, he faces up to one year in federal prison. / EDUCATION: They hail from Arkansas, California, Arizona, and Oregon. The Lane Community College Board of Education has selected four finalists for the position of LCC President. Each candidate will visit during the week of March 7 for interviews with the board and to take part in virtual public forums. The finalists are: Dr. Kim Armstrong, Vice Chancellor for Student, Equity, & Community Affairs at Arkansas State University—Three Rivers in Malvern, Arkansas; Dr. Stephanie Bulger, Vice Chancellor for Instructional Services at San Diego Community College District in San Diego, California; Dr. Clyne Namuo, Interim President at Phoenix College in Phoenix, Arizona; and Dr. Christopher Villa, former President for Portland Community College's Rock Creek Campus in Portland, Oregon. / BUSINESS, AGRICULTURE EMPLOYMENT: The 84th annual Oregon Logging Conference continues today at the Lane Events Center in Eugene. Hundreds of attendees are in town, and you'll be able to spot the outdoor logging equipment displays as you travel down West 13th Avenue. "Family Day" is Saturday, a chance for kids to see the equipment up-close and take part in some educational activities. They'll also be able to watch Day Two of the annual "Log Loader Competition." Some high school students from Oregon and Southwest Washington are taking part in today's "Future Forestry Workers Career Day event." The Oregon Logging Conference also features three chainsaw artists (two from Oregon) who will be crafting their work during demonstrations during Saturday's "Family Day," as well as for attendees today. Learn more at <https://oregonloggingconference.com/> /

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DISCUSSED

WEATHER, SAFETY: A series of late-winter storms are expected to bring rain, wind, and unsettled weather to the Pacific Northwest over the next couple of days. The National Weather service says this first storm is an atmospheric river that will continue through tomorrow night. The heaviest rainfall is expected to occur over the northern Oregon coast and northern Coast Range. As the storm arrives, we're seeing a gradual increase of snow levels. They're up to 8,000 feet this morning, which means some of the rain could further erode the snowpack at the pass levels and a bit higher. Snow levels could fall a bit toward the end of the week. / ECONOMY, TRANSPORTATION: Gasoline prices continue to climb amid global concerns over Russia's invasion of Ukraine and tight supplies from elsewhere around the globe. The average U.S. price of a gallon of regular-grade gasoline spiked 10 cents over the past two weeks to \$3.64 per gallon. Industry analyst Trilby Lundberg of the Lundberg Survey said Sunday that the jump came after a rise in crude oil costs amid global supply concerns following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Lundberg says further increases are likely. The price at the pump is about a dollar higher than it was a year ago. Nationwide, the highest average price for regular-grade gas is in the San Francisco Bay Area, at \$4.86 per gallon. The lowest average is in Houston, at \$3.14 per gallon. ; Eugene-Springfield's fuel prices are up to an average price of \$4.02 this morning for a gallon of regular-grade gasoline. That's up five cents from this time last week, according to AAA—the auto club. Average gas prices are up \$1.11 from this time last year. Diesel is up to \$4.27. / SAFETY: Oregon Highway 126 reopened early this morning after being closed much of the night following a fatal crash four miles west of Walton. No details yet from law enforcement investigators. / CLIMATE CHANGE, LEGAL: A new United Nations report outlines how climate change is harming us and the planet. One scientist says the report's key message to the world is, "Your House is On Fire. It focuses on what climate change means in our daily lives, from heat waves and floods, to droughts, rising seas, species extinctions, growing human hunger, and worsening health. The report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concludes that nearly half the world's population already faces significant risk from global warming. United Nations chief Antonio Guterres called it an "atlas of human suffering." The IPCC puts out this series of global reports every five to seven years. Scientists say

there's still hope that some of the worst can be prevented, or we can adapt to it. But they say the world needs to act fast and make difficult choices. Climate activists are renewing calls for rich countries to step up both their efforts to curb emissions and provide financial aid to the poor. Many world leaders use the IPCC reports as a roadmap in international negotiations on trying to curb global warming. But not all countries are on board or following up on their commitments. ; The U.S. Supreme Court is set to hear a case that could hobble Biden administration efforts to combat climate change. In arguments today, the justices are taking up an appeal from 19 mostly Republican-led states and coal companies over the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to limit carbon dioxide emissions from power plants. The court took on the case even though there is no current EPA plan in place to deal with carbon output from power plants. The administration already is dealing with congressional refusal to enact the climate change proposals in the President Biden's "Build Back Better" economic and infrastructure plan. / FISHERIES, ENVIRONMENT, LEGAL, UTILITIES: Federal regulators on Friday issued a draft environmental impact statement saying there are significant benefits to a plan to demolish four massive dams on Northern California's Klamath River. The goal is to save imperiled migratory salmon by setting the stage for the largest dam demolition project in U.S. history. The issuing of a statement by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission clears a major regulatory hurdle for the project and paves the way for public hearings on the document before a final draft is issued as soon as this summer. A final environmental impact statement would allow the extensive preparations necessary for the nearly \$500 million demolition and habitat restoration plan to begin in earnest. Dam removals could begin as early as next year if all goes smoothly, but a more likely scenario is 2024. The aging dams near the Oregon-California border were built decades before current environmental regulations went into effect and essentially cut the 253-mile-long river in half for migrating salmon, whose numbers have plummeted. The dams do not store agricultural water, are not used for flood control, and are not part of the 200,000-acre Klamath Project, an irrigation project farther north that straddles the Oregon-California border. The project on California's second-largest river would be at the vanguard of a push to demolish dams in the U.S. as the structures age and become less economically viable and as concerns grow about their environmental impact, particularly on fish. If the dams remained, power company PacifiCorp would likely have to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to retrofit the structures to comply with today's environmental laws. As it is, the utility has said the electricity generated by the dams no longer makes up a significant part of its power portfolio. Regulators wrote that moving ahead with the proposal would "maximize benefits" to salmon fisheries important to local tribes and restore the landscape to a "more natural state." Tribes that rely on the salmon for their sustenance and culture, including the Yurok and Karuk, cheered the milestone Friday. So did commercial fishermen and environmentalists who have worked for years to bring the dams down in a region already suffering through intense drought and dwindling water supplies. Coho salmon from the river are listed as threatened under federal and California law, and their population has fallen by anywhere from 52 percent to 95 percent. Spring chinook salmon, once the Klamath Basin's largest run, have dwindled by 98 percent. Fall Chinook, the last to persist in any significant numbers, have been so meager in the past few years

that the Yurok Tribe canceled fishing last year for the first time in memory. In 2017, they bought fish at a grocery store for their annual salmon festival. In recent years, as many as 90 percent of juvenile salmon sampled tested positive for a disease that flourishes when river flows are low. A spokesman for the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations says the dams are a key factor in the diseases that are wiping out entire generations of salmon. Project proponents have thus far overcome opposition to the plan. Some local and state officials worry about flood control and residents who live around a large reservoir created by one of the dams have unsuccessfully sued to stop the project. The original demolition proposal foundered after regulators initially balked at allowing PacifiCorp to completely exit the project. A historic deal reached in 2020 made Oregon and California equal partners in the demolition with a nonprofit entity called the Klamath River Renewal Corporation, which will oversee the project. That deal also added \$45 million to the project's \$450 million budget after concerns that the available funds weren't enough to cover any overruns. Oregon, California and PacifiCorp, which operates the hydroelectric dams and is owned by billionaire Warren Buffett's company Berkshire Hathaway, each provided one-third of the additional funds. Some critics have said governors in Oregon and California were irresponsible to assume financial responsibility for cost overruns and object that part of the project is financed by a voter-approved California water bond. / GOVERNMENT, POLITICS: Oregon lawmakers are entering the final week of their annual legislative session and working to consider a number of issues before the gavel falls and they adjourn by March 7. It's been a busy session already, with bills introduced dealing with pandemic and wildfire recovery, shoring up the economy and jobs, enhancing mental health services, and combatting climate change. Last week, Democrats who control both chambers outlined a proposed \$400 million package of investments to rapidly address some of the state's biggest challenges — homelessness and affordable housing. They also proposed giving Republicans \$100 million to allocate as they see fit in their rural Oregon districts. / CRIME: In Junction City, investigators want to hear from anyone who might have tips about who set two suspicious fires that damaged a duplex in the 300 block of East 5th Avenue on Saturday afternoon and evening. The first blaze was reported shortly after 2:30 Saturday afternoon, involving a fence on the east side of the property. A passerby used a fire extinguisher to put out the blaze. Fire officials called in police to investigate the fire. That evening, shortly after 6:30 p.m., crews returned to the same location to combat a fire that started on the east wall of the duplex. No one was home at the time save for a dog that was retrieved and taken into protective custody. Junction City fire officials say the blaze was suspicious. A state fire marshal arrived Sunday and determined the blaze was arson. Junction City Police are asking anyone who was in the area of the 300 block of East 5th Avenue on Saturday afternoon and evening and might have seen anything suspicious please contact them. Contact the Junction City Police Department at 541-998-1245. / SAFETY: Oregon State Police say a 25-year-old Eugene man died when he was struck while standing or walking in the traffic lane of southbound Interstate 5 a few miles south of Salem on Thursday night. Investigators say he had been the subject of some erratic driving complaints just minutes earlier. Dispatchers said they received a call about the driver of a Jeep Patriot that was reportedly "driving all over the road" and almost hitting other vehicles. A short time later, officials received a report the Jeep

had stopped on the shoulder of the roadway. A short time later came word of a pedestrian struck near the same location by a semi-truck driven by a 61-year-old Utah man. Investigators say the pedestrian, 25-year-old Esteva Cartajena of Eugene, also had been the driver of the Jeep. He died from his injuries. /

HEALTH: Americans who have been clamoring for an end to mask-wearing have welcomed new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It says healthy people in most areas of the country can safely stop wearing masks. But others remain wary that the pandemic could throw a new curveball. Now, states, cities and school districts are assessing whether it's safe to stop masking – long after others threw out such mandates and many Americans ignored them. Chicago day care operator Grace Thomas says she's not ready to take off her mask because she wants to keep everyone safe. But Indianapolis restaurant manager Steve Kelly says few employees or customers wear masks anymore. /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF
BROADCAST 03/01/22

TIME OF
BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KGNU-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

SCHOOLS: The McKenzie Schools are closed today because of a lack of available bus drivers. / WEATHER, SAFETY: A strong storm fueled by an "atmospheric river" brought rain, snow and threat of flooding and avalanches on Monday to the Pacific Northwest. Forecasters said a new daily rainfall record was set in Seattle Monday with 2.49 inches of rain and the rainfall total over 48 hours was close to surpassing the normal precipitation for all of February. Heavy snowfall and avalanche dangers for hours closed Snoqualmie Pass and Stevens Pass over the Cascade Mountains. Flood watches and warnings were in effect through Wednesday for rivers throughout the region. A flood watch was issued for the northwest Oregon coast. Atmospheric river storms are fueled by long and wide plumes of moistures pulled in from the Pacific. / HEALTH, BUSINESS, SCHOOLS, GOVERNMENT: It's been close to two years since the pandemic forced a general shutdown of businesses, schools, and other places, ushering in a cautious reopening with requirements for the wearing of masks in indoor public places. But that's changing this month—and in Oregon, Washington, and California, it's happening one week earlier than first planned. The governors of all three states yesterday jointly announced that indoor mask requirements will be dropped—with some exceptions—on March 12. The original date was March 19. It comes as the surge in cases and hospitalizations tied to the omicron variant of COVID-19 continues to fall dramatically. The easing of the requirements applies to many businesses and schools, meaning schoolchildren in the three West Coast states will no longer be required to wear masks in the classrooms. The West Coast announcements come after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Friday eased its federal mask guidance, essentially saying that the majority of Americans don't need to wear masks in many indoor public places, including schools. There are more than 7.5 million school-age children across the three states, which have had some of the strictest coronavirus safety measures during the pandemic. The new guidance will make face coverings strongly recommended rather than a requirement at most indoor places. In all three states, the decision of whether to follow the state guidance will now rest with school districts. Federal mask mandates still apply in high-risk indoor settings such as in airports, train and bus stations, on public transit, and in taxis. Many health care facilities will maintain masking requirements. Businesses also may maintain mask

guidelines to protect employees and customers. The milestone comes as much of the country relaxes public health orders, including school mask mandates, in an effort to restore normalcy and boost economic recovery. The changes reflect a growing sense that the virus is not going away, and Americans need to learn to live with it. The announcements signal a turning point, coming almost exactly two years after American cities began shutting down to prevent COVID-19's spread. California was the first state to announce a shutdown with stay-at-home orders in March 2020, followed soon after by Oregon and other states. At yesterday's news conference, Oregon Governor Kate Brown noted it was two years ago to the day that health experts identified Oregon's first case of COVID-19. She said leaders of the three states worked together on guidelines for reopening and the decision on when to lift masking because their communities and economies are closely linked. The new CDC guidelines are based on measures focused more on what's happening at hospitals than on test results. The CDC said that more than 70 percent of Americans live in places where the coronavirus poses a low or medium threat to hospitals and therefore can stop wearing masks in most indoor places. The CDC had endorsed universal masking in schools regardless of virus levels in the community since July, but it now is recommending masks only in counties at high risk. Based on that criterion, 16 of Oregon's 36 counties still fall under the "high" level of transmission. Dr. Dean Sidelinger, Oregon's state epidemiologist, said he hopes community leaders will use the CDC framework in "guiding their decisions" about masking. / HEALTH: Omicron is fading away, and so are Americans' worries about COVID-19. Fewer Americans now say they're concerned they'll be infected compared with January following the rise and fall of the wildly contagious coronavirus variant. That's according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Just 24 percent report being "extremely" or "very" worried about themselves or a family member contracting COVID-19. That's down from 36 percent in both December and January, when omicron caused a massive spike in infections and taxed public health systems. / BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT: Have a taste for Russian vodkas? Whether it's under the brand name Jewel of Russia, Green Mark, Hammer + Sickie, Russian Standard, Forty Degrees, or others, you won't be able to find it anymore in Oregon's liquor stores. The Oregon Liquor & Cannabis Commission yesterday directed the operators of the state's independently owned liquor stores to stop selling all Russian manufactured distilled spirits. It's the latest business-related reaction to the invasion of Ukraine and mirrors actions at liquor stores across the nation. OLCC leaders estimate about 5,000 bottles of Russian-made liquor were currently for sale in 281 liquor stores, which began removing the product from their shelves yesterday. More than 6,200 bottles are being stored in the OLCC's Portland warehouse. Oregon Liquor stores are also canceling or putting on hold any customer "special order" requests for Russian manufactured liquor. But there's still vodka available from OLCC retailers, including those branded with Russian names. But those will be brands that were *not purchased from distilleries located in Russia*. / CRIME: It sounds like he was a one-man crime wave. Eugene Police say they responded to a pair of break-ins early yesterday morning, arresting the same suspect in both. Shortly after 4:00 a.m. Monday, 54-year-old Timothy Allan Hills was first arrested after allegedly breaking the front door glass of the Dari-Mart at 1st and Monroe Streets. Officers said Hills appeared disoriented and was eating a store item, while bleeding from cuts

caused by glass shards in the door. Based on his behavior and injuries, Hills was taken to a hospital for treatment and cited in lieu of custody for Burglary and Criminal Mischief. But two hours later, police arrested Hills again—this time taking him to jail—after he allegedly broke the front door at Hutch's Bicycles on Charnelton Street and was spotted pushing one of the store's bicycles from the showroom floor toward the front door. This time, police say Hills was agitated and uncooperative, but an officer was able to calm him before he was taken into custody and charged with an additional count of Burglary. ; Arson detectives are investigating a rash of ten trash bin and dumpster fires that were set over a span of four-and-a-half hours on Sunday morning around downtown Eugene. The first blaze was reported around 6:40 a.m. Three of the fires damaged nearby buildings or vehicles. Have any tips in the case? Eugene Police Arson detectives would like to hear from you. They're especially interested in hearing from business owners and managers who might have security camera video of the suspect. Call Eugene Police at 541-682-5111. / SAFETY: Oregon State Police yesterday released details on Sunday night's fatal crash on Highway 126 five miles west of Walton. Investigators say it happened shortly after 5:45 p.m. when a vehicle driven by 24-year-old Sadie Ann Cervantes of Florence left its lane of travel for an unknown reason and crossed into the oncoming lane. The vehicle collided head-on with another passenger car, driven by 47-year-old June Michele Lemke of Gold Beach. Lemke died at the scene. Cervantes was hospitalized with injuries. The highway was closed for close to five hours Sunday night by the state police and Lane County Sheriff's Office during the investigation. / EVENTS, ENVIRONMENT: Oregon's Spring Whale Watch season begins this month. The best whale-watching sites are open at your favorite coastal parks. But because of a shortage of trained volunteers as the pandemic winds down, the Spring Whale Week events and locations hosted by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department canceled for this year—with plans for it to return in 2023. During the spring migration, an estimated 25,000 gray whales pass by Oregon's shores between late March to June on their way to cooler waters off Alaska. Many will be accompanied by their calves, who were born during the winter in the warmer water lagoons off the coast of Baja, Mexico. Oregon's designated whale watching sites offer the best chances of spotting whales because of their locations, usually slightly elevated above the ocean and in areas where whales are more easily seen. You also might enjoy the popular whale watching livestream on the Oregon State Parks YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/OregonParks> The livestreams are scheduled daily March 21-25, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Depoe Bay Whale Watch Center, which hosts the livestreams, reopens to visitors later this spring. / WEATHER, AGRICULTURE, RECREATION, FISHERIES: This week's heavy rainstorms could bring relief to some of the region's parched reservoirs managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Corps water managers say the atmospheric river will help bring Blue River and Dorena reservoirs up to normal lake levels for this time of year. Since the start of refill season, there has been very little rainfall. Reservoirs in the Willamette and Rogue River basins rely on rainfall to refill and generally start filling February 1st. Year-to-date precipitation across the Willamette basin was 93 percent of normal as of yesterday. The Rogue basin was in worse shape with only 73 percent of normal precipitation. Water experts say much of this season's rain fell well below they closed the gates on the region's dams at the start of the reservoir refill season.

Regulators keep reservoirs lower in the winter to reduce downstream flooding, then refill them in the spring to prepare for recreation and adequate streamflows for migrating fish. The Willamette Valley Project's 13 reservoirs are currently nine percent full, about 36 percent below where water managers would like levels to be this time of year. Warm rains can erode snowpack at lower elevations in the mountains. The snowpack currently stands at 106 percent of median for the Willamette and 75 percent of median for the Rogue. Snowmelt helps keep reservoir elevations elevated during the summer—if it lasts and matches outflows. But in most years, snowpack accounts for a relatively small portion of the system's storage. /

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BROADCAST 03/02/22

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BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KKNV-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED HEALTH, SCHOOLS: No preschool today in the Pleasant Hill district because of a staff shortage. All other Pleasant Hill schools and classes are operating on their regular schedule. / EDUCATION, MENTAL HEALTH: The University of Oregon is making a big move into Portland and expanding efforts to assist children needing behavioral health and mental health care. Former Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer and his wife, Connie, are donating \$425 million through their charitable foundation to create The Ballmer Institute for Children's Behavioral Health. The U-of-O will use the money to purchase the shuttered Concordia University campus in northeast Portland, create the new degree program, hire more than 20 new faculty members, and endow a \$100 million scholarship fund. The goal is to graduate more than 200 behavioral health specialists annually once the institute is fully operational. Campus leaders say the Ballmer Institute will establish a new national model for youth behavioral and mental health care by bringing together some of the university's top-ranked research programs and creating partnerships with Oregon public schools and families, and community support groups. Long-term, those at the institute want to create intervention and treatment programs that can be incorporated into the daily lives of kindergarten through 12th-grade students. The Portland Public Schools will be the Ballmer Institute's first partner. Portland Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero says the pandemic has amplified the mental and behavioral health needs of students in Oregon and across the country. But he notes that school districts often are ill-equipped to adequately address behavioral and mental health issues that can become barriers to learning. The University of Oregon also plans to create a new degree program and launch a certificate program for students seeking careers within schools and other organizations. The Ballmers have strong ties to the U-of-O: Connie Ballmer is an Oregon graduate and served on the Board of Trustees for seven years. / CLIMATE CHANGE, EDUCATION, DISASTERS, COMMUNITY: One of the lead authors on this week's groundbreaking United Nations report on climate change is a researcher at Oregon State University. David Wrathall is an expert on environmental change and human migration. He played a key role in writing several sections of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change or IPCC report, which looks at the human dimensions of climate change. That can include loss of housing and jobs, forced migration, and economic issues. Wrathall says

one of the key questions about climate change is in which places will people no longer be able to live because it is too dangerous. Oregon's 2020 wildfires, for example, displaced more than 4,000 people and many still are struggling to rebuild or have moved elsewhere. Similarly, more frequent heatwaves, prolonged drought, large storms, flooding, and rising sea levels have potentially large impacts across big portions of our state. Scientists say many large-scale weather disasters have been stoked by human-caused climate change— and fueled by temperature increases and changes in rain and snowfall. Since 1980, Oregon has had 35 weather disasters that have caused at least \$1 billion in damage when adjusted for inflation. Eight of those disasters occurred in the last five years, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Researchers say that over the past four decades, Oregon's average annual temperature has increased 1.7 degrees but in terms of annual average rainfall things have gotten 3.8 inches drier. Scientists say there's still hope that some of the worst can be prevented, or we can adapt to it. But they say the world needs to act fast and make difficult choices.

/ COMMUNITY, DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH, FAMILY: Big news from the Eugene Family YMCA, which is preparing to build a new home off 24th Avenue at Hilyard Street. "Y" officials say they've made the final payment on the property. The 5.4 acres were purchased from the Eugene School District 4J in four installments, totaling \$2.85 million over the past six years. The site is the former home of Roosevelt Middle School, which was rebuilt in 2016 on an adjacent parcel. The Eugene Family YMCA is continuing to raise funds for its \$5 million Capital Campaign. Groundbreaking for the new fitness, wellness, and learning facility is set for July, with the grand opening planned in December of next year.

/ AGRICULTURE, POLITICS: A much-debated bill that would give overtime protections to Oregon farmworkers passed the House Tuesday and heads to the state Senate for consideration. Under the bill, overtime would be phased in over five years. Supporters say it would provide equal protection for farmworkers who haven't been able to earn overtime because of an 80-year-old federal exclusion based in racism. But opponents say the bill will be financially crippling for small family farms and will force them to cap shifts at 40 hours per week rather than pay overtime, which ultimately will mean less money for farmworkers.

/ SPORTS: It's tournament time for the Pac-12 Women's Basketball teams: The Oregon State Women's Basketball team meets Arizona State today in the opening round of the Pac-12 Women's Basketball tournament in Las Vegas. Game time is 2:30 p.m. on the Pac-12 Network. The Oregon Women's Basketball team secured a second seed in this week's Pac-12 Tournament in Las Vegas. The Ducks will meet the winner of today's UCLA vs. USC game on Thursday at 6 p.m. The Pac-12 Network has the broadcast.

