

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEWS

Simple advice — get a flu vaccine

It's time to get your flu shot — if you haven't already. You owe it to yourself, and to protect the people around you.

Influenza is a highly contagious respiratory illness most commonly spread through coughing and sneezing. While most people who contract it experience no more than fever, chills, aches, cough and congestion, it can be serious — and even fatal.

The federal Centers for Disease Control say people should be getting vaccinated by the end of October. But its medical staff add that getting vaccinated later can still be beneficial and vaccination should continue to be offered throughout flu season, even into January or later.

In fact, writing in *The New York Times*, columnist Jane Brody recently reported that late fall is still a great time to get your shot.

"Although there are some cases of flu in October and November in the United States, flu season here doesn't usually get going full speed until December, peaking in most years in February and usually ending by April," she said in a Nov. 5 column.

Dr. Michael T. Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University

of Minnesota, told Brody that "immunity induced by the flu vaccine, which is rarely greater than 60 percent to begin with, tends to wane by 20 percent a month, leaving those who got their shot in August or September with less than desirable protection by the time they're exposed to a variant of flu virus their body doesn't recognize."

Osterholm said that "since 95 percent of flu outbreaks start in mid-December, it's best to get the flu shot in early to mid-November."

The CDC estimates that flu has resulted in between 9.3 million and 49 million illnesses each year in the United States since 2010. That's resulted in between 140,000 and 960,000 hospitalizations each year since.

Information about fatalities, especially about deaths of children, make for grim reading on the CDC website. Time magazine reported that flu and its complications killed almost 80,000 people in the U.S. last year, including 180 children. That's the highest flu death toll in four decades.

So here are some tips:

- Everyone six months of age or older needs a flu vaccine.
- It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies that protect



The Daily Astorian

The influenza virus has not hit too hard yet this season, but health officials urge residents to get a flu shot.

against flu to develop in the body

- Children 6 months through 8 years of age who need two doses of vaccine to be protected should start the vaccination process sooner; if it is their first vaccination, the two doses must be given at least four weeks apart.

In addition to getting vaccinated, the CDC states something that should be obvious, but is worth repeating: You can take everyday preventive actions like staying away from sick people and washing your hands to reduce the spread of germs.

And if you do contract flu-like symptoms, get medical help. If you are sick with flu, stay home from work or school to prevent spreading flu to others.

That latter point is a key.

The Umatilla County Health Department is a good starting point for anyone seeking more information. The agency's staff at 541-278-5432 is eager to help.

Many pharmacies offer flu shots for free and many insurances have only a very small co-pay.

This kind of preventative medicine is an investment in your own health, and that of family, friends and co-workers — in fact, everyone you encounter in your daily life.

If there is a small cost, it is money well spent.

For definitive details about all aspects of flu shots, go to bit.ly/flu-questions

OTHER VIEWS

Now it's campaign finance, not Russia

Prosecutors investigating President Trump made big news recently, but it wasn't about Russia. Rather, in their sentencing recommendation for fixer Michael Cohen, lawyers with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York wrote that in the final weeks of the 2016 campaign, candidate Trump directed Cohen to pay off Stormy Daniels and Karen McDougal, who wanted money to keep quiet about sexual dalliances. While such arrangements are legal, prosecutors argued that since the payoffs occurred during the campaign, they were violations of campaign finance laws.

Cohen, who is cooperating because prosecutors nailed him for tax evasion and bank fraud in his private business, pleaded guilty to two felony campaign finance violations. So no one has to talk about an "alleged" campaign finance scheme; there's already a guilty plea. But what was really significant about the sentencing memo was that prosecutors specifically said Trump told Cohen to do it.

"With respect to both payments, Cohen acted with the intent to influence the 2016 presidential election," prosecutors said. "He acted in coordination with and at the direction of (Trump)."

Those words caused a sudden shift in the debate over investigating the president. What had been a two-year-long conversation about Trump and Russia instantly became a conversation about Trump and campaign finance.

"Prosecutors are now implicating the president in at least two felonies," said CNN. "Federal prosecutors in New York say that President Trump directed Michael Cohen to commit two felonies," said NBC's Chuck Todd.

And so on. "There's a very real prospect that on the day Donald Trump leaves office, the Justice Department may indict him, that he may be the first president in quite some time to face the real prospect of jail time," said Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff, who will become chairman of the House Intelligence Committee next month.

Jerrold Nadler, the Democrat who will chair the House Judiciary Committee, said the campaign finance charges "would be

impeachable offenses because, even though they were committed before the president became president, they were committed in the service of fraudulently obtaining the office." Nadler said he has still not determined whether the charges, even though they could be the basis for impeachment, are important enough to actually go forward, at least yet.

Nadler's public caution is understandable; his committee will have the responsibility of starting the impeachment process, if that is what Democratic leaders decide. But the fact is, a number of Democrats clearly believe they already have enough evidence to impeach.

