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FIRST ALERT WEATHER

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LOCAL**Rebuilding after fires making gains**

The rebuilding process from the destruction and devastation of last September's Alameda fire continues to get stronger, according to the latest figures released by Jackson County. **A2**

NATION-WORLD**Surveying damage from floods in Europe**

German Chancellor Angela Merkel pledges quick financial aid and a redoubling of efforts on climate change while surveying a devastated village. **A3**

HEALTH**Rising cases in U.S. cause for concern**

The U.S. surgeon general says that he's concerned about what lies ahead with cases of COVID-19 increasing in every state and millions still unvaccinated. **A6**

INSIDE LINE**HOW TO REACH US**

Have a tip or question for the newsroom?

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Damon May of Mercy Flights shows young Rogue Eagles the functions of a Mercy Flights helicopter at the Medford Airport Friday.

ANDY ATKINSON / MAIL TRIBUNE



GETTING THEIR WINGS

Inaugural aviation camp introduces local teens to fundamentals of flying

By Joe Zavala
Mail Tribune

Rob Merriman has always viewed airplanes – what they do and how they do it – as a little bit magical. The public relations officer and chief flight instructor for the Rogue Eagles Radio Control Club still remembers pressing up against an airport fence as a child, frustrated that he couldn't get closer to those amazing flying machines.

So it was partly out of empathy

that Merriman and his fellow Rogue Eagles members ushered 15 local middle school students past that fence that separates the people from the planes at Rogue Valley International-Medford Airport on Friday during the first-ever Rogue Eagles Aviation Summer Camp.

Friday's itinerary included tours of Mercy Flights, fire safety facilities, TSA operations and opportunities for each of the teens to sit in a cockpit and poke around (just a little). It was the second day

of the three-day camp that will conclude Saturday at Agate Skyways, where the students will fly U-control and radio control aircraft.

"In our club, obviously we have a lot of folks that are very passionate about aviation and all of us have roots going back to when we were kids and can relate to what it was like when we were kids, and we're just thirsty to get our hands on anything to do with airplanes," Merriman said. "So we have a real desire to do anything we can to help young people find a path for their passion."

"Obviously we've chosen to pursue radio controlled aircraft and model building, but we recognize there's a lot more to this than just that so our goal in having the camp was to really introduce them to understanding how flight and aviation works aerodynamically, to address the physics of it, if you will, and also to introduce them to many of the career possibilities that exist within the general umbrella of aviation."

SEE WINGS, A4

STATE / PUBLIC HEALTH

OREGON AND THE WEST / PAGE A3

Oregon seeing rise in COVID-19 cases

By Sara Cline
The Associated Press / Report for America

PORTLAND — As the highly transmissible delta variant sweeps across the nation — fueling an increase in COVID-19 cases — Oregon is no exception.

For at least 11 consecutive weeks COVID-19 cases had been decreasing in Oregon, until last week. Health experts point to the highly

contagious delta variant, first detected in India, as a factor as state and federal officials continue to warn about a "pandemic of the unvaccinated."

"Cases are increasing and this is certainly due to the increasing percentage of the delta variant in Oregon. This has been seen in communities across the world," Tim Heider, a spokesman for the Oregon Health Authority, said

Friday. "If you are fully vaccinated, you are well protected from COVID, including the delta variant. If you are not vaccinated, make a plan to do so, and take precautions like wearing a mask indoors and in outdoor crowded places until you are vaccinated."

Last week the the Oregon Health Authority reported 1,318 new COVID-19 cases — an 11% increase from the previous week.

Hospitalizations rose from 66 to 104.

While Oregon's data shows that the delta variant accounts for only 5% of the state's COVID-19 cases, officials say that is likely an undercount as sequencing data can take weeks to be reported and not all coronavirus cases are tested for the variant.

SEE COVID-19, A4

WEST / PAGE A3

**FIRES IN OREGON, WEST CONTINUE TO GROW**

The largest wildfire in the U.S. torched more dry forest landscape in Oregon on Sunday, one of dozens of major blazes burning across the West.

OPINION / PAGE A7

**YOU SAID / WE SAID THEY SAID**

■ **LEONARD PITTS:** "It is hard to imagine behavior dumber, more dangerous, more short-sighted and more downright bass-ackward than that exhibited by Tennessee and its lawmakers."

SPORTS / PAGES B1-5

**SCORES, NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS**

■ **GOLF:** Collin Morikawa rallies in final round to win The Open and capture his second major. **B1**

■ **SOCCER:** Jeremy Ebobise scores in Timbers' 1-0 victory over FC Dallas. **B2**

WEATHER / PAGE A8

TODAY



94°/62°

TUE



90°/61°

WED



89°/57°

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