/ HEALTH: A new government report shows Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine gave children 5 and older strong protection against hospitalization and death even during the omicron surge. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released the new data Tuesday. A day earlier, a study from New York raised the question of whether the vaccine is less effective in children ages 5 to 11, especially against milder infections. Younger kids get a smaller dose than teens. But CDC data from additional states doesn't suggest an age problem. Vaccines generally are less effective against omicron infection but still protect against severe outcomes. /

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ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED HEALTH, COMMUNITY, SCHOOLS, GOVERNMENT: When Oregon drops its indoor mask requirements on March 12, there will be other big changes. The state and local health departments will pause their contact tracing efforts and lift quarantine guidelines in most situations, including in schools and childcare settings. Contact tracing and quarantines may still be used in those high-risk locations, which include health care settings, jails and prisons, and shelters. And isolation guidelines still apply to people who have tested positive for COVID-19 or who have symptoms. It's the latest update reflecting the new phase of the pandemic and the challenges faced by officials trying to track the rapid spread of COVID. In making the decision, the state is following new CDC guidance, which concludes that contact tracing and quarantine now have very limited impact on reducing the transmission of COVID-19, outside of high-risk settings. Individuals with COVID-19 are still recommended to stay at home for five days, then wear a mask for an additional five days when they are around other people. Schools will continue to exclude students from school for five days if they have symptoms or a known case of COVID-19. But effective March 12, quarantine will no longer be recommended for people within the general population who have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status. This includes children and staff in K-12 and childcare settings. But school officials and childcare providers will be strongly encouraged to notify families when cases are identified. These notifications allow individuals and families to take additional precautions according to their needs. Schools may begin offering "enhanced exposure testing" for students and staff with known COVID-19 exposures who are at increased risk of severe illness. Students and staff may continue to attend school regardless of their participation in enhanced exposure testing. State health officer and epidemiologist Dr. Dean Sidelinger said yesterday that for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic, the majority of Oregon's population—better than four in every five residents (86 percent)—has some level of immunity against COVID-19. That's either through vaccination, previous infection, or some combination of the two. Officials say that can help protect them from the most severe infections in the coming months. But Sidelinger adds that while the worst of the current surge is behind us, COVID-19 still exists and will continue to cause disease, hospitalization, and death even as we transition into the next phase of the

pandemic. Across the U.S. and here in Oregon, experts say the coronavirus is becoming endemic, meaning it's not going away but can increasingly be controlled and managed. / CRIME, SAFETY: One Eugene resident hired a moving company to transport the family's possessions to their new home on the East Coast—but the belongings never arrived. Another had moved from Arizona to Veneta and been without her property for close five months. Some good news this week for victims of a moving company scam: Members of the Eugene Police worked with their counterparts in Sutherlin to serve a search warrant at a Sutherlin warehouse and recovered the goods. Investigators say the big break in the case came when one victim worked to track down their belongings and determined they were likely in the warehouse—taking photos of other stacks of property. Specialists with EPD's Property and Financial Crimes Unit, Crime Analysis Unit, along with a police K9 located the Eugene victim's property and assisted her with filling a 26-foot U-Haul with the family's possessions. During the search additional victims were identified, and police helped coordinate rentals of U-Haul trucks that were loaded by detectives to reunite people with their belongings. But investigators say no arrests are expected because, as with other frequent scams, the companies and individuals behind the crimes are likely out of state or possibly out of the country. ; Here's an advisory the Eugene Police Department's Property Crimes Unit put out last month about moving company scams: Eugene Police have received increased complaints regarding moving company scams. Many of these cases are complex because they cross multiple state lines and jurisdictions. Among the complaints are that some movers falsify weight to increase the price and hold household goods over payment disputes. Eugene Police detectives have seen several variations of moving scams. One scam includes a moving company collecting an entire household for a move. They collect payment and then place the household goods into a storage unit to be left unpaid and abandoned. The storage unit eventually goes to auction, and the customer never receives their household goods. One moving company may make some deliveries to appear legitimate while forsaking others. Another moving company may continue to take on new customers, knowing they can't deliver or don't plan to, because it needs an inflow of cash to keep the business afloat. The customer's property is still in possession of the mover but held for a long time with false delivery promises or potential abandonment. Another scam involves the movers showing up to a victim's new home (often weeks after the promised delivery date) demanding more money to unload the property. Often these movers say they will only accept a cashier's check, or they will not deliver the property. At this point, many victims are so desperate for their property, they issue the payment. All of the complaints Eugene Police received involve a move scheduled through various brokers before being sub-tasked to a mover. A broker is a company that arranges for the transportation of a person's cargo, utilizing for-hire carriers to provide the actual truck transportation. Moving brokers are sales teams that book people's move and sell it to an actual moving company. A broker does not assume responsibility for and is not authorized to transport your household goods. Often these "brokers" charge several thousands of dollars and try to say part of the money goes to the movers, which is not true. Some brokers are offering a seven-day full refund in case of cancellation. However, the brokers call on the eighth day to raise the price or assign a mover. If the customer tries to cancel, they can no longer cancel due to a day past the refund policy. After a

subcontracted mover comes to collect the household goods, it is now out of the broker's hands. When customers call the brokers for assistance, most respond that this is no longer their problem and to talk to the mover. If a consumer believes they are a victim of moving fraud, they can contact their local law enforcement agency to possibly report it. Eugene residents can call the non-emergency number at (541) 682-5111. Victims should also file a complaint with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. The more complaints a company receives, the more likely an investigation gets triggered. Tips: Don't sign a blank or incomplete estimate. Don't sign a bill of lading without a deliver date estimate listed. Don't pay in cash (or Venmo, PayPal, etc.).

/ SAFETY, WEATHER, GOVERNMENT, LOW-INCOME, COMMUNITY: On the heels of last year's deadly heatwave, Oregon lawmakers are weighing a plan to give renters better access to air conditioners and air filters. The bill makes it easier for tenants to install portable cooling devices—by limiting the restrictions landlords and homeowners' associations can place on the devices. The proposal also calls for the creation of a program to distribute air conditioners and filters to lower-income and other vulnerable residents. The bill this week cleared the state Senate and now heads to the Oregon House. June's record-breaking heat wave contributed to the deaths of more than 500 people across the Pacific Northwest and western Canada. Most of those who died were lower-income or older residents who had no access to air conditioning and could not leave their homes. ; Concerns about drought, rising temperatures, and increased fire risk are prompting the Portland City Council to ban the sale and use of fireworks in the city. The Oregonian and OregonLive report yesterday's unanimous vote came after fireworks caused 44 fires in 2020 during the run-up to the Fourth of July. Portland officials banned fireworks sale and use last summer but responded to another 15 blazes sparked by fireworks. Over last year's July 4th holiday, three Portland residents died after someone threw fireworks into a dumpster at an apartment complex and the flames climbed the outside wall, trapping residents inside an upstairs unit. /

TRANSPORTATION, GOVERNMENT, SAFETY: The federal government has a message for states seeking billions of dollars from the Biden administration's new infrastructure law: If you're using the funds to widen roads, you must also make improvements to protect the lives and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists—or risk losing the money. In a report submitted to Congress, the Department of Transportation says it will prioritize the safety and health of all the users, from passenger vehicles and motorcyclists to riders of public transit; walkers, bicyclists, and scooter-riders; and rideshare drivers and passengers to people delivering goods. Projects that include or feature bike paths and traffic roundabouts, enhanced sidewalks, pedestrian pathways, bus stops, and transit lanes will be favored when the funds are allocated. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg says it's a shift from the agency's longtime focus toward adding car lanes to relieve congestion and increase speed — often at a cost to non-drivers and those living in neighborhoods along busy thoroughfares. Approximately one-third of U.S. traffic fatalities are people who are outside of vehicles. New data released yesterday indicates bicycles, motorcyclists, and pedestrians had some of the highest numbers among the more than 38,000 traffic-related deaths in 2020. /

MENTAL HEALTH, YOUTH: State attorneys general have launched a nationwide investigation into TikTok and its possible harmful effects on young users' mental health. It represents a widening of government scrutiny of the wildly popular video

platform. The investigation was announced Wednesday by a number of states, including California, Montana, Massachusetts and Colorado. U.S. lawmakers and federal regulators have criticized TikTok, citing practices and computer-driven promotion of content they say can endanger the physical and mental health of young users. Critics of TikTok have pointed, for example, to incidents around the country that came to light last fall in which students vandalized school bathrooms and other equipment and stole supplies — apparently in response to a viral TikTok challenge called “devious licks.” Also last fall, The Wall Street Journal reported that teenage girls had been seeking medical care for the sudden onset of tics, such as jerky motions and verbal outbursts; doctors said TikTok videos on Tourette syndrome could be a factor. Last month, Texas opened an investigation into TikTok’s alleged violations of children’s privacy. The investigation aims to determine if TikTok is violating the law in promoting its platform to young people. /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF
BROADCAST 03/04/22

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ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED ENVIRONMENT, WEATHER, ECONOMY, AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES: The past few years in Oregon have been the state's third-driest on record. And this year, as the drought continues, Central and Southern Oregon are expected to experience the worst effects. That's according to a regional panel of weather, snowpack, streamflow, and wildfire experts. Yesterday, they shared the latest numbers. They say we're starting this year drier than were last year—what they call a “building drought.” The effects might be moderate here on the west side of the Cascades. But Central Oregon especially is already in what experts say it “exceptional drought.” They say that could make the region more vulnerable to reduced and warmer-than-normal streamflows—which can affect everything from irrigation and cattle-raising, power generation and fish migration, to summer recreation—and an increased risk of wildfires. Much of the problem is the general dryness of the Central Oregon landscape: after years of drought, moisture content in the top three feet of soil remains low. So even a drenching rain is not enough to fix things. The experts say Central Oregon would need to receive 150 to 200 percent or more of normal precipitation over next two months to offset those drought conditions. Here in Western Oregon, streamflow gauges and reservoir levels were well below where they were this time last year before this week's atmospheric river hit. The scientists say we could use a couple more of those weather events to help raise precipitation totals to where they should be. The experts say the past couple of years we've seen some strong offshore high-pressure weather systems that basically deflected many of our typical winter storms to the north of us. The good news, they say, is that there is no indication we will experience as warm and dry a spring as we did last year. And they think last summer's deadly “heat dome” will not repeat this year. But they say the Willamette Valley increasingly is seeing more summer days where high temperatures are above 90 degrees. So while we might not experience an extreme event like last summer's late-June heatwave, there appears to be a definite warming trend in recent years. / AGRICULTURE, GOVERNMENT: Farmworkers in Oregon would earn overtime pay for the first time under a bill approved this week by state lawmakers. The Oregon Senate passed the bill Thursday, two days after it passed the House. It now goes to Governor Kate Brown for her consideration. If Brown signs it, Oregon will join a handful of other

states, including neighboring California and Washington, as well as New York, in removing restrictions that excluded farmworkers from the group of workers eligible to receive overtime. More than 1,000 people submitted testimony, including farmworkers who said they've been taken advantage of for too long for their important labor. Opponents say the bill will be financially crippling for small family farms and will force them to cap shifts at 40 hours per week rather than pay overtime. / CRIME: A Eugene man yesterday was sentenced to 33 months in federal prison and three years' supervised probation for supplying a University of Oregon student with fentanyl-laced counterfeit Oxycodone pills. Those pills caused the student's overdose death. 21-year-old Micaiah Wendell Ray Hill was arrested in late December, one week after the Christmas Eve death of 20-year-old Emanuel "Manny" Dreiling. Dreiling was an urban development student at the University of Oregon who was found dead in his Eugene apartment. Eugene Police Department investigators say they found a small baggie near the body containing what appeared to be Oxycodone pills. But a toxicology report confirmed Dreiling died from a fentanyl overdose. Police say the victim's phone contained text messages between Dreiling and a longtime friend in which they discussed purchasing Oxycodone pills from another person, whom police later identified as Macaiah Hill. Investigators say Hill distributed the drug out of a West Eugene home. In a raid on New Year's Eve, police and DEA agents arrested Hill, who later admitted to selling pills he suspected were counterfeit and contained fentanyl to Dreiling and others. ; Federal prosecutors say it is the largest seizure of fentanyl in Oregon history with a street value of close to four million dollars. A coordinated law enforcement operation on Tuesday targeted four alleged drug traffickers in the Portland area. Police and federal agents say they seized close to 150,000 counterfeit prescription pills containing fentanyl and 20 pounds of suspected bulk fentanyl. Investigators say the men, between the ages of 27 and 36, were trafficking large quantities of fentanyl manufactured in Mexico and elsewhere, then distributing and selling it in Oregon, Arizona, and several other Western states. ; Fentanyl is a powerful opioid that can cause potentially deadly overdoses in even small quantities. It is sometimes mixed with heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine. It also is sometimes used to create counterfeit prescription drugs marketed as OxyContin, Xanax, Adderall, and other pills. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid 80 to 100 times more powerful than morphine and 30 to 50 times more powerful than heroin. A 3-milligram dose of fentanyl—a few grains of the substance—is enough to kill an average adult male. The availability of illicit fentanyl in Oregon has caused a dramatic increase in overdose deaths throughout the state. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were more than 100,000 overdoses of all drugs in the U.S. during the 12-month period ending April 2021, an increase of nearly 29 percent from the previous 12-month period. Synthetic opioids—primarily fentanyl—accounted for more than three quarters of those deaths. The CDC reports drug overdose continues to be the leading cause of injury or death in the U.S. If you or someone you know suffers from addiction, please call the Lines for Life substance abuse helpline at 1-800-923-4357 or visit www.linesforlife.org Phone support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also text "RecoveryNow" to 839863 between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m. daily. If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, please call 911. / EDUCATION, HEALTH. COMMUNITY: As the pandemic eases, officials with Oregon State University say they'll hold in-

person commencement ceremonies this year at their campuses in Corvallis and Bend. The Corvallis ceremony is set for Saturday, June 11, at Reser Stadium. The OSU-Cascades ceremony will be held on Sunday, June 12, in Bend. OSU leaders say they're thrilled to be able to celebrate their graduates' success again in person. The ceremonies also will welcome graduates' families, friends and other members of the public. The 2020 commencement ceremonies were cancelled during the early months of the pandemic. OSU went virtual with its graduation events last year. / EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS: U.S. employers added 678,000 jobs in February, another solid gain that underscored the economy's robust health as the omicron wave fades and more Americans venture out to spend at restaurants, shops and hotels despite surging inflation. The Labor Department's report also showed that the unemployment rate dropped to 3.8 percent, extending a sharp drop in joblessness as the economy has rebounded from the pandemic recession. The February hiring data suggest that two years after COVID-19 sparked a nationwide shutdown and 22 million job losses, the disease is losing its grip on America's economy. More people are taking jobs or searching for work — a trend that, if it endures, will help ease the labor shortages that have bedeviled employers for the past year. In addition, fewer people are now working remotely because of the disease. A continuing flow of people back to offices could boost employment in urban downtowns, which struggled the past 24 months. And the number of Americans who are delaying job hunts for fear of the disease fell sharply from January, when omicron was raging, to February. /

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TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMY: The average price of regular gasoline across the U.S. has risen above \$4 per gallon for the first time since 2008. Analysts with AAA, the motor club, said the price of regular gas went up by almost 41 cents during the past week. That comes in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and represents the second largest jump in average national prices in a week. Oregon and many Western states already were well above the national average and the trend continues. AAA reports that this morning's price for a gallon of regular-grade fuel statewide and here in Lane County stands at \$4.52. That's up three cents from last week and a stunning 69 cents per gallon from this time last month. One year ago, we were paying an average \$2.98 at the pump. This morning's average local diesel price is \$4.89—a jump of eight cents from yesterday. Russia is the world's third-largest oil producer, representing about 12 percent of global trade. Even the U.S. imports some of Russia's output. As America and other nations continue to weigh and implement sanctions—including a possible ban on Russian oil and natural gas exports—oil prices have soared on world markets. Late last week, the U.S. and 30 other countries announced plans to release some of their countries strategic oil reserves to help stabilize prices. But experts say the amount being considered—while a significant commitment—remains small compared to the amount of oil that flows daily from Russia. / GOVERNMENT, ECONOMY, AGRICULTURE, HOUSING, HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENT, SPORTS: Oregon lawmakers on Friday adjourned their 2022 short legislative session after passing a range of ambitious proposals, including overtime pay for farmworkers, \$600 stimulus payments for low-income workers, and a \$400 million spending package focused on affordable housing and homelessness. Other notable bills include heat relief for vulnerable Oregonians, protections for election workers, and giving nurses access to a program that provides mental health and wellness support. Democrats, who control both chambers, gave Republicans \$100 million to allocate as they see fit in their rural Oregon districts. The session, which concluded Friday, was the final one for Senate President Peter Courtney, a Salem Democrat, who is the Oregon's longest-serving state lawmaker with 38 years. It was also the first where the public was allowed to attend in-person for the first time since March 2020. ; The Oregon Legislature on Friday approved providing Lane County with \$7.5 million

toward the construction of a new, publicly owned multi-use facility at the Lane Events Center. Backers say it could provide a home for the Eugene Ems baseball team, as well as other community events and activities, and could serve as the area's most significant outdoor concert venue. Additionally, they say it could accommodate youth, high school, and adult baseball tournaments. Officials with Lane County and the Eugene Emeralds are in the process of identifying other funding sources, gathering feedback from neighbors and community organizations, and putting together a detailed cost estimate and scope for the Board of County Commissioners to consider this spring. The Ems need a new ballpark to remain in Lane County to meet professional baseball's new national facility standards. The Emeralds also now have a longer season, which conflicts with the University of Oregon baseball team's use of PK Park, which the U-of-O owns. Backers on Friday thanked Lane County's Eugene delegation for its support, including State Senator Floyd Prozanski, Senator James Manning, Representative Nancy Nathanson, Representative Julie Fahey, and Representative Paul Holvey. / HEALTH: As we begin the third year of the pandemic, the global death toll this morning from COVID-19 has surpassed 6 million. Health experts say it is a reminder of the need to remain cautious, even as people are shedding masks, travel is resuming, and businesses are reopening around the globe. Infection and death rates continue to slow: The last million deaths of the tally compiled by Johns Hopkins University were recorded over the last four months. That's slightly slower than the previous million. But it highlights how many countries continue to struggle with the coronavirus. For infections alone, more than 450 million cases of the coronavirus have been recorded. But analysts think the case numbers and deaths remain vastly undercounted. The U.S. has recorded 79.2 million infections since the start of the pandemic and 958,000 COVID-related deaths. That includes more than 6,700 deaths across Oregon over the past two-plus years—472 of which were Lane County residents. ; Nearly half of the 500 million free COVID-19 tests that the Biden administration recently made available to Americans still have not been claimed as virus cases plummet and people feel less urgency to test. On the first day of the White House test giveaway in January, the government website www.COVIDtests.gov received 45 million orders. But officials say fewer than 100,000 orders a day are coming in for the four free rapid tests per household. Beginning this morning, those who already have their four free COVID-19 rapid test kits may order another four for their household. The government covers both the cost of the kits and their shipping to your home address. / EDUCATION: They hail from Arkansas, California, Arizona, and Oregon. The Lane Community College Board of Education has selected four finalists for the position of LCC President. Each candidate is visiting this week for interviews with the board and to take part in virtual public forums. The finalists are: Dr. Kim Armstrong, Vice Chancellor for Student, Equity, & Community Affairs at Arkansas State University—Three Rivers in Malvern, Arkansas; Dr. Stephanie Bulger, Vice Chancellor for Instructional Services at San Diego Community College District in San Diego, California; Dr. Clyde Namuo, Interim President at Phoenix College in Phoenix, Arizona; and Dr. Christopher Villa, former President for Portland Community College's Rock Creek Campus in Portland, Oregon. /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

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ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED WILDFIRE RECOVERY, RECREATION, SAFETY: It was badly burned during 2020's Holiday Farm Fire and no longer safe nor welcoming for overnight campers. Officials with the Willamette National Forest say they're looking at decommissioning the once-popular Delta Campground on the McKenzie River Ranger District. In its place, they would create an interpretative trail to share details about the fire and the landscape's gradual recovery. Forest officials say they know the Delta Campground has sentimental and historic value. But they say the blaze burned through the area at a very high intensity, killing all of the trees in the campground along with the adjacent Delta old growth grove. Forest leaders say those dead and burned trees still pose an imminent hazard to the public, making the area no longer safe or suitable for camping. Officials say they're holding a virtual meeting next week to share details of the proposal, along with the history of Delta Campground and a description of its current condition. The plan includes removing all campground infrastructure, including bathrooms, fire rings, signs, picnic tables, bridge remnants and paved surfaces. Participants will have the opportunity to share concerns with forest staff as well as ideas about what types of recreational experiences are needed in the area. The virtual public meeting will be via Zoom on March 17 from 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. Registration is not required to participate. / WEATHER, ENVIRONMENT, SAFETY, AGRICULTURE: It's happening for a third straight year and arriving earlier than anticipated. Oregon's governor has issued the season's first drought declaration—for hard-hit Klamath County. It comes as snowpack in the Klamath Basin stands at just 60 percent of normal for this time of year. That could have big impacts on everything from farming and ranching to streamflows, drinking water supplies, fish and wildlife, and the risk of catastrophic wildfires. The declaration directs state agencies, including the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Water Resources Department and the Water Resources Commission, to provide assistance to water users in the region and to seek federal resources to help residents and wildlife. Experts say the Klamath Basin received virtually no rainfall the first two months of the year, setting the stage for what could be a third consecutive summer of drought. / HOUSING, LOW-INCOME, HEALTH: More than \$289 million has been paid in the past nine months, and coordinators of Oregon's emergency rent relief program say they've provided financial assistance

to more than 40,000 households. Those households are home to more than 104,000 Oregonians. But the funding is close to running out. Leaders of the Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program say their application portal will stop accepting new applications next Monday, March 14. The remaining applications are being approved based upon highest need. The portal first opened last year with federal COVID relief funds, then reopened in late January to distribute more than \$100 million set aside by state lawmakers to help support renters facing eviction. In the early going, the rental relief program was hampered by huge backlogs and delays. But state officials say staff regrouped worked through the backlog. They say only three other states have provided a higher percentage of rental assistance according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. Anyone who has not applied for state rental assistance in the past and has fallen behind on rent is encouraged to apply for emergency rental assistance before the end of the day Monday, March 14, at oregonrentalassistance.org /

CRIME: A 47-year-old Lane County man will spend life in prison without the possibility of parole for the beating death of his 87-year-old grandmother in 2019. James Lynn Holt was sentenced yesterday for the killing of Sally Baldwin of Creswell. Investigators said Baldwin's door had been kicked in, she'd been severely beaten, and some of her personal belongings scattered about the residence. Baldwin died from her injuries a few days later. Holt was identified early in the investigation as a suspect. Officials said numerous pieces of evidence linked him to the crime scene and the murder. ; Eugene Police detectives have arrested a suspect in a rash of ten trash bin and dumpster fires that were set over a span of four-and-a-half hours a week ago Sunday around downtown. Investigators say 67-year-old Wayne Robert Krebs was contacted yesterday near West 5th Avenue and Jefferson Street. He has no known address. Krebs was charged with two counts of Arson in the Second Degree, six counts of Reckless Burning, Theft in the Third Degree, and on two outstanding warrants. Officials said three of the fires damaged nearby buildings or vehicles. Eugene Police Arson detectives are still interested in hearing from business owners and others who might have security camera video of the February 27 fire scenes or the suspect. Contact EPD Detective Chris White at 541.682.5376 or Cwhite@eugene-or.gov /

SPORTS: College baseball and Minor League teams might be poised to gain fans if the Major League Baseball lockout extends deep into the spring. That includes the High-A West Coast Champion Eugene Emeralds, who begin their 2022 season next month. Minor League players are not part of the MLB player's union. The college game has experienced significant growth over the past decade with schools—including the University of Oregon—spending millions of dollars to build new stadiums and facilities and increase coaching salaries. People in the game say the level of play is at an all-time high and will get even better because of the reduction of rounds in the MLB draft. The Shriners Children's College Classic was played over the weekend at Minute Maid Park in Houston. A game between Texas and LSU attracted almost 25,000 fans. /

