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Morrow County begins administering COVID-19 vaccine

County makes vaccine available to first responders

By BEN LONERGAN
East Oregonian

HEPPNER — Despite the cold weather, wind and drizzle, Morrow County Sheriff Ken Matlack appeared in a jovial mood on Wednesday, Dec. 30, awaiting his first dose of the Moderna

COVID-19 vaccine beneath a tent in the parking lot of the Bartholomew Building in Heppner.

After filling out paperwork and picking an arm, Matlack lifted the left sleeve of his uniform and received the first vaccination of the morning.

“It feels like just getting a flu shot,” he said as he returned to his patrol car to wait out the manda-



Rivera

tory 15-minute recovery period.

While Heppner’s Pioneer Memorial Hospital wrapped up its staff vaccinations earlier this week, the Dec. 30 vaccination event marked the first time Morrow County made vaccines available to law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical personnel and other first responders.

“I think it’s really a good deal,” Matlack said. “We’re hoping that more people will take the opportunity of getting the shot.”

Matlack said as of Dec. 30

about half of his staff intended to get the vaccine, a number he hopes to see increase as he and others in the department begin to receive the vaccination.

“I think when people start seeing more and more people doing it, it’s going to help get more people interested,” he said.

After the sheriff, Undersheriff John Bowles stepped up for his vaccination followed by Boardman Chief of Police Rick Stokoe and several other first responders.

While the initial trio of vac-

inations took place outdoors, county health officials then transitioned to administering vaccinations in a drive-thru manner. Individuals pulled up, filled out paperwork, parked and received their shot without leaving their vehicles.

Following the vaccination, drivers were required to wait out a 15-minute recovery period to check for side effects before they were able to depart. The drive-th-

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Police search for husband after shooting

The victim, Marlen Bowles, was Life Flighted to OHSU in critical condition where she later died

By BRYCE DOLE
East Oregonian

MORROW COUNTY — Police are still searching for the husband of a woman who was shot on Tuesday, Dec. 15, in Heppner and later died at Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, according to officials.

The victim’s husband, David Bowles, 43, is a person of interest in the investigation, and police say he should be considered armed and dangerous.

“Since the time of the shooting, he hasn’t been located or found yet,” Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson said. “So he’s somebody I know law enforcement is trying to talk to find out the whole process and what happened. We’ve interviewed many other witnesses, but we still need to talk to David Bowles.”

The victim, Marlen Bowles, was Life Flighted to OHSU in critical condition where she later died with her family at her bedside, according to Nelson.

The Oregon State Police took the lead in the investigation at the request of the Morrow County Sheriff’s Office partly because David Bowles is the brother of Morrow County Undersheriff John Bowles, according to Lt. Melissa Ross, a public information officer from the sheriff’s office. Ross said the investigation was handed to OSP out of concern for appearance and perception, not that there could be a potential conflict of interest.

“As my general understanding, it’s really not considered a conflict of interest unless it was like one of our employees,” she said, adding the undersheriff was not involved

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Chloe LeValley/Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

Sandy Fujan opens the drapes in her Milton-Freewater home as her husband Roger points the thermal imaging camera to the window. The blue shadows on the screen are not ghosts in this instance, “just our reflection,” he said.

Ghost hunting

Northeast Oregon Paranormal tours private homes searching for ghosts in Milton-Freewater

By CHLOE LEVALLEY
Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

MILTON-FREEWATER — Sandy Fujan recalls that shortly after her father died, she saw her husband’s razor rocking back and forth on a table. As one who believes in the paranormal, the Milton-Freewater woman assumed it was her late father moving the shaver.

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Chloe LeValley/Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

An electromagnetic field reader is used during initial walk-throughs of homes by Northwest Oregon Paranormal investigators to note normal emissions from appliances or electricity in the walls.

Physician revels in running, family time

Dr. Deborah Woodbury moved to Pendleton from Pennsylvania

Editor’s Note: This story is part of an annual series by the East Oregonian called “Our New Neighbors,” which introduces the community to people who have moved here in the past year.

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Dr. Deborah Woodbury is getting to know her new town by lacing on her running shoes and hitting the streets.

In August, the physician moved to Oregon from Pennsylvania as COVID-19 ramped up. She would spend the next couple of months painting and install-

ing flooring at her new North Hill home, and then start her family practitioner job at Pendleton Family Medicine in the fall. While a pandemic isn’t an ideal time to explore a new town or make friends, she enjoys the company of family who live in Pendleton.

Woodbury frequently visited Pendleton to spend time with her parents, Ron and Melissa Woodbury (both now deceased), and her sister, Sarah Woodbury, brother-in-law, Dan Haug, and their children. Deborah’s two sons, John and Tom, often spent their spring breaks in Pendleton while growing up.

Deborah, a veteran of 16 marathons, usually starts her day

with a run. She goes from 5 to 12 miles and incorporates steep hills into her daily workout. She might run up Airport Road and into farm country. Or head up North Main Street, circle back to town, and then run up and down Red Lion Hill to Grecian Heights Park and back home.

This kind of tenacity has qualified Woodbury for six Boston marathons. She’s often on the road before dawn, doing her cool down before most of us have finished our first cup of coffee. Endurance is her gift, not speed, Woodbury said. When prodded, however, she said her personal best is a



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

Dr. Deborah Woodbury poses in her front yard with her dog, Goldilocks. Woodbury moved to town in August to be near family and work at Pendleton Family Medicine as a family practitioner.

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