



Peter Tesonero/Collegian

Helen Pu (senior-communication sciences and disorder) receives a nasal spray vaccine for the H1N1 virus.

Flu vaccines destroyed

One year after the H1N1 scare, local medical facilities are disposing of extra swine flu vaccines.

By Megan Rogers
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Last July, swine flu hit Penn State — and one year later, local health services say they have had to destroy hundreds of vaccines because the anticipated epidemic never reached its projected peak. All of the university's vaccines expired before the end of the spring semester and have since been disposed of, said Kathy Spout, an administrative assistant for University Health Services (UHS). The Pennsylvania Department of Health provided swine flu vaccines to UHS during the Fall 2009 semester. UHS Marketing Manager Beth Collitt said.

She said she was not aware of how many vaccines were given, used or ultimately disposed of. Collitt said not as many vaccines were given as were expected — mostly because of the time it took for the vaccines to arrive. When swine flu first arrived on campus, there was more interest from students in getting the vaccines, but vaccines available did not meet the demand, she said. Priority was given to at-risk groups, and then as vaccines slowly became available, appointments to get the shot were offered to all students. In the end, not as many people were reported to be affected by the flu as was anticipated. "The slow release of vaccine dissipated the interest," Collitt said. "The timing of everything was such that when people were most concerned about it we just did not have the vaccine available yet." But that was the situation all

over the country, she said. Other local health services said they experienced the same thing. "We anticipated more need than actually occurred," said Marlene Stetson, infection prevention and control coordinator at Mt. Nittany Medical Center. The center's vaccines expired in February and the center destroyed several hundred vaccines on-site. Stetson said the center has already placed their order for this year's seasonal flu vaccine — and the H1N1 vaccine is a part of the flu package for the upcoming year. Collitt said it is not set yet whether the health services will provide the swine flu vaccine for the upcoming flu season. CVS Pharmacy, 116 West College Ave., which also provided vaccines last year, declined comment. To e-mail reporter: mer5200@psu.edu

UPUA reaches out to freshmen

By Zach Geiger
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Aspiring student leaders, take notice: The student body president and other members of Penn State's student government are hosting an informational meeting tonight to inform and inspire freshmen to get involved in student politics.

"Summertime is always a great opportunity to reach out to first-year students," University Park Undergraduate Association President (UPUA) Christian Ragland said.

Ragland (senior-political science) and other members of the general assembly will speak to students at the UPUA information session — attendance is open to all second summer session students.

"It's almost as if Barack Obama was hanging out with normal American citizens," Learning Edge Academic Program (LEAP) mentor Rebecca Alt said.

There is no formal agenda for the meeting, Alt (sophomore-communication arts and sciences) said.

Instead, the purpose of the meeting will explain Ragland's role as UPUA president, what the executive board does, discuss things the freshman class wants to see accomplished and explain how new students can get involved in UPUA.

The meeting is a good opportunity for students who are interested in joining student government or just want to know more about how the process works to hear about it first-hand from their student leaders, Ragland said.

"They see the articles I'm in, and then they actually see me getting involved," Ragland said. "This is the way to get UPUA out there more than it has ever been."

The idea for the meeting originated with Alt and Ragland wanting to get incoming freshmen involved in student government at Penn State, Alt said.

If you go

What: UPUA information session for freshmen
When: 7 tonight
Where: 67 Willard Building
Details: Student body president, other officials to speak

"A lot of Penn State students were leaders in high school, and some feel a little bit nervous about continuing that in college," Alt said.

Ragland wants recruits to fill the two freshmen representative spots currently open in UPUA.

"There's a lot of students interested, students with student government backgrounds from high school," Ragland said. "We're talking about succession — it's up to them to take over."

Ragland and Alt want to reach out to the larger audience of the more than 900 new freshmen attending summer session to inform them about student government and find out what things they want to accomplish, Ragland said.

The meeting is not a LEAP event, but Ragland and Alt — both LEAP mentors themselves, encouraged their students to attend the event.

"It's a UPUA event, but we're using our connections to LEAP to get students to come," Alt said.

Showing freshmen first-hand what UPUA does for the students is one of the best parts of being a LEAP mentor, Ragland said.