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ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED EDUCATION, COMMUNITY, HEALTH: As the pandemic eases, officials with the University of Oregon say they'll hold in-person commencement ceremonies this year in Eugene. Officials made the announcement yesterday on social media. The U-of-O's 146th commencement ceremony is set for Monday, June 13, in Autzen Stadium. Because festivities were largely virtual the past two years, this year's event will honor those graduates as well as those earning degrees this academic year. No tickets will be required for the Autzen event. Graduates may invite as many family members and friends as they wish. Individual schools and colleges also will hold in-person ceremonies on Sunday, June 12, and Monday, June 13. Last week, Oregon State University announced it was returning in-person commencement on its campuses the weekend of June 11-12. Lane Community College also plans an in-person ceremony. / CRIME, SAFETY, FAMILY: Springfield Police say it was a devastating discovery: On Monday evening, officers responded to a Gateway-area motel to assist a state worker conducting a welfare check on a 28-year-old woman and her six-month-old child. Investigators say the mother had died days earlier from an apparent overdose and the baby boy had spent four days in the motel room strapped in a stroller car seat. The infant was virtually unresponsive when discovered by police and was rushed by medics first to PeaceHealth Riverbend medical center than on to Doernbecher hospital in Portland for lifesaving treatment. Remarkably, the baby is making a rapid recovery from what officials say was severe dehydration, malnourishment, and severe diaper rash and was being prepared for discharge. Springfield Police say the state Department of Human Services child welfare worker who followed up after-hours that evening deserves credit for saving the child's life. Springfield Police say the mother's death underscores the dangers of addiction—not just to drug users but those around them. They say during the investigation into the mother's death they recovered what is now considered a non-criminal user amount of heroin from the room. Police say there are resources for those battling addiction. They include CAHOOTS—which often assists those in the midst of drug- and mental health-induced crises—and local addiction clinics. CAHOOTS may be reached at 541-726-3714. The non-emergency line is staffed 24 hours a day. Online resources can be found at <https://little-help-book.netlify.app/table-of-contents-style->

[homepage/subcategory.html](#) and at <https://equinoxclinics.com/> /

TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMY: The Russian invasion of Ukraine is continuing to shake up global oil markets and cause pain at U.S. gas pumps. Gasoline prices yesterday set a new national record and analysts say they're likely to go higher in the coming weeks. The national average topped \$4.17 a gallon on Tuesday, according to auto club AAA. Oregon and other West Coast states are well above that, with Lane County's average for a gallon of regular-grade fuel at \$4.67 this morning, up 60 cents from one week ago. Californians already pay more than \$5 on average. And in the Northern California town of Mendocino, the price at the pump yesterday hit \$8.45. Prices at the pump already had been rising for more than a year, as energy demand outstripped supply. But analysts say most of the run-up in the last week or so can be blamed on Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as oil markets anticipated tighter supplies and bans on Russian oil imports by the U.S. and other countries. / **EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION:** Here's one way to take on supply chain shortages over the long run: Umpqua Community College has received a \$300,000 grant from Douglas County and the State of Oregon to support truck driver training scholarships. The money comes from federal funds set aside for pandemic economic relief. It will allow Umpqua Community College to provide training scholarships for up to 150 entry-level professional truck drivers. Officials say that will prepare them to earn a Commercial Driver's License or CDL. Experts say the nationwide shortage of licensed truckers has led to supply chain delays and sent wages for drivers soaring. The American Trucking Association estimates the industry will need more than 1.1 million new drivers by 2026. In Oregon, close to 80 percent of freight moves by truck. The truck driving program at Umpqua Community College provides 160 hours of hands-on instruction with options to train over four weeks or ten weekends. Campus officials say their students network with local trucking companies and often receive job offers upon completion. The Umpqua Community College Truck Driving program is an approved training provider for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and has an average job placement rate of 85 percent. / **AGRICULTURE, ECONOMY:** Ukraine is known as Europe's "breadbasket" because it accounts for 12 percent of the world's wheat harvest and 16 percent of the world's corn exports, according to U.S. figures. But the Russian invasion and blockade of Ukraine is jeopardizing wheat exports. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack says he does not expect disruptions for American consumers, since we grow most of our wheat here. But he said last month that America's wheat farmers will boost production to prevent global supply chain problems if needed. Oregon grows a number of types of wheat, but soft white winter wheat makes up more than 80 percent of the crop. Soft white winter wheat is sold domestically but also exported to many countries, especially in Asia, where it is prized for making noodles, pastries, cakes, and cookies. / **ELECTIONS:** Lane County Elections is mailing voter notification cards to all active Lane County voters this week. The cards include the voter's precinct, along with state senate and representative district based on the recent redistricting process. The cards give Lane County voters the opportunity to ensure that voter registration records are up to date and accurately reflect their current residence, mailing address and party affiliation. You also may check the status of your registration at oregonvotes.gov New county commissioner districts go into effect for the 2023 election cycle, so they will not be reflected in this week's voter notification mailing. If you believe you are a registered Lane County

voter and do not receive a voter notification card, you may register or update your registration one of two ways: Online at www.oregonvotes.gov no later than 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, April 26. The online option is available to those with a valid Oregon driver's license, DMV-issued identification card or learner's permit. Mail a voter registration card to the Elections Office with a postmark no later than Tuesday, April 26. /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF BROADCAST	03/10/22
TIME OF BROADCAST	5:30AM-8:30AM / KGNU-FM
NAME OF PROGRAM	Morning News
LENGTH OF PROGRAM	30 Seconds
ISSUE OR SUBJECT DISCUSSED	<p>SPORTS: Boys' High School Basketball Playoffs: March 10-11: Number two seed Churchill takes on Wilsonville in the semifinals Friday at 1:30 p.m. at Gill Coliseum on the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis. The Lancers defeated Eagle Point in the quarterfinals yesterday, 66-52. Crescent Valley (Corvallis) meets Ashland today at 9 a.m. in Consolation play at Gill Coliseum on the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis. Top seed Junction City meets Baker today at 2 p.m. at North Bend High School. Philomath meets Seaside today at 4 p.m. at North Bend High School. ; Girls' High School Basketball Playoffs: March 10: Top seed Willamette meets Crescent Valley (Corvallis) at 1:30 p.m. today at Gill Coliseum on the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis. Corvallis meets Ridgeview at 3:15 p.m. today at Gill Coliseum on the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis. Springfield meets Silverton at 8:15 p.m. today at Gill Coliseum on the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis. Top seed Philomath meets Mazama at 2 p.m. today at Marshfield High School. Marist meets Hidden Valley at 3:45 p.m. today at Marshfield High School. ; In Pac-12 basketball action: The Oregon men's basketball team defeated Oregon State yesterday in the opening round of the Pac-12 Tournament in Las Vegas. The Ducks face Colorado today at 2:30 p.m. in a quarterfinal game being broadcast on the Pac-12 Network. ; In other Pac-12 notes: The Oregon Softball Squad is preparing for its home opener at Jane Sanders Stadium. The Ducks host Portland State Friday at 4 p.m. and North Dakota State for a doubleheader on Saturday beginning at 11 a.m. The games are being carried on the Oregon Live Stream 2. ; The Oregon Baseball squad opens its conference season Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at Stanford. ; Oregon Lacrosse is at Arizona State Friday afternoon at 3 p.m. ; The Oregon Women's Golf Team now is ranked No. 2 in the nation. /</p> <p>SPORT, COMMUNITY, DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMY: They say it will attract thousands of athletes and feature a huge, multi-day festival in Eugene's new Downtown riverfront park.</p> <p>Officials yesterday provided a brief update on the World Athletics Championships—known locally as "Oregon22," which take place July 15-24 at Hayward Field. They say the athletes' village will occupy the residence halls at the University of Oregon, housing three thousand competitors. Another 3,000 members of the media are expected from around the world, along with national</p>

delegations, family, and friends. In all, there could be tens of thousands of visitors during mid- to late-July. Tourism officials anticipate visitors will stay in hotels, motels, rent apartments and homes up and down the Interstate 5 corridor—and even on the coast and in the mountains. They hope that will translates into day- and overnight trips and spending in many Oregon communities. In all, they say the event will have a multi-million-dollar economic impact. This is the first time the event has been held in the U.S. and Eugene is the smallest city to ever host it. One uncertainty remains: the weather. Last year's Olympic Trials included some record-hot days and there are concerns that summer wildfire smoke might intrude into the valley. Oregon22 coordinators say while they can't change the weather, but they can alter start times in some cases to minimize athlete exposure. U-of-O officials say if smoke makes its way into the region, researchers will collect air samples and other data to study the effects of poor air quality on athletic performance. / ECONOMY: You're seeing it when you buy milk and eggs, veggies and meat, when you fill the tank on your car or truck, when you pay the rent or your utility bill. Inflation remains at a 40-year high, propelled by surging costs for gas, food and housing. Analysts say consumer inflation jumped 7.9 percent over the past year, the sharpest spike since 1982. And the increase, reported by the Labor Department, reflected the 12 months ending in February so it did not even include most of the oil and gas price increases that followed Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Analysts say consumer spending, solid pay raises, and persistent supply shortages had sent U.S. consumer inflation to its highest level in four decades. / EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS: Oregon employers added 5,700 jobs in January, as our unemployment rate was essentially unchanged—up just a notch from 4.2 to 4.3 percent. Experts say the increase reflects some reductions of holiday staffing but also indicates more people are returning to the job market. The Leisure and Hospitality sector led the way, added 2,200 jobs. The Government sector added 1,500 jobs, the bulk of those at the local level. Professional and Business Services and Financial Activities. Oregon Department of Employment analyst Gail Krumenauer says employers have added more than 107,000 workers over the past year and have recovered 82 percent of the jobs lost in the pandemic-caused recession. Some sectors are recovering more robustly than others and now have more jobs than they did before March of 2020. Those include the Construction sector; Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing—which includes things like food and beverage manufacturing; Retail Trade; Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities; the Information sector; and Professional and Technical Services. By comparison, Oregon's Private Healthcare and Social Assistance has struggled by comparison, losing 3,000 jobs over the past year. While Oregon continues to experience steady overall job growth and relatively low unemployment, it's still a challenge for many employers to find qualified applicants. ; Lane County's January unemployment rate remained unchanged at 4.4 percent, but we saw a net gain of 900 jobs from December. Compared to one year ago, state employment analyst Brian Rooney says total nonfarm employment is up 5,900 jobs. Leisure and Hospitality businesses have added a net 5,300 jobs in the past year. Local education, manufacturing, and retail trade also increased their payrolls over the past 12 months. That offset net losses in the past year for Private Education, Health Services, and Professional and Business Services. ; Officials with Northwest-based Alaska Airlines yesterday announced they are creating a pilot academy in Oregon to train qualified personnel for the cockpit. It's similar to

efforts being undertaken by several other U.S. airlines. The company says it will invest millions of dollars to help students attend an Oregon flight school, earn commercial pilot licenses, then begin flying for Alaska Airline's regional partner, Horizon Air. The training will be offered in Hillsboro and Redmond, piggybacking on existing flight school programs. Alaska Air officials say they will offer low-interest loans for the instruction and cover the cost of a commercial pilot's license, coupled with a job offer upon completion of the training. ; U.S. businesses posted a near-record level of open jobs in January, a trend that has pushed up worker's pay and added to the economy's inflationary pressures. The Labor Department said employers posted 11.3 million jobs at the end of January. Before the pandemic, the record was 7.6 million in 2018. Wednesday's report underscores the distorted nature of the job market after two years of the pandemic. There are 1.7 available jobs for every unemployed worker, which has led to widespread complaints among businesses about worker shortages. That's good for employees if it enables them to demand higher pay. But it can also clog up supply chains if trucking and other logistics firms can't meet demand for shipments. In other cases, businesses have to turn down work for lack of employees. / CRIME: Lane County Sheriff's deputies say they've arrested the suspect in the early-February burglary of a local church. The theft resulted in the loss of approximately \$1,500 in property from the Applegate Church of the Nazarene. Officials say surveillance video showed the thief breaking into the church at 2 a.m. on February 3, returning 90 minutes later to steal more items, then coming back on February 15 to take even more property. Investigators say 49-year-old Wayne Anthony Eldridge was identified through surveillance video that showed both the suspect and his vehicle—a white Dodge pickup. He had been contacted in the Veneta area on an unrelated issue on February 18, before he was tied to the church break-in. Eldridge was located late yesterday morning, when deputies responded to a rural market off Bailey Hill Road after receiving a report of a man passed out in a white pickup. They identified him as Eldridge and took him into custody. / HEALTH: Coronavirus cases continue to decline across Oregon, as do hospitalizations—which experts say are a better indicator of the easing of the surge in cases caused by the omicron variant of COVID-19. According to the Oregon Health Authority, last week saw a 28 percent drop in reported infections statewide. The numbers are down 94 percent from their peak in mid-January. COVID-related hospitalizations across Oregon also dropped last week by 35 percent. And while there were 122 reported deaths, that was down by 15 from the previous week. Still, the coronavirus has not gone away. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 470 new infections and 29 additional deaths. Lane County Public Health was notified yesterday of 36 new cases. Forty-six local residents are hospitalized for COVID and its complications. There were no new deaths. Our pandemic death toll remained at 476. /

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SPORTS: Boys' High School Basketball Playoffs: March 11: Number two seed Churchill takes on Wilsonville in the semifinals of the Class 5A Boys' basketball tournament today at 1:30 p.m. at Gill Coliseum on the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis. Top seed Junction City meets Seaside in the Boys' Class 4A basketball tournament semifinals today at 1:30 p.m. at Marshfield High School. The Philomath boys meet Baker today at 9 a.m. in Consolation play at the Boys' Class 4A state basketball tournament at Marshfield High School. ; Girls' High School Basketball Playoffs: March 10: Springfield meets Putnam at 8:15 p.m. today in the semifinals of the Girls' Class 5A basketball tournament at Gill Coliseum on the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis. Willamette meets Corvallis at 9:00 this morning in Consolation action at the Girls' Class 5A state basketball tournament. The game is being played at Gill Coliseum on the Oregon State University campus in Corvallis. Top seed Philomath meets Hidden Valley at 6:30 p.m. today at the Girls' Class 4A basketball tournament at Marshfield High School. Marist meets Mazama at 9:00 a.m. in Consolation play at the Girls' Class 4A state basketball tournament. ; In Pac-12 basketball action: The Oregon men's basketball team is out of the Pac-12 tournament and unlikely to earn a spot in the NCAA tournament after losing yesterday in the conference quarterfinals to Colorado, 80-69. ; In other Pac-12 notes: The Oregon Softball Squad has its home opener this afternoon at Jane Sanders Stadium. The Ducks host Portland State at 4 p.m. and North Dakota State for a doubleheader on Saturday beginning at 11 a.m. The games are being carried on the Oregon Live Stream 2. ; The Oregon Baseball squad opens its conference season today, Saturday, and Sunday at Stanford. ; Oregon Lacrosse is at Arizona State this afternoon at 3 p.m.

/ COMMUNITY, HEALTH, SAFETY, TRANSPORTATION, GOVERNMENT: On Sunday, we're "springing forward" onto Daylight Saving Time until November 6. Set your clocks ahead one hour when you go to bed Saturday night. The time change happens Sunday morning at 2 a.m. But traffic safety advocates warn that changes to sleeping patterns can result in drowsy driving – and that can be fatal for anyone out using the transportation system, whether in a car, on foot, riding or rolling. Unlike drunken driving, driving drowsy is not a behavior people readily recognize as dangerous. Around one-third of American drivers have admitted falling asleep at the wheel, and more than half (60 percent) said they have driven

while drowsy, according to a National Sleep Foundation poll. But like impaired driving, the consequences of drowsy driving can be tragic. And like impaired driving, it's preventable. The best way to do that: Invest in a good night's sleep so your body more quickly adapts to the new schedule. ; If you struggle with the switch to daylight saving time, sleep experts suggest easing the transition. It's better for your schedule and your health. Many of our organs have internal clocks. Younger, healthier people may adjust more quickly. But for older people, or those with medical conditions that affect their sleep, it's a much harder task. Experts suggest a gradual shift and a commitment to a good night's sleep while you adjust. Tonight and Saturday night, for example, try shifting your bedtime by 20 minutes each night. Don't sleep in on Sunday. It will also help you fall asleep easier at night. Light exposure makes a difference. Make sure you have lights on when you awaken and try taking a walk once the sun is up. Coffee can help you stay alert, but experts suggest you only drink it early in the day to avoid disrupting sleep cycles. Don't use alcohol to help you fall asleep earlier. That actually can interrupt your sleep in the middle of the night. Limit your nighttime exposure to "blue screens," such as computers, phones, and tablets. And remember, what works for adults also works for kids. This is a good chance for parents to help their youngsters establish good sleep habits. ; In 2019, Oregon lawmakers passed a bill to keep Oregon on Daylight Saving Time and the governor signed it into law. But the permanent switch to Daylight Saving Time requires that neighboring states to be on board and Congress approves the change. Until that happens, we'll "spring forward" on Sunday but return to Standard Time on November 6. / HEALTH, BUSINESS, COMMUNITY: Two years ago, Oregon and much of the rest of the country was closing down businesses, schools, and other places as the first wave of COVID-19 swept across the U.S. Tomorrow, the state lifts most of its indoor mask restrictions. Depending upon your pandemic experience, that is either a cause for celebration or a source of trepidation. It comes as the surge in cases and hospitalizations tied to the omicron variant of COVID-19 continues to fall dramatically. The new guidance will make face coverings strongly recommended rather than a requirement at most indoor places. The decision of whether to follow the state guidance in classrooms now rests with individual school districts. The TSA announced yesterday that it will continue requiring passenger masks in airports, on commercial flights, on buses—including Lane Transit District buses, as well as on Amtrak trains, and at transit hubs through April 18. Many health care facilities will maintain masking requirements, to protect staff and vulnerable patients. Businesses also may maintain mask guidelines to protect employees and customers. And many people with vulnerable immune systems or caring for those with health issues will continue wearing masks as a precaution. But the relaxation of public health orders, including indoor and classroom mask mandates, is the latest step in the effort to restore normalcy and boost the economy. The changes also reflect a growing sense that the virus is not going away, and Americans need to learn to live with it. The new guidelines—both nationwide from the CDC and from Oregon's leaders—are based more on what's happening at hospitals than on new infectious cases of the coronavirus. The CDC said that more than 70 percent of Americans now live in places where the coronavirus poses a low or medium threat to hospitals and therefore can stop wearing masks in most indoor places. / HEALTH, BUSINESS, EVENTS, COMMUNITY: When the first wave of the

pandemic arrived and triggered shutdowns two years ago, one of the events that was hardest hit was the annual Lane County Home & Garden show. Limits on the size of gatherings shut down the show hours before it was set to open. That was then. This is now. The 42nd Lane County Home & Garden Show opens its doors at noon today at the Lane Events Center in Eugene. There are more than 225 exhibitors eager to see you and tell you about their products and services. National and local experts are planning three-dozen seminars over the course of the three-day event. Planning to attend? Bring three cans of food to donate to our local food bank and you get in free. Otherwise, it's \$5 per person. The Lane County Home & Garden Show opens at noon and continues today through 9 p.m. Doors open at 10 a.m. Saturday and Sunday. / HEALTH: On the two-year anniversary of the start of the pandemic, COVID-related hospitalizations have plunged 80 percent over the last six weeks, a big drop from mid-January's omicron-fueled surge. Cases now stand at their lowest levels since July 2021, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data. Coronavirus cases also continue to decline across Oregon, as do hospitalizations—which experts say are a better indicator of the easing of the surge in cases caused by the omicron variant of COVID-19. Still, the virus has not gone away. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 433 new infections and 54 additional deaths. Lane County Public Health was notified yesterday of 42 new cases. Thirty-nine local residents are hospitalized for COVID and its complications. The county yesterday also was notified of five additional deaths, which raises our pandemic death toll to 481. Nationwide over the course of the pandemic, the U.S. has seen 79.4 million infections and more than 965,000 deaths. ; A reminder: Free rapid COVID-19 test kits still are available from the federal government. That includes those who already have their four free COVID-19 rapid test kits; you may order another four for your household. The government covers both the cost of the kits and their shipping to your home address. The website is www.COVIDtests.gov / HOUSING, LOW-INCOME, HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: More than \$289 million has been paid in the past nine months, and ccoordinators of Oregon's emergency rent relief program say they've provided financial assistance to more than 40,000 households. Those households are home to more than 104,000 Oregonians. But the funding is close to running out. Leaders of the Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program say their application portal will stop accepting new applications next Monday, March 14. The remaining applications are being approved based upon highest need. The portal first opened last year with federal COVID relief funds, then reopened in late January to distribute more than \$100 million set aside by state lawmakers to help support renters facing eviction. But state officials say staff have worked through early backlogs. Anyone who has not applied for state rental assistance in the past and has fallen behind on rent is encouraged to apply for emergency rental assistance before the end of the day Monday, March 14, at oregonrentalassistance.org / TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMY: The Russian invasion of Ukraine is continuing to shake up global oil markets and cause pain at U.S. gas pumps. Lane County's average for a gallon of regular-grade fuel at \$4.74 this morning, up seven cents during the past two days. It's an increase of 47 cents from one week ago and 82 cents from one month ago. This time last year, a gallon of regular-grade fuel in Eugene-Springfield was \$3.03 per gallon. So let's say you have a 16-gallon gas tank. Last year, it cost an average \$48

dollars to fill it up. Today, you're looking at more than \$75. / AGRICULTURE, GOVERNMENT, CRIME, POLICING, BUSINESS, SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT: Two counties in southern Oregon have declared local states of emergency related to cannabis, paving the way for a moratorium on new hemp licenses. It comes after an explosion of hemp and marijuana grows—both legal and illegal—has overwhelmed regulatory agencies and law enforcement in the region. The Mail Tribune reports Jackson County commissioners declared a local state of emergency Thursday while Josephine County commissioners declared a similar state of emergency Wednesday. A new Oregon law requires the state to deny applications for new hemp licenses in counties that declare a cannabis emergency. The moratorium on new hemp licenses is retroactive to Jan. 1, meaning pending applications since then will be denied. Law enforcement agencies raiding illegal marijuana grows in 2021 said they often found workers living in squalid conditions, water theft in a region hard-hit by drought, improper use of pesticides and other chemicals, garbage, electrical wiring hazards and evidence of illegal drug trafficking. Agencies believe organized criminal networks, including foreign drug cartels, are financially backing many of the illegal grows. / CRIME, SAFETY: Prosecutors in Washington state say a man has been sentenced to more than a year in prison for critically damaging a bridge on the Olympic Peninsula by cutting chunks of cedar out of it to sell. The Peninsula Daily News reports 63-year-old Troy Crandall was sentenced last week to more than 17 months in prison and must pay more than \$20,000 in restitution. Crandall was convicted in February after he and another person were discovered on Oct. 22 with sections of cedar from the bridge. Officials believed the two were planning to sell the cedar for shake and shingles. / SAFETY, COMMUNITY, DISASTERS: Quick reminder if you're a resident of the Lane Fire Authority and Santa Clara Fire District service areas: You should receive a test message for the local emergency alert system at noon tomorrow (Saturday, March 12). The test is expected to arrive on mobile phones, landlines, or via email for those in the Veneta, Fern Ridge, and Santa Clara areas. The messages will include the words "TEST ALERT" to reduce any potential confusion. Do NOT call 9-1-1 if you receive Saturday's test alert. You might be automatically opted in for some services, including Wireless Emergency Alerts or Reverse 9-1-1. But everyone in Lane County is encouraged to sign up to receive AlertSense emergency alerts at public.alertsense.com/SignUp/. Residents also may stop by the Veneta Fire Station (88050 Territorial Highway) or Santa Clara Fire Station #116 (3939 River Road, Eugene) on tomorrow between noon and 1:00 p.m. to learn more about preparing for emergencies and emergency alerts. Lane Fire Authority, Lane County Emergency Management and Central Lane 9-1-1 are working together to conduct the test. This test will not include the Emergency Alert System (television and radio messages) because those are aired countywide and likely to cause unnecessary confusion for residents outside of the test area. ; For our listeners up in Benton County, the Benton County Sheriff's Office also is planning a test of the local ALERT system on Saturday. That takes place at 2 p.m. The test will cover all of Benton County. All traditional land phone lines in the database also will receive the message, as will those who have registered other devices with the system. If you receive one of the test messages, you'll be given the option to confirm that you received the message. /

