



Sami Spriet, an Eastern Oregon University student, receives her first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine on Tuesday, May 4, 2021. The Centers for Disease Control voted to recommend booster shots on Thursday, Oct. 21, 2021.

BOOSTERS

Continued from Page A1

of severe COVID-19 or with frequent institutional or occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2.

Similarly, the CDC recommended that individuals 18 years of age and older who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine could get a booster at least two months after the initial dose.

As well, the FDA approved mix and matching — giving out vaccines from different manufacturers.

“Certainly, from my point of view, I really appreciated that we were finally able to look at, consider, and recommend a mix-and-match approach as part of our way to boost people’s immunity, especially for the people who need it,” said Dr. Wilbur Chen, professor of medicine at the University of Maryland during the meeting’s closing statements.

The panel heard testimony and findings from several experts in the field about the efficacy of booster shots. Studies show that the efficacy of both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines wane over time, prompting questions about instituting a third dose to help wake up the immune system and keep it alert to COVID-19 infections.

Data presented by experts showed that the vaccine boosters provided additional immunity to COVID-19 on top of the immunity received in the one- and two-shot series.

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine, in particular, benefited dramatically from the booster shot, showing a nearly 94% efficacy rate as compared to its far lower initial rate of 71% against COVID-19 hospitalizations, bringing it in line with the Pfizer and Moderna offerings.

“Vaccines don’t save lives, but vaccinations do,” Dr. Grace Lee, chair of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, said during the meeting. “Our recommendations are one step of the way, but it’s going to be so important, as everyone mentioned, that in our implementation, patients are truly educated about the benefit-risk balance based on their own personal situation.”

The CDC panel also weighed data regarding the risk of vaccines — with contributing experts citing a growing number of reports about rare systemic side effects of vaccination such as Guillain-Barre syndrome, blood clots and myocarditis — an inflammation of the muscle.

The panel, which voted on Oct. 21, spent considerable time going over rates of myocarditis and pericarditis symptoms following a second dose of Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, particularly among young males who received the mRNA vaccines.

Dr. John R. Su, a member of ACIP, noted that the incidents of symptoms of myocarditis were higher than background incidences of the self-same symptom, but that the incidence rate was

approximately 1 in 1 million for developing symptoms, which could affect up to 100 per 1,000,000 in young males. The experts further noted that 77% of patients recovered from their symptoms.

An NIH study cited in the presentation stated that mix-and-match booster shots showed no increase in risk compared to instances when vaccines of the same type were given. Those risks of myocarditis and Guillain-Barre syndrome were statistically insignificant when compared to using the same vaccine for both doses.

Experts who spoke to the panel noted that the public should be aware of the risks and benefits associated with the vaccine.

Second doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which had previously been stopped due to a rare blood clotting disorder, showed a significantly smaller prevalence rate of clots following a second dose. Incident rates of blood clots stood at 15.1 cases per million following the first dose and 1.9 cases per million after the second.

The panel heard data that showed that vaccine boosters from Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech produced the highest levels of immunity, while the Johnson & Johnson booster provided the least amount of protection.

Vaccines are available at no cost at several locations. Specific locations for vaccines can be found at www.vaccines.gov/ search or via your local pharmacy.

CONCERT

Continued from Page A1

period of time.

“We have a lot going on,” Don Kellogg said.

Finding an ‘angel’

When she reached out to Boye about coming to La Grande, Cassy Kellogg said she was given a couple of options about raising the money to pay for the concert — find sponsors or “find an angel.”

The couple found an unnamed “angel” who donated \$50,000 to make the concert happen. Don Kellogg, who retired a couple of years ago after a long career with Avista, is raising another \$15,000 to pay for Barton and the rest of the event.

Cassy Kellogg said finding either a sponsor or an “angel” was a key factor in making sure the concert happened.

“Alex and I were half in tears reading the note that they found an ‘angel,’” Eddie Wenrick, Boye’s manager, said. “These people are serious. They want to help kids. We have to show up.”

Boye’s shows routinely draw as many as 10,000 people. The Kelloggs are optimistic the Union County show can draw as many as 2,500 fans.

“There’s people who will travel from Boise and the Tri-Cities to see Alex,” Don Kellogg said.

