

OPINION

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OUR VIEW

Don't mess around with the flu — get your flu shot

Imagine if every year the U.S. military suffered thousands of casualties in some foreign conflict.

It is a difficult and chilling scenario. Fortunately, no such war exists, but every year seasonal flu and its complications send people to the hospital and kill many more.

In this day and age, we tend to focus on diseases that grab headlines and generate fear but are tucked into remote jungle regions. Ebola continues even now to burn through portions of the Congo. Yet we forget that seasonal influenza is a dangerous and routine malady that rolls through our midst.

The flu is no joke. It can kill and often does, but there is a time-tested method to avoid it.

Taking the time out to get a flu shot isn't just a minor inconvenience. It is a critical part of keeping not only yourself safe but also your friends and family and others you may not even know.

As far as Mother Nature goes, influenza is a perfect virus. Easily spread, it



EO file photo

The flu is spread through coughing, sneezing and unwashed hands. While flu actually is a year-round virus, it hits harder in the cold weather season. Researchers don't know exactly why, but a leading theory is that the virus survives better in cold, dry air.

infects people with ease. When someone infected coughs, sneezes or even talks, the virus can be inhaled into the lungs. From there the virus spreads and brings on the all-too-familiar

symptoms of the flu.

About 8% of the U.S. population is infected by the virus each year.

Flu can also create severe complications, including pneumonia and other

infections.

The annual cost of flu is also steep. Estimates place a price tag of more than \$9 billion a year in costs connected to hospital stays and visits to the doctor because of the virus. That is not counting, by the way, the number of days missed from work by those who are struck down by the virus.

That is why getting a flu shot now is so important. Generally, acquiring a flu shot isn't expensive and it is a fast, efficient way to avoid the sickness.

Get your flu shot either from your primary care provider or by visiting the county health department. Pharmacies in grocery stores and drug stores often provide vaccines as well.

No one likes to get sick and certainly no one wants to spend seven to 10 days at home fighting off the flu virus. But modern medicine offers all of us a way to avoid the flu.

Don't mess around with the flu. Get your flu shot. A short time out during the day to get the vaccine will pay off down the road.

YOUR VIEWS

Tribes governed by Board of Trustees, not General Council

There was a hearing in Umatilla tribal court on Tuesday, Oct. 1, that resulted in Judge Doug Nash temporarily reinstating Sally Kosey back to her seat on the Board of Trustees. On Thursday, Oct. 3, the tribal newspaper reported that Nash based his decision partly on the BOT's lack of action regarding the recent "nearly unanimous" General Council motion to reinstate Kosey. The GC, or tribal constituency, is comprised of Umatilla-enrolled tribal members 18 years or older.

In consideration that the court made its ruling at least partly based on a GC motion, a discussion is needed on the authority, or lack thereof, of the General Council. Article V of our tribal Constitution clearly defines the limited powers of the General Council: "The GC shall elect its own officers, and shall also elect the members and officers of the BOT, as hereinafter provided; and the GC shall have the power to demand reports from its officers and from the said Board, and to recall its officers or the members of the Board, as hereinafter provided."

Thus, it needs to be understood that motions by the General Council should be considered, but they are not binding. The GC cannot give itself new powers by merely approving motions;. It would take a Constitutional amendment for the GC to acquire more powers than what the Constitution currently defines.

Article VI of our Constitution: "The governing body of the Confederated Tribes shall be a Board of Trustees." This clearly means that the duly elected BOT is the policy-making body of the CTUIR. However, the BOT should not have ignored the near-unanimous GC motion to reinstate Kosey. They should have responded and explained to the GC they will not uphold the motion, for the reasons I am now pointing out.

As the governing body, the BOT has the Constitutional power to uphold or deny GC motions.

I was one of the four abstentions when the near-unanimous GC motion to reinstate Kosey was approved. The reason I abstained is I knew the motion was not binding, and I seriously doubted the BOT would reverse their recent decision to vacate Kosey's seat. In my opinion, it is a lack of knowledge of tribal governance that leads to ill will and frustration in the community.

The tribal newspaper also reported that Nash asked tribal attorney Naomi Stacy if the organizational chart shows the General Council above the Board of Trustees, implying the BOT is subordinate to the GC. However, in our form of tribal government, power is derived from our Constitution, not the organizational chart. The primary purpose of an organizational chart is to establish lines of

communication for internal purposes.

Thus, at the end of the day, the tribal court needs to base its rulings on existing and applicable laws, not public sentiment.

Bob Shippentower
Pendleton

Changing priorities

In a recent Facebook post, I characterized the Pendleton City Council as being inept in awarding grants. I'd like to apologize for that as being a bit too harsh.

A better term would be unfamiliar with the basic requirements of any business, especially a new one, to successfully operate in the current atmosphere of doing business in the state of Oregon.