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SPORTS: In college basketball: The Oregon Women's Basketball team is headed to the NCAA Tournament for a fifth straight year. The Duck women are a Number Five seed in the Wichita Region. They're headed to Knoxville, Tennessee, to face No. 12 seed Belmont on Saturday. ; The Oregon Men's Basketball team is headed for the National Invitation Tournament or NIT. They are at Utah State on Tuesday in the tourney's first round. The game airs at 6 p.m. on ESPN. ; The Oregon State Women's Basketball team is headed for the Women's NIT. The brackets and matchups are being revealed later today. ; In other Pac-12 notes: A strong home opener for the Oregon Softball Squad as the Ducks swept defeated Portland State 7-0 in Friday's home opener at Jane Sanders Stadium, then swept a doubleheader against North Dakota State on Saturday. Oregon Softball is at Utah on Friday. ; The Oregon Baseball squad lost its first conference matchup Sunday at Stanford but hopes for a better outcome when it holds its home opener on Friday evening at Eugene's PK Park. The 6 p.m. contest will be broadcast by the Pac-12 Network. ; In the boys' high school basketball tournaments: The Junction City Boys were the runner-up over the weekend at the Class 4A Boys' Basketball Tournament. The Philomath boys took 4th Place. ; The Churchill Boys' Basketball team took home 5th Place in the Class 5A tournament. ; In the girls' high school basketball tournaments: The Springfield girls were the runner-up in the Class 5A Basketball tournament after losing in the championship game to Crescent Valley. The Willamette Girls took 4th place. ; Top seed Philomath won the title in the Girls' Class 4A basketball tournament and Marist took 4th Place. / WEATHER, UTILITIES: The National Weather Service on Saturday night recorded a peak wind gust of 53 mph at Eugene's airport. The high winds across the region knocked down some trees, limbs, and fences, and caused some scattered power outages across the valley. Utility crews worked through the night and into Sunday to repair much of the damage. Some repairs are still underway this morning. / SAFETY: Eugene Springfield Fire crews, with the assistance of Lane Fire Authority, early Sunday morning battled a blaze in multiple units of a storage complex off Irvington Road in Santa Clara. The fire was called in just after 3 a.m. Its cause is being investigated. No injuries were reported. ; Interstate Five was closed near Wilsonville for a time Sunday after a livestock truck tipped and

close to two dozen cattle escaped and were wandering on the freeway. They were eventually herded onto an exit ramp and another trailer. Officials said some were injured in the crash and had to be euthanized. ; A reminder that on Sunday we moved onto Daylight Saving Time until November 6. If you haven't set your clocks ahead one hour, this might be a good time to take a couple minutes and do so. Remember to check the clock in your vehicle, too, should it not automatically update. / TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMY: Gas prices stayed high over the weekend. Lane County's average for a gallon of regular-grade fuel is just shy of \$4.76 this morning, up two cents per gallon from Friday. It's an increase of 24 cents from one week ago and 83 cents from one month ago. This time last year, a gallon of regular-grade fuel in Eugene-Springfield was \$3.08 per gallon. AAA analysts say gas prices have climbed an average 70 cents per gallon since Russia invaded Ukraine. This morning, a gallon of diesel averages \$5.54 locally. And a new study by the auto club finds that most Americans said they are making adjustments to their lifestyle and travel habits now that prices have reached \$4.00 per gallon. Those changes will become more pronounced, they said, once fuel prices hit \$5.00 a gallon. Younger drivers said they would be more likely to carpool to work or school. Older drivers in the survey said they would combine more trips and errands. ; The average U.S. price of regular-grade gasoline shot up a whopping 79 cents over the past two weeks to \$4.43 per gallon. Industry analyst Trilby Lundberg of the Lundberg Survey says Sunday the new price exceeds by 32 cents the prior record high of \$4.11 set in July 2008. Lundberg said gas prices are likely to remain high in the short term as crude oil costs soar amid global supply concerns following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Nationwide, the highest average price for regular-grade is in the San Francisco Bay Area, at \$5.79. The lowest average is in Tulsa, Oklahoma, at \$3.80. ; Citing record-high prices for gasoline, Uber announced Friday it is going to charge customers a new fuel fee to help offset costs for ride-hail and delivery drivers. The temporary surcharge will be either 45 cents or 55 cents for each Uber trip and either 35 cents or 45 cents for each Uber Eats order, depending on location. It takes effect on Wednesday. Uber says all the money will go directly to drivers. The surcharge will be in effect for at least 60 days and comes on the heels of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has sent oil and fuel prices surging. / HOUSING, LOW-INCOME, HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: More than \$289 million has been paid in the past nine months, and coordinators of Oregon's emergency rent relief program say they've provided financial assistance to more than 40,000 households. Those households are home to more than 104,000 Oregonians. But the funding is close to running out. Leaders of the Oregon Emergency Rental Assistance Program say their application portal will stop accepting new applications at the end of the day today. The remaining applications are being approved based upon highest need. The portal first opened last year with federal COVID relief funds, then reopened in late January to distribute more than \$100 million set aside by state lawmakers to help support renters facing eviction. But state officials say staff have worked through early backlogs. Anyone who has not applied for state rental assistance in the past and has fallen behind on rent is encouraged to apply for emergency rental assistance before the end of the day at oregonrentalassistance.org / EDUCATION, FAMILY, ECONOMY: Members of the University of Oregon Board of Trustees this week vote to set student tuition and fees for the 2022-23 academic year. The recommendation calls for a 4.5 percent overall increase for

undergraduate students who are Oregon residents and a three percent hike for non-residents. Tuition and fees for graduate-level programs would increase between zero and five percent, depending on the program. The U-of-O Board of Trustees also will be asked to approve a \$15 million restoration of the Knight Library's exterior, roof and foundations funded by the state Legislature. The panel also will consider an expanded version of a proposed Oregon Acoustics Research Lab, which would test mass-timber products in that growing construction materials market. The UO is seeking a \$15 million grant from the federal Economic Development Administration. / EDUCATION, MENTAL HEALTH, YOUTH, DEVELOPMENT: The University of Oregon's Board of Trustees this week review the planned purchase agreement for the former Concordia University campus in northeast Portland to house its new institute on child behavioral and mental health. The 19-acre campus includes 23 furnished buildings with classrooms, faculty offices, a recently constructed library, a recently renovated athletic facility, a student center, two residential homes, and 513 beds in on-campus residential housing. The negotiated purchase price for the real estate and its contents is \$60.5 million. The purchase is being fully funded through a landmark, \$425 million donation announced last week by former Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer and his wife, Connie. / COMMUNITY, ENTERTAINMENT: William Hurt, the Oscar-winning actor who starred in films ranging from "Broadcast News" to "Body Heat," "The Big Chill" to "Kiss of the Spider Woman," died Sunday at his Portland home at the age of 71. Hurt maintained ties to our state throughout his career: He got his start in acting on the stage of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland. In a long-running career, Hurt was four times nominated for an Academy Award, winning for 1985's "Kiss of the Spider Woman." He was one of the 1980s foremost leading men. Later, he would transition into a character actor in movies such as "A History of Violence," while also appearing in several Marvel films. His son said in a statement that Hurt died from natural causes. In 2018, Hurt announced he had terminal prostate cancer. /

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DISCUSSED

CRIME, WILDLIFE: A longtime prosecutor with the Lane County District Attorney's office is taking on new duties as the state's anti-poaching special prosecutor. Jay Hall is the new Assistant Attorney General with the Oregon Department of Justice. He will take the lead on prosecuting many fish and wildlife crimes across the state. It is part of an expanded effort to crack down on poaching that includes the addition of more Oregon State Police Fish & Wildlife troopers and a big public awareness campaign. Hall will provide law enforcement officers with specialized training and help them access resources to build stronger court cases. That includes advising law enforcement agencies in evidence collection, case process, and penalty options. Hall, who spent 12 years with the Lane County DA's office, also will assist county prosecutors across the state who are trying cases involving fish and wildlife crimes. Hall is an expert on using state racketeering or RICO laws to hold poaching rings accountable. In 2010, he received the Oregon State Police Prosecutor of the Year award for using those statutes to prosecute an organized poaching ring that took more than 300 deer and elk in Oregon. ; A 39-year-old Eugene man has pleaded guilty in federal court to illegally importing and exporting hundreds of live scorpions. Darren Drake pleaded guilty Monday. According to court documents, between September 2017 and March 2018, Drake imported and exported dozens of live scorpions from and to contacts in Germany without a federal import-export license. Drake also mailed or received several hundred live scorpions from other U.S. states, including Michigan and Texas, in violation of federal mailing laws. Documents say one intercepted parcel had been falsely labeled as chocolates. Drake's sentencing is set for June 22. Prosecutors say if he keeps a clean record they will recommend two years' probation, a \$5,000 fine, 250 hours of community service, and required homework on conservation issues. / CRIME: A Lane County man will spend 12-and-a-half years in federal prison followed by five years of supervised release for sexually abusing multiple children at a daycare run by his wife, and for possessing and distributing thousands of images and videos depicting child sexual abuse. 55-year-old Eric Wade Rogers was arrested in 2017 and families of the children were notified of the abuse. ; A federal jury in Portland has found a Vancouver, Washington, man guilty in a sex-trafficking scheme involving two Lane County teen girls. They were 14- and 15-year-old runaways when first

contacted by 34-year-old Johnl Jackson and an accomplice, who also gave the teens drugs and alcohol before selling them for sex. Jackson will be sentenced in June and faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. / EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT, MENTAL HEALTH, YOUTH, EDUCATION: The University of Oregon's Board of Trustees has approved the planned purchase agreement for the former Concordia University campus in northeast Portland to house its new institute on child behavioral and mental health. The negotiated purchase price for the real estate and its contents is \$60.5 million. The purchase is being fully funded through a landmark, \$425 million donation announced last week by former Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer and his wife, Connie. The 19-acre campus includes 23 furnished buildings with classrooms, faculty offices, a recently constructed library, a recently renovated athletic facility, a student center, two residential homes, and 513 beds in on-campus residential housing. / WILDLIFE, RECREATION: Heading to the coast this spring? Enjoy the salt air, the surf and the sand, but be sure to keep an eye out for closures along some stretches of Oregon's beaches to protect nesting snowy plover. The seasonal closures begin today (March 15) and continue through September 15. Beachgoers will see signs and ropes that identify sensitive plover nesting areas and list restrictions to protect the small shorebirds during this period. Plover beaches remain open to foot and equestrian traffic on wet, packed sand throughout nesting season. All other recreation on plover beaches is off limits on both wet and dry sand, include walking your dog (even on a leash), driving a vehicle, riding a bicycle, camping, fires, and flying kites or drones. The small birds nest on open sand along Oregon's beaches. Nests, and especially chicks, are well-camouflaged. During nesting season, human disturbances can flush adult plovers away from their nests as they attempt to defend their young from the perceived predator. Left alone too long, or too often, eggs or chicks can die from exposure, predators or people. Recreation restrictions occur in small stretches of beach along the entire coastline where plovers are nesting or could potentially nest. These areas collectively comprise about 45 miles of Oregon's 362 miles of shoreline. Visitors still have access to hundreds of miles of Oregon beaches that have no seasonal restrictions. By planning your trip, you can enjoy the coast and help keep these special birds safe. Detailed maps can be found on the Oregon State Parks website at oregon.gov/plovers and on the Siuslaw National Forest website at go.usa.gov/xEh2h Visitors to the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area can review maps at go.usa.gov/xdwYQ to identify unrestricted recreation areas and information on riding motor vehicles on the sand. / SPORTS: In college basketball: The Oregon Men's Basketball team is at Utah State tonight in the opening round of the National Invitation Tournament (NIT). The game airs at 6 p.m. on ESPN. ; The Oregon Women's Basketball team is headed to the NCAA Tournament for a fifth straight year. The Duck women headed to Knoxville, Tennessee, to face Belmont in Saturday's first-round game. ; The Oregon State Women's Basketball team is headed for the Women's NIT. The Beavs host Long Beach State on Thursday at 7 p.m. (No TV). ; In other Pac-12 notes: The Oregon Baseball squad holds its home opener against Utah on Friday evening at Eugene's PK Park. The 6 p.m. contest will be broadcast by the Pac-12 Network. ; The Oregon Softball is at Utah on Friday. ; Are people interested in placing wagers on the men's March Madness college basketball tournament? About 45 million Americans say they plan to, according to a report from the gambling

industry's national trade group. The American Gaming Association predicts that \$3.1 billion will be wagered on this year's tournament, a figure that includes legal bets as well as those placed with illegal bookies or offshore web sites. The report forecasts that more than 17 percent of American adults will place at least one bet on the tournament. The college championship tournament is one of sports betting's biggest events, but it still trails the level of betting seen in football's Super Bowl. While many plan to bet on this year's NCAA college basketball championship tournament, an increasing percentage will do it in single-game bets or other ways that don't include filling out brackets. / SPORTS, MENTAL HEALTH, ECONOMY: This is Problem Gambling Awareness Month in Oregon. Those who lead treatment efforts say that, for some, months of social isolation during the pandemic meant increased addiction and more time gambling online, using phone apps, or betting on Fantasy Sports Leagues and other sites. Most Oregonians are "social gamblers." They place bets occasionally for fun or recreation, whether purchasing a lottery ticket or bingo card, wagering on sporting event or making some video lottery plays. But for some, gambling becomes a problem that is uncontrollable, destroying families, friendships, and finances. Some become despondent over their losses, even taking their own lives. Oregon offers free treatment, both in-patient and outpatient options, as well as a regular online and by-phone Help Center. The Oregon Council on Problem Gambling has a 24-hour helpline at 1-877-MY-LIMIT and is online at www.opgr.org / FAMILY, ANIMALS: Labrador retrievers still tug the hardest on U.S. dog lovers' heartstrings, but poodles just strutted back into the American Kennel Club's top five most popular dog breeds for the first time since 1997. The club's annual popularity rankings came out this morning. They're drawn from records of more than 800,000 purebred puppies and older pooches that joined the nation's oldest canine registry last year. Labs have been No. 1 for an unprecedented 31 straight years. Rounding out the top five are French bulldogs, golden retrievers, German shepherds and poodles. After that come bulldogs, beagles, Rottweilers, German shorthaired pointers and dachshunds. By the way, the American Kennel Club's website links to all sorts of useful resources, including local flea and tick seasons across the U.S. and "7 Things to Get Your Dog to Stop Eating Poop." /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF
BROADCAST 03/16/22

TIME OF
BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KGNU-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

GOVERNMENT, HEALTH, COMMUNITY, SAFETY: It was just on Sunday that we changed our clocks to “spring forward.” Now, members of the U.S. Senate have unanimously approved a measure that would make Daylight Saving Time permanent next year. The bill still needs to pass the House and get President Biden’s signature to become law and take effect in 2023. Nearly a dozen states across the U.S.—including Oregon—have already standardized Daylight Saving Time but cannot make the change until it is approved at the federal level. The proposal has been named the Sunshine Protection Act. It received bipartisan support in the Senate and would mean we’d no longer have to change our clocks twice a year. Oregon Senator Ron Wyden calls those Spring and Fall clock and time changes a “silly exercise.” Daylight Saving Time was adopted as a wartime measure in 1942. But similar actions had been proposed for centuries, first as a way to save on candles as daylight hours shifted, later as a way to save on energy. But supporters say making Daylight Saving Time permanent would have a positive impact on sleep habits, health, driving safety, and more. Currently, 48 states observe Daylight Saving Time—the exceptions being most of Arizona and all of the state of Hawaii. / POLICING: Springfield’s interim police chief is taking the helm permanently. Andrew Shearer will be sworn in on March 28. Springfield officials say he has a collaborative leadership style and focuses on community partnerships. Shearer has been Springfield’s interim police chief for ten months. He says he’s witnessed the courage of the men and women in his agency firsthand and appreciates both their selflessness in the face of danger and their efforts to continually improve. Shearer pledges to continue working to build trust and strengthen the partnership between Springfield Police and the community. Shearer began his policing career close to 30 years ago in Portland, working in a variety of roles from neighborhood policing to overseeing the Investigative Branch and other key divisions, and becoming assistant police chief. Shearer replaces longtime Springfield Chief Richard Lewis, who is retiring June 1 after 38 years with the department. Lewis has been on paid leave since March as part of an administrative investigation. Springfield officials have not revealed details of that investigation. / POLICING, LEGAL, MENTAL HEALTH: A federal lawsuit alleges two Springfield police officers failed to use non-lethal force or de-escalate an encounter with Chase Brooks before one of them fatally shot him. The lawsuit,

filed on behalf of Brooks' estate and family, also claims the 911 operator gave police inaccurate information that caused them to "behave in an aggressive and lethal manner." Springfield police officer Eric Pardee shot and killed Brooks on March 14, 2020, in a store parking lot on after he allegedly damaged a vehicle with a weapon. The District Attorney's office found Pardee's use of deadly force lawful. City spokeswoman Amber Fossen says the city is aware of the lawsuit and is reviewing the legal complaint. / HOMELESSNESS, GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY, SAFETY, HEALTH, BUSINESS: Today is the day the City of Eugene and its partners finish closing that large homeless encampment in Washington-Jefferson Park. They're down to fewer than two dozen tents and have spent the past few weeks helping to relocate many of the camp's occupants to spots in a new "Safe Sleep" site at 410 Garfield Street. Coordinators say the new location provides 86 heated spaces with a variety of features to support unhoused residents' health and stability. But not everyone is happy about leaving Washington-Jefferson Park. And this morning, crews responded to a reported tent fire on a stretch between West 5th and West 3rd Avenues. No reports on what sparked the blaze or whether there were any injuries. After the campers finish moving today, the city will close the park and fence off the area so it may be restored. Washington-Jefferson Park will reopen later this year for normal use. The city now has three Safe Sleep sites in operation, including the new location near 4th and Garfield, a site for those with vehicles at 3rd and Garfield, and a location on Dani Street known as "Everyone Village" that accommodates a mix of small shelters and vehicle campers. Officials say the three locations provide safe, legal shelter for nearly 200 people experiencing homelessness. A fourth site, the "Rosa Safe Sleep" site at 2243 Roosevelt Blvd., will add shelter for upwards of 20 more people later this year. / EDUCATION: The University of Oregon Board of Trustees has approved increases to next academic year's tuition and fees this fall for incoming students. There will be a 4.5 percent overall increase for undergraduate students who are Oregon residents and a three percent hike for non-residents. An incoming resident undergrad taking a fulltime load of 12 credits per term can expect to pay slightly more than \$10,000 in tuition for the school year. New non-resident students will see their annual tuition rise to more than \$31,000. Current students who enrolled since the summer of 2020 will not see any increases because of a program that holds their rates for five years, allowing them to better plan for college costs. / ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, HEALTH: Call it "The Big Sneeze." Scientists say climate change is making allergy seasons longer and more intense. A new study details how warmer temperatures and extra carbon dioxide in the air will allow plants to bloom earlier and produce more pollen, a cycle that has already begun. But how much depends on the particular pollen, the location, and the level of greenhouse gas emissions in the air. Allergists say that pollen season in the U.S. used to start around St. Patrick's Day and now often starts around Valentine's Day. Experts say close to 40 percent of American children suffer pollen allergies. Researchers say adults with allergies can harm the economy through lost workdays and increased medical costs. And allergies can be especially difficult for the 25 million Americans with asthma. The study notes that while the Southeastern U.S. might get hit hardest by the extended allergy seasons, the Pacific Northwest will see some of the most dramatic changes with a much earlier start to the pollen season for alder trees. Extended sneezing seasons might not be avoidable, the scientists

say even moderate cuts to greenhouse gas emission from coal, oil and natural gas could make a difference. By the end of the century, researchers expect the pollen season to stretch an extra 20 days. But without significant greenhouse gas reductions, they say America's pollen season will start 40 days earlier. / HOUSING, LOW-INCOME, HEALTH, GOVERNMENT: It was set to permanently close two days ago. But Oregon's Emergency Rental Assistance Program is remaining open through the end of the day on Monday, March 21. It comes after U.S. Treasury officials notified the state that it will be receiving \$16 million in additional federal emergency rental assistance funding. More than \$302 million has been paid out over the past nine months. Coordinators of Oregon's emergency rent relief program say they've provided financial assistance to more than 41,800 households. Those households are home to more than 104,600 Oregonians. Applications are being approved based upon highest need to help support renters facing eviction. Anyone who has not applied for state rental assistance in the past and has fallen behind on rent is encouraged to apply for emergency rental assistance before the end of the day on Monday, March 21, at oregonrentalassistance.org Tenants who submit new applications can access protections from eviction for nonpayment of rent while their application is being reviewed and processed. Tenants must show proof to their landlord that they applied for the program to receive the protections. / HEALTH: Pfizer and its partner BioNTech asked U.S. regulators to authorize an additional booster dose of their COVID-19 vaccine for seniors. That would add a fourth shot to the regimen for adults over age 65, who currently are eligible for a series of two initial doses, followed by a booster dose. The new booster would be designed to counter current COVID variants. Pfizer is basing its request on vaccination data from Israel, where a fourth dose already is offered those ages 60 and older. If the U.S. government approves the request, a key question would be how soon seniors would be advised to roll up their sleeves. COVID cases are dropping across the U.S. but have begun climbing again in parts of Europe and Asia. ; COVID-related cases and hospitalization numbers are continuing to fall across the state. But with 421 reports of new infections yesterday, the Oregon Health Authority now has logged more than 700,000 cases in the two years since the pandemic began. Close to 6,900 Oregonians have died. Lane County Public Health was notified yesterday of 38 new cases. Twenty-nine local residents are hospitalized for COVID and its complications. Two of those patients are in intensive-care beds. The county yesterday was notified of a new death, which raises our pandemic death toll to 486. Nationwide over the course of the pandemic, the U.S. has seen 79.4 million infections and more than 966,000 deaths. / MILITARY, HEALTH: Members of the Oregon National Guard have largely wrapped up their deployment to hospitals across state to shore up staffing amid the winter omicron surge of COVID-related cases. A few remain at some regional hospitals, but most have concluded their support roles as patient numbers subside. That includes personnel who spent time at PeaceHealth and McKenzie-Willamette's medical centers. Most National Guard personnel across the state served for 30 days in nonclinical roles. They provided logistical support, served as materials handlers and equipment runners, assisted with COVID-19 testing and other non-clinical services. They also shored up staffing in transportation, traffic control, food, and janitorial areas. Some sat with patients to provide emotional and other support. In all, close to 1,200 soldiers and airmen

