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**The LEWISTON TRIBUNE**

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THE REGION'S INDEPENDENT NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1892

ONE DOLLAR

**St. Joe's and Regence remain at odds**

Region's largest hospital won't participate in provider's insurance plans unless a new deal is struck before Jan. 15 deadline

By **ELAINE WILLIAMS**  
OF THE TRIBUNE

Women who become pregnant and people who are diagnosed with cancer in the future could be among those hardest hit by a dispute between St. Joseph Regional Medical Center and Regence BlueShield of Idaho.

The Lewiston hospital will no longer participate in the Idaho insurance plans of Regence as of Jan. 15, unless the two sides can reach a compromise before then.

At issue is how much St. Joe's charges Regence for the medical care Regence customers receive at the hospital. The prices are

set in a contract between Regence and St. Joe's, following a common practice in the health care industry.

Regence is one of the biggest insurance providers in the region, covering more than 15,000 people in north central Idaho.

St. Joe's is the largest hospital in the area and

the only place that delivers babies and offers chemotherapy in the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley. It is also part of LifePoint Health, a private business based in Tennessee that operates a network with dozens of hospitals in almost 30 states.

In the absence of a resolution, Regence would

continue to provide in-network reimbursement for emergency treatment at St. Joe's for conditions such as heart attacks or injuries sustained in serious automobile accidents after Jan. 15, said Regence spokesman Lou Riepl in an email.

Generally, other care St. Joe's offers, including

obstetrics, chemotherapy and office visits to physicians who are hospital employees, would be considered out of network after Jan. 15, if St. Joe's and Regence can't reach a settlement, Riepl said.

That means that Regence would reimburse

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**Security aide says he did his duty reporting Trump call**

Pence adviser testifies she also listened to call

By **LISA MASCARO**  
and **MARY CLARE JALONICK**  
OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — A career Army officer on assignment to President Donald Trump's National Security Council testified Tuesday he felt it was his duty to object to Trump's "improper" phone call seeking Ukrainian investigations of U.S. Democrats. Republicans answered him with doubts about his loyalty to the United States.

Arriving on Capitol Hill in military blue with medals across his chest, Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman told impeachment investigators he felt no hesitation in reporting the president's request of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Vindman, a 20-year military officer who received a Purple Heart for being wounded in the Iraq War, was among the officials who listened in to the July 25 call when Trump asked Zelenskyy for a "favor" — investigations of former Vice President Joe Biden and other issues.

"It was inappropriate, it was improper for the president to request, to demand an investigation into a political opponent," Vindman told the House Intelligence Committee.

His testimony launched a pivotal week as the House's historic impeachment investigation reaches further into Trump's White House.

Democrats say Trump's pressure on Ukraine to investigate former while withholding U.S. military aid to Kyiv may be grounds for removing the 45th president.

Republicans have argued both that there was no link between the two matters, and that there is nothing inappropriate even if there was.

Vindman testified alongside Jennifer Williams, an adviser in Vice President Mike Pence's office. Both said they had concerns as they listened to Trump speak with the newly elected Ukrainian president about political investigations into Biden.

Trump insists Zelenskyy did not feel pressured and has cast the impeachment probe as a

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**Serpentine strollers**



Tribune/Pete Caster

Morning sunlight illuminates the wet asphalt pathway as people stroll through the curves along the Lewiston Levee Parkway Trail near the Southway Boat Ramp in Lewiston on Tuesday morning. Today might be an even better day to go for a walk, with the forecast calling for a high temperature of 50 degrees and sunny skies. The extended weather outlook can be found on Page 6A.

**Data says America has about 1 million same-sex households**

LGBTQ advocate says Trump administration has hindered efforts to count population

By **MICHAEL MACAGNONE**  
OF CQ-ROLL CALL

WASHINGTON — The Census Bureau estimates about 1 million same-sex married and unmarried couples are living together nationwide, according to new figures released Tuesday.

Same-sex households make up about 1 percent of all homes, according to data released as part of the Current Population Survey, and the first time such figures were included in its main results. The estimates provide a limited glimpse into the LGBTQ population in America, which has not shown up in federal surveys for much of the nation's history.

The Census Bureau plans to include more data about same-sex relationships, but advocates worry decisions by President Donald Trump's administration have hindered efforts to count LGBTQ residents as a whole. Limiting that ability may have implications for assessing the needs of the community, as well as spending in federal programs.

"It's significant progress and we are excited about it, but we're really missing quite a lot of community data," said Meghan Maury, policy director for the National LGBTQ Task Force.

For instance, household data is used in measuring poverty, household composition and other demographic factors, according to the Census Bureau. Tuesday's data release also showed several other broad trends in American households: The number of adults living alone has risen, along with the number of households without children.

Maury pointed out, though, that the agency's methodology limits the ability to measure the LGBTQ community more broadly because it would not include individuals living without a partner, or bisexual people living with, or married to, an opposite-sex partner.

That goes to a central issue for measuring LGBTQ resi-

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**Valley's homeless have few overnight options**

Agencies to meet Thursday to try to find a replacement for the ROC rescue mission

By **JOEL MILLS**  
OF THE TRIBUNE

Local agencies and social service providers are scrambling to set up a warming shelter for homeless people now that the ROC rescue mission in North Lewiston is closed and the area was hit with unseasonably icy temperatures in October.

Officials from the Salvation Army, Twin County United Way and the city of Lewiston will gather at 9 a.m. Thursday in the St. Joseph Regional Medical Center social hall to discuss how they can partner to provide an overnight shelter where people can go when the mercury drops below freezing. "We understand that when the temperature gets down into the 20s, we need to do something," Lewiston City Manager Alan Nygaard said. The ROC previously provid-

The Lewiston Corps of the Salvation Army is seeking to have an all-volunteer force of bell ringers during this holiday season instead of using any paid workers, according to Director Lt. Joleen Aycock. She said the corps has set aggressive fundraising goals this year to help make up for a nationwide reduction in donations that has led the organization to make budget cuts, and using volunteer bell ringers should help that effort.

Those who would like to volunteer for shifts that start at two hours may visit [www.ringforchange.com](http://www.ringforchange.com) or call Aycock's co-Director Lt. David Aycock at (208) 746-9653 extension 200.

ed an overnight warming shelter that gave members of the homeless community a place to sleep, warm food, clothing and an introduction to its other programs. But the faith-based nonprofit group shut its doors

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**Coming in Thursday's Tribune**

New streaming platforms are arriving constantly, and consumers are left trying to figure out which ones are worth their time and money. We break down streaming services for you. In **360**.

