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Mightier than the sword

OPINION/4A

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REGION/3A

EAST OREGONIAN

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Flu season plays dirty

Oregon flu numbers still officially low, but docs and public health officials note recent uptick in cases

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

Got the flu? You're not the only one. Flu has finally swept into Oregon. Officially, influenza activity remained minimal in Oregon in December but the virus appears to be on the rise in recent days. Nationally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that

flu has so far killed 21 children. "It's ramping up here," said Sharon Waldern, nursing supervisor for the Umatilla County Public Health Department. "I'm definitely hearing from emergency rooms and local docs that they are getting positive results with the rapid influenza A test. This coincides with what's being seen nationwide and statewide."

The uptick in flu isn't yet reflected in the state's weekly influenza activity reports, "Flu Bites." During the latest update from the week of Dec. 14, activity was still described as "minimal."

"I anticipate that status is going to change," Waldern said. "We're seeing an increase in flu diagnosis."

Just over the border in Washington, the flu epidemic is rolling. Harvey Crowder, director of the Walla Walla County Health Department, said doctors

See FLU/6A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
The influenza virus has not hit the state too hard yet this season, but Umatilla County health officials urge residents to get a flu shot.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
The Columbia Development Authority has received word that the U.S. Army is considering selling it the land at the former Umatilla Chemical Depot. They had previously agreed to give the land to the development authority.

Army reversal echoes 2011 fight over depot

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

For those involved in planning the redevelopment of the Umatilla Chemical Depot land, Monday's Columbia Development Authority meeting must have come with a sense of déjà vu.

For the second time in less than five years, they learned the Army wanted to reverse course on giving the property to the local reuse authority, threatening once again to cast aside more than two decades of economic development work at the local level.

This time, the Pentagon said it didn't think it could turn the land over at no cost to the Columbia Development Authority, which doesn't have funds to

purchase it.

"It was a pretty significant reversal from what we had been told up until last month," project manager Don Chance told the board.

He also told the board he thought it was still possible to work something out — not an unreasonable position given the local reuse authority's history.

The LRA had a similar scare in 2011, when the Army announced it would not be closing the base through the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process after all. The chemical weapons would still be destroyed, taking most of the jobs with them, but the Army would continue to classify the depot as an active military base with no local input on what happened to the land.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
There are more than 400 block warehouses standing on the Umatilla Chemical Depot.

In that instance, then-LRA members Bill Hansell and Terry Tallman flew to Washington, D.C., for face-to-face talks,

Oregon's Congressional delegation joined the fight and lan-

See DEPOT/6A

Regulators survey Oregonians on pot rules

By HILLARY BORRUD
Capital Bureau

SALEM — State regulators want to know what hopes and concerns Oregonians have about the new legal marijuana system, as officials prepare to write rules to implement it.

The Oregon Liquor Control Commission will oversee commercial pot growers, manufacturers and retailers under the new state law, and the agency launched an online survey Tuesday to gather input. The survey asks people to rank by priority some of the issues the OLCC will consider, such as restricting packaging that appeals to children and developing standards to test whether someone is driving under the influence.

The public has less than a week to take the survey, which will be available through Jan. 12. Regulators face a tight timeline to write rules by January 2016, when they must begin accepting applications for recreational cannabis businesses.

Measure 91, which voters passed in November, will also allow adults age 21 and older can possess pot for personal use beginning July 1.

Rob Patridge, Klamath County District Attorney and chairman of the OLCC Board of Commissioners, said Tuesday that it's too ear-

See MARIJUANA/6A

Commission OKs Oregon low-carbon fuel standard

By HILLARY BORRUD
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — The Oregon Environmental Commission voted 4-1 Wednesday to adopt low-carbon fuel standards that are supposed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles.

Under the new regulations, fuel importers and producers will have to reduce the carbon content of transportation fuels by 10 percent over the next decade, starting in January 2016.

The vote means Oregon is the second state on the West Coast to adopt the fuel standards. California has already implemented low-carbon fuel standards, and Washington Gov. Jay Inslee last month asked the state's Department of Ecology to draft low-carbon fuel regulations.

State lawmakers will ultimately decide whether the new standards take effect, because a 2009 law that granted regulatory authority to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality expires in May. Democrats hold the majority in both the state House and Senate, and they have said that making the low-carbon fuel program permanent is a top priority in the upcoming legislative session.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality expects the new low-carbon fuel standards will reduce greenhouse gas emissions

"I am worried that there will be jobs lost."

— Jane O'Keeffe, chair of the commission

See FRANCE/6A

See FUEL/6A

Hunt for two in French shooting that killed 12; one surrenders

By ELAINE GANLEY and LORI HINNANT
Associated Press

PARIS — One man sought in the deadly shooting at a French satirical paper has turned himself in, and police hunted Thursday for two heavily armed men with possible links to al-Qaida in the military-style, methodical killing of 12 people at the office of a satirical newspaper that caricatured the Prophet Muhammad.

President Francois Hollande, visiting the scene of France's deadliest such attack in more than half a century, called the assault on the weekly newspaper

Charlie Hebdo "an act of exceptional barbarism."

France raised its terror alert system to the maximum — Attack Alert — and bolstered security with more than 800 extra soldiers to guard media offices, places of worship, transport and other sensitive areas. Fears had been running high in France and elsewhere in Europe that jihadis trained in warfare abroad would stage attacks at home.

French brothers Said and Cherif Kouachi, in their early 30s, should be considered armed and dangerous, according to a police bulletin released early Thursday. Mourad Hamyd, 18,

surrendered at a police station in Charleville-Mezieres, a small town in France's eastern Champagne region, said Paris prosecutor's spokeswoman Agnes Thibault-Lecuivre. She did not offer details on Hamyd's relationship with the men.

Heavily armed police moved into the nearby city of Reims, searching for the suspects without success, Thibault-Lecuivre said. Video from BFM-TV showed police dressed in white apparently taking samples inside an apartment. It was not immediately clear who lived there.



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