with the Oregon National Guard mobilized in January to help out at 41 hospitals across the state. Their duties were similar to the Oregon Guard's deployment of close to 1,500 personnel last year during the delta surge. Across the state, hospital officials say they were grateful for the Guard members, noting their commitment and professionalism. / HEALTH, FAMILY: The federal government has provided more than \$2 billion to help cover funeral costs for more than 300,000 families of people who died from COVID-19. The announcement Tuesday from the Federal Emergency Management Agency comes as FEMA launches a new campaign to raise awareness about the aid to the families of the more than 965,000 people who have died in the U.S. from the virus. The COVID-19 Funeral Assistance program provides up to \$9,000 per funeral and covers COVID-19 related deaths since Jan. 20, 2020. The average amount awarded per death is \$6,500. FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell says the program has helped provide people with "critical financial relief during a time of such unexpected, unimaginable and widespread loss." / ECONOMY, TRANSPORTATION: After cresting above \$123 per barrel shortly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the price of crude oil on global markets has gradually fallen below \$110. If this trend holds, it might help ease pressure on gasoline prices across the U.S. But Lane County's average for a gallon of regular-grade fuel is holding at \$4.76, the same as it was at the start of the week. It's an increase of 24 cents from one week ago and 83 cents from one month ago. This time last year, a gallon of regular-grade fuel in Eugene-Springfield was \$3.09 per gallon. AAA analysts say gas prices have climbed an average of more than 70 cents per gallon since Russia invaded Ukraine. This morning, a gallon of diesel averages \$5.54 locally. ; DoorDash is trying to help its drivers pick up some of the tab for higher gas prices. The delivery company will give drivers 10 percent cash back when they use DasherDirect, its debit card for drivers. The rebate can be used for any gas purchase, whether for deliveries or not. Also, DoorDash will pay weekly bonuses for drivers logging the most miles. For example, those who drive 225 miles can pick up an extra \$15. It's the latest effort by gig companies to ease the effects of higher gas prices on drivers who get goods, food and people from one place to another. Uber has begun charging customers a fuel fee to offset rising fuel costs. / RECREATION, SAFETY: The Spencer Butte Main Trailhead parking lot is closed today (March 16) and tomorrow (March 17) for hazard tree removal. To ensure public safety, the gate to the parking lot will remain closed and all access to this parking lot will be prohibited. The public is asked to refrain from parking in front of the gate or entering the parking lot on foot. Access to the Spencer Butte summit will still be available from the 52nd and Willamette Trailhead (a 5-mile roundtrip) or the Fox Hollow Trailhead (a 4.2-mile roundtrip). Visitors should be prepared for the longer hikes, which also include several hundred additional feet of elevation gain to the summit. / TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY: That new Scottsburg Bridge continues to take shape on Highway 38 over the Umpqua River. Motorists should expect brief delays through the work zone over the next two months. Starting this week, the highway will be limited to a single lane across the old Umpqua River Bridge. A temporary signal will provide traffic control. Most delays will be less than five minutes. The lane closure will allow prime contractor Hamilton Construction to begin construction on the north roadway approach to the new bridge. Hamilton began work on the \$43 million project in early 2019 and plans to shift traffic onto the new bridge by late spring or

early summer. Get updates on this and other Oregon Department of Transportation projects and see current highway conditions at www.tripcheck.com ; Up on the northern Oregon Coast, Highway 101 is closed by a landslide south of Wheeler, at milepost 47. Cleanup is underway and a late afternoon opening is planned. That could change based on conditions. Go to www.TripCheck.com for current road status. Traffic is being detoured over Miami-Foley Road, but the route is length restricted. Longer trucks need to take alternate routes. / SPORTS: In college basketball: The Oregon Men's Basketball team advanced to the second round of the National Invitation Tournament (NIT) with a win over Utah State last night, 83-72. The Ducks visit Texas A&M this weekend. (Day & time TBA). ; The Oregon Women's Basketball team is headed to the NCAA Tournament for a fifth straight year. The Duck women will be in Knoxville, Tennessee, to face Belmont in Saturday's first-round game. ; The Oregon State Women's Basketball team is headed for the Women's NIT. The Beavs host Long Beach State on Thursday at 7 p.m. (No TV). ; In other Pac-12 notes: The Oregon Baseball squad holds its home opener against Utah on Friday evening at Eugene's PK Park. The 6 p.m. contest will be broadcast by the Pac-12 Network.; The Oregon Softball is at Utah on Friday. / HEALTH, AGRICULTURE: Nearly 7 million chickens and turkeys in 13 states have been killed this year due to avian influenza, prompting officials and farmers to acknowledge that, despite their best efforts, preventing infections is incredibly difficult. State and federal officials hope the disease won't spread as extensively as during an outbreak in 2015 that led to the deaths of about 50 million chickens and turkeys, causing egg and meat prices to soar. Scientists are confident that wild birds are spreading the disease, but they are unsure how the virus infects commercial flocks in highly secure barns. Research since 2015 suggests the virus can be tracked inside on equipment, workers, mice, small birds, and even dust particles. /

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTING FORM

DATE OF
BROADCAST 03/17/22

TIME OF
BROADCAST 5:30AM-8:30AM / KGNU-FM

NAME OF
PROGRAM Morning News

LENGTH OF
PROGRAM 30 Seconds

ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

EVENTS, FAMILY, COMMUNITY: It attracts big crowds of very happy kids. After a two-year hiatus, the Willamalane Park & Recreation District's MEGGA Hunt is back. The community's big annual egg hunt is set for Saturday, April 16—the day before Easter—at Lively Park off Thurston Road in Springfield. This year's egg hunt will have three options: Traditional Egg Hunt: Kids will search for eggs in open, smooth-landscape fields. Different areas will be set up for babies and toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age kids. This is great for families who are comfortable in a small crowd. There are three ways to register: Go to willamalane.org/megga to select your option and register. Call the Willamalane customer service desk at 541-736-4544. Come in to a Willamalane facility and register with the front desk. / ECONOMY, HOUSING: The Federal Reserve has launched a high-risk effort to tame the worst inflation since the 1970s by raising its benchmark short-term interest rate and signaling potentially up to six more rate hikes this year. The Fed made a quarter-point hike in its key rate, which it pinned near zero when the pandemic recession struck two years ago. That eventually will eventually mean higher loan rates for many consumers and businesses. Last year's record-low mortgage rates of below three percent are already gone. Higher home loan costs might discourage some buyers. Credit card interest rates will rise sometime over the next couple of billing cycles. So, too, will interest rates on many Home Equity Lines of Credit (HELOCs). The costs of auto loans are expected to rise—although car loans tend to be more sensitive to competition and those interest rates might rise more slowly. Savers might receive somewhat better returns, depending on their bank or credit union. But savings accounts, certificates of deposit and money market accounts don't typically track the Fed's changes. Instead, banks tend to impose higher rates on borrowers, without necessarily offering any juicier rates to savers. Online banks and others with high-yield savings accounts might be an exception. These accounts are known for aggressively competing for depositors. But such accounts typically require significant deposits. If you're invested in mutual funds or exchange-traded funds that hold long-term bonds, they will become a riskier investment. Typically, existing long-term bonds lose value as newer bonds are issued at higher yields. / AGRICULTURE, ECONOMY: Northwest farmers are seeing prices rise as uncertainty over the situation in Ukraine affects global agriculture markets.

Ukraine produces 12 percent of the world's wheat harvest and 16 percent of the world's corn exports, according to U.S. figures. But farmers in Oregon and Washington state say while domestic wheat and corn prices are climbing, they are dealing with increased costs for fuel and fertilizer. They say that limits profits and makes it difficult to estimate margins for the rest of the year. /

HOMELESSNESS, COMMUNITY, SAFETY, BUSINESS: The City of Eugene and its partners yesterday finished closing that large homeless encampment in Washington-Jefferson Park. The location was down to half-a-dozen tents. City staff and others spent the past few weeks helping to relocate dozens of the camp's occupants to spots in a new "Safe Sleep" site at 410 Garfield Street. Coordinators say the new location provides 86 heated spaces with a variety of features to support unhoused residents' health and stability. Crews have fenced off the area so it may be restored. Washington-Jefferson Park will reopen later this year for normal use. The city now has three Safe Sleep sites in operation, including the new location near 4th and Garfield, a site for those with vehicles at 3rd and Garfield, and a location on Dani Street known as "Everyone Village" that accommodates a mix of small shelters and vehicle campers. Officials say the three locations provide safe, legal shelter for nearly 200 people experiencing homelessness. A fourth site, the "Rosa Safe Sleep" site at 2243 Roosevelt Blvd., will add shelter for upwards of 20 more people later this year. /

CRIME: They suspect it was a "road rage" incident and they're looking for the vehicle that fled the scene. Eugene Police responded to a vehicle-vs.-pedestrian crash on Monday night shortly after 10 p.m. at the intersection of the Beltline Highway and West 11th Avenue. They say a 29-year-old Eugene man has life-threatening injuries after being struck by a lifted, two-tone, single cab pickup truck. Investigators believe the injured man had gotten out of his own vehicle before being hit. Based on video footage, investigators say it appears the suspect drove away westbound on West 11th Avenue. Police are asking for tips in the case or video of the incident. They say the truck might or might not be damaged from the incident. Contact the Eugene Police Major Collision Investigation team and Officer Allison Jordan at 541-682-5154 x 1463 or email AMJordan@eugene-or.gov /

SAFETY, TRANSPORTATION: Drivers of bigger vehicles such as pickup trucks and SUVs are more likely to hit pedestrians while making turns than drivers of cars. That's according to a new study released today by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. It points to the increasing popularity of larger vehicles as a possible factor in rising pedestrian deaths on U.S. roads. The authors also questioned whether wider pillars holding up roofs of the larger vehicles—along with higher front ends—make it harder for drivers to spot people. In 2020, the most recent year for which complete statistics are available, more than 6,500 pedestrians were killed in the U.S. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says that's up 59 percent since 2009, and a 4 percent increase from 2019. /

CRIME: Eugene Police this week captured a burglary suspect with the help of a Police K-9 and their Drone Team. It happened Monday evening at the Century Link building at 10th and Oak Streets downtown. An employee inside the building working heard someone using power tools to try to get in through an outside door. The employee let via another door for safety. While police waited for the arrival of a K-9 to help clear the building, the Drone Team sergeant flew the drone around about half the large downstairs area and eventually heard an elevator heading for the second floor. With the help of the

police dog, 28-year-old Isaac Linn Mulhern was arrested. / CRIME, EDUCATION: Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, often referred to as drones, are an increasingly important part of daily life. They're used by commercial businesses and agricultural operations, to sell everything from real estate to vehicles. They're employed for Search and Rescue and firefighting operations, inspections, environmental and wildlife protection, film-making, mapping, and more. Increasingly, colleges and universities are offering training and degrees in Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. That includes a two-year program at Lane Community College. Students learn to design and manufacture, test and fly custom unmanned aircraft. There's also the opportunity to obtain your FAA Remote Pilot License and become an unmanned aircraft expert. / EDUCATION: Lane Community College's new president hails from California and supporters say she's known for her experience, focus on students, and partnerships with business. The Lane Community College Board of Education yesterday named Stephanie Bulger as LCC's new leader. She is currently Vice Chancellor for Instructional Services at San Diego Community College. Bulger has more than two decades experience in higher education, including a series of leadership positions. / SPORTS: The Lane Community College Women's Basketball team this week finished its regular season undefeated for the first time in program history. The 26-0 Titans now head for the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) tournament in Everett, Washington. Lane meets South Puget Sound Community College at 10 a.m. on Saturday. / HEALTH: COVID-related cases and hospitalization numbers are continuing to fall across the state. But infections continue: the Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 355 new cases and 35 additional deaths. Lane County Public Health was notified yesterday of 30 new cases. Twenty-nine local residents are hospitalized for COVID and its complications. Two of those patients are in intensive-care beds. The county yesterday was notified of two additional deaths, which raises our pandemic death toll to 488. / EVENTS, HEALTH: St. Patrick's Day celebrations across the country are back after a two-year hiatus. That includes New York City's parade today, the nation's largest and oldest. It's a sign of growing hope that the worst of the coronavirus pandemic may be over. In 2020, these parades were among the first major events cancelled as the virus hit the United States. New York's parade coincides this year with the city's reopening. Major mask and vaccination rules have recently been lifted. Elsewhere, Chicago dyed its river green after doing so without much fanfare last year. Communities in Boston, Florida, and Savannah, Georgia, are also bringing their parades back. / WILDLIFE: Yes, you can salvage that roadkill for food. But there are rules. A reminder and an update from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife: A temporary rule that waived in-person check in requirements for certain wildlife species during the pandemic expires March 18. Beginning Saturday, March 19, anyone who salvages a roadkilled deer or elk or harvests a bear or cougar during hunting season will be required to call their nearest ODFW district office and make an appointment to check in their animal per the usual regulations. ODFW and all state offices remain closed to in-person visitors and are not scheduled to open until at least May 1, so check-in appointments must be arranged prior to showing up at an office. For the roadkill salvage rules for deer and elk, go to <https://myodfw.com/articles/roadkill-salvage-permits> Note: The antlers and head of all salvaged animals need to be surrendered to an ODFW office within 5

business days of taking possession of the carcass. Call ahead to your nearest office to make an appointment. Tissue samples from the head of roadkilled deer and elk are tested as part of Oregon's Chronic Wasting Disease monitoring efforts. This disease has not been detected in Oregon yet but was found within 30 miles of the Snake River in Idaho last year. Early detection could help limit spread of the disease. For many years, successful bear and cougar hunters have been required to check in certain parts of their animal within 10 days of harvest. For cougars, hunters are required to check in the hide with skull and proof of sex attached and if the cougar was a female, the reproductive tract (how-to). Bear hunters are required to check in the skull only (though the reproductive tract is requested too; see how-to in Big Game Regs). Again, an appointment is required; please see the list of field offices and call your nearest office to make an appointment <https://myodfw.com/contact-us> Skulls must be unfrozen when presented for check-in and hunters should prop open the mouth to improve access to the teeth. Inserting a stick or dowel between the molars prior to freezing/ drying out will help keep the jaw open. During check-in, ODFW takes a tooth which is used to determine age of the animal. This information goes into population modelling efforts for the state's cougar and bear populations. Hunters should be ready to present their license and tag and report the unit where their cougar or bear was harvested during check-in.

/ AGRICULTURE, HEALTH: Nearly seven million chickens and turkeys in 13 states have been killed this year due to avian influenza. Now, Oregon agriculture officials are sounding the alarm, warning farmers and those with backyard flocks to monitor and protect their birds. Preventing avian infections is incredibly difficult. Officials hope this wave of disease will not spread as extensively as an outbreak in 2015 that led to the deaths and destruction of about 50 million chickens and turkeys, causing egg and meat prices to soar. Scientists say wild birds appear to be spreading the disease, but they are unsure how the virus is infecting commercial flocks in highly secure barns. Research since 2015 suggests the virus can be tracked inside on equipment, workers, mice, small birds, and even dust particles. Many of the farms and backyard flocks affected by this year's outbreak have been located in the Midwest. But earlier this month, global animal health officials confirmed that a bald eagle found dead in British Columbia had tested positive for the highly pathogenic avian influenza. That detection is the first in North America's Pacific Flyway since 2015. The case and the virus do not present an immediate public health concern: No human cases of these avian influenza viruses have been detected in the United States. But Dr. Ryan Scholz, the Oregon Department of Agriculture's state veterinarian, says now is the time to prepare, learn about the symptoms of the avian virus, monitor commercial poultry and backyard flocks for any symptoms, and report any they see to state officials. If you find a sick or dead domestic bird, don't touch it, report it. Instead, email state officials at npip@oda.oregon.gov or call 1-800-347-7028. If you find a dead or sick wild bird, please report to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife by calling 1-866-968-2600. For more information about the avian influenza, its symptoms, biosecurity, and how you can protect your flock, visit the Oregon Department of Agriculture's avian influenza webpage at <https://oda.direct/AI>

/ RECREATION, SAFETY: Quick reminder that the Spencer Butte Main Trailhead parking lot remains closed through today (March 17) for hazard tree removal. The gate to the parking lot will remain closed and all access to this parking lot will be prohibited. The public is

asked to refrain from parking in front of the gate or entering the parking lot on foot. Access to the Spencer Butte summit still is available from the 52nd and Willamette Trailhead (a 5-mile roundtrip) or the Fox Hollow Trailhead (a 4.2-mile roundtrip). Visitors should be prepared for the longer hikes, which also include several hundred additional feet of elevation gain to the summit. / SPORTS: In college basketball: The Oregon Men's Basketball team will play top seed Texas A&M on Saturday night in Texas for their second round National Invitation Tournament (NIT) game. The contest tips off Saturday at 9 a.m., our time, on ESPN. ; The Oregon Women's Basketball team is in Knoxville, Tennessee, on Saturday to face Belmont in its first-round game of the NCAA Women's Tournament. The game tips off Saturday at 2:30 p.m. on ESPN2. ; The Oregon State Women's Basketball team meets Long Beach State tonight at 7 p.m. in the Women's NIT. (No TV). ; In other Pac-12 notes: The Oregon Baseball squad holds its home opener against Utah on Friday evening at Eugene's PK Park. The 6 p.m. contest will be broadcast by the Pac-12 Network. ; The Oregon Softball is at Utah on Friday. /

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TRANSPORTATION, SAFETY, HEALTH: Quick note if you're one of the many people planning Spring travel: There's a lot of pent-up demand, so expect big crowds at airports, tourist attractions, and other popular sites. Airlines say they've recently seen bookings exceed their pre-pandemic levels. The TSA reminds air travelers that masks continue to be required in airports and on commercial flights. The mask requirement also remains in effect for train and bus stations, the trains and buses themselves, and other forms of mass transit. That includes Lane Transit District buses. / WEATHER, ENVIRONMENT, WILDFIRES, AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, COMMUNITY: The federal government's latest seasonal forecast indicates there's no relief in sight for the West's record-shattering megadrought. Rather, scientists with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration say the drought will only deepen this spring. The experts add that the Spring likely will be hotter than normal in most states and drier as well for much of the West—although Oregon and Washington might remain closer to normal temperatures during April, May, and June. In California, especially the Central Valley, three-year rain and snow levels will soon reach their lowest on record since 1922. Scientists say the more than 20-year megadrought gripping the West is the worst in 1,200 years and is stoked by human-caused climate change from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas. Experts say worsening drought also sets the stage for another summer of dangerous wildfires. An estimated 60 percent of the U.S. already is experiencing some form of drought—which could make them more vulnerable to heat waves. State climate experts said earlier this month that, from year-to-year, more than one-third of Oregon has been in severe drought or worse from 2000 to 2020. Despite our recent rains here in the Willamette Valley, most of Central, Eastern, and Southern Oregon remain in severe or exceptional drought. Researchers say there is little moisture in the first three feet of soil across much of the state—meaning each year's continued drought is drying things out a little bit more. Nationwide, only an area around the Great Lakes down to Kentucky is forecast to be wetter than normal. But because those areas are expected to be warmer and wetter, health experts say allergy season will be worse. Back in the West, a long-delayed plan to build a giant reservoir in Northern California's Central Valley has received a big financial boost. The Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday signaled its

intent to loan the project nearly \$2.2 billion. That would cover about half of the total cost for the reservoir, which would be located midway between Sacramento and Redding. The project still must clear an environmental review. Opponents fear the reservoir will divert too much water from the Sacramento River. / CRIME: Eugene Police say the pedestrian struck Monday night in West Eugene during a suspected "road rage" incident has died. They continue to seek tips from the public as they work to locate the driver who fled. 29-year-old Dylan Mark Wilson of Eugene was struck after apparently getting out of his own vehicle shortly after 10 p.m. Monday at the intersection of the Beltline Highway and West 11th Avenue. Investigators say the suspect was driving a lifted, two-tone, single cab pickup truck. Nearby video footage indicates the suspect left westbound on West 11th Avenue. It's not known whether the pickup sustained any damage. If you have any tips in the case or video of the incident, Eugene Police would like to hear from you. Contact the Eugene Police Major Collision Investigation team and Officer Allison Jordan at 541-682-5154 x 1463 or email AMJordan@eugene-or.gov / HEALTH: In mid-January, during the peak of the omicron surge of the COVID variant, Lane County was receiving reports of more than 700 new infections each day, as hospitalizations surged into the low 80s. Lane County Public Health was notified yesterday of 30 new cases. Twenty-six local residents are hospitalized for COVID and its complications. Three of those patients are in intensive-care beds. The county yesterday was notified of two additional deaths, which raises our pandemic death toll to 490. Oregon's COVID-related cases and hospitalization numbers continue to ease. Still, the Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 331 new cases and 27 additional deaths. ; Drugmaker Moderna asked the Food and Drug Administration on Thursday to authorize a fourth dose of its COVID-19 vaccine as a booster dose for all adults. The request is broader than rival pharmaceutical company Pfizer's request earlier this week for the regulator to approve a booster vaccine for all seniors. In a press release, the company said its request for approval for all adults was made "to provide flexibility" to the CDC and medical providers to determine the "appropriate use" of a second booster dose of the mRNA vaccine, "including for those at higher risk of COVID-19 due to age or comorbidities." U.S. officials have been laying the groundwork to deliver additional booster doses to shore up the vaccines' protection against serious disease and death from COVID-19. The White House has been urging Congress to approve more funding for the federal government to secure more doses of the vaccines, either for additional booster shots or variant-specific immunizations. / HEALTH, ECONOMY, FAMILY, LOW-INCOME: Medical debt is a huge burden for many Americans, as medical emergencies and unexpected diagnoses often result in large bills that can overwhelm those who previously never missed a debt payment. Those unpaid bills end up on credit reports, sometimes lowering consumers' credit scores and hindering their ability to get affordable mortgages, car loans and other credit. But The Wall Street Journal is reporting that the nation's biggest credit-reporting firms are planning to remove tens of (b)illions of dollars in medical debt from consumers' credit reports starting in July, erasing the obstacle that makes it harder for millions of Americans to borrow money. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau estimates that some \$88 billion in medical bills are listed across 43 million credit reports. The three credit-reporting firms maintain reports on more than 200 million people in the U.S. But Equifax, Experian, and

