

Columbia County group goes to Washington, D.C. on SBHC Day



left to right, Brandi Crape, Anne Carmack, Debbie Snook, Sherrie Ford, Teresa Dews, Paula Hester, Tami Alexander and Liz Smith-Currie is next to Senator Merkley. The group was in Washington, D.C. for SBHC Advocacy Day.

June 17 was School-Based Health Care (SBHC) Advocacy Day in Washington, D.C., and Vernonia and Columbia County were on hand. Members from Columbia County attended the annual conference. There are currently two SBHC centers in Columbia County: Sacagawea Health Center in St. Helens and Rainier Health Center.

"SBHC's are often described as small-scale doctors' offices on school campus meant to reduce class time missed for health care," said Sherrie Ford, MPH, the SBHC Coordinator for Columbia Health District-Public Health Authority. "Because data shows that 'Healthy Kids Learn Better,' SBHCs are an effective method to improve both health and academics. Columbia County Public Health," Ford continued, "has the ambitious goal of assessing the feasibility of an SBHC in each school district in the coun-

ty." There are currently over 2000 SBHCs in the nation and 54 in Oregon.

Debbie Snook, Executive Director of the Vernonia Health Center attended the conference in order to determine the feasibility of opening a SBHC in the new Vernonia school. New federal funding became available in 2010 for SBHCs and may help bring SBHC to Vernonia. Others attending from Columbia County included Brandi Crape of the Rainier Health Center Oversight Committee; Clatskanie School District Nurse Anne Carmack, and Sacagawea Health Center Medical Assistant Teresa Dews. Paula Hester, Tami Alexander, and Liz Smith-Currie attended from other Oregon SBHCs. Over 300 advocates from across the country were on hand on June 17 for the Advocacy Day rally.

Tips given to avoid heat-related illness

With the high temperatures in Oregon last week, Oregon Public Health officials want to remind people to take precautions to avoid getting sick from extreme heat. Very high temperatures can create serious health problems. Pets are also affected by the higher temperatures.

"Prevention is the best defense," said Mel Kohn, M.D., M.P.H., director of Oregon Public Health. "Drinking plenty of water, staying out of the sun during the hottest part of the day, and knowing the warning signs of heat-related illness are a few important steps people can take."

Kohn added: "We have had hot weather in the past, but with the climate change we are likely to have more of these high temperatures periods in Oregon."

The first symptoms of health problems from the heat can include headache, dizziness and weakness. In extreme cases heat-related illness can cause convulsions and sudden loss of consciousness and can be fatal.

Those at greatest risk for heat-related illness include infants and children up to 4 years of age, people 65 and older, people who are overweight, and people who are ill or on certain

medications, as well as those who work outdoors.

Here are some other tips to help you keep cool and avoid a serious heat condition:

- Never leave children in a parked car, even if the windows are cracked open.
- Use the buddy system if you are working outside. Monitor the condition of your co-workers and have someone do the same for you.
- If you are 65 years of age or older, have a friend or relative call to check on you twice a day during a heat wave. If you know someone in this age group, check on them at least twice a day.
- Avoid hot foods and heavy meals, which add heat to your body.
- Avoid exercising outdoors during the heat of the day.
- Dress infants and children in cool, loose clothing and shade their heads and faces with hats or an umbrella.
- Limit sun exposure during mid-day hours.
- Draw all shades, blinds, and curtains in rooms exposed to direct sunlight.

Pets can be particularly affected by the high temperatures,

according to Emilio DeBess, D.V.M., M.P.V.M., Oregon public health veterinarian.

Here are some tips to help pets:

- Provide shade. Be sure your pet has protection from the heat and sun — a dog house does not provide relief from heat. Bring your pet inside during the hottest part of the day.
- Provide fresh water. Animals do not sweat like humans. They need fresh, clean water at all times. Refill with cool water often during the heat of the day if the animal must be kept outside.
- Limit exercise during the hottest hours of the day. Exercise your pet in the early morning or in the evening. When possible, walk your dog on the grass. Asphalt gets very hot and can burn your pet's paws.
- Never leave your pet in a parked car. On an 85-degree day, the temperature inside a vehicle with the windows slightly open can reach 102 degrees within 10 minutes. Overheating can result in irreversible organ damage and even death.

To learn more about hot weather safety tips, please visit: <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/spotlight/heatsafety.shtml>.

Sturgeon fishery is re-opening today

Fishery managers extended, for a second time, the recreational sturgeon fishery in the lower Columbia River, giving anglers an additional two weeks to fish.

Fishery managers from Oregon and Washington decided to re-open the recreational white sturgeon retention season, from Buoy 10 at the mouth of the Columbia to the Wauna powerlines at River Mile 40,

from today, July 15, through August 1. The retention season will be open seven days a week for sturgeon 41-inches to 54-inches in fork length.

The original season was extended through July 11, when managers estimated that less than half of the available quota had been harvested.

According to Chris Kern, ODFW fish biologist, there is little chance of reaching the harvest quota even with the additional season extension.

"With a projected 3,000 to

4,000 fish remaining on the quota after August 1, catch rates would have to increase dramatically for us to reach the quota," he said.

"Fewer anglers have been fishing this year because catch rates have been down from recent years," Kern added. But fishing had improved substantially by the end of the first season extension.



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