



"Working for Your Well-Being!"

CCFoPH Newsletter

Seventh Edition – December 2009

Annual Meeting Date

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Save the Date



The annual meeting of the full membership of the Coos County Friends of Public Health is set for Thursday, January 28th. We only meet once a year and want to see you there! Mark your calendar for January 28th and join us (place to be determined).

The CCFoPH Board will present a slate of candidates who have stepped forward to run for Board positions up for election. Come help us celebrate our past year of accomplishments, elect new officers, and decide on future plans.

WIC Increases Caseload

Hungry families have been seeking food banks, food stamps, school snack packs, and also the WIC program. Because of the increased need, the Coos County Public Health WIC program recently got the official go-ahead from the state to serve 36 additional participants. The four WIC staff members (plus one bi-lingual part-timer) are now serving a monthly caseload of 1,965 pregnant women and young children, an increase of 127 since April. Over a million dollars worth of foods are provided by the Coos County WIC program in a year's time, along with health screening and advice on eating for good health. The WIC food package, which is designed to supplement the diet with good nutrition, recently added whole grains and fruits and vegetables. When nutritious foods are provided during pregnancy and early childhood, it supports normal growth and an intelligent brain. WIC works on the premise that what babies eat affects them for the rest of their lives.

Thank You Volunteers!

CCFoPH hosted a table at another successful health fair thanks to our loyal volunteers. Chris and LaDonna Flammang, Molly Ford, and Michelle Wyatt met and talked with seniors and other interested persons at the Elder Resource Fair on October 10th in the Pony Village Mall. Visitors to our booth received information on flu vaccines, and the consequences of smoking for pregnant women and their children.



H1N1 Update - A Holiday Bargain

by Frances Smith

The best holiday bargain this season—the H1N1 vaccine—has been expanded beyond the priority groups and is now available to everyone. It's **free** at public health community clinics and by appointments at the Health Department office.

There has been a significant reduction in swine flu illness in Coos County since November. Officially, we have had 38 cases (confirmed by the state public health lab tests), with 31 hospitalizations and 1 death. Those hospitalized in Coos County have represented all ages, from babies to over 65 years old. The age group with the highest rate of hospitalization has been the group 25-49 years old. The highest death rate in Oregon has been in the age group over 65. The one Coos County death was in a middle-aged person.

Over 14,000 doses of vaccine have been delivered to Coos County, and more shipments arrive weekly. The vaccine has been distributed equally between the Health Department and the medical clinics, and will soon be available through pharmacies. Children at school sites received 2761 doses, and another round of clinics at the schools has begun, with children under the age of 10 getting the second dose. **Two of the most frequent questions are:**

1. **Is it safe?** The vaccine was manufactured by the pharmaceutical companies, using the same processes and testing that have been in place for many years to develop the seasonal flu vaccine. Millions in this country have now been vaccinated with no problems, so experience tells us the risk of serious reactions to the vaccine is extremely low, while complications from the flu are relatively common and can be very serious.
2. **I've already been sick. Should I get the vaccine, or am I immune?** If you have already had the H1N1 flu, then you should be immune. If you're not sure that you were sick with H1N1 because you didn't have a test, and considering that another respiratory infection could have caused your illness, then getting a flu shot is a good idea. It's especially important if you have any chronic conditions, such as asthma, you are pregnant, or you have a low functioning immune system.

If many people take advantage of this **free** gift, we may be able to prevent another wave of illness after the holidays.

Next public health clinic: **December 19, Pony Village Mall, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.**



The Coos County Friends of Public Health want everyone in our community to have a healthy and happy holiday season. Here are some tips to keep you and yours safe this year:

- ◆ Take a walk in the sunshine to keep your spirits up and heart healthy;
- ◆ Keep yourself and your Christmas tree hydrated with lots of water;
- ◆ Remember to put leftovers back in the refrigerator in a timely manner.

Many Ways to Donate

As 2009 comes to a close and requests from worthy causes fill our mail boxes reminding us of the opportunity to donate in time to claim one more tax credit, we hope you will think of the Coos County Friends of Public Health. CCFoPH is a nonprofit organization with 501(c)3 status and donations to us are tax deductible. All funds received are spent locally to help improve the health status of our community. The "Friends" have developed many different ways to donate so you can choose the programs you want to support.

- ◆ **Coins for Coos Kids:** helps pay for immunizations and also supports the WIC program.
- ◆ **The Dr. Charles Holloway Memorial Fund:** supports Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Parent Education Home Visiting programs, and Infectious Disease Prevention.
- ◆ **The Pam Robison WIC Fund:** Supports the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program helping provide nutritious food and supplements to those in need. WIC provides specialty items like infant formula that is not available through local food banks.
- ◆ **General Donation to CCFOPH:** Supports this organization's efforts to reach the community, raise awareness about various health issues, mail our newsletter, and increase our membership!

To make a donation, mail a check to CCFoPH, P.O. Box 203, Coos Bay, OR 97420. If you wish to support a specific fund mentioned above, please write the title of the fund on your check's memo line. Thank you for supporting The Coos County Friends of Public Health!

Gift Ideas: True Stories and Insights into Public Health

Looking for a good book to read over the holidays or a gift idea? Consider these recommended favorites*.

1. Randy Shilts. (2007). **And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic** (20th ed.). New York: St. Martin's Press. An expose of why AIDS was allowed to spread unchecked during the early 80's while the most trusted institutions ignored or denied the threat.
2. Laurie Garrett. (2001). **Betrayal of Trust: The Collapse of Global Public Health.** New York: Hyperion. How a series of potential and present public health catastrophes together form a terrifying portrait of real global disaster in the making.
3. Tracy Kidder. (2004) **Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World.** New York: Random House. A doctor provides health care in a remote impoverished region of Haiti, while working across the globe to overcome drug resistant tuberculosis.
4. Laurie Garrett. (1995) **The Coming Plague: Newly Emerging Diseases in a World Out of Balance** (Reprint) New York: Penguin. A 50-year journey through the world's battles with microbes examines the conditions that have culminated in recurrent outbreaks of newly discovered diseases, epidemics of diseases migrating to new areas, and mutated old diseases that are no longer curable.
5. Richard Preston. (2002) **The Demon in the Freezer.** New York: Ballantine Books. The author of **Hot Zone** (a story of the Ebola virus) takes us into the heart of the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick, Maryland, the epicenter of national bio-defense.
6. John M. Barry (2006) **The Great Influenza: the Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History** (Revised Edition). New York: Penguin. The Great Influenza of 1918 is ultimately a tale of triumph amid tragedy, and a sobering model for the epidemics looming on our own horizon.



(*Thanks to the National Association of City and County Health Officials' website: www.naccho.org.)

Coos County Friends of Public Health
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Vice President – Carla McKelvey

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Ex-officio members – Frances Smith, Sherrill Lorenzo

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Contact Information: ccfoph@gmail.com, 541-888-6871 or 541-756-2020 x 543

Thank you most recent Donors!

Anonymous, Coins for Coos Kids; Paula Bechtold

Welcome New Members

Members who have renewed (paid dues) or joined since the last newsletter are: Paula Bechtold