TransUnion will begin removing notes about medical debt that was paid after it was sent to collections. These debts can stick around on a consumer's credit report for up to seven years, even once they are fully paid. In another change, new unpaid medical debts will not be added to credit reports for a full year after being sent to collections. The firms are also planning to remove unpaid medical debts of less than \$500 in the next few months. / HEALTH, YOUTH: New numbers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention find that the first year of the pandemic saw more Americans drinking heavily or using illicit drugs — but apparently not smoking as much. U.S. cigarette smoking dropped to a new all-time low in 2020, with only 1 in 8 adults saying they were current smokers. CDC researchers note that adult e-cigarette use also dropped. Outside analysts say tobacco company price hikes and pandemic lifestyle changes combined with public health campaigns likely played roles. It is the continuation of a gradual decline in smoking that's been going on for more than half a century: In 1965, 42 percent of U.S. adults were smokers. As more people stayed close to home, social scientists say those who primarily were "social smokers" didn't have as many opportunities. Additionally, parents and teens were suddenly spending more time at home, forcing many young people to cut back. Health experts say some longtime smokers also might have quit after learning that smokers are more likely to develop severe illness after a COVID infection. Health officials have long considered cigarette smoking — a risk factor for lung cancer, heart disease and stroke — to be the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. The CDC report is based on a survey of more than 31,000 U.S. adults. It found that use of cigars, smokeless tobacco and pipes stayed flat. The rate has been gradually dropping for decades for a number of reasons, including taxes and smoking bans in workplaces and restaurants. But a big part of the recent decline has been hikes in tobacco product taxes and prices. Interestingly, the number of cigarettes sold in the U.S. actually went up in 2020 — the first such increase in two decades, according to the Federal Trade Commission. But analysts suspect it is because while fewer people smoked, those who did were using cigarettes more. Other surveys have suggested that for many people, alcohol consumption and illicit drug use increased in the first year of the pandemic. / ENVIRONMENT, FISHERIES, HEALTH: The Environmental Protection Agency has added a contaminated island on the Columbia River to the federal Superfund list of toxic waste sites. That starts the process for eventual cleanup of the uninhabited Bradford Island. The island—located 40 miles east of Portland near Cascade Locks—is part of the Bonneville Dam complex. The manmade island was created between the two powerhouses that straddle that section of the river along the Oregon-Washington border. For decades, crews and contractors with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for years dumped toxic waste on the island and in the river. The substances included PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls). PCBs are used in electrical equipment such as transformers and capacitors, as well as in substances such as hydraulic fluids, heat-transfer fluids, and lubricants. The chemicals contaminated fish caught and eaten by humans—including local fishermen and tribal members. Scientists say resident fish caught near Bradford Island contain the highest levels of cancer-causing PCBs in the Northwest. The Oregon Health Authority and Washington Department of Health have longstanding advisories warning people not to eat resident fish caught near Bradford Island. The Superfund designation is reserved for the country's "worst of

the worst" environmental hazard sites. Yesterday's decision by the Biden administration earned praise from regional officials, including Oregon and Washington's governors. / CRIME: Prosecutors say a man was running a "massive" so-called "ghost gun" operation from his mother's house in Salem, Oregon, and distributing counterfeit pills made of fentanyl in exchange for other guns. The Oregonian/OregonLive reports agents from the U.S. Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and Salem police seized 63 firearms from the home Tuesday amid approximately 200 counterfeit oxycontin pills. Authorities say Tyler Ray Harnden was arrested and indicted on drug and firearm charges. It wasn't immediately known if he has a lawyer to comment on his behalf. Ghost guns are homemade firearms that lack serial numbers used to trace them and are often purchased without a background check. / SPORTS: In college basketball: The Oregon Men's Basketball team will play top seed Texas A&M on Saturday night in Texas for their second round National Invitation Tournament (NIT) game. The contest tips off Saturday at 9 a.m., our time, on ESPN. ; The Oregon Women's Basketball team is in Knoxville, Tennessee, on Saturday to face Belmont in its first-round game of the NCAA Women's Tournament. The game tips off Saturday at 2:30 p.m. on ESPN2. ; The Oregon State Women's Basketball team defeated Long Beach State 70-59 last night to advance to the second round of the Women's NIT. They will meet the winner of today's Portland-Colorado State game. (Date and time for OSU game TBA). ; In other sports notes: The Oregon Baseball squad holds its home opener against Utah this evening at Eugene's PK Park. The 6 p.m. contest will be broadcast by the Pac-12 Network. ; The Oregon Softball is at Utah today.; The undefeated Lane Community College Women's Basketball team meets South Puget Sound Community College at 10 a.m. on Saturday in the Titans' opening round of the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) tournament in Everett, Washington. /

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WEATHER: Sunday was the vernal equinox—the first day of Spring. For much of yesterday, the sun was directly over the equator—meaning day and night were of equal length. From here through June 21, days will be growing gradually longer. / ECONOMY, TRANSPORTATION: Relief won't arrive very quickly. But global oil prices eased slightly in recent days. That's largely halted the big increases in fuel prices at the pump. But analysts say those prices have remained high and might climb again if tensions continue to rise over the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Some states—mostly in the Eastern half of the country—have seen gasoline prices drop. But that's not been the case out West. This morning, Lane County's average for a gallon of regular-grade fuel is holding at \$4.75, the same as it was at the start of the last week. One month ago, the price in Eugene-Springfield averaged \$3.97. The average price this morning for gallon of diesel is \$5.48. / EVENTS: Broadway musical sensation "Hamilton" is coming to Eugene's Hult Center in September for a two-week run. Tickets for the performances—set for September 13-25—are expected to sell briskly and attract visitors from across the state. The American Theatre Guild on Friday announced its line-up for the 2022-2023 "Broadway in Eugene" season. "Hamilton" is creator Lin-Manuel Miranda's biography of Alexander Hamilton. When it debuted on Broadway in 2016, the show won 11 Tony Awards including Best Musical. Other touring productions include: "The Simon and Garfunkel Story" on January 14; "Legally Blonde" will be in town for a three-day run in February; "Come From Away" arrives April 25-30 of next year. and "Anastasia" will play at the Hult Center May 12-14, 2023. Tickets will be sold through the Hult Center box office and at BroadwayinEugene.com Season ticket purchasers will have priority for selecting seats. / EVENTS, ENVIRONMENT, WILDLIFE: Oregon's Spring Whale Watch is underway. Because of a shortage of trained volunteers as the pandemic winds down, the traditional Spring Whale Week events and locations hosted by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department are canceled again this year. But organizers expect it to return in 2023. During the spring migration, an estimated 25,000 gray whales pass by Oregon's shores between late March to June on their way to cooler waters off Alaska. Many will be accompanied by their calves, who were born during the winter in the warmer water lagoons off the coast of Baja, Mexico. Oregon's designated whale watching sites offer the best chances of spotting

whales because of their locations, usually slightly elevated above the ocean and in areas where whales are more easily seen. See a list and read spotting tips at <https://stateparks.oregon.gov/index.cfm?do=things-to-do.whale-watching> Download the state's Whale Watching brochure at <https://bit.ly/3HrE5KQ> You also might enjoy the popular whale watching livestream on the Oregon State Parks YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/OregonParks> The livestreams are scheduled daily March 21-25, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Depoe Bay Whale Watch Center, which hosts the livestreams, reopens to visitors later this spring. /

CRIME: Eugene Police say a pedestrian was injured after a two-vehicle crash early Sunday morning at West 6th Avenue and Blair Street. Investigators say two vehicles were driving westbound on West 6th approaching Blair when the driver of one vehicle turned from the far-left lane in front of the vehicle driving in the far-right lane. The first vehicle spun and went across a sidewalk at the northwest corner of the intersection, striking a pedestrian waiting to cross Blair Street. The pedestrian was hospitalized with what were described as non-life-threatening injuries. Investigators believe speed and alcohol might have contributed to the crash. West 6th at Blair was closed for about four hours during the accident investigation. /

SPORTS: In sports notes: The undefeated Lane Community College Women's Basketball is headed for the Final Four in the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) tournament in Everett, Washington. The Titans are now 28-0 on the season and meet Lower Columbia on Saturday at 5 p.m. The Championship game is set for Sunday at 4:45 p.m. ; The Oregon State women's basketball team advanced to the final 16 of the WNIT with a 74-56 win over Portland Sunday afternoon at Gill Coliseum. With the victory, the Beavers will now host New Mexico on Thursday in the third round of the WNIT. Tip-off is set for 7 p.m. ; The Oregon Women's Basketball team is out of the NCAA tournament after Saturday's double-overtime loss to Belmont, 73-70. ; The Oregon Men's Basketball team is out of the NIT tournament after Saturday's loss to Texas A&M on Saturday, 75-60. Standout Will Richardson had not been able to play because of what Duck Sports leaders described as a "non-COVID illness." After the loss, they said Richardson is recovering from a case of mononucleosis. ; Oregon Softball won two of three games at Utah over the weekend and visits BYU this afternoon. ; Oregon Baseball wrapped up a sweep of Utah Sunday afternoon and heads to Gonzaga on Tuesday. ; Oregon Men's Golf, which has won two of its last four tournaments, will host the 32nd Duck Invitational today and Tuesday at Eugene Country Club. ; Oregon Lacrosse defeated Marquette Sunday at Papé Field. /

FAMILY, ECONOMY, GOVERNMENT: Working on your tax returns? The Internal Revenue Service is overburdened and understaffed, which means even the smallest error could delay the processing of your tax return for months. The biggest mistake some are making is opting for paper filing, which could take longer to process and is often more likely to contain errors. Instead, file your return electronically and ask to receive your refund via direct deposit. Be particularly careful to accurately report any advance child tax credit payments you received last year and try to make sure your income matches what's been reported to the IRS. Making an account on the IRS website can help. /

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WILDFIRE RECOVERY, GOVERNMENT: Lane County is partnering with the Oregon Building Codes Division on new grants are available to those affected by the 2020 Holiday Farm Fire to help better-protect their homes and businesses from future blazes. People who own a home – including a manufactured home – or a business that was damaged or destroyed by the 2020 wildfires can receive money for using more fire-resistant methods and materials when they rebuild. Those who have already rebuilt also qualify. Fire hardening is an important tool to help make homes more resistant to fire. Fire hardening includes actions that make a home or business more resistant to damage from a wildfire, such as using materials for siding and roofing that resist ignition during a wildfire, installing fire-resistant windows to protect openings, or using attic ventilation devices that help reduce ember intrusion. The improvements are particularly effective at preventing ignition from embers, which can travel great distances from wildfires. To qualify for the program, a person must own a home or business that was damaged or destroyed in the 2020 Oregon wildfires. There is a menu of fire hardening improvements, including more fire-resistant roofs, siding and windows that qualify for grant money. Once one or more qualifying improvements have been completed, an eligible applicant can receive grant money through the Lane County Land Management Division. To learn more and apply, visit <https://www.oregon.gov/bcd/Pages/firehardening.aspx> Lane County applicants will be directed to an application form, which can be submitted in person to Permit Navigator Marianne Nolte Find more about the application process at McKenzieRebuilds.org / AGRICULTURE: Farmers worldwide are weighing whether to change their planting patterns and grow more wheat this spring as Russia's war in Ukraine has choked off or thrown into question grain supplies from a region known as "the breadbasket of the world." Countries in the Middle East, Asia and Africa rely on those supplies to feed millions of people who subsist on subsidized bread and bargain noodles. Major grain producers like the United States, Canada, France, Australia and Argentina are being closely watched to see if they can quickly ramp up production. But farmers there are facing the prospect of another year of drought, climbing fuel and fertilizer costs, and supply chain disruptions. Ukraine produces 12 percent of the world's wheat harvest and 16 percent of the world's corn exports, according to U.S. figures. But

farmers in Oregon and Washington state say while domestic wheat and corn prices are climbing, they are directly affected by those increased costs for fuel and fertilizer. They say that limits profit and makes it difficult to estimate margins for the rest of the year. / BUSINESS, ENVIRONMENT, LEGAL: A coalition of businesses is asking a court to block Oregon's plan to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The state's new Climate Action Plan administrative rules were approved in December. They include a push to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation fuels and natural gas by 90 percent by the year 2050. But in a petition for judicial review filed this month, 12 industry trade groups claim the rules "hold fuel suppliers directly accountable" for the state's greenhouse gas emissions. The groups represent farming, ranching, fossil fuel, logging, manufacturing and retail businesses. ; Companies would be required to disclose the greenhouse gas emissions they produce and how climate risk affects their business, under new rules proposed by the Securities and Exchange Commission. The proposed rules are part of a drive across the government to address climate change. Under the proposals, public companies would have to report on their climate risks, including the costs of moving away from fossil fuels. They would be required to lay out their transition plans for managing climate risk, how they intend to meet climate goals and progress made, and the impact of severe weather events on their finances. / HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH: Oregon is one of seven states in 2020 that saw a decrease in suicide rates. But state prevention officials we still had the 13th-highest suicide rate in the U.S. and our numbers remain above the national average. Last week, Lane County declared a public health emergency due to an increase in youth suicides since November 2021. As part of the prevention effort, the state and county are providing additional resources and support to Lane County schools, healthcare providers, and community members. According to a new analysis that also includes preliminary data from 2021, Oregon for a third year had success in reducing statewide suicide deaths for youth ages 24 and younger. But other indications are not so encouraging: Call volumes to "Lines for Life," a regional substance abuse and suicide prevention nonprofit, have increased annually since 2016. Oregon has invested heavily in suicide prevention efforts in the recent years. That includes launching the Remote Suicide Risk Assessment and Safety Planning phone line and creating a tool to support school administrators, school counselors and other school-based mental health programs. The state also created the Oregon Behavioral Health Support Line, which offers live support. If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, please know that help is available: Oregon's Safe + Strong Helpline and website provide support for those struggling with the loss of loved ones and lifestyle changes. Go to <https://www.safestrongoregon.org/mental-and-emotional-health> The Safe + Strong Helpline, 1-800-923- HELP (4357), is available 24/7. 24/7 Suicide Prevention National Lifeline number: 1-800-273-8255. 24/7 Spanish Lifeline: 1-888-628-9454. 24/7 Crisis Text Line: Text "OREGON" to 741741. 24/7 Crisis Line for Veterans: 1-800-273-8255 and Press "1" or text 838255. Senior Loneliness Line: 503-200-1633. YouthLine for teen-to-teen crisis help through Lines for Life: 1-877-968-8491. Text teen2teen to 839863. / HEALTH: More declines in Oregon and Lane County's COVID-19 infection rates, as the omicron surge continues to dissipate. On Monday, Lane County Public Health was notified of a combined 46 new cases from the three-day, Friday through Sunday period. Local coronavirus-

related hospitalizations dropped from 29 patients on Thursday to 22 yesterday morning. There were no new reported weekend deaths. Oregon's statewide COVID-related cases and hospitalization numbers also continue to ease. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 560 new cases over the previous three days and five additional deaths. Health officials continue to keep an eye on cases in Europe related to the omicron subvariant known as BA.2, which appears more transmissible than the original. / RECREATION, ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORTATION: Planning to spend part of your day at Mount Pisgah and Lane County's popular Buford Park? You're now able to charge your electric vehicle while you're there. Lane County's Fleet Services Division has unveiled an electric vehicle (EV) charging station in the main parking area at Howard Buford Recreation Area (Mt. Pisgah). It's already operating with a grand opening event set for tomorrow. Buford Park and Mount Pisgah attracts hundreds of thousands of visits each year. The Emerald People's Utility District and Mount Pisgah Arboretum partnered with Lane County to create the charging station. The charging station can serve two vehicles at a time. Park visitors can connect their vehicles for a fee of \$1 per hour while they hike. Users will need the free ChargePoint app to use the station. The project was made possible in part by a \$24,000 Green Grant award from Emerald People's Utility District. / COMMUNITY, DEVELOPMENT: Congratulations to the City of Cottage Grove. Just received the announcement that it's been named Oregon's Tree City of the Year for 2022. The honor comes from the non-profit, Oregon Community Trees, and the Oregon Department of Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program. The mayor and others will acknowledge the honor as part of an Oregon Arbor Month celebration on Saturday, April 2, that will include a community tree giveaway. Cottage Grove has a population of about 10,800 people in southern Lane County. Those bestowing the honor note that for the past 28 years, Cottage Grove has been recognized nationally as a Tree City USA. That's the result of committing to growing a healthy urban forest, which in turn improves the livability and quality of life for its citizens and future generations. Among the ways that's happened: Cottage Grove has acquired close to five acres of streamside land for parks and open space; completed a tree canopy survey; and recycled and reused woody debris from branch and leaf pickup programs and tree maintenance operations. / BUSINESS, SAFETY, CRIME: For years, the federal government has been warning U.S. companies of the threats posed by Russian hackers. President Joe Biden is urging U.S. companies to make sure their digital doors are locked tight. Biden cites "evolving intelligence" that Russia is considering launching cyberattacks against critical infrastructure targets as the war in Ukraine continues. That might include the energy, medical, financial, and transportation sectors. The president's top cybersecurity aide, Anne Neuberger, expressed frustration Monday that some critical infrastructure entities have ignored alerts from federal agencies to fix problems in software that could be exploited by Russian hackers. / SPORTS: In sports notes: The undefeated Lane Community College Women's Basketball is headed for the Final Four in the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) tournament in Everett, Washington. The Titans are now 28-0 on the season and meet Lower Columbia on Saturday at 5 p.m. The Championship game is set for Sunday at 4:45 p.m. ; The Oregon State women's basketball team on Thursday hosts New Mexico in the final 16 of the WNIT tournament. Tip-off in Corvallis is 7 p.m. ; Oregon Softball had a win

yesterday at BYU, 9-3. The Ducks are back home Friday at 6 p.m. to host Cal for a three-game series at Jane Sanders Field. ; Oregon Baseball wrapped up a sweep of Utah Sunday afternoon and heads to Gonzaga today. ; Oregon Men's Golf, which has won two of its last four tournaments, wraps up hosting the 32nd Duck Invitational today at Eugene Country Club. ; Oregon Lacrosse defeated Marquette Sunday at Papé Field. ; Former Oregon quarterback Marcus Mariota has joined the Atlanta Falcons. It comes the Indianapolis Colts have acquired their new quarterback, Matt Ryan, in a trade with Atlanta. Indy is sending a third-round pick, No. 82 overall, for the longtime Falcons star. The rebuilding Falcons quickly announced the signing of Marcus Mariota, a former No. 2 overall pick. The 28-year-old Mariota played sparingly over the past two seasons as a backup to Derek Carr with the Las Vegas Raiders. /

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ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED

EMPLOYMENT: Oregon's unemployment rate dropped to 4.0 percent in February from January's 4.2 percent. Some of the biggest job gains were in the Leisure and Hospitality sector as pandemic restrictions and infections eased and people began traveling more and spending more money on recreation. Analysts with the Oregon Employment Department say they also recorded strong hiring gains in the Construction, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Professional and Business Services. Eight other categories also saw modest gains in employment. No sector had a substantial loss. Oregon's economy is now in its 22nd month of recovery from the pandemic-sparked recession. In February, officials say 59,000 Oregonians had been unemployed for less than six months—which was near the lowest number in two decades. The number of long-term unemployed—those looking for work for six months or more—also continued to fall. It stood at 24,000 last month. There are still weak spots in Oregon's economy. Despite recent gains, the Leisure and Hospitality sector continues to account for a large share of jobs that have still not returned since March of 2020. The category added more than 51,000 workers last year but has regained only 87 percent of the jobs it lost early in the pandemic. On the upside, Construction had record-high employment levels last month of 116,100 jobs. Analysts say mild weather in mid-February allowed roofers and other contractors to get work completed that may have been postponed in more severe winters. Professional and Technical Services also continued its rapid expansion. It has more jobs now than it did before the recession. / HEALTH: Officials with Moderna say their COVID-19 vaccine works in babies, toddlers, and preschoolers. The company announced early findings from a study of children younger than age six this morning. If regulators agree the small doses are safe and effective enough, parents could decide whether to vaccinate their youngest children by this summer. Moderna plans to submit the data to U.S. regulators in the coming weeks. While number of other countries allow Moderna vaccinations for older children, the U.S. currently limits them to adults. Moderna said also will continue its push to vaccinate teens and school-age children. ; Three more Lane County residents have died from complications of COVID-19. That raises our pandemic death toll from the past two years to 494. On Tuesday, Lane County Public Health was notified of 47 new cases. Local coronavirus-related hospitalizations rose to 28 patients, with three in intensive-

care beds. Overall, state and local COVID numbers have continued to ease as the omicron surge dissipates. But the virus continues to sicken those with vulnerable immune systems. And health officials continue to keep an eye on cases in Europe and increasingly here in the U.S. related to the omicron subvariant known as BA.2, which appears to be more transmissible than the original. More people are using home test kits to determine whether they've been infected. But not everyone is notifying their health care providers or county health departments when they do. Public health officials say without those reports, it is difficult to gauge the full impact of the virus' spread and take steps to protect those who are most vulnerable. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 269 new cases and eight additional deaths. ; In Washington state, health officials say the subvariant of omicron known as BA.2 accounts for about one-quarter of all COVID-19 cases recently sequenced. The Seattle Times quotes researchers who say the subvariant has steadily spread across Washington state and other parts of the country after becoming widespread in Europe. But researchers remain hopeful that any potential wave of the new strain will be milder and not cause as many infections, hospitalizations, and deaths as the original version of omicron did. Authorities say vaccinations—particularly booster doses—continue to protect against severe infection. ; Amid the easing of pandemic restrictions, more people are removing their masks in public, at work, and at events and social gatherings. But health experts say that's leading to a rise in late-season influenza cases. They're encouraging you to make sure you get your annual flu vaccine, even if you skipped it last fall. Flu season generally peaks around late January or February, but things were delayed because fewer people were out and about. Anyone ages 6 months and older is eligible to receive the flu vaccine, particularly young children, older adults, and those who have chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease or metabolic diseases such as diabetes. Experts say pregnant women also should be vaccinated since children younger than 6 months cannot receive the flu vaccine. The flu vaccine is free or low cost with most health insurance plans. / CRIME, SAFETY, POLICING: It was a quick decision, designed to save lives—but not one most of us would choose. An Oregon State Police sergeant last week stopped a wrong-way driver racing down an on-ramp toward Interstate 84 near The Dalles by intentionally colliding with the oncoming vehicle. Officials say the selfless act by State Police Sergeant Calloway likely saved lives. It came after drivers on I-84 in the Columbia Gorge began calling 9-1-1 about a white Ford Mustang whose driver was speeding and traveling erratically. The driving and safety concerns grew as State Police and sheriff's deputies out of Hood River both worked to pull over the suspect and deploy "stop sticks" to deflate his tires. They say his driving got worse as he took the first exit to The Dalles. Officers and troopers were stationed at the top of the exit. But when he spotted him, investigators say the suspect turned around and began driving the wrong way back toward the traffic lanes. Seeing the dangerous situation developing as he was exiting I-84, state police say Sergeant Calloway used his patrol car to intentionally collide with the Mustang. Those patrol cars must be sturdy: Sgt. Calloway only sustained minor injuries. The suspect—whose name has not been released—was hospitalized for non-life-threatening injuries and is expected to face a wide range of charges. / ENVIRONMENT, FISHERIES: Concerned about recent low returns of summer steelhead to the North Umpqua basin, the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife is considering how to protect and

enhance the runs. Last year, summer steelhead returns declined up and down the coasts of Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. Only 450 wild summer steelhead returned to the North Umpqua basin last year. The decline, along with the impacts of recent wildfires and drought, are prompting the agency to take a closer look at their effect on the North Umpqua's summer steelhead population, along with other factors such as ocean conditions and the hatchery program. The ODFW is collecting public input as part of the effort, including through an already-at-capacity in-person workshop in Roseburg later this month, an online survey, and a webinar in early April. Learn more at https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/CRP/north_umpqua_summer_steelhead.asp ; It is part of an effort to protect an iconic resident of Oregon's tide pools that is threatened by a fast-spreading disease. Oregonians who fish recreationally are now prohibited from taking home sea stars, otherwise known as starfish. The new rule from the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission went into effect Friday. It comes as sea stars struggle for survival along the Pacific Coast because of the spread of what is known as "sea star wasting syndrome." The disease was first detected in 2013. It causes sea stars to develop lesions. As the disease runs its course, their limbs break off and their bodies disintegrate. Commercial sea star harvesting in Oregon was banned in 2014. Recreationists were previously allowed to harvest up to 10 marine invertebrates, including shellfish and sea stars. ; The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission has voted to increase the number of invasive European green crabs that people can catch. Researchers say crab threatens Oregon's population of Dungeness crab. Marine scientists say green crabs dig up and eat eelgrass meadows, destroying seagrass many other creatures rely upon for food and shelter. They also displace juvenile Dungeness crabs from the places where they normally shelter and feed, making the Dungeness vulnerable to predators. Additionally, green crabs feed on clams, oysters, and mussels, reducing populations of those popular Oregon bivalves. European green crabs have found their way into Coos Bay and the vulnerable South Slough Estuary, among other locations. Experts say one of the best ways to reduce their populations is to trap and eat them. A lot of them. Green crabs may vary in color from green to yellow or orange. They have five spines on each side of their shells and three bumps between their eyes. Always check for these identifying marks before removing possible green crabs. Green crabs can be brought to the nearest Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife office or taken home and eaten. / SPORTS: In sports notes: Oregon Men's Golf finished fifth yesterday after the final round of the Duck Invitational at Eugene Country Club. ; The Oregon State women's basketball team on Thursday hosts New Mexico in the final 16 of the WNIT tournament. Tip-off in Corvallis is 7 p.m. ; Oregon Baseball defeated Gonzaga on the road yesterday, 9-5. The Ducks host USC Friday at 4:05 p.m. at PK Park. ; Oregon Softball is back home Friday at 6 p.m. to host Cal for a three-game series at Jane Sanders Field. ; Oregon Lacrosse hosts Cal on Friday at 5:00 p.m. ; The undefeated Lane Community College Women's Basketball is headed for the Final Four in the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) tournament in Everett, Washington. The Titans are now 28-0 on the season and meet Lower Columbia on Saturday at 5 p.m. The Championship game is set for Sunday at 4:45 p.m. /

