



Duck outlook

Numbers look good /Outdoors

Pennant races



Action heats up as season winds down /1S, 3S

Thursday, September 20, 2007

Great Falls, Montana

www.greatfallstribune.com

50 cents

FWP lifts restrictions as moisture cools fires

By ERIC NEWHOUSE
Tribune Projects Editor

Rain and snow sweeping across Montana are dampening the wildfires still burning in the state.

According to the National Weather Service, the Rocky Mountain Front, where three wildfires are burning, received anywhere from .4 inches of rain to more than an inch. The higher elevations saw "at least several inches of snow," said Matt Jackson, a meteorologist with the

weather service.

As a result of the favorable weather, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks removed all fire restrictions on the three wildlife management areas along the Front: Sun River, Ear Mountain and Blackleaf, according to a news release.

On Sunday, helicopters were dropping buckets of water on a rejuvenated tongue of flame at Upper Jocko Lake on the Jocko Lakes fire near Seeley Lake, but the rains quickly eased that problem.

"Mother Nature moved in with late afternoon showers over the past two days and effectively replaced the need for helicopters on hot spots," said a fire incident report Tuesday evening.

By Wednesday afternoon, fire officials were optimistic, but unwilling to say that the end was

in sight. "It's been wonderful, but it won't take long for this moisture to dry out," said Cass Cairns, fire information officer at the Jocko Lakes fire near Seeley Lake. "And October can bring a couple of weeks of warm temperatures and good burning conditions."

However, by 6 p.m. Cairns sent an e-mail notifying the media that the Jocko Lakes update inbox was shutting down today and crews were leaving the scene.

"Firefighters are getting ready to pack their gear and head for home more than six weeks after lighting set off the 36,348-acre Jocko Lakes fire," she wrote.

The release stated fire suppression-related rehabilitation work should be completed by tonight. Cairns also wrote that the release

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WILDFIRE WATCH

For breaking news, maps, new releases, photo galleries and past coverage visit www.gftribune.com/fires

Plenty of flu shots expected this year

By LAURAN NEERGAARD
AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON — Come one, come all: After years of shortages and confusion, this fall promises plenty of flu vaccine to go around — up to 132 million doses, more than the nation has ever produced.

The ample supplies have the government urging vaccinations not just for people at highest risk of dying from influenza, but for anyone who wants to avoid a week of aching misery.

But new CDC data show only a fraction of people who need flu shots the most obtain them, including just one in five babies and toddlers.

Shots aren't the only option. On Wednesday, the government

Today's question

Weigh in on this topic. Details on 1M

ruled that it's safe for younger kids than ever before to try a nasal-spray vaccine called FluMist. Once only an option for people ages 5 to 49,

FluMist now can be used by children as young as 2. CDC is closely monitoring whether a new strain that emerged near the end of Australia's flu season will cause illness here — a strain that this year's vaccine doesn't specifically target.

Each year's vaccine contains protection against three influenza strains — two Type A strains, an H1N1 and an H3N2 version, plus a milder Type B — that experts predict will cause the most illness. The vaccine isn't always a perfect match, and this year's contains a different H3N2 version than the newly emerging one, nicknamed H3N2/Brisbane-like.

Get vaccinated anyway, Gerberding stressed. The other two strains in the vaccine are causing illness around the world, and even if the newer one travels here, too, the vaccine should provide some cross-protection.

Who's at highest risk for flu? Anyone over 50 or under 5; people of any age who have asthma, heart disease, weakened immune systems or other chronic illnesses; and pregnant women.

Vaccine also is particularly recommended for relatives and caregivers of those people, and health care workers — people who may be robust enough to recover themselves, but could infect the more vulnerable before they realize they're ill.

Prospector: More photos at www.gftribune.com

Casino destroyed



TRIBUNE PHOTOS/RYAN SANDERS

Firefighters couldn't save the Prospector Casino at 907 Smelter Ave. N.E. on Wednesday. Investigators will begin their inspection today.

Cause of blaze not yet known

By RICHARD PETERSON
Tribune Staff Writer

Investigators will begin their inspection today of the Prospector Casino's charred ruins at 907 Smelter Ave. N.E.

