

HEALTH: Four percent of adults eat the recommended servings of fruits, vegetables

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health as “fair” or “poor,” but in 2015, 27 percent rated their health at the lower end of the scale.

Ward and Harwood said the change required discussion with the community to determine rationale for the health perception change.

Weight status

More than a third (36 percent) of adults in Umatilla and Morrow counties were obese and another third (38 percent) were overweight. Both statistics are higher than the state and national average.

“Seventy-four percent of adults were either overweight or obese based on their body mass index,” Ward said. “And that’s probably under-reported.”

For Umatilla County, the percentage of obese adults increased from 32 percent to 37 percent between 2011 and 2015; the percentage of those overweight dropped slightly from 35 percent to 34 percent.

Part of the change may come from how few adults (4 percent) eat the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables daily and how many adults do not participate in any physical activities or exercise (21 percent).

“We asked why do you not exercise. I call it the long list of excuses,” Ward said. “My favorite is third on the list: people admitting they’re just lazy. You have some honest people.”

Reasons for not exercising included: time (26 percent), too tired (21 percent), laziness (18 percent), pain or discomfort (18 percent) and weather (16 percent).

Tobacco and drug use

In 2015, 13 percent of adults in Umatilla and Morrow counties were tobacco smokers and 26 percent were considered former smokers, both on par with the state and national averages. In 2011, 18 percent of Umatilla County residents were smokers and only 17 percent were former smokers.

Although recent legislation legalized recreational marijuana use, the number of local residents who reported using marijuana within the past six months only increased slightly. In 2015, 12 percent of Umatilla County residents and 11 percent of Morrow County residents reported using marijuana within the past six months. However, 16 percent of adults reported using medication not prescribed for them or taking more medication than prescribed.

“This one really surprised me,” Ward

said. “For me, to know that people are misusing prescription drugs more than are using marijuana? I did not see that one coming.”

Other highlights

- 24 percent of Umatilla county adults have been diagnosed with asthma, compared to 17 percent for the state of Oregon and 14 percent for the national average.

- 8 percent of adults in Umatilla and Morrow counties were without health care coverage, mostly those who were under 30 years of age and those with an income under \$25,000 a year.

- 17 percent of residents in Umatilla County and 18 percent of residents in Morrow County live below the poverty level.

- 11 percent of adults in Umatilla and Morrow counties have been diagnosed with cancer at some point in their life.

- 13 percent of adults in Umatilla and Morrow counties have been diagnosed with diabetes.

- 33 percent of adults in Umatilla and Morrow counties have been diagnosed with arthritis.

- The leading causes of death for 2014 include cancer (22 percent), heart disease (19 percent), chronic lower respiratory diseases (6 percent).

WORLD BRIEFLY



Terrence Antonio James/Chicago Tribune via AP
From left, Randolph Stone, Maurice Classen and Joseph Ferguson, of the Task Force on Police Accountability attend a news conference at the Harold Washington Library Center in Chicago on Wednesday, called to address the task force’s recommendations for reform of the Chicago Police Department.

Report: Chicago police have ‘no regard’ for minority lives

CHICAGO (AP)—Police in Chicago have “no regard for the sanctity of life when it comes to people of color” and have alienated blacks and Hispanics for decades by using excessive force and honoring a code of silence, a task force declared Wednesday in a report that seeks sweeping changes to the nation’s third-largest police force.

The panel, established by Mayor Rahm Emanuel late last year in response to an outcry over police shootings, found that the department does little to weed out problem officers and routine encounters unnecessarily turn deadly.

The group concluded that fear and lack of trust in law enforcement among minorities is justified, citing data that show 74 percent of the hundreds of people shot by officers in recent years were African-Americans, even though blacks account for 33 percent of the city’s population.

“Reform is possible if there is a will and a commitment,” the report said. But change must start with an acknowledgement of Chicago policing’s “sad history.”

The task force pointed to examples that spanned generations, including the 1969 killing of Black Panther Fred Hampton, allegations of torture from the 1970s to the 1990s under former commander Jon Burge and controversial stop-and-frisk practices in the early 2000s.