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ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED YOUTH, SAFETY, TRANSPORTATION, EDUCATION: A horrific traffic accident this week in Oklahoma is focusing attention on the larger issue of the safety challenges facing teen drivers and the potentially deadly distractions when they have other passengers in their vehicles. Six teenage girls crowded into a small, four-seat car during their high school lunch break and were killed when their vehicle collided with a large truck hauling rock. The Oklahoma girls ranged in age from 15 to 17. The cause of the crash remains under investigation. But it highlights concerns about teenagers who transport other young passengers. A study by AAA, the automobile club, finds that adding just a single passenger under the age of 21 increases the risk of a crash by 44 percent when the driver is a teen and the fatality rate in those crashes climbs by 51 percent. Many teens are responsible, careful drivers. But experts say teens simply lack experience behind the wheel, which increases the odds of a dangerous outcome, not just for the teen driver, but for their passengers and others on the roadways. They urge parents of teens to take seriously the rite of passage a driver's license represents. AAA officials say supervised driving – with parents in the passenger seat as the coach – is the first step to teaching teens how to become responsible and safe drivers. They suggest requiring teens to log at least 100 hours of supervised practice driving with a parent before driving solo. Begin by practicing driving in low-risk situations and gradually move to situations that are more complex: highways, nighttime, driving in the rain, and on and around challenging roadways, including on curves. They add it is important for parents to set and consistently enforce rules to limit teenage passengers in the vehicle: Allow no more than one non-family passenger under the age of 20 to ride with the teen driver during the first six months of driving. Learn more at <https://exchange.aaa.com/safety/teen-driver-safety/> See Oregon's guide for teen drivers at <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/forms/dmv/7190.pdf> / CRIME: Police say they have arrested a Lane County man in connection with a March 14 suspected "road rage" incident in West Eugene that took the life of a pedestrian who was struck after getting out of his vehicle. Investigators say 62-year-old Walter Max Sledge of Walton was arrested without incident on Tuesday afternoon. Sledge was jailed on charges of Hit and Run and Murder. Officials thank members of the public for their tips in the case that helped them to locate the suspect's vehicle. 29-year-old

Dylan Mark Wilson of Eugene died in the nighttime incident at the intersection of the Beltline Highway and West 11th Avenue. Eugene Police continue to ask anyone who witnessed the incident or might have video of it to contact them. Contact the Eugene Police Major Collision Investigation team and Officer Allison Jordan at 541-682-5154, extension 1463, or email AMJordan@eugene-or.gov ; Police arrested a 38-year-old man early Wednesday morning after he allegedly broke into a café near the University of Oregon and appeared to be barricading himself inside. Evan Lee Pruitt was taken into custody with the assistance of a K-9 following the incident at the East 13th Avenue Café Yumm. Eugene Police say that during the incident Pruitt appeared to be putting hand sanitizer on the floor and using a large knife to cut potatoes. At one point, he reportedly had a large CO2 container on a table with a torch in his hand. ; The Lane County Sheriff's Office is asking for tips as it investigates the theft of a side-by-side utility vehicle stolen from a Bureau of Land Management work center early in the morning on Friday, March 18th. Security camera footage shows the suspect entering through the gate of the BLM's Shotgun Creek work center and stealing the green 2009 Polaris 800 Ranger. The BLM is offering a \$500 reward for information leading to the recovery of the stolen vehicle. Have information to share? Contact Sgt. Marvin Combs at the Lane County Sheriff's Office. Dial 541-682-4150 and select Option 1. ; Investigators say the driver who crashed head-on with another vehicle on the Beltline Tuesday night had a blood alcohol level nearly three times the legal limit. Officials say 41-year-old Rebecca Farset of Eugene was at the wheel when her vehicle struck another car near the Highway 99 interchange. / HEALTH: The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 314 new COVID-19 infections and 30 coronavirus-related deaths. That pushed the state's overall pandemic death toll above 7,000 for the first time (to 7,013). It came as the state continues to see declines in overall cases and hospitalizations, but continued deaths among those with the most vulnerable immune systems. The number of infections reported last week to the Oregon Health Authority was down close to 20 percent from the previous week. Last week, Oregon's total number of COVID infections since the start of the pandemic climbed above 700,000. Lane County Public Health received reports yesterday that two more local residents have died from complications of COVID-19. That raises our pandemic death toll to 496. On Wednesday, local health officials were notified of 21 new cases. Twenty-five Lane County residents remain hospitalized for complications of the coronavirus, with three in intensive-care beds. ; Health officials across the U.S. are continuing to keep an eye on cases of COVID-19 related to the newer omicron subvariant known as BA.2, which appears to be more transmissible than the original. Officials with the Oregon Health Authority say they, too, are tracking the spread of BA.2 and it is already circulating in Oregon. Not all COVID tests are genetically sequenced to determine which variant is causing a particular infection. But of those samples that were recently analyzed, close to 70 were confirmed to be from the omicron BA.2 subvariant. Still, that's currently a small number among the thousands of recently diagnosed cases tied to the main omicron variant. Nationwide, COVID-19 has sickened at least 79.8 million Americans and killed more than 974,000. / EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMY, BUSINESS: The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits last week fell to its lowest level in 52 years as the U.S. job market continues to show strength in the midst of rising costs and ongoing pandemic. Jobless claims fell to 187,000 for the week ending

March 19, the lowest since September of 1969, according to the Labor Department. Earlier this month, the government reported that employers added a robust 678,000 jobs in February, the largest monthly total since July. The unemployment rate dropped to 3.8 percent, extending a sharp decline in joblessness to its lowest level since before the pandemic erupted two years ago. U.S. businesses posted a near-record level of open jobs in January — 11.3 million — a trend has helped pad workers' pay and added to inflationary pressures. Some businesses continue to struggle to fill vacancies. They say the skills listed on some applications don't match the skills needed for the open jobs. Some workers continue to stay on the sidelines, either because they are concerned about their health, are caring for their youngsters during a shortage of available childcare spots, or still have a cushion of savings from federal and state pandemic assistance payments. But analysts say many of the workers with cash cushions are slowly returning to the workforce as they deplete those funds and as inflation increases the costs of basic goods and services. / TRANSPORTATION: Spring is here and it's time to take off the studded tires if you're using them on your vehicle. Oregon drivers have until Thursday, March 31, to remove them. But Oregon Department of Transportation officials are encouraging you to make the swap to your regular tires and not wait until the March 31 deadline, especially if you are not planning to drive over Oregon's mountain passes between now and then. Studded tires are allowed in Oregon from November 1 through March 31. They provide good traction on snow and ice but can damage road surfaces over time. A 2014 study found that studded tires cause about \$8.5 million in damage each year to state highways. ODOT experts say when it's time to buy your next set of traction tires, there are some good alternatives that cause less damage to roadways, ranging from newer studless tires to improved tire chains that are much easier to use. Drivers whose vehicles still are equipped with studded tires after the March 31 deadline can be charged by law enforcement with a Class C traffic violation. After March 31, ODOT officials ask that you please use other types of traction tires or chains, if needed, or postpone your travel over mountain passes until conditions change for the better. / SPORTS: In sports notes: The Oregon State women's basketball team hosts New Mexico this evening in the final 16 of the WNIT tournament. Tip-off in Corvallis is 7 p.m. ; Oregon Baseball hosts USC Friday at 4:05 p.m. at PK Park. ; Oregon Softball is back home Friday at 6 p.m. to host Cal for a three-game series at Jane Sanders Field. ; Oregon Lacrosse hosts Cal on Friday at 5:00 p.m. ; The undefeated Lane Community College Women's Basketball is headed for the Final Four in the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) tournament in Everett, Washington. The Titans are now 28-0 on the season and meet Lower Columbia on Saturday at 5 p.m. The Championship game is set for Sunday at 4:45 p.m. /

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NAME OF
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ISSUE OR
SUBJECT
DISCUSSED ENVIRONMENT, WEATHER, AGRICULTURE, WILDFIRES: We're less than one week into Spring, but already five Southern and Eastern Oregon counties have declared drought emergencies. The latest: Jackson County, which includes the cities of Medford, Central Point, and Ashland. Klamath, Crook, Jefferson, and Morrow counties made similar declarations earlier this month. The declarations allow state and local officials take steps to assist businesses and areas hardest hit by drought, but they also can add restrictions on water use where needed. The past few years in Oregon have been the state's third-driest on record. And this year, as the drought continues, Central and Southern Oregon are expected to experience the worst effects. Central Oregon especially is already in what experts say it "exceptional drought." They say that could make the region more vulnerable to reduced and warmer-than-normal streamflows—which can affect everything from irrigation and cattle-raising, power generation and fish migration, to summer recreation—and an increased risk of wildfires. Much of the problem is the general dryness of the Central Oregon landscape: after years of drought, moisture content in the top three feet of soil remains low. So even a drenching rain is not enough to fix things. The experts say Central Oregon would need to receive 150 to 200 percent or more of normal precipitation over next two months to offset those drought conditions. Here in Western Oregon, streamflow gauges and reservoir levels were well below where they were this time last year before this week's atmospheric river hit. The scientists say we could use a couple more of those weather events to help raise precipitation totals to where they should be. The experts say the past couple of years we've seen some strong offshore high-pressure weather systems that basically deflected many of our typical winter storms to the north of us. The good news, they say, is that there is no indication we will experience as warm and dry a spring as we did last year. And they think last summer's deadly "heat dome" will not repeat this year. But they say the Willamette Valley increasingly is seeing more summer days where high temperatures are above 90 degrees. So while we might not experience an extreme event like last summer's late-June heatwave, there appears to be a definite warming trend in recent years. / ECONOMY, TRANSPORTATION: Gasoline prices continue to ease at the pump. AAA, the automobile club, says the average national price for a gallon of regular fuel is down two cents since

Monday. That reflects both a stabilization of global oil prices and a slowing of consumer demand as high gas prices put a crunch on household finances. This morning, Lane County's average gas price \$4.74, down a penny from yesterday. One month ago, it was \$4.00 per gallon. One year ago it was \$3.14. But the average price this morning for diesel is \$5.50, up two cents over the past seven days. But analysts warn prices might climb again if tensions continue to rise over the Russian invasion of Ukraine. / SAFETY: On Thursday, acting on a tip from a family, Springfield Police Officer Walsh located and retrieved a wanted escapee on Highway 126 Eastbound in Springfield near Interstate 5. According to nine-year-old Benton, the fugitive allegedly "leapt" from an open car window at freeway speeds. The fugitive, named Timmy, is a stuffed shark toy. Police say Timmy is lucky to be alive and miraculously suffered only minor road rash. Speed appears to be a contributing factor in the injuries sustained. Back with Benton and his family, sources tell us Timmy "The Stuffed Shark" has been sentenced to house arrest with 5 years of parole. The family has agreed to participate in a comprehensive Baby Shark review daily, which involves singing the "Baby Shark" song. / HEALTH: Oregon continues to see declines in overall COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, but hospitalizations and deaths continue among those with the most vulnerable immune systems. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 301 new COVID-19 infections and 20 coronavirus-related deaths. Lane County Public Health received reports yesterday of 37 new COVID-19 infections and one recent death. That raises our pandemic death toll to 497. Twenty-one Lane County residents remain hospitalized for complications of the coronavirus, with five in intensive-care beds. / TRANSPORTATION, HEALTH: The airline trade group that supported a federal mask mandate for all air travelers has asked the Biden administration to end the mask requirement and eliminate other COVID-19 protocols for travelers. Airlines for America, which represents American, Delta, United, Southwest, Alaska, JetBlue and other carriers, released a letter Wednesday addressed to President Biden, saying "the persistent and steady decline of hospitalization and death rates are the most compelling indicator that our country is well protected against disease from COVID-19." The U.S. Travel Association, which represents the country's travel industry, also issued a letter Wednesday, asking the Biden administration to end coronavirus testing for international travelers to the U.S. and mask mandates on flights. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention two weeks ago announced a one-month extension to the mask mandate for passengers on planes, buses, trains and transit hubs, to April 18. The CDC also said it was developing guidance to ease the mandate as soon as April. In response to the extension, the Transportation Workers Union, which represents mechanics, baggage handlers, flight attendants and other transportation workers, said it supported any "federal guidance based on science" but noted that the mask mandate has led to harassment and assaults against flight attendants. Since September 2021, the Transportation Security Administration has imposed almost \$400,000 in civil penalties against more than 600 passengers who refused to wear a mask on a plane. / TRANSPORTATION, BUSINESS: Southwest Airlines officials announced this week that starting on June 5th, the airline will begin a new nonstop service between Eugene and San Jose, California. San Jose is California's third-most populous city and is home to Silicon Valley. The new service marks Southwest's fourth nonstop destination from Eugene. The new daily flight will operate on a

Boeing 737-700 with 143 seats. The aircraft will depart Eugene at 12:35 p.m., arriving in San Jose at 2:10 p.m. The San José to Eugene flight leaves Northern California each day 11:25 a.m. and arrives in Lane County at 12:55 p.m. /

TRANSPORTATION, ENVIRONMENT: One in five of the first batch of next-generation U.S. Postal Service delivery vehicles will be electric-powered, officials said Thursday. The Postal Service formally placed its initial \$2.98 billion order for 50,000 vehicles with at least 10,019 of them being battery-electric vehicles. That represents a doubling of electric vehicles from the initial plan. The new vehicles are taller to make it easier for postal carriers to grab packages and parcels that make up a greater share of volume. They also have improved ergonomics and climate control. The first of the new vehicles are expected to be on delivery routes by late next year. The Postal Service is in the process of replacing the ubiquitous delivery trucks that went into service between 1987 and 1994. The fleet currently includes 190,000 local delivery vehicles. More than 141,000 of those are the old models that lack safety features like air bags, anti-lock brakes and backup cameras. It would cost an extra \$3.3 billion to convert the entire Postal Service fleet to electric vehicles. Money for that was included in Biden's Build Back Better plan that stalled in Congress. / COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENT: Oregon yesterday became the fourth U.S. state to enact a law establishing a statewide mattress recycling program. The law, championed by Lane County State Senator James Manning, requires mattress manufacturers to set up and operate a recycling program, overseen by the state, to make it easy for consumers to recycle their unwanted mattresses. The new law calls for establishing convenient locations in every county for residents to drop off their mattresses. The goal: reduce illegal dumping and create more recycling-sector jobs. It is similar to the Oregon paint stewardship law and discarded electronics programs, where retailers and collection sites collect a small fee from consumers to help fund the programs. Mattress Recycling Council programs already exist in California, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Together, those three states have collected more than 10 million mattresses. The programs have recycled 380 million pounds of steel, foam, fiber, and wood—preventing those materials from winding up in landfills. The components then are recycled into new products. Oregon's mattress recycling program will be reviewed every five years, both to determine its effectiveness and to gauge how well it's reduced litter and the number of products heading to landfills. / SPORTS: In sports notes: The Oregon State women's basketball team rallied last night to defeat New Mexico, 78-73, and advance to the quarterfinals of the Women's National Invitation Tournament. On Sunday, they host UCLA at Gill Coliseum in Corvallis. Tip-off is at noon. ; Oregon Baseball hosts USC this afternoon at 4:05 p.m. at PK Park. ; Oregon Softball is back home today at 6 p.m. to host Cal for a three-game series at Jane Sanders Field. ; Oregon Lacrosse hosts Cal today at 5:00 p.m. ; The undefeated Lane Community College Women's Basketball is headed for the Final Four in the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) tournament in Everett, Washington. The Titans are now 28-0 on the season and meet Lower Columbia on Saturday at 5 p.m. The Championship game is set for Sunday at 4:45 p.m. /

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HEATH, ENVIRONMENT: With the arrival of warmer Spring weather, pollen levels are beginning to rise. So, too, are allergy symptoms. This time of year, tree pollens are the primary culprit, as native Alder and Maple trees lead the way. But many local street trees also are in bloom, including birch trees with their pollen-laden catkins. Grass pollen levels are lower but will climb in the coming weeks. / SAFETY, TRANSPORTATION: Oregon Highway 34 is closed seven miles west of Alsea in the Coast Range after a log truck crashed overnight. Crews are working in the area and awaiting the arrival of equipment to help them unload the trailer so it may be turned upright. That could take several hours. Travelers are being urged to take alternate routes. Go to www.tripcheck.com for updates. / ECONOMY: Watch for extra traffic this morning on Coburg Road, Chad Drive, and Crescent Avenue. The new WinCo store in northeast Eugene opens its doors this morning at 9 a.m. Staff and vendors spent the weekend stocking shelves and finishing up their training. The WinCo is opening in the spot formerly occupied by a ShopKo store and the building underwent a significant remodel and expansion for its conversion to grocery retailing. ; It was a busy final weekend of Spring Break around Eugene-Springfield. Yard and Garden stores—ranging from Jerry's Home Improvement, Lane Forest Products, and Rexius, along with Down-to-Earth and local nurseries like Johnson Brothers—were packed with shoppers. Family-friendly locations such as local parks and Camp Putt attracted crowds amid the sunshine. At the University of Oregon, students returned to their dorm rooms from Spring Break. Fans crowded the UO softball and baseball games or peered over the fence to get a closer look at the massive new, curved video board recently installed at Hayward Field. / EVENTS: Lane County's Farmers Market opens its Spring season on Saturday and will operate every Saturday through December 17th, rain or shine, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. For the first part of the season, the booths will be set up along that two-block stretch of Eugene's 5th Avenue between Oak and High Streets, where they've been operating every weekend since early February. But later this year, everyone will relocate once the new Farmers Market Pavilion and Plaza is completed at 8th Avenue and Oak Street, across from the Park Blocks and the Lane County Courthouse. Completion of the new pavilion was originally set for next month, but coordinators say delays in the shipping of some construction materials has pushed the completion date to the

end of May—with the Farmers' Market set to open at its new home in early June. For its Spring season, the Lane County Farmers' Market is offering longer hours and will feature close to 60 farmers and food artisans. They're selling a range of local food products including seafood, meats, vegetables, fruit and flowers. All foods sold at the Lane County Farmers Market are either grown by Oregon farmers or made in Oregon with a portion of locally grown ingredients. Customers who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP benefits may use them at the market. You'll want to visit the Market Information Booth for details on how to do that. / SPORTS: In sports notes: The Oregon State women's basketball team lost to UCLA, 74-66, in Sunday's quarterfinals and is out of the WNIT. ; Oregon Baseball split a Sunday doubleheader with USC at PK Park. ; 12th-ranked Oregon Softball defeated Cal on Sunday, 8-7, at Jane Sanders Stadium. ; A great season, but the Lane Community College Women's Basketball team came up short in the NWAC Championships over the weekend. The Titans lost the title game to Lower Columbia, 77-70. But it was the only loss in Lane's otherwise impressive season. / AGRICULTURE, FAMILY: It is "Chick Cam" season for the Oregon State University Extension Service. The first chicks are set to begin hatching on Tuesday (March 28). The eggs are ready to shake, rattle and roll. For the ninth year, you may watch chicks hatch on the Oregon State University Extension Service livestream. Check it out at <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/watch-chicks-hatching-osu-extensions-webcam> The livestream will document the chicks as they hatch. The cameras will remain on until 5 p.m. March 31. Faculty and staff at the OSU Extension office in Astoria set up cameras to bring the livestream to the public. Once the chicks hatch, they move from the incubator to a brooding pen where they remain until they are able to regulate their body temperatures, according to Julie Scism, education program assistant with Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program in Clatsop County. The camera will rotate between the incubator and brooding pen until the chicks are ready to move into an outdoor environment. Once they're big enough, the chicks go home with OSU Extension 4-H members, who care for them and show them at the county and state fairs. "The chicks are well taken care of," Scism said. "After the chicks get big enough, they'll be rehomed so that local 4-H youth continue learning about raising chickens, egg production and showmanship." Since the annual livestream launched in 2014, more than 80,000 people from around the world have watched chicks hatching on the OSU Extension website and more have watched on TV station websites. / SAFETY, FISHERIES: The U.S. Coast Guard has suspended the search for the master of a fishing vessel that sank late Friday night in the Pacific Ocean about 35 miles off the coast of Florence. Officials say 68-year-old Mike Morgan of Newport made a mayday call around midnight on Friday to report that his 32-foot fishing vessel was sinking. An MH-65 Dolphin rescue helicopter crew from Newport spotted the vessel's debris field and a life raft when they arrived at the spot where an emergency beacon had been activated but had to return to base because of heavy fog and low visibility. A motor lifeboat crew recovered the body of a female crew member early Saturday. Officials have not yet released her name. Over the next 24 hours, the Coast Guard used helicopters and boats to search for signs of Morgan across a more than 230-square-mile area but were unsuccessful in locating him. Officials say the decision to suspend an active search is never easy but will resume it if they receive credible information about Morgan's location. / CRIME, SAFETY,

HOMELESSNESS: Police say a 24-year-old man crashed his car into a homeless encampment early Sunday morning in Salem, killing four people and injuring three others, including the driver. Investigators arrested 24-year-old Enrique Rodriguez Jr. Sunday evening and charged him with four counts of first-degree manslaughter. Officials say alcohol use might have been a factor in the deadly crash. /

