

Abortion researchers unfazed by picketers



P O R T - LAND (AP) — One of three Oregon doctors targeted in a harassment campaign by an anti-abortion group says she will not back down from her research.

"Of course it would be better if there were no abortions — or starvation or rape or child abuse, either. Our world will be better when all children are wanted, and I work towards that vision," Dr. Elizabeth Newhall, an obstetrician-gynecologist at Legacy Emanuel Hospital, said Sunday.

Newhall was targeted because of her involvement in testing of the new French abortion pill, RU-486. Also on the list was her husband, Dr. James Newhall, who provides abortions at Portland's Downtown Women's Center.

The Newhalls have been picketed twice this winter by Advocates for Life Ministries, a Portland anti-abortion group that has played a key role in forming the national coalition.

Elizabeth Newhall described the experience as "very frightening," especially to the couple's children.

The third Portland doctor listed was Dr. George Kabacy, the medical director of the Lovejoy Surgicenter.

Carye Ortman, Lovejoy Surgicenter's director of counseling, said Kabacy would have no comment.

But she said it was ironic that a group proclaiming family values should be attacking doctors who have families of their own. "It's very disheartening," she said.

The three were on the national "deadly dozen" list issued Sunday by the Portland-based American Coalition of Life Activists at a news conference in Arlington, Va. The group adopted the methods and even the name of the Oregon effort, called "No Place to Hide."

The coalition distributed mock "wanted" posters accusing the 12 doctors of "crimes against humanity," listing the home addresses of some, and offering a \$5,000 reward for information about them.

Crane said that the reward was intended to encourage tracking the physicians, but he declined to speculate whether the campaign would expose doctors to the risk of violent attacks.

Pony may not find happy home

PATERSON, Wash. (AP) — It's a heartwarming story: abandoned pony rescued from railroad tracks finds loving new home.

But it may not end well. Under an obscure state law, the pony could be turned into dog food.

His new family is hoping common sense will prevail.

Carlene Whitesell brought the pony home Dec. 30 after he was spotted wandering untended near the tracks. The animal was unlikely to survive a run-in with a freight train.

"The pony wouldn't have been there the next day," said Dolores Milliman, a local farm owner. "The crows would've been eating him."

Whitesell was among those enlisted by Postmaster Beth Allen to lure the frightened animal away from the tracks and into this Benton County town.

She brought the pony home to the house she and her family share with four dogs, two cats and a cockatiel. Sons Israel, 12, and Benjamin, 8, took to their new friend immediately and named him Blaze.

Whitesell set about trying to find the pony's owner, posting placards at the post office, and contacting area veterinarians and the sheriff.

Finally someone suggested she call the state brand inspector.

That's when the Whitesells learned about the Revised Code of Washington, Title 16, Chapter 24, Section 110, which says: "Any horses, mules, donkeys, or cattle of any age running at large or trespassing ... are declared to be a public nuisance."

Blaze will be impounded Tuesday. If the brand inspector's office can't find his owner, he'll be auctioned to the highest bidder, which could be a slaughterhouse agent looking for horse meat.

Whitesell can scarcely believe it. "I resent the idea that they (the state) think they can sell what's not theirs. This is just so stupid," she said.

"I like to sit in there and talk to him, and feed him apples and carrots. I don't want them to take

him, because I like him," Israel said.

Whitesell's owner offered to pay for advertising to find the pony's owner and to sign documents saying she would give him up if his owner makes an appearance.

She's offered to pay the state whatever Blaze would likely fetch at auction.

But the law doesn't work that way. If the pony remains unclaimed and Whitesell wants him, she would have to hire a horse trailer, drive an hour or so to the auction site in central Washington or Oregon, and try to outbid the meat industry and anyone else who might want Blaze.

"I don't want him taken from here; it doesn't take long for an animal to become part of your family," his mother said. "But when you don't have any political influence, you can't do anything."

Whitesell did call longtime state Sen. Irv Newhouse, a Republican from nearby Mabton. That prompted a series of phone calls involving Senate staffers, the attorney general's office and state Agriculture Department officials.

But on Friday, Newhouse was told the pony will be picked up Tuesday and taken to the Sunnyside Livestock Market. If his owner can't be found, he'll be sold.

Newhouse believes the department has other alternatives, such as negotiating a sale to Whitesell if the pony's owner can't be found.