"I love it — why not get first-hand experience interacting with freshmen as the president?" Ragland said.

The meeting is only the start of UPUA's interaction with students during the summer, Ragland said.

"This is definitely not the last one," Ragland said.

"This is the kick-off of summer where we're showing off what UPUA is."

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'Underground anomalies' cause street closures

By Zach Geiger
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

A pair of "underground anomalies" closed part of Fischer Road Wednesday night, forcing Office of Physical Plant (OPP) crews to place a temporary fix on the problem ahead of Monday's final repairs.

"We're not completely sure that they're sinkholes — we're calling them small underground anomalies," OPP spokesman Paul Ruskin said.

The "anomalies" in the roadway — each 4 ft. deep and 5 ft. wide — did not result in any car accidents, Ruskin said.

A sinkhole occurs when water collects underground and slowly deteriorates the land above it.

"Sinkholes are like deer in [Pennsylvania]," Ruskin said. "When you see them on the road you try to avoid them."

Part of Fischer Road was closed Wednesday while crews investigated the anomalies. Access to the Nittany Parking Deck remained open by turning right onto Fischer Road from Park Ave.

Wednesday's original plan for the repairs called for OPP crews to investigate the cause of the anomalies and repair the roadway with gravel and then compact it, re-opening Fischer Road and

restoring full access to the Nittany Parking Deck.

"It turned out to be not as easy and quick to repair as expected," Ruskin said.

In preparation for the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts last weekend, OPP placed heavy-duty steel plating over the area of the sinkholes and reopened all of Fischer Road, Ruskin said.

OPP crews closed Fischer Road at 6 a.m. Monday to complete the final repairs, Ruskin said. The repairs were completed before noon Monday and area is open to traffic, Ruskin said.

Another sinkhole developed along Fischer Road in June, which

OPP crews repaired in similar fashion.

OPP will continue to monitor the road, Ruskin said.

Penn State is located in the middle of carst topography, where underground voids of water dissolve the limestone and cause sinkholes, Ruskin said.

The Fischer Road anomalies are not the first of these types of problems OPP has dealt with.

"OPP has dealt with sinkholes for 50 years, on Curtin, Old Main Lawn, [Electrical Engineering] West, and the old Creamery building," Ruskin said.

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Sinking feeling

One of the Nittany Parking Deck entrances was inaccessible over the weekend due to a sinkhole.



Source: Paul Ruskin, Office of Physical Plant; Heather Schmelzlen/Collegian

Hershey Medical Center wins award

By Anita Modi
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Sweeping glass arcs and sky bridges overlooking lush, green courtyards aren't exclusive to Penn State's main campus.

They're also architectural intricacies of the Penn State University Hershey Medical Center, Cancer Institute in Hershey, Pa., which was awarded the First Annual Generative Space Health Improvement Award last week.

The award program was established by the CARITAS Project to recognize healthcare settings committed to improving patient care by improving their environments.

The CARITAS Project specifically encourages the integration of two distinct fields — academic research and clinical practice — to pursue new discoveries for both prevention and treatment.

Dr. Thomas Loughran, the institute's director, said the building took two years to design. Architects incorporated input from patients and patient advocate groups in their plans to create a place of beauty and light, he said.

"The whole concept was to bring the outside environment into the building," Loughran said. "It's cheerful and bright and really lifts your spirits up."

The building was designed, he said, to facilitate the interactions between the scientists who develop treatments for cancer and the doctors who treat cancer patients directly. The institute epitomizes collaboration, placing laboratory research bench space just a floor above outpatient clinics, Loughran said.

Dr. Wafik El-Deiry, chief of the institute's hematology/oncology division and associate director of translational research — the application of basic research to clinical practice — is responsible for bridging the gap between researchers and physicians.

He said although patients might not fully recognize it yet, discussion amongst members of the institute take place in various forms — from research seminars to patient rounds — and is especially useful when identifying biomarkers and coming up with strategies to prevent cancer.

"Patients will soon come to appreciate the cancer institute as a place where new discoveries are made in the lab and brought to the clinic," Dr. El-Deiry said.

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