

HEALTH MATTERS

Ground Broken for Mental Health Hospital

Begins long awaited replacement

Gov. Ted Kulongoski and Senate President Peter Courtney joined Oregon State Hospital patients, mental health advocates, other lawmakers and local officials for the official groundbreaking of a key component of Oregon's new state hospital system.

The Sept. 3 groundbreaking commemorates the beginning of a five-year construction project that will bring the long-awaited replacement of Oregon's 125-year-old state hospital in Salem.

Construction on the planned 620-bed, 700,000-square-foot hospital in Salem will be com-

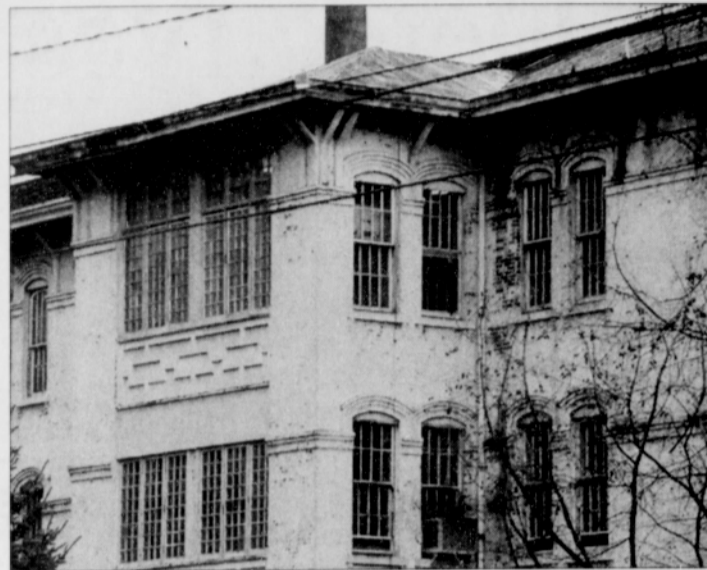
pleted in 2011. A second hospital with a capacity of 360 beds is scheduled to open in Junction City in 2013.

"Today's groundbreaking comes after years of work to build an Oregon system we can all be proud of and that will offer real help and real hope to Oregonians with mental illness," said Gov. Kulongoski. "The construction of these two replacement hospitals will be the centerpiece for a patient-first, patient-focused and patient-driven mental health system of care."

The state's mental health care system has been a top priority of

Gov. Kulongoski and Sen. Courtney. Within months of taking office in 2003, the Governor established a 21-member Mental Health Task Force, which recommended, along with construction of two new state hospitals, a recovery model of care that will provide early treatment to prevent people from requiring hospitalization.

Under the leadership of Sen. Courtney, the 2005-2007 Legislature approved \$458.1 million to construct the two new hospitals as well as provide funding for community-based mental health treatment so that people can get the help they need before having to enter the hospital.



The 125-year-old Oregon State Hospital in Salem will be replaced with a new state-of-the-art mental health facility.

The path to create a better mental health system came after years of neglect of a hospital that became obsolete long ago, Sen. Courtney noted.

"We are well past the time to replace this old and decrepit building," said Sen. Courtney. "As lawmakers, it is our responsibility to ensure that this vulnerable population is treated with respect and dignity in a safe, secure environment that fosters healing. Constructing new hospitals and growing a mental health system will greatly ensure individuals' timely return to their communities and their successful long term recovery."

M.D. Students Begin Classes

The Oregon Health and Science University School of Medicine opened its classroom doors last week for 115 new medical students. Of these, 68 students are Oregon residents.

The new students, who were selected from a pool of more than 5,000 applicants.

This year's class also includes three students who

successfully completed the school's Post-Baccalaureate Conditional Acceptance Program.

The nationally unique program is designed to increase the number of clinicians from disadvantaged and diverse backgrounds. It offers conditional acceptance to identified historically disadvantaged students whose traditional

medical school applications were declined.