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SCHOOL, SAFETY, TRANSPORTATION: One veteran school bus driver says he sees it every single day—and it's terrifying. Eugene Police, in partnership with the Eugene and Bethel school districts, are reminding drivers to stop for school buses when their lights are flashing. They're concerned after receiving a number of recent complaints about drivers who are not doing that. Oregon law requires drivers to stop and remain stopped for school buses displaying flashing safety lights. These safety lights are activated by bus drivers at stops to allow children to safely get on and off their bus and cross the street. This law applies to vehicles on BOTH sides of the road. Police remind you that while an expensive ticket is bad, colliding with a child is tragic. Please be patient when you see school buses and their flashing lights. Be patient. Protect children. Be safe. / TRANSPORTATION: One more reminder: Spring is here and it's time to take off the studded tires if you're using them on your vehicle. Oregon drivers have until the end of the day on Thursday (March 31), to remove them. Studded tires are allowed in Oregon from November 1 through March 31. They provide good traction on snow and ice but can damage road surfaces over time. A 2014 study found that studded tires cause about \$8.5 million in damage each year to state highways. ODOT experts say when it's time to buy your next set of traction tires, there are some good alternatives that cause less damage to roadways, ranging from studless tires to improved tire chains that are much easier to use. Drivers whose vehicles still are equipped with studded tires after Thursday night's deadline may be charged by law enforcement with a Class C traffic violation. After March 31, ODOT officials say you may still use other types of traction tires or chains, if needed, or postpone your travel over mountain passes until conditions change for the better. / EVENTS: After two years of a virtual event, the annual Oregon Country Fair is returning in July for three days of in-person festivities. Planners say the event in the woods near Veneta will take place on July 8, 9, and 10. Tickets go on sale April 1st at ticketswest.com But because the pandemic is continuing, attendees will need to provide proof of full COVID-19 vaccination or proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken within 24 hours prior to the date of entry. The Oregon Country Fair attracts close to 50,000 visits over the three-day event, in addition to the thousands of volunteers, vendors, and performers who coordinate it. The 2022 Oregon Country Fair will feature 18 entertainment stages, more than 80

food booths, and close to 350 craft booths featuring more than 700 vendors. There are also occasional parades and other activities. When tickets go on sale on Friday, April 1, individual ticket prices are \$40 for Friday, July 8; \$40 for Saturday, July 9; and \$35 for Sunday, July 10. Tickets purchased the day of the event are \$50 for Friday, Saturday or Sunday. All admission tickets are sold through TicketsWest online at ticketswest.com. Prices do not include TicketsWest service fees. Children ages 10 and under are admitted free with a ticketed adult and there is a \$5 discount for individuals who are alter-abled or age 65 or older. No admission tickets are sold at the fair site. Parking at the Oregon Country Fair is \$15 per vehicle per day. Parking passes may be purchased with admission tickets or onsite the day of the fair. Fairgoers must show an admission ticket or will-call voucher to drive onto the site. To encourage all fairgoers to use public transportation, the Oregon Country Fair has partnered with Lane Transit District to provide free bus service to the fair site for those with tickets. That free service is available both on regular LTD routes and the Fair shuttles the weekend of the event. Full entertainment schedules will be posted on the Oregon Country Fair web site in the coming weeks. More information is at www.oregoncountryfair.org /

HEALTH: Concerned about waning immunity and the COVID variant known as "stealth omicron," U.S. regulators this morning announced that they are ready to allow people ages 50 and older to receive another booster dose of the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. The Food and Drug Administration guidance would make millions of Americans eligible to receive a fourth dose. The second booster is expected to become available immediately after leaders with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reach their own decision. According to the new FDA guidance, those who are eligible would be able to seek a fourth dose several months after their previous booster. The decision is intended to offer extra protection to the most vulnerable should the virus rebound. That includes older adults who were vaccinated in the fall and are concerned about possible exposure this spring and summer. With this month's COVID-19 infection rate cases relatively low, it's not clear whether those ages 50 and older need to rush out and get the additional dose. The ruling came without a meeting of the FDA's independent advisory panel. There's limited evidence on how much benefit another booster will offer right now. But experts have focused on studies from Israel, where a second booster provided added protection during the end of the omicron surge. /

HEALTH, WILDFIRES, ENVIRONMENT: Some sobering new research finds that if severe wildfire seasons continue and intensify across the West, Oregon could see particle pollution from wildfire smoke increase more than 50 percent by the middle of the century and triple by century's end. The troubling scenarios were published Monday by scientists at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Princeton University. They say if drought and warming temperatures from climate change continue, we might regularly see smoky skies in late summer and early fall. The new computer model shows burned landscapes are causing ground temperatures to rise and further elevate wildfire risk. The modeling also shows how climate change is driving weather conditions including unhealthy air, increased air stagnation, and wildfire smoke that travels greater distances. This and other studies increasingly find that particle pollutants in wildfire smoke are raising the risk of experiencing a wide range of health issues, including cardiovascular disease, birth defects, even an increased risk of developing COVID-19. /

CRIME: Eugene Police say a woman walking her

dog near Arthur Street and West 15th Court in West Eugene was splashed by a stranger with an unknown acid substance late yesterday morning. Investigators say they believe the assault might be related to the victim's ethnicity, which could make it a possible hate crime. It happened shortly before 11:30 a.m. The woman was taken to the hospital for treatment of chemical burns and the dog was transported to an emergency veterinarian's office for evaluation. Police say the woman told them the suspect fled on foot west toward the Amazon Canal. He is described as a white male, possibly between the ages of 17-20, with dirty blond hair. He was last seen wearing a black surgical face mask, jeans, black boots and black hoodie. Eugene Police are asking for leads in the case and would especially like to hear from anyone who might have home security or vehicle camera footage of the incident or the suspect. Please call 541.682.5569, Detective Glenn Gilhuber, and refer to case 22-04892. ; The teen suspect in a Eugene-area weekend shooting that left another juvenile wounded has been arrested in Douglas County. Lane County Sheriff's officials say 16-year-old Elijah James Grinstead was located at a Roseburg residence by Douglas County Sheriff's deputies. Investigators say Grinstead intentionally shot and wounded the other juvenile at a residence in the 2400 block of Marjorie Avenue in northeast Eugene on Saturday. Officials say the victim was known to Grinstead but have not released additional details in the case. ; Eugene Police say they arrested a Springfield man early Sunday morning after he allegedly fired shots during a physical dispute in the parking lot of a West Eugene bar. There were no reports of anyone being wounded during the incident. 22-year-old Michael Luther Woolsey was jailed for Unlawful Use of a Weapon and Unlawful Possession of a Firearm, and on an outstanding warrant. Police say the altercation was reported shortly after 2:20 a.m. Sunday in the parking lot of the Silver Dollar Club off West 10th Place. Police say they arrested Woolsey without incident and recovered a firearm during their investigation. ; The search continues for a Springfield man reported missing since the middle of this month. Lane County Sheriff's deputies say a passerby on Sunday spotted a car belonging to 34-year-old Eric Ray Brazil. It was located in a wooded area near Vida near the end of Goodpasture Road. Brazil was reported missing to the Springfield Police Department by a friend earlier this month after being last seen on March 14th. Eric Brazil is described as a Latino male adult standing about five-foot-11 and weighing approximately 170 pounds. He has brown hair and brown eyes. He was last believed to be wearing a maroon hooded sweatshirt, black Carhartt vest, a black beanie hat, black pants and black shoes with white soles. Officials were told Brazil had been behaving in a paranoid fashion recently and might suffer from mental health issues. If you've seen him or have any information about his whereabouts, the Springfield Police Department would like to hear from you. Call 541-726-3714. Reference SPD case #22-1967. / POLICING: Springfield's new police chief was sworn in Monday. Andrew Shearer has been interim chief for ten months. Springfield officials say he has a collaborative leadership style and focuses on community partnerships. Shearer pledges to continue working to build trust and strengthen the connections between Springfield Police and the community. Shearer began his policing career close to 30 years ago in Portland, working in a variety of roles from neighborhood policing to overseeing the Investigative Branch and other key divisions, and becoming assistant police chief. / ECONOMY, EMPLOYMENT: When hundreds of thousands of workers quit their jobs during the pandemic, it was dubbed The

Great Resignation. Many left for higher-paying gigs or left the workforce altogether. But a new study that USA Today commissioned from the Harris Poll organization finds that that most workers who quit jobs during the Great Resignation regret leaving or starting a new position, or don't plan to stay with their new employer. Those with regrets gave various reasons. Some say their new role is different from what they expected. Others say they lost their work-life balance or miss the culture of their previous job. Some said they didn't really give their move a great deal of thought, or they left with a cushion of cash that is now being eaten by rising inflation. / SPORTS: Some big player losses for the Oregon Women's Basketball team. Forward Nyara Sabally has decided to enter the WNBA draft. Sabally, a fourth-year sophomore, was the team's top scorer and rebounder, averaging 15.4 points and 7.8 boards. She also averaged 1.4 blocks per game. A native of Germany, Sabally is the younger sister of Satou Sabally, who also played at Oregon and is now with the WNBA's Dallas Wings. In the hours after Sabally announced her plans to enter the WNBA draft, veteran players Sydney Parrish, Kylee Watson, and Maddie Scheer (sheer) revealed that they plan to enter the NCAA's transfer portal. The Duck women still have some strong returnees and a promising class of incoming freshman recruits. ; Some national attention for the Oregon State and Oregon baseball teams. The Beavers are ranked in the Top 5 in three separate polls, including Number 2 by Baseball America. The Oregon Ducks are in the Top 25 in several polls, including as high as Number 11 in the Collegiate Baseball standings. /

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HEALTH: U.S. regulators on Tuesday authorized another COVID-19 booster for people ages 50 and older, a step to offer extra protection for the most vulnerable should we see another surge of COVID-19 this spring and summer. The decision from the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention makes the fourth dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines available to those who are eligible and are at least four months past receiving their previous booster. Prior this, the FDA had cleared fourth doses only for people ages 12 and older who have severely weakened immune systems. FDA leaders said yesterday that this especially fragile group also can get an additional, fifth booster. The latest expansion provides an extra dose for millions of Americans. The question now is whether everyone who is eligible should rush out and get it. COVID-19 cases have dropped to low levels after the winter surge of the highly contagious omicron variant. CDC data indicates that two vaccine doses plus a booster still provide strong protection against severe disease and death. But an omicron sibling known as BA.2 or "stealth omicron" is causing a worrisome jump in infections in Europe — and the CDC announced yesterday it now is the dominant strain across our country. A potential surge of BA.2 comes as vaccination rates across the U.S. have stalled. About two-thirds of Americans are fully vaccinated with their initial two doses, but half of those eligible for their first booster still haven't gotten it. There's limited evidence to tell how much benefit another booster could offer right now. Israel, the first country to offer such doses, says it found they increased protection as the effects of the first booster waned, especially in older adults, whose immune systems are more vulnerable. None of the COVID-19 vaccines are as strong as good a match for the omicron variant as they were against earlier versions of the virus. Protection against milder infections naturally wanes over time. But scientists say the immune system builds multiple layers of defense beyond antibodies that can help prevent severe illness and death. What's far from clear is how long any extra benefit from another booster would last and when is the best time to get it. Some experts say getting a booster dose right before a surge is the ideal time. But they note that longer intervals between vaccination doses can help the immune system mount a stronger, more cross-reactive defense. Next week, the government will hold a public meeting to debate whether everyone eventually needs a fourth dose, possibly this fall, and

whether it should be of the original vaccine formulations or an updated dose that factors in the newer variants. The National Institutes of Health recently tested monkeys and found “no significant advantage” to using a booster that targets just omicron. ; Lane County Public Health has received two more reports of deaths related to COVID-19—which raised our two-year pandemic death toll to 500 yesterday. The county also was notified of 35 new infections. Twenty local residents are hospitalized, but only one of those patients is in an intensive-care bed. The Oregon Health Authority yesterday received reports of 351 new infections and 42 additional deaths, which raised our statewide pandemic death toll to 7,115. / TRANSPORTATION, HEALTH: Twenty-one states are suing the Biden Administration, seeking to end the federal mask mandate for people on commercial airline flights, on trains, buses, light rail, and subways, and in transit hubs including airports, train, and bus stations. The suit was filed in Florida. It comes after the Transportation Security Administration or TSA decided to extend the federal mask mandate to April 18. The mask requirement had been set to expire on March 18 but was extended by one month to allow federal public health leaders time to develop new, more targeted policies to protect passengers and workers. / CRIME: Eugene Police say the woman who was splashed with acid by a stranger while walking her dog near Arthur Street and West 15th Court in West Eugene on Monday has been released from the hospital. Investigators say the assault might be related to the victim's ethnicity, which could make it a possible hate crime. They also continue to ask for leads in the case and would like to hear from anyone who might have home security or vehicle camera footage of the incident or the suspect. Please call 541.682.5569, Detective Glenn Gilhuber, and refer to case 22-04892. / SAFETY: Have you seen him? The Lane County Sheriff's Office is trying to locate a missing person. 47-year-old Manuel Joseph Bayya was last seen in the Elmira area on March 7th. He commonly travels on a red sport-bike motorcycle. Bayya is described as a Native American male standing approximately five-foot-ten and weighing about 170 pounds. He has brown hair and brown eyes. If you have any information about Bayya's whereabouts, the Lane County Sheriff's Office would like to hear from you. Please call 541-682-4150 and select Option 1. / CRIME, TERRORISM, ENVIRONMENT: A former Seattle man who was on the run for 12 years and accused of eco-terrorism appears ready to accept a plea deal next week. Accused eco-saboteur Joseph Dibee was charged in a string of attacks that destroyed or damaged environmental targets across the West two decades ago. He was arrested in Cuba in 2018 as he prepared to board a flight for Russia. Prosecutors say that in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the now-55-year-old Dibee joined about a dozen animal rights and environmental activists known as “The Family” in setting fires around the West. Investigators say Dibee took part in targeting a Bonneville Power Administration transmission tower near Bend; helped set fire to a horse slaughterhouse in Redmond and a federally owned wild horse corral in Susanville, California; and a fire at U.S. Department of Agriculture building in Washington state; and a blaze that destroyed a federal horse corral in California. But prosecutors say Dibee fled the U.S. in December 2005, one month before he was indicted, living first in Syria and then in Russia. The Oregonian and OregonLive report terms of Dibee's plea deal and recommended sentence have not been released. But Dibee's attorney said in a filing in federal court earlier this month that the settlement might mean no further time behind bars. U.S. District

Judge Ann Aiken will preside over the plea hearing, which is set for Monday. / **DISASTERS, WILDFIRE RECOVERY:** The Oregon State Fire Marshal's office is beginning a series of free webinars to help you prepare your property and your community for the threat of wildfire. The first online seminar takes place tomorrow evening, March 31st, starting at 6:00 p.m. and runs about an hour. This week's focus is on defensible space: What to do in that first 100 feet around your home to better safeguard it. Want to stream the session? Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wildfire-risk-reduction-webinar-what-is-the-home-ignition-zone-registration-293405562937> The webinar also will be recorded and posted online for later viewing. / **ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITY:** It's known as "renewable natural gas." The idea is to capture biogases such as methane and carbon dioxide that might otherwise be released into the atmosphere—contributing to global warming—and instead convert and harness them to heat homes and businesses and power appliances. Later today, officials at the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission—or MWMC—along with local leaders and representatives of Northwest Natural—will hold a ribbon cutting to celebrate of the agency's new Renewable Natural Gas facilities. The new equipment is located at MWMC's metropolitan waste treatment plant off River Avenue. And, yes, let's just get this out of the way now: Every time you flush your toilet, you're contributing to the "green" effort. The equipment "scrubs" the biogas produced during the processing of what we'll call "waste solids" to strip it of its carbon dioxide and other contaminants and produce pure methane for natural gas. The final product then is injected into NW Natural system. The process began in November of 2021, making MWMC the first public agency to contribute the "renewable natural gas." Agency officials say this allows them to divert and process virtually all of the biogas created during the waste treatment process. Previously, the MWMC used about 60 percent of its biogas to power its treatment plant, but the remaining 40 percent was flared to the atmosphere. They say this project enable them to minimize flaring and convert nearly all of the biogas to clean energy. / **ENVIRONMENT, FISHERIES:** Good news from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife: The fish viewing area at Winchester Dam north of Roseburg reopens on Friday, April 1. Access to the viewing area had been restricted because of the pandemic. For decades, the fish ladder at Winchester Dam has been a popular stop off Interstate 5 and provides an opportunity for visitors to see migratory fish like Chinook and coho salmon, steelhead and lamprey. April visitors may see winter steelhead or spring Chinook at the fish ladder. One note for visitors: There is no restroom at the viewing area. But a restroom is available at John P. Amacher Park across the Highway 99 bridge. For more information on the Winchester Dam viewing area, call the ODFW's Roseburg office at 541-440-3353 or visit <https://myodfw.com/winchester-dam-fish-counts> / **COMMUNITY, ANIMALS, ENVIRONMENT:** Springfield residents: Do you have an adorable dog that enjoys the outdoors? Enter your dog for a chance to be featured in the City of Springfield's Canines for Clean Water 2023 Calendar. The calendar brings dog lovers together to celebrate their canine friends, recognize that local waterways are wonderful places for people and their pets to enjoy, and agree to contribute to clean water by picking up their dog's waste. The calendar contest is accepting entries through April 12. To enter, you and your dog must live in Springfield or Glenwood, pledge to pick up after your canine(s) and submit a dog photo either by FaceBook or email. Details for

entering are at bit.ly/caninecal Judges will select 12 winners in April, and those will be photographed by Springfield city staff in May. This will be the 11th edition of the Canines for Clean Water calendar from the City of Springfield's Stormwater Team. The 2023 calendar is scheduled to be available for free to all Springfield residents in November 2022, while supplies last. /

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ECONOMY, TRANSPORTATION: President Biden is ordering the release of one million barrels of oil per day from the nation's strategic petroleum reserve for the next six months in a bid to control rising energy prices. The combined release is more than 180 million barrels from the reserve, which currently holds roughly 568 million barrels of crude. The White House says Biden will also call on Congress to impose financial penalties on oil and gas companies that lease public lands but aren't producing energy. For drivers, that's good news after gasoline prices surged to record highs during the past six weeks during Russia's run-up to and invasion of Ukraine. Russia is the world's second-largest exporter of oil and the recent economic sanctions by governments around the world have disrupted flows out of the country. That drove other spikes in inflation across the global economy as manufacturers, farmers, food suppliers, and other businesses pass along increased production and shipping costs to consumers. The International Energy Agency is holding an emergency meeting on Friday to discuss oil supply concerns. ; With the easing and stabilization of global oil prices, gas prices are staying stable or retreating somewhat in many parts of Oregon. But they remain painfully high after a month-and-a-half of increases. AAA, the automobile club, says this morning's average price for a gallon of regular-grade fuel in Eugene-Springfield is \$4.72, down three cents from one week ago. One month ago, it was \$4.02 per gallon. One year ago, it was \$3.17. But the average price this morning for diesel is up to \$5.58, up seven cents over the past seven days. / HEALTH: State health officials say Oregon has enough COVID-19 vaccine supply to meet the demand for second booster doses for people ages 50 and older and younger people who are immunocompromised. It comes after federal agencies earlier this week authorized the second boosters of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. Those who qualify for the second booster also must be at least four months past their first booster dose. If you received a primary vaccine and booster dose of Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine at least four months ago, you also now qualify to receive a second booster dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna mRNA vaccine. Leaders with the Oregon Health Authority say roughly 270-thousand doses of Pfizer and Moderna's vaccine currently are distributed across the state and should easily meet any surge in demand. And they say the CDC is ready to send more doses if state and local vaccination providers need them. According to state

data, close to 56 percent of Oregonians ages 50 and older, or about 893,000 residents, received their initial COVID booster. Analysts with the Oregon Health Authority estimate around half-a-million second booster doses might be given over the next four to six months. Vaccines are available through many health care providers and local pharmacies, along with some larger vaccination sites. That includes the outdoor drive-through site at Eugene's Autzen Stadium, which operates Thursdays through Sundays from noon to 7 p.m. It's worth noting if you're looking to book a second booster appointment that many health care providers and vaccination locations have not yet updated their online appointment forms to reflect the option of the second booster. That should happen in the next day or so. And while many older adults now are eligible for those second boosters of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, state health officials continue to encourage everyone ages 12 and older to receive their primary doses of COVID-19 vaccine followed by a booster. They say those who have not received those doses are most at-risk for infection and illness. / HEALTH, LOW-INCOME: It was a glitch in a state software system. It delayed or withheld a portion of their pay from more than 4,300 home-care workers across Oregon. But leaders with SEIU Local 503, the union representing a large share of the home-care workforce, say the state is going to pay a combined \$1.3 million in late fees to those who were affected. The money begins arriving in May. The problem began in August when the state implemented a new electronic timecard system that still required some manual entry by state staff. Many workers said that, for a time, they were not paid for all the hours they worked. Others complained their paychecks were delayed. A spokesperson for Oregon's Department of Human Services says they are working on a fix and have hired additional technical staff to assist affected home-care workers. Union officials and members staged demonstrations in recent weeks to highlight the problem. SEIU Local 503's Vice-President Rebecca Sandoval says about half of its members who are home-care workers live at or below the poverty line, so a missing or partial paycheck has a huge impact. / POLITICS, CRIME, POLICING, RACIAL JUSTICE: Oregon auditors say the breach of the state Capitol in December 2020 and a standoff in Portland with police capped a year of heightened politically motivated violence. In the advisory report released Wednesday, auditors say the state could do more to prevent these events and improve coordination between levels of government and agencies grappling with the threat of extremist acts. Auditors cited data from the Center for Strategic and International Studies that shows Oregon might rank 27th among states in population but comes in sixth among states for violent extremist attacks between 2011 and 2020. Auditors say the threats have "become increasingly complex and volatile." / SAFETY: Eugene Springfield Fire responded to a reported house fire in the 2400 block of Springfield's G Street on Wednesday afternoon. When firefighters arrived, they found a blaze in the crawlspace of the home and had to cut through the floor to extinguish it. The house was unoccupied at the time of the fire. The cause of the blaze is under investigation. / EVENTS: Eugene's Saturday Market begins its 2022 run this weekend. The market operates on Eugene's Park Blocks at 8th and Oak Streets every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine, through mid-November. This is the Saturday Market's 53rd season. Coordinators say there are more than 330 members this year, as they expand their offerings post-pandemic. That includes close to 30 new artisan vendors. The Saturday Market includes a mix of outdoor booths operated

by local merchants, an International Food Court, live music and other performances. A reminder: The Lane County Farmers Market is operating Saturday in its temporary location on 5th Avenue between High and Oak Streets while the Eugene Town Square project with its new Farmers' Market Pavilion is being finished. The Farmers Market will move to the new building, returning to 8th and Oak Streets, later this spring. / SPORTS, EVENTS: Oregon Track and Field hosts its first outdoor competition of the season Friday and Saturday at Eugene's Hayward Field. Organizers say with the lifting of COVID limits, crowds for this and other events can reach full capacity. The Hayward Premiere gets underway Friday with the start of field events at 3:00 p.m. and the first of several middle and distance running events at 5:30 p.m. The invitational meet resumes Saturday with field events beginning at 11 a.m. and events on the track at 1 p.m. It's a great spring tune-up for Hayward Field and local track officials and volunteers ahead of the World Athletics Championships—known locally as "Oregon22," which take place July 15-24 at Hayward Field. / SAFETY: The Oregonian and OregonLive are reporting that a mysterious stuffed animal spill on Interstate 5 in Portland left some drivers, and transportation officials, scratching their heads Wednesday morning. About 300 of the stuffed toys — which included a Pooh Bear, a Minion and what appeared to be several My Little Ponies — were strewn across the interstate near the Burnside Bridge late yesterday morning. Reporter Kale Williams quotes an official with the Oregon Department of Transportation, who said most of the toys were off to the side and caused a minimal backup, though workers did close one lane to collect the stuffed critters. They recovered close to 300. No one's certain how they wound up alongside the freeway, but ODOT officials say the stuffed animals were taken to the agency's North Portland maintenance yard, quote, "for care and feeding." /