

# Ione/Arlington teams win some, lose some

The Ione/Arlington volleyball team played Bickleton Thursday, October 7 in Arlington. It was homecoming week in Arlington and the volleyball team took the win. There was a bit of confusion with the location of the game. The Bickleton team arrived in Arlington a bit later than the start time because they first stopped in Ione. Things like that happen with sports, and everyone involved was patient and supportive throughout the evening.

The Ione/Arlington volleyball team travelled to Condon on Saturday, October 9. I/A did not secure the win, but they will have a quick turn around with another shot at Condon in Ione on Thursday, October 14.

The Ione/Arlington football team also picked up a win this weekend as they hosted Sherman/Condon. After a slow start, I/A trailed 18-0 in the first quarter. However, I/A started to crack into the lead as they were only down 18-8 at halftime.

They continued to battle back in the third where



Madison Orem #9 on Ione/Arlington team.

they trailed 18-16, and half-way through the fourth quarter I/A took the lead 30-26, which would end up as the final score. Taylor Rollins gained 116 yards on the ground and added one touchdown, Cedrick

Dayandante rushed for 109 yards as well. Azriel Borghese and Marty Medina brought in touchdown passes from Carson Eyentich, who rushed for a touchdown to go along with his two passing touchdowns.



Callie Troutman #15 competed in the Condon game.



Aubrey Blakley serves the ball.



Favi Juarez #9 played against Bickleton.

# County government unsure of vaccination mandate impact

By David Sykes

Morrow County government is still unsure of the impact President Biden's recent vaccine mandate will have on the county employees. "Although there is a mandate by the President, the rules surrounding the mandate have not been issued outside of health care workers and schools, to my knowledge. It is my understanding that OSHA and OSHA Oregon will also need to come out with their rules. Until those rules are established, we are not certain what the county will be required to enforce, nor how this may impact our employees. I can tell you that all of our public health employees are vaccinated," County Administrator Darrell Green told the Gazette-Times Tuesday.

At an October 6 Board of Commissioners meeting, county human resource director Lindsay Grogan said she had sent out a vaccination questionnaire to all 120 county employees and received back 80 responses. "That is 65 percent of the employees, and better than we expected," Grogan said.

Of those who responded 60 percent said they were vaccinated, and 40 percent said they were not. She said the rate is higher than the county population, where only 40 percent of the Morrow County residents have been vaccinated. "So, it's better than we thought it was going to be," she told commissioners.

Grogan went on to say 27 percent of those who responded said they were prepared to leave employment

with the county if mandated to get vaccinated. Also, 25 percent of the unvaccinated said they would apply for a religious or medical exemption if mandated to get the vaccination. None of the respondents said they were unable to get the vaccine if they wanted it.

The question came up when employees turn in religious or medical exemptions, who would be making the decision to grant the exemption? Grogan said it would most likely be a panel of people selected for the job. "We would prefer a panel to eliminate bias," Grogan said. Commission Chair Don Russell said there should be a defined set of rules to follow, and the decision can't be left up to a person to decide who qualifies for the exemption. As an example, he said: "My opinion is probably different than the norm, but I don't want my opinion to be the rule," Russell said. "I want there to be a well-defined set of rules. If I have a religion exemption what defines that religious exemption? Myself, being a practicing Catholic, until Pope Francis comes out with his corona mandate and says, 'if you want to work at the Vatican you need to be vaccinated or find a new job,' I would think that a practicing Catholic probably doesn't have a religious exemption," Russell said. "That's my opinion and not what the guidelines say so we need to find out what the guidelines say. Same with medical exemption; got to be a defined set of guidelines," he urged.

Although Community Counseling Solutions is not a county department, Executive Director Kimberly Lindsay said her organization is feeling the effects of COVID vaccination mandates. She said there are 200 employees at CCS and of those approximately 172 are fully vaccinated or have filed for exemptions. She said four employees are leaving prior to the October 18 deadline and others are in the process of getting vaccinated or deciding what they want to do. "Could be worse or could be better," she said. "There are 30 out there that are undecided, which is not an insignificant number," Lindsay told the commissioners. She said that it "would be painful" if they all did leave, but they are being proactive and keeping up with her employees' situation.

Additionally Green said, "We currently believe we will fall under the guidance to mandate COVID-19 vaccinations through OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) for employers with 100 plus employees, which is where we will most likely fall under this eligibility. Although we are unsure if it will apply, as that official rule(s) has not been released. In the past, the county has tried not to be more restrictive than the guidelines we have been mandated to follow."

Green said that while the original guidance specified that the mandate would apply to private employers of 100 plus employees, legal professionals have interpreted that it most likely will apply to all employers with 100 plus employees in the U.S. jurisdictions, either directly through Federal OSHA or through an OSHA-approved state plan.

"State Plans are monitored by OSHA and must be at least as effective as OSHA in protecting workers and preventing work-related illnesses," Greene said. "The DOL (Department of Labor) and OSHA generally do not have regulatory authority over local governments and municipalities, however, the impending vaccination and testing regulations for employers with 100 or more employees may impact county employees who are in one of the 26 states that participate in OSHA-approved workplace safety and health programs and submit 'state plans' to the agency," he said.

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