

Flu season hitting earlier than usual

East Oregonian

Emergency rooms and pharmacy counters are filling up while classrooms and workplaces are looking sparse.

It must be flu season. In Umatilla County, hospitals and the health department are reporting an earlier than usual spike in influenza cases.

Larry Blanc of St. Anthony Hospital reported Friday that since Jan. 1 the Pendleton hospital had 23 positive tests and has instituted a visitation restriction, barring most visitors under the age of 12 and requiring masks for anyone showing symptoms of the flu.

At Good Shepherd Health Center, Hermiston, the flu season (starting Oct. 1) has seen 182 positive tests and three admissions for flu so far, compared to 10 last year.

About five percent of hospital admissions statewide are flu related, according to Umatilla County Health Director Jim Setzer, compared to

four percent at this time last year.

But Setzer said head counts at hospitals don't give an accurate count of how many are under the weather, as many people stay at home to deal with the illness.

In Pendleton schools, the week started with a 90 percent attendance rate on Monday, a couple of points below average but was back to normal by Thursday. Administrator Matt Yoshioka said teachers, however, were calling in sick by the end of the week and by Friday there were not enough substitutes to cover for all the classes. The district was able to fill in with secondary teachers taking classes during their prep periods and classified staff who are accredited substitutes stepping in at the elementary schools.

Setzer said this year's vaccine appears to not be as good at preventing the virus as previous years, but it has shown the ability to ease and shorten symptoms.

BRIEFLY

Car hits power pole on Canal Rd.

HERMISTON — A car hit a power pole Friday morning on Canal Road, causing power outages and road closures for several hours.

Umatilla County Fire District Battalion Chief J.W. Roberts said it was a single-vehicle crash, and no one was injured. He said around 8 a.m., the car hit the power pole on Canal Road just south of Diagonal Boulevard, shearing the pole.

Roberts said a school bus narrowly missed the pole, but was not involved in the crash. The bus, which had children in it, stayed at the scene for a few minutes, he said.

Roberts said the vehicle that hit the pole left the scene, and was chased down by a Umatilla County Sheriff's deputy, who brought them back to the scene to be examined by medics.

Good Shepherd preparing to open Women's Center

HERMISTON — As Good Shepherd Health Care System's new women's clinic prepares to open later this month, advanced registered nurse practitioner Angie Hays is now taking patients.

Hays signed on to the Good Shepherd Nancy Rudd-McCoy Women's Center after 22 years in the community and said she is excited to focus on caring for women "from menstruation to menopause."

"My primary focus will be providing physical exams, providing contraception options — nexplanon and IUD, caring for common and chronic urinary tract infections, vaginal infections, abnormal bleeding, and other physical conditions women may be experiencing — even hypertension and thyroid conditions," she said in a news release. "Really, I'll be caring for all aspects of preventative health for women."

The new 11,000-square-foot Women's Center at 620 N.W. 11th St. in Hermiston will add new services to Good Shepherd's offerings, including midwifery. To schedule an appointment please call 541-667-3801 or visit www.gshealth.org/good-shepherd-medical-group/gynecology/ and request an appointment online.

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

Partners quit day jobs to open Moe Phở

PENDLETON

By MIRANDA VEGA RECTOR

Confederated Umatilla Journal

Stepping away from 15 years of working as a shift manager for table games, Moe Soeum is pursuing his passion for cooking at Moe Phở — an up-and-coming restaurant owned and operated by Soeum that will be serving Asian dishes.

Soeum is of Cambodian descent and started cooking at a young age; he learned mostly from his mom, Meas Khiev. He and his partner, Whitney Minthorn, a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, have been working around the clock to make their restaurant dream a reality.

Together they took a business class offered by Business Development Services of Wildhorse Resort & Casino to get the restaurant in motion. Soeum formerly worked at Wildhorse. Recently they returned from a trip to Thailand and Vietnam where they took a cooking course on traditional foods. To gain hands-on experience, Soeum has been cooking in the kitchen of Lawan's Thai Garden in Hermiston while Minthorn has been handling the front of the house.

"I was scared to quit my job at the casino," said Soeum. "I didn't want to take a chance. But recently it's been like, 'I need to do this now or else I'm not going to do it.'"

The restaurant will be located at 370 S. Main Street, the former home of New York Richie's. According to Soeum, the owner will be making adjustments to the



Photo contributed by Whitney Minthorn

Whitney Minthorn, left, and Moe Soeum took cooking classes in Vietnam to learn authentic dishes that will be served in Soeum's new restaurant.