The decision on awarding a grant or loan would be best left to a panel more familiar with the economic realities of this current atmosphere. The closing of the "The Lodge" is just such an example of a project that should have never been approved for taxpayer funding. It is neither a historic building that fits the early 20th century architectural design the city is so keen to preserve, nor did it fill a missing venue or provide any economic benefit to a community of this size.

City Hall has got to realize that economic investment must compliment current businesses and not duplicate those already established. Competition is good for the consumer until market saturation forces businesses to close. An example? With Wildhorse building a new top-notch bowling center, would it be wise for the city to also entertain construction of a like facility? I think not.

Their process of divesting of the old fire station seems to be an attempt to develop the River Quarter in accordance with the plan that proved unworkable and was ultimately repealed. The mindset at City Hall appears that they are unwilling to admit failure by developing their plan and implementation behind closed doors in "executive session." This lack of transparency leads to public mistrust amid rumors of another giveaway of public property. A history of huge giveaways has instilled an image of desperation to claim success, at any cost, and left the city in a weak negotiating position, such as the deal they were forced into at Pendleton Heights and a subsequent deal with the Contractor scheduled to build across from New Weds Foods.

Parks and Recreation, as well the Olney Cemetery and Vert Auditorium, all continue to be a huge drain on the city's budget. The homeless situation, after enabling has failed as a solution and now reached "crisis" levels. And as City Hall continues in the talking stage of how to solve the situation with our public streets, somehow a hotel has become a top priority at City Hall.

Rick Rohde
Pendleton

OTHER VIEWS

Trump stonewalls the Constitution, Democrats say 'bring it on'

The constitutional crisis has officially arrived. To the surprise of nobody with a cognitive intellect, Donald Trump has hauled us to this treacherous precipice. The good news is that the House Democrats, empowered by the midterm voters to hold Trump accountable, are eager to prevail in the historic showdown to come. And their strategy is a win-win.

Have you read the letter, authored by Trump's legal eagles, which decrees that the White House will refuse to cooperate with the impeachment probe? As government documents go, it's a doozy. The lawyers' Trump armbands are wrapped so tight their brains have been starved of oxygen. The result is a smorgasbord of recycled MAGA catechisms.

My favorite claim is that the current impeachment inquiry is "constitutionally illegitimate," despite the Constitution's Article II provision that grants the House sole power to hold our highest officials accountable — a provision that traces its origins to 14th-century Britain.

The letter also claims that a House impeachment probe can't be launched unless the full House votes to launch it, but the Constitution says no such thing, not one word. Remember when Republicans prided themselves on being "strict constructionists" who took the Founders' words literally?

There's also some whining in the letter that the impeachment inquiry seeks to "overturn" Trump's election, when in truth the whole point of an impeachment inquiry is to examine presidential abuses of power after an election. If Trump's lawyers (and Trump) were to enroll in a remedial history course, they'd learn that Richard Nixon was targeted for impeachment in 1974 despite the fact that he'd won the 1972 election in a 49-state landslide.

House Democratic leaders, having digested and spat out the letter's various Orwellian tidbits (the impeachment probe "threatens grave and lasting damage to our democratic institutions"), are actually fine with the fact that the ultimate battle has been joined. Their win-win goes something like this:

Since they already have the goods on Trump's most blatant impeachable act,"he sought to extort Ukraine for domestic campaign dirt against Joe

Biden," anything they get from new documents and Trump witnesses would be gravy. And if the Trump regime stonewalls on delivering documents and witnesses, then presto, that's further grist for an article of impeachment detailing obstruction of justice. As suburban Philadelphia congresswoman Mary Gay Scanlon, vice chair of the House Judiciary Committee, said on Tuesday, "the more obstruction there is, the more quickly this (inquiry) moves."

Trump and his lawyers want to sucker the House Democrats into a long court fight over the documents and witnesses, hoping to run out the clock to 2020. But the Democrats don't need to play that game, so they won't. Trump wants to stiff the inquiry? Fine. Intelligence panel chairman Adam Schiff said that stonewalling would be "yet additional strong evidence of obstruction of the constitutional functions of Congress."

Trump is so anxious to hide the damning truth about his Biden dirt-digging (as the documents and witnesses would reveal) that he clearly prefers to take the hit on obstruction of justice. That's how badly he is cornered. And there's zero evidence that stonewalling the inquiry will win over the electorate. A national poll, released Tuesday, says that 58% of Americans support the House inquiry, and only 38% oppose it. This past spring, those percentages were virtually reversed.

And another new poll, released Wednesday morning, is even more brutal for Trump: 50% of registered voters support Senate conviction and removal.

Granted, it strains credulity at the moment to believe that the Republican Senate would throw him out, since they hail disproportionately from red states overfilled with bitter-end MAGA fans. But it's already highly plausible that a craven Senate exoneration would leave obstructionist Trump seriously or mortally wounded by the stink of his smoking gun.

So, it's game on. As the poet Ralph Waldo Emerson penned, "Things are in the saddle/ And ride mankind." And for once, the Democrats are snapping the reins.

Dick Polman is a nationally syndicated columnist.

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