

Spilyay Tymo

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Vaccine soon for front-line, High Lookee residents

Warm Springs health officials expect an initial shipment of 200 Covid-19 vaccine doses by the end of December. The initial shipment would be enough for front-line health workers serving the tribal community; plus staff and residents of High Lookee Lodge, said Dr. Rachel Locker, clinic vaccine coordinator.

The first shipments to Warm Springs will be the Moderna vaccine, found to be "highly effective" against Covid-19: Final testing shows the Moderna vaccine to have 94-percent efficacy against the virus.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration will meet this Thursday to consider granting emergency use authorization of the Moderna vaccine. Large-scale shipments could begin the following day or this weekend. At the local level, "We're expecting our initial shipment before the end of the year," Dr. Locker said.

Most of the IHS and Tribal clinic staff, about 130 employees, have indicated they will receive a Covid-19 vaccine, Dr. Locker said.

Two doses of the vaccine are required for immunization: The second dose comes approximately 28 days after the first. The 200 doses in the initial shipment would be administered to the front-line workers—doctors, nurses, emergency response and other care providers—and the High Lookee Lodge residents. The second dose for these individuals would come from a subsequent vaccine shipment to Warm Springs.

The Moderna vaccine will be the second Covid-19 vaccine to receive FDA emergency use authorization. Distribution and use of the Pfizer vaccine began last week.

The Moderna vaccine is better suited for smaller hospitals and clinics in rural areas, because it is shipped in smaller quantities than

Pfizer's. The Moderna vaccine also does not have to be stored at the super-low temperature of the Pfizer vaccine. The Moderna can be stored at a temperature like a regular freezer.

As with other care facilities, Warm Springs IHS follows the established Centers for Disease Control guidelines for the order of distribution of the vaccine. In general terms:

The front-line health care and emergency response personnel, and elder care facility residents, are first; followed by other essential employees, people 65 and older, people 55 and older who have a comorbidity—that is, some other disease; and the general public. For the entire community of Warm Springs to receive the vaccine—by sometime into the spring—approximately 13,000 doses eventually would be needed, Dr. Locker said.

Shutdown through Dec. 27

In response to the continued increase in Covid-19 cases, the Confederated Tribes Response Team recommended to Tribal Council a continued shutdown of the tribal government.

Tribal Council on December 9 approved the recommendation.

The renewed closure is now in effect through Sunday, December 27, with an expected return to work date of Monday, December 28. The tribal organization will continue to provide essential services to the community, and the following will be imposed:

The shutdown through December 27 does not apply to essential services typically defined

as the Police Department, Fire and Safety, Emergency Medical Technicians, Public Utilities, etc.

In addition, other essential service functions have been defined during this pandemic to include Finance, Health and Human Services, Day Care, etc. These employees are determined by the branch managers and directors.

The Covid-19 team discourages traveling out of state. If a tribal employee travels out of state, he or she will be required to report the travel to his or her immediate supervisor. The employee will be required to take a Covid-19 test prior to returning to work, with documentation of a negative result.

A look back at reservation and tribal news of 2020

As a tradition in December, the Spilyay looks back at some of the memorable events of the past year on the reservation.

Sometimes the big news is open for discussion: In 2018, for instance, the tribes saw the closure of Kah-Nee-Ta Resort. While that same year the tribes and Indian Head Casino opened the Plateau Travel Plaza. Both of these were memorable occasions.

Last year the question was a little clearer: In the spring of 2019—just after the Twenty-Eighth Tribal Council took office—the tribes began an Agency-wide boil water notice. This lasted into the summer—an unprecedented event at the time.

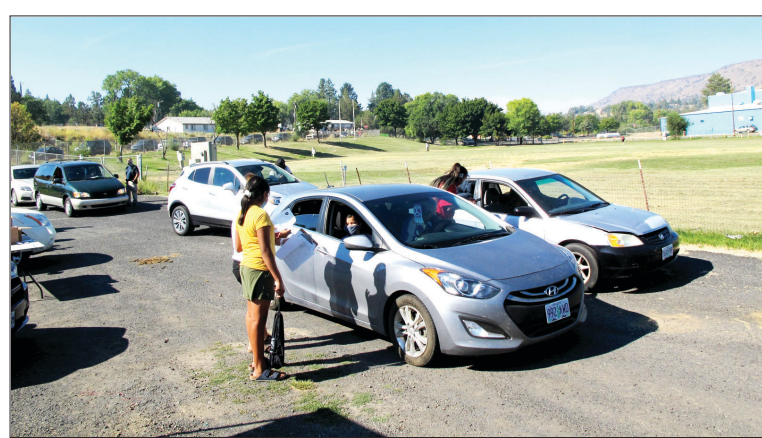
This year the reservation saw

another months-long boil-water notice; plus the massive Lionshead forest fire. Meanwhile at Congress the tribes were able to nullify the false 'treaty of 1865.' Even this news, though, could not surpass the single most memorable development of 2020—the most memorable event in recent memory.

In February 2020 no one had heard much about Covid-19. It was a mystery illness happening in China, half a world away. And it could never reach the U.S., let alone the Reservation.

Then came March of 2020, and words that resonate to this day:

The Tribal Council of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, in partnership with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian



This image from September helps to illustrate the 2020 situation in Warm Springs: The annual school giveaway was done drive-by with families and staff wearing masks, and social distancing.

Health Services, declares a State of Emergency, as a proactive measure in addressing the Covid-19 coronavirus.

It was late in March, and the Declaration continued: 'At this time there are no confirmed or presumptive cases of Covid-19 on the

reservation...'

Since those hopeful days the Warm Springs Health and Wellness Center has conducted more 6,000 Covid-19 tests—with more than 600 positive results.

Over the past nine months 12 community members have died from the virus. Sixty people have been hospitalized. And all parts of the organization have seen prolonged shutdowns.

As this year reaches its conclusion, vaccines are on the way, though months of precaution are still ahead of us.

Needless to say, 2020 will always be remembered on the reservation—and around world—as the year of the virus.

— Dave McMechan

Community covid update

ECE closure

Due to unfortunate circumstances from the Covid-19 pandemic, the Early Childhood Education Center is unable to operate the facility. ECE anticipates reopening on Monday, December 21.

Billing will be adjusted as needed. If there are any billing questions, please email Nancy Mendez:

nancy.mendez@wstribes.org

Any other questions can be sent to Casandra Moses, ECE manager:

casandra.moses@wstribes.org

The Early Childhood Education Center is licensed to provide emergency childcare only to essential staff who are working.

Essential staff are defined as first responders, emergency workers, health care professionals, followed by critical operations staff and essential personnel.

Warm Springs ECE follows the Health and Safety guidelines provided by the Early Learning Divi-

sion and Oregon Health Authority.

All adults and children entering the building must have their temperature checked and pass the health and travel questions. All adults who enter the building must wear a mask at all times.

There are no visitors allowed in the building during the reservation State of Emergency. All pick-up and drop-off of children must be done outside the building.

Community update

A community-wide curfew is imposed from 10 p.m. to 6 p.m. during the shutdown.

As of earlier this week, the Warm Springs Healthness Center had conducted 6,132 Covid-19 tests. Of those, 5,564 have come back negative; while there have been a total of 540 positive cases.

Sixty community members have been hospitalized with covid, and 55 discharged.

UPDATE continues on page 8



Wishing Warm Springs a Safe and Merry Christmas, from artist Travis Bobb.

**STAY HOME
STAY SAFE
SAVE LIVES**