Oregon residents who enroll in the program are put through the paces of an intensive three-term course designed to improve study skills, develop and enhance a foundation in science, and prepare students for the rigors of the OHSU School of Medicine curriculum.

No Link between Autism, Vaccine



(AP) -- A new study found no evidence of a link between autism and the combined measles, mumps and rubella vaccine.

Researchers hope the findings will help boost the rate of immunization against these illnesses amid some parental concerns about a potential link.

Parental concerns about potential vaccine risks by people who have opted not to have their children vaccinated have led to a major surge in measles outbreaks in the United States and Europe, the CDC says.

Measles kills some 250,000 people a year, mostly children in developing countries.

One child in 150 have autism or Asperger's in the United States, CDC data show.

A health worker vaccinates a girl against measles.

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Warning against Rabid Bats

Oregon health officials are warning people to protect themselves and their pets from rabies after finding five rabid bats since the beginning of 2008.

"People can take two precautions to protect themselves and their pets from bats and rabies," said Dr. Emilio DeBess, public health veterinarian. "Never handle bats; and make sure your cats and dogs are up to date on their rabies vaccines."

Bats, which are most active in

warm weather, play an important role in the ecosystem, especially in controlling insects at night. Oregon bats often eat mosquitoes and can catch over 1,000 tiny insects in an hour.

"Unfortunately, bats often carry rabies," said DeBess. "If you find a bat during the daylight hours, it is probably not healthy and should be avoided."

"Bats that don't have rabies generally don't fly into people," said DeBess. "So if a bat touches you, think about rabies and ask

your doctor about vaccination."

Of the sick and dead bats tested in Oregon during the last 10 years, about 9.5 percent have had rabies.

Other mammals in Oregon can be infected with rabies from bats.

"Vaccinating pets against rabies protects them and provides a buffer zone between humans and rabid wild animals," he said. "And, sadly, if a pet is unvaccinated and is exposed to rabies, the recommendation is that it be euthanized."

HEALTH WATCH

Maternity Water Workout -- Helping new moms regain muscle tone, strength and flexibility, all in the support and freedom of the water. Call 503-256-4000 for more information.

Childbirth Preparation -- Thursdays, starting Thursday, June 19, from 7 to 9 p.m., this four-week series aims to help first-time parents prepare for a more comfortable labor and delivery with lectures, practice and discussions; fee \$85 per couple. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Big Brothers & Big Sisters -- Saturday, June 21 from 10 to 11 a.m., this special sibling class is for ages 3 to 6 to help preschoolers prepare for their new role as a big sister or brother. Parents must be present. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Childbirth Refresher Course -- Sunday, June 22 from noon to 4 p.m., refresher class for parents who have taken a childbirth prep class to reviewing medications, breathing, relaxation techniques and birthing options; fee \$55. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Container Gardens -- Seminar is Wednesday, June 25 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Oasis Center-large classroom, Macy's 4th Floor, 621 S.W. Fifth Ave.; \$7 fee. The Everyday Wellness Clinic at Oasis offers many se-

nior programs and activities. For more information, call 503-241-3059.

Welcome to Medicare -- Thursday, June 26 from 7 to 9 p.m. and Saturday, June 28 from 10 a.m. to noon, Mt. Hood Community College will provide a free two-hour class to help participants understand the fundamentals regarding various benefit options. To register, call 503-491-7572.

Maternity Orientation -- Thursday, June 26, from 7:45 to 8:45 p.m., this free class is to help familiarize parents-to-be with the maternity unit and answer any questions they may have regarding labor and delivery. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Bereavement Support Groups -- Free, safe confidential group meetings for those who have experienced the death of a loved one offered on various nights and locations. For information and registration, call 503-215-4622.

Mammography Screening -- Early detection is a key factor in the prevention of breast cancer. Call 503-251-6137 to schedule your high-tech, soft-touch mammogram.

Smoke-Free Support Group -- meets Mondays, 7 to 8 p.m. For more information, call 503-256-4000.

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