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Gazette Times

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Some flu vaccine getting to Morrow County

By David Sykes

The H1N1 flu vaccine is starting to make its way to Morrow County, and health officials are now administering the doses in limited amounts to the targeted swine flu group, the county health nurse said Monday. Morrow County Public Health Director Sheree Smith said that as soon as the county gets more H1N1 vaccine they will be going into the schools to vaccinate the students. Smith said she hoped to see a larger supply of vaccine arriving in two to three weeks.

Smith said her office will be giving the vaccine at all regularly scheduled clinics in Boardman (Monday and Tuesday) and Heppner (Thursday) giving out what is available. Smith emphasized that the vaccine at this time will only be given to those in the following target groups.

The target groups for H1N1 vaccination are:

-Pregnant women

-Household members and caregivers of infants less than 6 months of age.

-Children 6 months through 24 years of age.

-Persons age 25-64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of complications from influenza.

-Healthcare workers and law enforcement.

"H1N1 influenza illness has not yet peaked," Smith said. We urge everyone to get the vaccine when they can." She also said health experts expect another wave of H1N1 influenza illness in the spring.

Smith announced the arrival of additional seasonal influenza vaccine and urged people to get their regular seasonal flu shots which can be received during the normal clinic schedule starting November 4 with the P.O.D. (Point of Distribution) Clinic offering free (no cost) seasonal vaccine to anyone. The clinic will be held at Riverside High School Wednesday, November 4, in Boardman 4-7:30 p.m. This clinic is the same type that was held at the Heppner High School last November. Everyone is encouraged to attend, especially those without health care coverage, said the health department.

Residents at 270 Chase Street in Heppner are taking the flu season in stride, putting up these yard decorations as comic relief. *-Photo by Autumn Morgan*

Governor candidate visits Heppner

By David Sykes

Candidate for Oregon Governor John Lim, who was in Heppner last Friday, says the number-one issue facing Oregon is the economy.

John Lim

Lim, an experienced state legislator having served 13 years in the House and Senate, says Oregon needs a limited government and a smaller government that will not stifle the businesses that will ultimately create the jobs in Oregon. "We have 12 percent unemployment in Oregon, higher than the national average," says Lim. "And that is unacceptable. We need to show young people how to succeed."

Lim immigrated to the United States from Korea in 1966 and has worked in many different types of jobs including starting his own company called American Royal Jelly Company, which he still owns, in 1972. "I have held manual jobs and owned a company. I understand how to work and how to run a business," he says.

Lim says the Democrats have been running things too long with poor results. "Oregon needs a new direction. Our state has been under one party rule for too long, and that is not good. I am not sure what the Democrat governor has done," he adds. "But we need fresh leadership."

"It is not the job of government to provide jobs," Lim says. "The private sector will create the jobs." The government should "steer" he says, "not row," when driving the economy.

Lim says the Republican Party needs to have a big tent, unify and listen to people with different opinions. "I am a conservative and believe in improving the economy and creating jobs. I will be the top salesman for Oregon," he says. With his ties to Korea, Lim says he has spent time in the Pacific Rim countries and could help sell Oregon's products to those countries.

On education Lim says we need to be more pragmatic. "Our curriculum is not designed for the 21st century. We need to customize education," he says. "Each student should work in what they are good at. Twenty five percent of students in Oregon don't graduate. This is a problem. We need to teach students other things, such as hands on skills," Lim says.

Lim also says we need to make sure the government does not become the sole support for citizens. "We have 100,000 people on welfare in this state. We need to make sure people can get jobs and then take them. The government should not be providing long term income," he says.

Following is Lim's biography:

John Lim is one of the longest serving members in the legislature, where he served five elected terms in Oregon. When he was in the eighth grade, the Korean War broke out on June 25, 1950. His father, Eun Kyu Lim, was forced to serve as a firefighter under the North Korean military occupation for three months. Because of this reason, John Lim's father was executed by the South Korean

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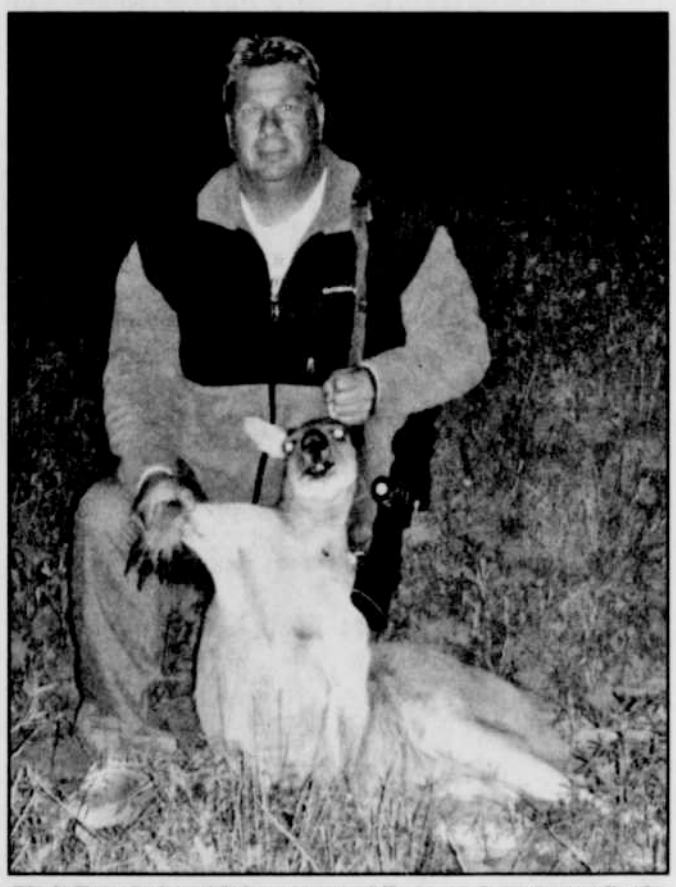
Rauch bags kangaroo in Australia



