

Roundabout SISTERS

Bill Bartlett
Columnist

Vaccine guilt

Imagine my surprise when I got a text and an email within minutes of each other Wednesday night from St. Charles Health System (SCHS) telling me to schedule the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination for the next day. I was so sure that it was a scam or malware that I reported it to hospital security. I mean it looked real, but why, pray tell, would I be in line for the vaccination at this point in time?

I keep reading of the disastrous roll out in every state including ours. Of upwards of 35 percent of nurses and other healthcare workers in some locales refusing it, allowing more and more unused doses to pile up. Of members of the African American community being suspicious of its intent, residual from the 1932 Tuskegee Study of Black men. Of nursing-home patients not being higher on the list.

It wasn't a scam, the hospital informed me, and at 5 p.m. Thursday I got the first of two doses. I'm fairly sure I am the first nonmedical professional or first responder in town to be vaccinated. Thirty-three of our Sisters-Camp Sherman RFPD Station 701 personnel have been dosed during one of three sessions held at St. Charles, Bend, the only place in the county currently with the vaccine. Likewise, our Sheriff's deputies were included in that round.

It had taken me over an hour to accept the idea that it was OK to get it despite being healthy and fully believing that if I got the

darned virus I would survive it. I agonized (OK, that's an exaggeration) — but I really, really stressed and fought the idea. How could I arrange for someone needier than I to get my place? It just feels so wrong. Being in comparatively safe Sisters makes the whole thing even more frustrating.

Yeah, I'm a St. Charles volunteer, and hence my eligibility, but so is our golden retriever, Robbie. We are a therapy dog team at the Redmond hospital. Hardly what you'd call frontline healthcare workers. But that's not how SCHS sees it. There are roughly 500 volunteers across the system with an accumulated 50,000 hours of service in 2019. At \$15/hr. equivalent value that's a \$750,000 direct benefit to the community.

Since February, volunteers have not been admitted to any of the four St. Charles hospitals, putting the burden on their myriad services on the already overtaxed staff dealing with the pandemic. Getting vaccinated gets us back to work to help alleviate the workload.

Fire Chief Roger Johnson and I marveled at the military-like precision of the vaccine administration. I was among the 494 vaccinated on Thursday, between 11 a.m. and 9 p.m., an operation that will continue every day until doses are exhausted and again when more arrive.

Today I have only the normal, expected arm soreness at the injection site. I am incredibly grateful for the massive effort to get shots in the arms. We think only of the 600-plus million doses needed. That also means 600 million needles and syringes, over a billion documents, and the thousands and thousands of healthcare workers to get the job done.

When your time comes, it's imperative that you get the vaccine. Estimates vary, but somewhere around 90 percent of the population needs to be vaccinated to achieve herd immunity and kick this thing in the butt.

Indeed, it takes a village. Do your part.

SAA to host virtual meeting

The Sisters Arts Association (SAA) is holding its annual member meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, January 26 at 10 a.m.

To participate, complete a form at the website, www.sistersartsassociation.org. Those who do will receive an invitation by email to join the meeting. The signup deadline is Sunday, January 24, at 10 a.m.

SAA will review its accomplishments during 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. These include an enthusiastic general meeting in January, an increase in members and donors, and two Fourth Friday Artwalks, the safely-conducted Artist Studio Tour in late September, and one member meeting held under conditions of social distancing and masking.

The Sisters Gallery Map was also updated to include new galleries and places where hungry visitors to Sisters can find a bite to eat along the way.

During this Zoom meeting, participants will be able to meet the board, learn about plans for 2021 and how they can participate. Those who wish to get involved may visit www.sistersartsassociation.org and click on "Events/Annual Meeting" to register.

At the end of the meeting, a name will be drawn to receive a complimentary membership for 2021, worth \$50.

Sisters Country birds

By Douglas Beall
Correspondent

Williamson's Sapsuckers (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*) are generally found in the mountains of the western U.S. where they prefer forests of older coniferous trees.