"I was scared to quit my job at the casino. I didn't want to take a chance. But recently it's been like, 'I need to do this now or else I'm not going to do it.'"

— Moe Soeum, Moe Phở owner

restaurant space, closing half of it off, moving the kitchen to one side of the building, and adjusting the location of the bar.

The décor will be "modern and cultural," which includes a painting shipped from Cambodia as well as some of Minthorn's photography. As for the staff, they will be wearing traditional uniforms designed by a Vietnamese fashion designer.

"It's the type of restaurant you would find if you were actually in Southeast Asia ... with the music playing ... you would feel like you were in another country," said Minthorn, who is also handling the restaurant's

design, business and marketing aspect.

Although the featured dish on the menu is chicken or beef Phở, Soeum will be serving a variety of Vietnamese, Cambodian and Thai cuisine including Thai Noodles, spring rolls, and Cambodian Fried Rice.

Instead of alcoholic beverages, customers can choose from Vietnamese coffee, bubble tea with pearls, milk tea, and Pepsi products.

Traditional Phở is a Vietnamese soup consisting of rice stick noodles, broth, meat, and herbs. Soeum said the broth is the most important. It cooks for a long period of time and "to make

it right you need to put in a lot of love."

In 2016, Phở was at the top of Google Food Trend's "seasonal riser" list, predicted to be a trend that would come back even stronger in the upcoming years. The dish has been growing at a consistent rate of 11 percent year after year since 2013.

The pair has yet to set an official opening date, though they expect to be serving customers around the end of January or beginning of February. At first they plan to be open seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. until they get a better feel for what the Pendleton community's Phở needs are, and then they will adjust accordingly.

"Together we have come up with a fresh concept, a popular menu, and an ambitious but achievable plan to build it into a thriving new business," wrote Soeum and Minthorn in their business plan.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SATURDAY, JAN. 13
EASTERN OREGON CELTIC SOCIETY PIPERS GATHERING, 1 p.m., The Old Meeting House, 901 M Ave., La Grande. For pipers of all skill levels. Instruction is free, but a \$2 donation for use of the building is appreciated. (541-568-4643)

HERMISTON CULTURAL AWARENESS CLUB, 2 p.m., Starbucks, 1235 N. First St., Hermiston. Practicing the wisdom of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the community, including all cultures and races. Everyone welcome. (John Carbage 541-701-7073)

PENDLETON EAGLES STEAK AND LIVE MUSIC, 6-11:59 p.m., Pendleton Eagles Lodge, 428 S. Main St., Pendleton. Dinner from 6-8 p.m., music from 8 p.m. to midnight. Members and guests welcome. (541-278-2828)

SUNDAY, JAN. 14
PENDLETON EAGLES BREAKFAST, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Pendleton Eagles Lodge, 428 S. Main St., Pendleton. Open to members and guests. (541-278-2828)

WHITE EAGLE GRANGE, 5:30 p.m., White Eagle Grange Hall, 43828 White Eagle Road, Pendleton. 5 p.m. potluck, bring salad or dessert. Regular meeting to follow. (Gail Wilson 541-276-3778)

MONDAY, JAN. 15
BOARDMAN QUILT GROUP, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Boardman Senior Center, 100 Tatone St., Boardman. Quilt construction, quilting updates, education, history and friendship. Free. (Kathy Hyder 541-571-7009)

BLUE MOUNTAIN PIECE-MAKERS, 12 p.m., Thimbles Fabric N More, 1819 Westgate Place, Pendleton.

PENDLETON ROTARY CLUB, 12 p.m., Red Lion Inn Walla Walla Room, 304 S.E. Nye Ave., Pendleton.

IRRIGON MOOSE LODGE TACOS AND BINGO, 6-9 p.m., Irrigon Moose Lodge, 220 N.E. Third St., Irrigon. Tacos from 6-9 p.m., bingo from 6:30-9 p.m. Open to members and guests. (541-922-1802)

OREGON TRAIL GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY, 6 p.m., Pendle-

ton City Hall community room, 501 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton. (Tom Moon 541-278-9702)

BLOOMER GIRLS GARDEN CLUB, 6:30 p.m., location varies, Hermiston. (Barbara Chadwick 541-567-2043)

INLAND NORTHWEST MUSICIANS CHORALE REHEARSAL, 7 p.m., Harris Jr. Academy gymnasium, 3121 S.W. Hailey Ave., Pendleton. No tryouts; all welcome. No rehearsals June-July-August or Christmas-New Year. (RaNiel Dunn 541-289-4696)

TUESDAY, JAN. 16
PENDLETON TOASTMASTERS NO. 154, 6:30 a.m., Pendleton City Hall community room, 501 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton.