Chris Rauch shot this kangaroo while on a trip to Australia the first part of September. Rauch shot four that same night, but, he said, the big one got away. *–Contributed Photo*

The Heppner Gazette-Times wants to see pictures of your trophy animals from this hunting season. Stop by to have your picture taken, drop off photos, or email them to editor@rapidserve.net.

Health district shows $387,155 loss for 2009 fiscal year

Upcoming tax levy revenues to improve bottom line

By April Sykes

Konrad Capeller, certified public accountant with Michael R. Bell & Company, told the Morrow County Health District Board Monday night that audited financial statements show that the district had a net loss of $387,155 for the 2009 fiscal year, compared to net gains of $229,978 for 2008 and $658,107 for 2007.

The board had expected a loss for the year, as the district's previous three-year serial levy had expired. Voters have approved a new five-year levy which is expected to generate over $350,000 per year for the district. Capeller also attributed some of the loss to the start-up of the new long-term care facility at Pioneer Memorial Hospital, in addition to the absence of levy funding for the year.

He credited MCHD Chief Financial Officer Nicole Mahoney with better debt collections for the district. He said the district's days in accounts receivable went down from 70 days to 63 days, compared to most hospitals, which average 75-80 days in accounts receivable.

The financial statement indicated that the district's overall business grew, with gross patient revenue increasing $931,256, almost 17 percent, and the net patient revenue increasing $543,865, 11 percent. Non-patient revenues, including property taxes, decreased by nearly 30 percent, while operating expenses increased by $839,372.

The financials reported $1,753,080 in net assets for the district in 2009, compared to $2,140,235 in 2008 and $1,910,257 in 2007. Total operating revenues were $5,671,798 in 2009; $5,143,907 in 2008; and $5,209,598 in 2007. Total operating expenses were $6,766,853 in 2009; $5,927,481 in 2008; and $5,473,461 in 2007. The district had a non-operating gain (which includes property tax revenue, interest earnings and expense, donations and grants and gains/losses on the sale of assets) of $707,900 in '09; $1,013, 551 in '08; and $921,970 in '07.

Capeller also touched on the difficulties the district has had with Medicare reimbursements. He said estimates on the amount of Medicare payments the district is to receive is based on cost reports and can vary widely from period to period, subsequently resulting in Medicare overpaying. The district must then repay Medicare for those overpayments, periodically resulting in a hefty repayment amount. He said he and Mahoney were working on a resolution to the problem and would examine the issue quarterly.

District administrator Michael Blauer told the board that he has been exploring options to satisfy the impending federal requirement for implementation of an electronic records system. He told the board that an initial deadline of 2011 has been set to have the electronic record system in place, with other requirements mandated in following years. He said the district will be reimbursed for the system, however strict guidelines must be followed to receive reimbursement, so selection must be made very carefully. "If you pay all the money and don't fill the requirements, you won't be reimbursed," said Blauer. Capeller said that as soon as funds are expended for the system, "You get a check." Mahoney said that while the costs of purchasing the system will be reimbursed, maintenance of that system will not.

In other business the board:

-learned from Blauer that Dr. Hanlon has expressed an interest in providing cardiac care for the district, however, the purchase of certain specific equipment may be required.

-learned from Blauer that he was contacted by members of Boardman Emergency Services who told him that they were very satisfied with the equipment they are provided by the district. One volunteer told the board at the last district meeting that the equipment was sub-standard.

-learned from Blauer that flu outbreaks have seemed to have subsided somewhat. He said that all doors at the hospital are open except for "a couple in long-term care." "Things seem to be stable right now, but we're keeping an eye out," he said. "We appreciate all the efforts of the staff," added MCHD Chair Larry Mills.

-heard from Blauer that the district's providers have met with the directors of the new mental health facility that is scheduled to be completed the first part of next year with the

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ATVs stolen from M.C. Grain Growers

According to the Morrow County Sheriff's Office, four ATVs were stolen from Morrow County Grain Growers' store in Lexington.

On October 23, a store employee contacted the sheriff's office to report that four ATVs were missing from the store. A deputy responded and reported the following ATVs as stolen: a gold 2010 Polaris Razor with black stripes; a red 2009 Polaris Sportsman 550; a camouflage 2009 Polaris Sportsman 850; and a red 2009 Polaris Sportsman 400.

Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday, November 1. Don't forget to turn you clocks back an hour on Saturday night.

ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:
MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

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Keep warm this winter
Winter Clothing Now In Stock!
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