Sharing a positive message

Cassy Kellogg said she’s seen, and heard about, young people struggling emotionally and mentally during the pandemic. When she saw the clip of Boye’s performance on his “Ignite the Light” tour, she thought having him bring his show to La Grande and offering suicide prevention resources could be beneficial.

“People come to watch the concert, but the purpose in the tour is to connect local people with local resources,” she said. “So the Union County Safe Communities Coalition is supporting us.”

Boye said mental health therapists, called “thought leaders,” will share during the concert and will be available for anyone who wants to talk about mental health.

“That’s a win for me,” he said.

Exhibitors will have booths to provide resources and the Kelloggs also are working with the La Grande Lions Club to open their booth at the fairgrounds to sell hamburgers.

“That would be another charity people would be donating to if they bought lunch,” Cassy Kellogg said.

The concert will strive to follow all COVID-19 mandates, including masks and social distancing.

“We want everyone to wear a mask,” Cassy Kellogg said.

The Kelloggs also urge attendees to bring blankets and folding chairs to the concert.

Boye’s background

Boye has resided in Utah for two decades. He is a former member of the European boy-band Awesome and of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

Boye’s professional career has included recording religious and Latter-day Saints music.

In recent years, he has built a massive YouTube following by performing Africanized versions of popular music, including “Let It Go” and “Circle of Life,” from the Disney movies “Frozen” and “The Lion King,” respectively, as well as the Taylor Swift hit “Shake It Off.”

Boye also appeared on “America’s Got Talent” and was named the 2017 artist of the year and grand prize winner in a music contest sponsored by Pepsi and Hard Rock Cafe. This past December in Miami, he performed a halftime show for NFL’s Monday Night Football.

“I’m hoping that La Grande can prove to the rest of the world that you can get Alex Boye to come because Los Angeles, Miami, Salt Lake City, those are his venues so far,” Don Kellogg said.

GRANGE

Continued from Page A1

The Wolf Creek Grange purchased its present hall in 1957, a building that previously housed a number of businesses, including a meat market and a mercantile store. If the grange had remained in the Wolf Creek Reservoir area instead of moving into North Powder, it might not be as popular a meeting place as it is today.

“People like to go to places that are convenient to get to,” Bouchard said.

The Wolf Creek Grange was the 596th chartered in Oregon but today it is one of only about 200 in the state.

Few of the state’s remaining granges likely are involved in more community services projects than the Wolf Creek Grange. They include a free medical equipment loan service program through which donated items, such as wheelchairs and walkers, are lent free of charge to anyone; college scholarships given annually to local youths; and a community dinner served each year the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

Wynn Nielsen, a member of the Wolf Creek Grange, said the community work done by the grange is a reflection of the many wonderful people who live there.

“North Powder is just a special place,” he said.

People visiting the Oct. 24 celebration will have an opportunity to learn about the Wolf Creek Grange history



Alex Wittwer/The Observer
Cecilia Lovely reads through a 2007 edition of The La Grande Observer on Wednesday, Oct. 20, 2021, looking for clippings to use in the Wolf Creek Grange collage that will be displayed at the grange’s 100th birthday celebration on Sunday, Oct. 24, in North Powder.

and the dances and fairs it once put on by looking at scrapbooks and old photos and reading copies of North Powder’s old newspaper, The North Powder News, which was published at least into the 1930s. People reading copies of the 1930s editions of the old newspaper will learn that North Powder then had a gas station, Hutchinson Service Station, an auto repair shop, Newman and Keeney Garage, and a pharmacy, Ferguson’s Drug Store, which sold candy for 60 cents a pound.

People coming will also have a chance to step back in time musically, by joining in the singing of standards like “She’ll Be Coming Round the Mountain” and “Old Gray Mare.”



Alex Wittwer/The Observer
In preparation for the Wolf Creek Grange’s 100th birthday party on Oct. 24, 2021, Linda Dickson, left, Cecilia Lovely and Wynn Nielsen work on restoring the North Powder grange’s scrapbooks on Oct. 20.

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Get your
Mammogram.



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- You know early detection is the best defense.
- Our care team will ensure your comfort.
- Convenient times are available.
- Ask us about financial assistance.
- Contact your healthcare provider to schedule.



grh.org/BreastCancer