GREENFIELD GRANGE PINOCHLE, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Greenfield Grange 579, 209 N.W. First

St., Boardman. (541-481-7397)

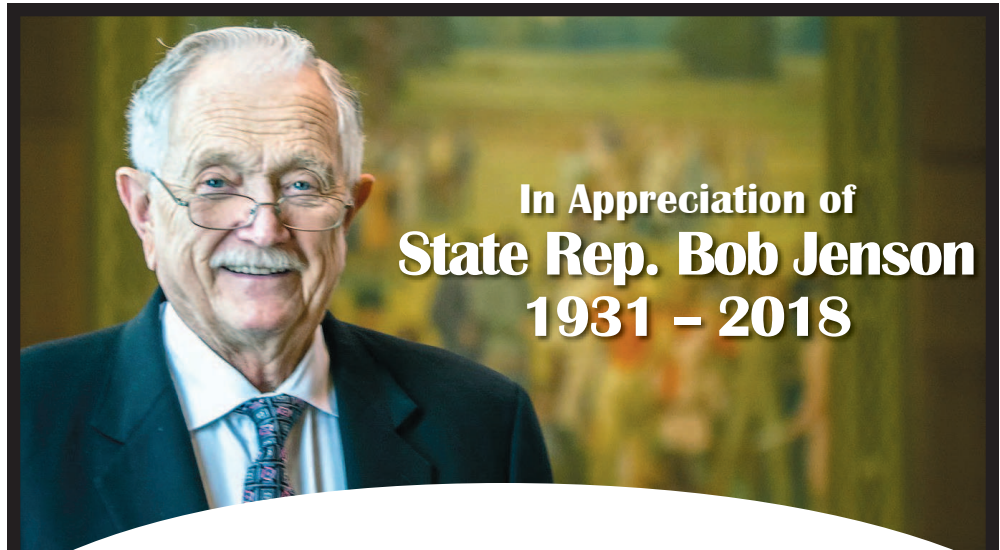
BIBLE STUDY, 10 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 352 S.E. Second St., Pendleton. (Rev. Jim Pierce 541-276-2616)

GREATHER HERMISTON AREA REPUBLICAN WOMEN'S CLUB, 11:30 a.m., Desert Lanes Bowling Alley, 1545 N. Main St., Hermiston. No-host lunch. All women welcome. (541-567-0006)

"THE LIFE MODEL: LIVING FROM THE HEART JESUS GAVE YOU" BOOK STUDY GROUP, 1-2:30 p.m., Bowman Building, 17 S.W. Frazer Ave., Pendleton. (Pat 541-276-6671)

WESTON-MCEWEN LI-ONS CLUB, 1 p.m., Doubletree Restaurant, 327 E. Main St., Athena. (Eilyn 541-566-3987)

STUDYING THE MIRACLES OF JESUS, 4-6 p.m., Good Samaritan Ministries, 319 W. Locust Ave., Hermiston. (541-564-1041)



In Appreciation of State Rep. Bob Jenson 1931 - 2018

Bob Jenson battled for the interests of Eastern Oregon in the Oregon House of Representatives, in a gracious and civil manner. Among his many accomplishments, Bob never wavered in an effort to get more water for our farming and food processing economy. He championed the value of community-owned utilities and fought on our behalf. We are still benefiting today from the tireless efforts of Bob Jenson, and he will be dearly missed.

Our Condolences to the Family and Friends of Bob Jenson,

The Board and Staff of Umatilla Electric Cooperative



AG Jeff Sessions is limiting our freedom of speech & rights as business owners.

PENDLETON'S CRAFT CANNABIS BOUTIQUE
1733 SW Court Ave, Pendleton

Flower
Topicals
Edibles
Concentrates
and more



Open 7 days
A week
8-10
Mon-Sat
10-10
Sunday

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Adults 21+ • Keep Out of Reach of Children • Do not drive while under the influence of Marijuana