

— MILESTONES —

Vapes, e-cigarettes are not safe for anyone

By Carrie Brogoitti

Despite emerging clues about the cause of vape-related illness and deaths, the cold fact remains: Breathing anything other than clean air into your lungs is harmful. Yet two of the substances most used by Union County youth — tobacco (including vapes) and marijuana — are inhaled. This is why these two substances are priorities for the Union County Safe Communities Coalition, a diverse group of community members working together for a safe, healthy and drug-free community.

Here is a critical and misunderstood fact: E-cigarettes and vapes are not safe ways to quit smoking. Vape products, like Juul, contain nicotine — significant quantities in most cases. One Juul pod has as much nicotine as a pack of

cigarettes. These products are just another way for the tobacco industry to maintain addictions and hold on to customers. In fact, more than half of people who vape also smoke cigarettes.

We must continue to push for ways to protect kids from vape — and all tobacco. E-cigarettes and vape are highly addictive, and young people are using them at shocking rates. One in four Oregon 11th-graders use e-cigarettes, a number that climbed nearly 80% in just two years. Adolescent brains are particularly susceptible to addiction, and kids who use e-cigarettes are three times as likely to start smoking as their peers who don't vape.

Let's not be lulled by the tobacco industry into thinking vape products are safe. There are other ways we can help our friends, family and neighbors quit for good that don't include inhaling dangerous aerosol. Anyone in Oregon can get free counseling

and FDA-approved nicotine replacement therapy medication, like patches or gum, through the Oregon Quit Line. Quitting addiction is hard, and it may take people several attempts. Studies show that people who receive medication and counseling are twice as likely to succeed in their efforts to quit.

Help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for both youth and adults. People can reach the Quit Line through the following contacts:

English: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or quitnow.net/oregon

Spanish: 1-855-DEJALO-YA (1-855-335-35692) or quitnow.net/oregonsp

Native Quit Line for Alaska Indians and Native Americans: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669), then press "7"

TTY: 1-877-777-6534
"This is Quitting" is a free, confidential, 24/7 texting program for

teens and young adults who vape. Text DITCHJUUL to 88709 or www.thisisquitting.com.

Are you the parent of a young person who vapes? Parents can text QUIT to 202-899-7550 to sign up to receive text messages designed specifically for the parents of vapers.

Until health experts can identify why people who have used these products have become seriously ill, and in some cases died, officials are recommending that no vaping product should be used. People who experience symptoms of the illness after using vaping products, such as shortness of breath, cough or chest pain, should immediately seek medical attention. Additional information can be found at www.healthoregon.org/vaping.

Carrie Brogoitti is the public health administrator for Center for Human Development and serves on the Union County Safe Communities Coalition.



Submitted photo

Virginia McLaughlin, of Island City, will celebrate her 100th birthday with a special lunch at noon Saturday, at the Union County Senior Center, 1504 N. Albany St., La Grande. Her friends are invited to enjoy the catered lunch.

BREIFs

Community drive aims to help replenish the blood supply

LA GRANDE — The American Red Cross has extended its urgent call for donors of all blood types to give blood or platelets.

The Red Cross must collect nearly 13,000 blood donations and more than 2,600 platelet donations each day for patients who rely on blood to survive, according to a news release from the organization, and shortfalls in donations can cause delays in essential medical care.

With influenza escalating across the country and preventing some donors from giving, and winter weather threatening to cancel blood drives, the Red Cross now has a critical shortage of type O blood and urgently needs donors to restock the shelves.

The Red Cross announced a community blood drive Tuesday noon to 6 p.m. in the gym of the La Grande Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. To make an appointment, contact Linda Strand at 541-963-4261. Donations of all blood types are welcome.

Bring a friend to senior center's Sweet Treat Social

LA GRANDE — The Union County Senior Center, 1504 N. Albany St., La Grande, is hosting a Sweet Treat Social from 2-3 p.m. Wednesday. All are encouraged to bring a friend to share the yummy treats and see what the senior center has to offer.

For more community content go to www.la grandeobserver.com

Grande Ronde Hospital

EVANS: To Krista Evans and Max Evans, of Island City, a son, Lincoln Maxwell Evans, 9 pounds 6 ounces, Dec. 28, 2019, at 1:33 p.m. Grandparents are Noralee Evans and Troy and Patricia Potts.

HALLADAY: To Shelby Lynn Halladay and Calvin James Halladay, of La Grande, a son, Hawken Scott Halladay, 8 pounds 3 ounces, Dec. 27, 2019, at 8:08 a.m.

MCDONALD: To Kathy McDonald and Jesse McDonald, of La Grande, a son, Conor Grover McDonald, 9 pounds 1 ounce, Dec. 16, 2019, at 5:56 p.m. Grandparents are Dave and Pan Mann.

SMITH: To Katelyn Smith and Laine Smith, of Union, a daughter, Ava Mae Smith, 7 pounds 3 ounces, Dec. 26, 2019, at 12:44 p.m. Grand-

parents are John and JoAnn Hefner and Randy and Rhonda Smith.

TAYLOR: To Sara Markham Taylor and Trevor Eden Taylor, of La Grande, a son, Brack Leon Taylor, 8 pounds 6 ounces, Dec. 20, 2019, at 1:03 p.m. Grandparents are Tim and Edna Taylor, Mike and Linda Markham, Tim Taylor, Marjorie Reese, Ed Markham, Wilma Markham, and Leon and LaRue Johnson.

DUFFY: To Alicia Dawn Phillips and Jeremy David Duffy, of La Grande, a daughter, Eve Aurora Duffy, 5 pounds 7 ounces, Jan. 3 at 7:21 p.m. Grandparents are Wendy Phillips, David Phillips, Gary Lilleston, Carla Duffy and Larry Davis.

HAYCOCK: To Jaime Nicole Thiess and Cody Lawrence Haycock, of La Grande, a son, Wyatt

Haycock, 8 pounds 5 ounces, Jan. 2 at 2:54 a.m. Grandparents are Richard Thiess, Debra Lizzio-Thiess, Rick Haycock and Lynette Sponsier.

YIFTHEG: To Sheldeen Maria Pua Yifthege and Thomas Jose Itibus Yifthege, of La Grande, a son, Francisco Ignatius Pio Kiseki Tamag Pua Yifthege, 5 pounds 5 ounces, Jan. 16 at 10:45 a.m. Grandparents are Michael and Elphidia Yifthege and Rudolfo and Irene Pua.

Wallowa Memorial Hospital

WARNOCK: To Emily Paige Warnock and Brandon Joe Warnock, of Imnaha, a daughter, Eila Alvedia Warnock, 6 pounds 4.5 ounces, Dec. 20, 2019, at 7:55 a.m. Grandparents are Charity and Phillip Ketscher and Shari and Joe Warnock.

BIRTHS




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