U.S. says Russian planes buzzed Navy ship in Baltic Sea

WASHINGTON (AP)—Russian attack planes buzzed a U.S. Navy destroyer in the Baltic Sea multiple times Monday and Tuesday, coming as close as an estimated 30 feet from the ship and twice passing below the ship’s navigation bridge, U.S. officials said Wednesday.

The Russian Su-24 planes appeared unarmed but on Tuesday flew what the commander of the USS Donald Cook deemed to be a simulated attack profile. The Cook’s commander judged the actions unsafe and unprofessional, but the ship took no action beyond trying unsuccessfully to communicate with the aircraft by radio, according to a statement by U.S. European Command.

The U.S. European Command, which oversees U.S. military operations in that area, said the Cook was conducting deck landing drills with an allied military helicopter when two Su-24s made numerous close-range and low-altitude passes Monday afternoon. One pass occurred while the helicopter was refueling on the Cook’s deck.

“As a safety precaution, flight operations were suspended until the Su-24s departed the area,” it said. European Command did not identify the ally involved but other officials said the helicopter was Polish.

Obama claims progress on Islamic State amid worrying signs

LANGLEY, Va. (AP)—President Barack Obama claimed progress Wednesday in the U.S.-led fight against the Islamic State group, even as political turmoil in Iraq and renewed violence in Syria threatened to jeopardize hard-fought gains.

During a rare presidential visit to CIA headquarters, Obama said it had been “a bad few months” for the Islamic State and gave a detailed account of areas where U.S.-backed forces have wrested territory back from the extremist group. Though he acknowledged the fight remains difficult and complex, he said IS was on the defensive and that the U.S. intends to “keep that momentum.”

“Every day, ISIL leaders wake up and understand that it could be their last,” Obama said, using an acronym for the extremist group.

Obama offered no new steps or specifics about how the U.S. will beef up the fight against IS, although U.S. officials have suggested those steps are in the works. Defense Secretary Ash Carter has said the Pentagon is seeking ways to increase military support for the fight, including a likely increase in U.S. forces, along with the possible use of Apache helicopters for Iraqi-led combat missions.

The visit to the CIA’s campus in suburban Virginia was designed to assure Americans that the U.S. is fully engaged in the fight, despite persistent complaints from Obama’s critics that his strategy isn’t aggressive enough. Indeed, in recent months Obama has made similar field trips to the Pentagon and the State Department to illustrate how all facets of the U.S. government are on the case.

EOCI: Ban does not apply to TRCI crews

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“We have a lot to offer the city and the surrounding area,” she said. “We think that our inmates are pretty well received around the state.”

Taylor added that the prison sent out more than 500 inmates to help fire crews last year and has about 300 inmates in work crews on a daily basis.

George Murdock, the chairman of the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners and a member of the EOIC advisory committee, and Dale Primmer, the director of Umatilla County Community Justice and a city council candidate, also spoke in favor of lifting

the ban.

Primmer said these kinds of work crews are not new to the area.

Although EOIC work crews are banned, the agreement doesn’t apply to work crews from other programs like Umatilla County Community Justice and Two Rivers Correctional Institution.

Primmer’s department supervises roughly 700 people on parole and probation, some of whom work on projects like the Pioneer Park rebuild and the Rivoli Theater restoration as a part of community service requirements.

“This notion that you are introducing a new element to the community is a false

one,” Primmer said. “They do provide a lot of work in the community and a lot of skilled labor in the community.”

Primmer said the risk assessment tools used to pick inmates for work crews are much more advanced than they were in 1987, meaning work crew members are less likely to walk off or commit a crime. Many on the council agreed with Taylor and the county officials that it was time to scrap the agreement.

Although supportive of prison work crews, Councilor Becky Marks warned that the council had revisited the idea before and were met with strong public opposition.

“They came out in droves the last time we brought this up,” she said. “I was just a member of the audience that night but I was a little surprised at the response from the community when you said you were going to let inmates work in town. I would very strongly suggest that we do some heads-up work and maybe work on getting some communication out there about what an asset this could be for us.”

The council asked City Manager Robb Corbett to place the ban repeal on the agenda for the council’s May 3 meeting.

Contact Antonio Sierra at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.

STUDENTS: Can talk with counselors at LHS

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Columbine-type of attack on the school with specific people targeted.”

Harvey said the parents of the youth were fully cooperating with the investigation.