Sapsuckers are a specialized group of woodpeckers that do not actually suck sap. After pecking neat rows in trees to cause sugary sap to flow, sapsuckers lick it up with tongues tipped with stiff hairs. This also brings insects, which are gleaned by hummingbirds and warblers. The radically different plumages between the male and female so confounded 19th-century naturalists they thought the birds were of a different species.

Male Williamson's Sapsuckers begin to establish territories before females arrive on the breeding grounds. Courtship usually involves the male making a bounding flight on fluttering wings toward the female, perching beside her, and swinging the head side to side while giving staccato calls.

Males are very territorial

at this time of year, chasing away other males. Their territory can be as large as 10 acres. They nest in cavities in trees, laying four to six glossy white eggs which incubate for 14-16 days and the hatchlings fledge the nest in three to four weeks.

The Williamson's Sapsucker took its name from Lt. Robert Williams, a surveyor who collected the first male in 1855. He traveled Central Oregon to conduct the Pacific Railroad Survey. A group of sapsuckers are known as a "slurp." For more photos visit www.abirdsingsbecauseithasa.com/recent-journeys.

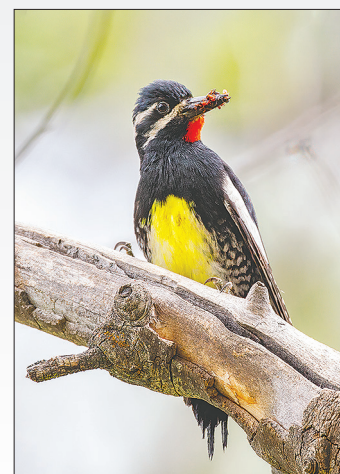


PHOTO BY DOUGLAS BEALL

Williamson's Sapsucker.

JOIN

SISTERS ARTS ASSOCIATION

Annual Meeting via Zoom
Tuesday, January 26, 10 AM
SistersArtsAssociation.org

MEET
interesting
PEOPLE!

VIRTUAL Calendar

Things to participate in online while staying safely at home.

JAN
14
THUR

Deschutes Public Library: Botany Meets Biology – The Plight of the Sage Grouse 6 p.m. Dr. Stu Garrett discusses the decreasing grouse population. Registration is required at www.deschuteslibrary.org/calendar/.

JAN
19
TUE

Deschutes Public Library: Writing About Home with Elizabeth Wetmore 6:30 p.m. Native Texan and author of "Valentine," the bestselling debut set in the oil fields of Texas in the 1970s, discusses the influence of place in her work. Live Zoom event. Go to www.deschuteslibrary.org/calendar/.

JAN
23
SAT

Deschutes Public Library: Placed - An Encyclopedia of Central Oregon 2 p.m. Editors Irene Cooper and Ellen Santasiero discuss "Placed," a composition of writings based on place and phenomena unique to Central Oregon. Registration is required at www.deschuteslibrary.org/calendar/.

JAN
25
MON

Deschutes Public Library: Oregon's African American History 5 p.m. Delve into the history of African Americans in Oregon with Kim Moreland, the vice president of Oregon Black Pioneers. Go to www.deschuteslibrary.org/calendar/.

JAN
26
TUE

Deschutes Public Library: Trivia with the Librarians 6 p.m. Test your literary and 2020 knowledge! Go to www.deschuteslibrary.org/calendar/.

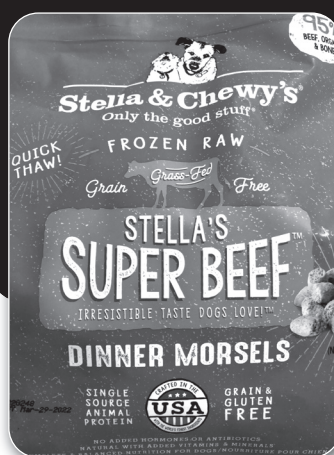
JAN
27
WED

Deschutes Public Library: Karyn Ann Patridge Performs Indie-Soul/Folk 5 p.m. Portland-based singer-songwriter. Go to www.deschuteslibrary.org/calendar/.

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