The building was destroyed by a fast-moving fire that forced the evacuation of dozens of workers and customers Wednesday.

Great Falls Fire/Rescue officials hadn't determined the cause of the three-alarm blaze late Wednesday night but said they learned from casino employees that it probably started on the northeast side of the building, ruling out the kitchen. The Silver City Casino,

which was attached to the Prospector, also went up in flames.

"It was the employees that discovered the fire and we began preliminary interviews with them," said Battalion Chief Chuck Rovreit.

"But we won't be able to get in there until (today)."

About 20 firefighters battled the blaze and all off-duty firefighters were called in to provide relief if needed.

See PROSPECTOR, 3A

Rob Zombie coming to play at ExpoPark

By Tribune Staff

Rob Zombie, heavy metal and industrial rock musician currently on tour with Ozzy Osbourne in his fall North American tour, is scheduled to play ExpoPark on Nov. 8 at 8 p.m.

Zombie, also a director and writer, cites Black Sabbath, Alice Cooper, Judas Priest and the Ramones as some of his musical influences.

He was a member of White Zombie before going solo in 2001. His hits include "Dragula," "Living Dead Girl," and "Never Gonna Stop." He has also released a greatest hits album and a live album.

As a movie director, his credits include "House of a 1,000 Corpses," "The Devil's Rejects," and "Halloween," which is currently in theaters, according to his Web site.



TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

A day after announcing that he would open for Ozzy Osbourne in Billings on Nov. 9, Rob Zombie booked a date at the ExpoPark on Nov. 8.

Ticket are \$34 for general admission. They go on sale at 10 a.m. Saturday online at <http://www.ticketmaster.com/venue/246342> or at Montana ExpoPark's box office.

Little Shell Tribe Leaders say process to gain federal recognition too slow

By DIANA MARRERO
Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Leaders of American Indian tribes seeking federal recognition asked lawmakers for help Wednesday, saying the Bureau of Indian Affairs has taken too long to process their applications.

"With delay, comes a terrible human cost," said John Sinclair, president of the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana, at a hearing of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee.

The Little Shell Tribe, which has been trying to get recognition for nearly three decades, is among 17 tribes nationwide whose applications for federal recognition are pending with the BIA. More than 200 other Indian groups also are seeking recognition.

The distinction is important because a federally recognized tribe is eligible for government programs and assistance. Recognized tribes often can begin seeking approval to build Indian casinos, which have become a source of wealth for some tribes.

The BIA could make a decision about the Little Shell in the next year, Sinclair said. But he is not waiting for the agency to act. Instead, he is lobbying lawmakers to intervene.

Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., who introduced legislation this year to grant the Little Shell federal recognition, said the "bureaucratic red tape these tribes are put through are absolutely ridiculous."



LITTLE SHELL: For more on the Great Falls-headquartered tribe, go to its Web site at: www.littleshelltribe.com/index.shtml

"They've waited for a long time," he added.

Earlier this year, Montana granted the Little Shell state recognition and gave tribal members control of several acres of land outside of Great Falls.

The tribe has been seeking federal recognition since 1978. They received preliminary recognition from the BIA in 2000.

The Native American Rights Fund, which has taken on the Little Shell's case, has spent about \$1 million for anthropologists and travel costs to help put the tribe's documentation together, said K. Jerome Gottschalk, an attorney with the nonprofit law firm.

The Little Shell have about 4,500 members across the state, with many living in the Great Falls area. Tribal members are suffering as they wait for federal recognition, Sinclair said.

"We want an answer," he said.

"Yes or no." Tribes seeking recognition want lawmakers to pressure the BIA to speed up its application process. Some have asked lawmakers to step in and grant them recognition through legislation addressing their specific cases.

BIA officials have made decisions in 40 cases since the agency established a process to grant

See LITTLE SHELL, 3A

Great Falls forecast

High: 64° — Low: 43°
Partly sunny with morning showers

Full weather report on back page



BIG STACK ONLINE

Learn more about the rise and fall of the engine that fired up the Electric City at www.gftribune.com. Site includes slide show of demolition and historic photos.

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A Gazette newspaper
No. 130 — 123rd Year