Harvey stated the Union County Sheriff’s Office has also been providing extra security at the high school during the investigation. Harvey stipulated that additional information will be limited in scope, in order

to protect the integrity of the investigation and the legal process, and because the alleged threats came from juveniles.

La Grande High School Principal Brett Baxter said he first learned of the threat Monday afternoon from a staff member. Administrators looked into the report and a short time asked the La Grande Police Department to investigate it.

Baxter is sent a letter to parents home with all LHS

students Wednesday which explained what happened and why an investigation was conducted.

La Grande School District Superintendent Larry Glaze recorded a message for parents and students this morning which was sent to about 2,800 phones via an automated call system.

“I told them that La Grande Police Chief Brian Harvey gave us the green light to run schools today,” Glaze said.

Law enforcement officers were at La Grande High School throughout the day Wednesday.

“We want to allay fears of parents and students,” Glaze said.

Students who are concerned about the situation have the opportunity to talk with counselors. Counselors were called in Tuesday to help students cope with grief due to a 2015 graduate Hanna Doig-Cashell’s death in a car accident on Monday.

BRIEFLY

Echo pursuing funding for sewer upgrades

ECHO — Echo residents may worry that calls from Portland State University are a scam, but they’re actually a tool the city needs to pursue \$2.3 million in funding for upgrades to its sewer system.

City manager Diane Berry said the calls ask people about their demographics and income level, but the information will be kept anonymous and will not be linked to their address. The information is required as part of grant applications to state agencies and HUD.

Berry said that in 2005 the Department of Environmental Quality informed Echo that its wastewater discharge into the Umatilla River was not meeting standards for suspended solids and biological oxygen demand, and it needed to make changes. After hitting some roadblocks, including a landowner who decided not to sell needed property to the city, the project still has not been completed.

“This is probably the slowest sewer project ever,” Berry said.

As a result, state agencies have said that the city needs to redo its demographic and income studies before applying for funding this year.

Berry said the city is shooting for about \$2.3 million in upgrades, including replacing a pump at the lift station, replacing worn-out pipes, installing new pipes, replacing a bridge over a ditch, cleaning out the lagoon where solids are stored and creating an evaporation pond to direct water into.

She said the city currently pumps recycled and chlorinated water into the river less than 30 days out of the year, and never during the summer.

Westland Irrigation District monthly meeting set for Monday

HERMISTON — The Westland Irrigation District will hold its monthly board meeting Monday, April 18 at 1 p.m. at the Stafford Hansell Government Building in Hermiston.

Items on the agenda include an update on the Central Project — part of a multi-phase effort to pump additional irrigation water from the Columbia River — and A-line recharge. The board will also consider a report from GSI Water Solutions on groundwater management, and consider adopting a safety and health program.

For more information, contact the district office at 541-667-2030.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to news@eastoregonian.com

OREGON: 30,500 transplants came from California in 2014

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state,” Bullington wrote, but “Oregonians are not keen on Californians. It’s clearly apparent.”

The picture on the GoFundMe page is nearly identical to the anti-California stickers that appeared on For Sale signs around Portland last summer. Of all the transplants that moved to Oregon in 2014, the U.S. Census Bureau found, 30,500 came from California — far more than the 18,500 who came from Washington, the second-largest group. Meanwhile, home values and rents in Oregon have sharply increased, and the inventory of available homes for sale and rent has been historically low — a fact many locals have blamed on the transplants.

This is a chance for Oregonians to gain one more home on the rental market, eliminate two cars from the roads and get rid of two people from the

line at the popular Portland brunch spot Screen Door, Bullington wrote.

And in an apparent nod to a certain presidential candidate, Bullington ends his request with, “Help make Oregon green again.”

In a phone interview, Bullington acknowledged that it’s a tongue-in-cheek campaign.

“I just thought it was kind of funny,” he said.

He had been planning on moving back to California anyway, he said, because many of his friends are also beginning to have children and he wants his daughter to be able to grow up with them.

“I actually love a lot of the things that Oregon has to offer,” Bullington said.

But don’t get him wrong: if he meets his \$3,500 goal, he really is going to use the money, he said.

“That’ll pay for the moving truck... That’s what it cost to get us here,” Bullington said.

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