But "they haven't chosen to do that. I've tried to be as impartial as I can be, but I sympathize with the lady and her boys," he said.

"Our role and our responsibility is cut and dried," said Agriculture Department spokeswoman Premiere Boone. "You find something; you call us; we come and impound it; we advertise it for 10 days."

"After that, we take it to the nearest market, and whoever has the funds is able to bid."

Officials did promise to let Whitesell know when and where Blaze will be auctioned.

Sciences university may split from system

SALEM (AP) — Legislation to make Oregon Health Sciences University a public corporation is drawing support from Gov. John Kitzhaber and top leaders of both parties.

The chief sponsor of the measure is Sen. Gene Timms, R-Burns, a key player as co-chairman of the budget-writing Joint Ways & Means Committee.

"We must not allow handicaps of a state bureaucracy to destroy one of the finest teaching, research and health care providers in the country," Timms said at a conference Monday.

Backers of the plan say it could make University Hospital, which provides 60 percent of OHSU's revenue, more competitive by freeing it from state administrative rules.

Kitzhaber said the school's future "depends on its ability to compete in a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive marketplace."

"It is a great example of how we can find innovative ways to

deliver public services more efficiently and cost effectively," said Kitzhaber, who's a physician.

Among supporters of the proposal are Senate President Gordon Smith, R-Pendleton; House Speaker Bev Clarno, R-Bend, and major Democratic leaders.

"Every university hospital in this country is swimming in difficult waters because of the changes in health care," said Joseph W. Cox, the chancellor of the State System of Higher Education.

The legislation would make the school a public enterprise, reporting to a governor-appointed board and responsible to the Legislature.

Neither the state higher education system nor the Department of Administrative Services would oversee its operations.

Timms said his proposal would eliminate the chancellor and the president of the state higher education board as non-voting members of the OHSU governing board.

Report may limit Tri-City economy

RICHLAND, Wash. (AP) — Economic diversification efforts in the Tri-Cities could be stymied by findings of a draft report by the Department of Energy's inspector general, business leaders said.

The report says DOE cannot require a contractor to build a laboratory nearby as a condition for winning its contract to help clean up wastes and contamination at the Hanford nuclear reservation.

"If Westinghouse (Hanford Co.) and other Hanford contractors don't have the ability to include a local service requirement in contracts, then firms in New York or anywhere else could work for us here and there is no economic benefit to these communities," said Sam Volpentest, executive vice president of the Tri-City Industrial Development Council.

The preliminary report concludes Westinghouse could not require International Technology Corp. to build a new laboratory within 25 miles of the Tri-Cities as a condition of winning a \$218 million, eight-year contract. The requirement, included in the contract issued to International Technology in August

1993, was intended to boost efforts to build the Tri-Cities economy.

The company is known now as Quanterra, following a merger in recent months between International Technology and Coming Analytical Co.

Volpentest wants the development council to lobby Congress for legislation that would allow the Department of Energy to require that environmental cleanup work be done in communities near the polluted federal sites.

"This is where all these products were produced, where the pollution happened," he said. "I don't see why the heck firms in some other cities should financially benefit from the problems left behind we're trying to solve."

If the DOE stops requiring contractors from doing work in or near the Tri-Cities, it will be violating the Tri-Party Agreement. The Tri-Party Agreement between the DOE, by the state Department of Ecology and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets out the guidelines and a timetable by which Hanford is to be cleaned up over 30 years. It also includes the

requirement that Hanford cleanup work be performed within 25 miles of the Tri-Cities.

Meanwhile, since the contract was awarded, changes in cleanup procedures have greatly reduced the amount of work that Quanterra will do for Westinghouse. Though it will analyze about the same number of samples, it won't perform as many tests on them.

That will reduce the value of the contract from the original estimate of \$218 million to about \$50 million.

But the company intends to go ahead with the groundbreaking scheduled next month for a \$5 million expansion of the firm's existing Richland laboratory despite being told the local service requirement was improper, said Brad Figley, vice president of Quanterra, based in Denver.

"We are committed to meeting (Tri-Party Agreement) milestones," Figley said. "To do that, all of the work has to be done there in Richland."

Westinghouse Hanford Co. officials refused inquiries to DOE in Richland. Tom Bauman, a DOE spokesman, said DOE would not have any comment until it sees a final report.

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