

Essential for children

Adequate health care available for area students

By Melissa Over

School is starting soon and for families of school-aged children this means making a list for new shoes, clothes and school supplies. Another item to add to the list is health insurance for your child. Having health insurance can give parents peace of mind in knowing that their children are covered in case of injury or unforeseen illness.

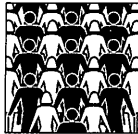
The Health Network for Rural Schools, coordinated through the Oregon Health Sciences University School of Nursing at Eastern Oregon University, is a local program working with the communities of North Powder, Union, Cove, Imbler and Elgin to place a nurse in the schools one day per week. The Health Network has recently started a project to help get the word out about free or low-cost health insurance for children. The schools in these communities recognize the need for providing adequate health care and are backing this new project to help our children get a healthy start for the new school year.

INTEREST IN GETTING children the medical attention they need extends beyond this local effort. All across the country people are working together within communities like ours to see that children have access to the health care they both need and deserve. The national program enabling this widespread effort is called the Children's Health Insurance Program.

In Oregon, CHIP is a designated expansion of our existing state health care program, the Oregon Health Plan. This means Oregon is now able to provide more eligible children with health insurance than before. Having this insurance can provide a child with something as simple as a pair of eyeglasses or fix an aching

tooth, making a significant difference in their ability to concentrate on school work and most importantly, improve their quality of life.

Children deserve the healthiest start possible. Medical attention to sometimes smaller yet chronic symptoms can make a difference in a child's potential to learn. Good health can boost their confidence and help them to make better more informed choices as they grow. Every child can benefit from health insurance, not only in times of accident or illness but also from preventative medical check-ups and immunizations.



COMMUNITY COMMENT

IF YOU OR SOMEONE you know does not have health insurance for their child and has to think twice before spending out-of-pocket money for medical bills, the Health Network for Rural Schools can explain the Oregon Health Plan and the Children's

Health Insurance Program, help fill out forms and arrange for transportation if the need arises.

Please call Elinor Riley, 562-6045, or me at 568-4832. We are outreach workers for the Health Network for Rural Schools. To leave a message for either of us, call 962-3089. We can get the ball rolling and take the guesswork out of the application process. All information received is confidential.

As our children get ready to go back to school and while we make our shopping list for necessities, we must consider our children's health as a priority in helping achieve the best education possible.

Enjoy the rest of your summer and while planning for the upcoming school year be sure to check health insurance on your list.

MELISSA OVER of Cove is a community outreach worker for Health Network for Rural Schools.

LETTERS

True hero passes on

To the Editor:

As we go through our lives, if we are lucky we get a chance now and then to meet someone who is truly a hero.

A hero is a person who by their actions inspires us to try a little harder to do what we know is the right thing.

Our community has lost just such a hero. He survived the Bataan Death March and almost four years in a prisoner of war camp in Japan. He endured the unendurable. He survived when there was no hope of survival.

He is a hero for what he did for his country, but more than that, he is a hero for what he did when he came home from the war. When he returned home, he worked hard to build a successful career and overcome the aftermath of what he had been through. He succeeded in both. He raised a beautiful family and was an outstanding member of the community.

Most men would have been bitter, but he was not. He was a good man. He was my friend and will be missed. Albert Keith Walker will always be a hero.

Timothy H. Jederberg,
Union County veterans service officer

So many in community help child

To the Editor:

We are grateful to everyone who donated, participated and helped with the benefit yard sale that was held for Nicole Reedy (Riley).

It is so wonderful for a community such as yours to help out a child you don't even know.

Nicole is doing great. She had her first surgery on July 28 in San Antonio.

She was only in the hospital for one week after her surgery.

Nicole is the 82nd participant in the whole world who has had this experimental titanium rib implant surgery done and the fastest to recover and be discharged from the hospital.

We don't have the second surgery date yet, but we will be sure to keep you posted.

We appreciate all your help, caring and prayers and are grateful to the American Legion for holding the yard sale at their facility.

Most of all, Art, Judy, Rod and Kristie Ritchie showed they cared so much by taking this upon themselves to help us.

Tony & Joan Riley
Nicole Reedy (Riley)
Evans, Wash.

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