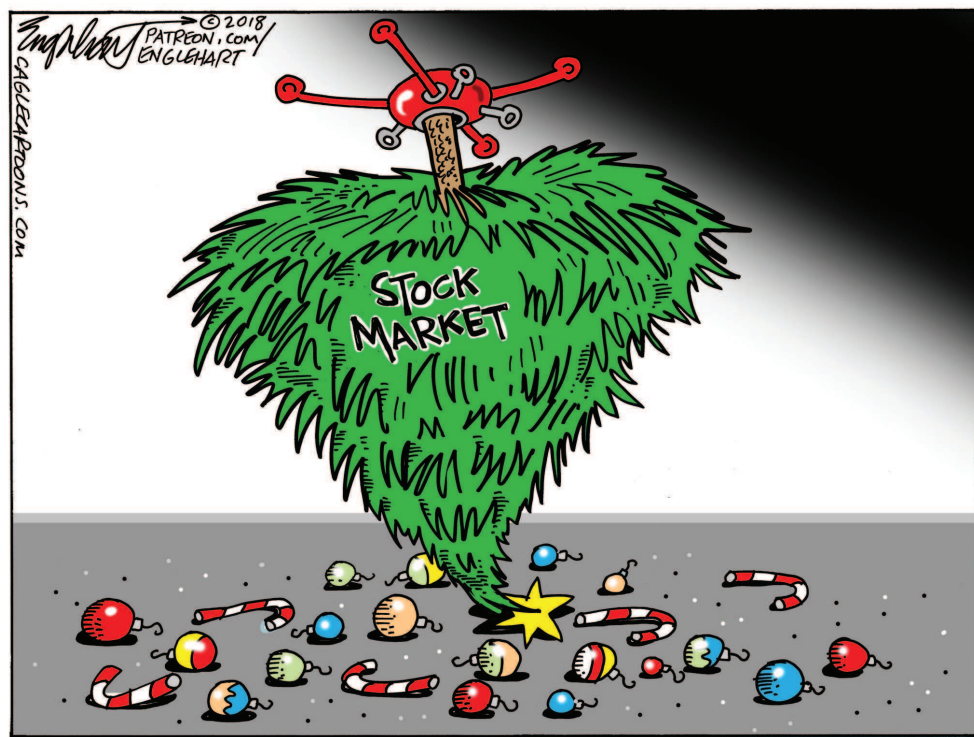
One significant problem could be that the campaign finance charge against the president is a pretty iffy case. Back in 2010, the Justice Department accused 2008 presidential candidate John Edwards of a similar scheme — an alleged campaign finance violation based on a payoff to a woman with whom Edwards had had an affair (and a child).

President Trump would point out that the accusation against him differs in at least one key respect from Edwards. Prosecutors accused Edwards of raising donor money to pay off the woman. Trump used his own money, which even the byzantine and restrictive campaign finance laws give candidates a lot of freedom to use in unlimited amounts.

But the political reality is, it doesn't really matter if it is a weak case. And it doesn't matter if Trump himself has not been indicted, or even that a sitting president cannot be indicted. Because now, Democrats can say, "The Justice Department has implicated the president in two felonies. Two felonies. TWO FELONIES!"

The last few days have seen a big pivot in the campaign against Donald Trump. For two-plus years, it was Russia, Russia, Russia. But despite various revelations in the Russia probe, the case for collusion remains as sketchy as ever. Now, though, prosecutors in the Southern District of New York have given Democrats a new weapon against the president. Look for them to use it.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for *The Washington Examiner*.



YOUR VIEWS

Creative solutions can have unintended consequences

When faced with difficult problems, it is important to consider both standard and atypical solutions. However, when choosing a creative, "outside the box" course, you must beware of unexpected consequences. It is your responsibility to see the homework completed and you must not be swayed by solutions that have a few appealing components, but are not implementable; or those with short-term benefits but long-term repercussions; or ones that cause more harm than good.

In 1910, our country faced problems in the southern states with invasive, imported water weeds. They had taken over waterways, clogging boat motors and threatening the economic and ecological viability of the region. In addition, the country was suffering from a meat shortage. Thinking outside of the box, our political leadership proposed importing hippos from Africa and releasing them into swamp lands to eat the water hyacinth and be farmed for their meat.

Little thought was given to the idea that solving one invasive species problem by importing another might be a bad idea. Few

considered the aggressive nature of hippos, or their inability to respond to domestication, or the environmental changes that would occur, or the impacts to local agriculture when the hippos grazed adjacent cropland. The truth is that many of our political leaders were convinced that importation of hippos was an easy solution to these immediate problems. In 1910, H.R. 23621, the American Hippo Bill, was proposed. It failed to pass by a single vote.

Now, let's talk about a wall.

Lynn Robertson
Pendleton

Remember the pets this holiday season

In this special time of giving, I'm asking everyone to remember something to support the work of the Pendleton Animal Welfare Shelter. As an all-year gift to the children, nothing mirrors the love and care of a community more than the humane treatment of its pet population.

Join the compassion circle and let 'er sparkle. And be proud of what has been accomplished!

Marjorie Iburg
Pendleton

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