

FLU

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possible.

“We have been doing weekly surveillance of schools since 9/11,” said Gail Wechsler, Steuben County public health coordinator. “We have heightened it to daily. We are checking with emergency rooms daily and we are in constant contact with the state Health Department. We are in a state of heightened surveillance.”

Karen Miner, Chemung County director of Information and Records, said the county has assembled an emergency preparedness committee consisting of representatives of health agencies, local fire and police departments, the Red Cross, school districts and hospitals.

Miner said the committee’s primary focus was preparing to disseminate information on the virus if the situation warrants.

Currently officials are cautious about the situation, but they say it’s far too early to sound the alarm.

“At this point, we’re focused on preparation,” Miner said. “Standard protocol is if someone comes into an emergency room hacking and coughing, you put a mask on them. We are heightening awareness with the staff to be sure they are following those protocols.”

Several factors make identifying swine flu difficult. Miner said most of, if not all, the symptoms of swine flu are the same as other strains of influenza, including seasonal flu.

In addition, many of the symptoms, including a runny nose, coughing and trouble breathing, could also

A LOOK AT SWINE FLU DEVELOPMENTS WORLDWIDE

Key developments on swine flu outbreaks, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization, and government officials:

- Deaths: 152, all in Mexico, 20 confirmed as swine flu and rest suspected.
- Sickened: 26 confirmed in Mexico, with up to 6,000 people showing symptoms; 68 confirmed in U.S.; 13 confirmed in Canada; two confirmed in Scotland; 14 confirmed in New Zealand; two confirmed in Spain; and two confirmed in Israel.
- Confirmed U.S. cases, by state: 45 in New York, 13 in California, six in Texas, two in Kansas and one each in Indiana and Ohio, according to CDC and states.
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration issues emergency guidance allowing certain antiviral drugs to be used in broader range of population if needed. Public

health emergency declared and roughly 12 million doses of Tamiflu from federal stockpile to be delivered to states.

- Cuba banned flights to Mexico; U.S., European Union, other countries discourage nonessential travel there. Arriving travelers questioned at Mexico’s U.S. border and world airports.
- Mexico suspends all schools until May 6. In U.S., some schools closed in New York City, Texas, California, South Carolina, Connecticut and Ohio.
- In Mexico City, surgical masks given to the public, venues closed and public events canceled. President assumed new powers to isolate infected people. World Bank loaning Mexico more than \$200 million.
- Worldwide: WHO alert at Phase 4 of 6, meaning disease spreads easily but isn’t pandemic.

be caused by spring allergies.

“At this point, if you are mildly ill, but not sick enough to need to be hospitalized, the best thing to do is stay home,” Wechsler said. “One other thing we urge people – if you are sick and going to the doctor or emergency room, contact them first to make sure they have a mask available before going in.”

Terry Graham, supervisor of special education for the Corning-Painted Post school district, said the district sent

a letter home with all students warning about the potential danger of swine flu and outlining the steps students can take to help prevent the spread of the virus.

She said the classroom teachers are continuing to stress to students the importance of washing their hands on a regular basis and covering their nose and mouth when they sneeze and cough.

Health officials also said anyone feeling sick should stay home to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

MASSA

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blame.

Mexico’s health minister said Tuesday the swine flu outbreak was suspected in more than 1,600 illnesses.

“The public needs to be aware of the serious threat of swine flu and we need to close our borders to Mexico immediately and completely until this is resolved,” Massa said. “The Centers for Disease

Control and the World Health Organization monitoring this situation closely and I call on all Americans to pay attention and follow their instructions as this situation develops.”

Massa finds himself at odds with the World Health Organization (WHO). According to Reuters, WHO is not recommending travel restrictions at this time.

A WHO spokesman said infected people may not show symptoms, making travel restrictions ineffective.

He said travel restrictions could also create unnecessary economic hardships.

Massa, however, stood by his call to seal the border during his weekly press call.

“We must have the ability to secure our borders,” Massa said. “If we don’t do that, all the money we spend on the Army, Navy and Air Force is largely irrelevant. Our borders are what define us as a country. The ability to secure our borders should be paramount.”

Blown-away dog reunited with owners

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WATERFORD TOWNSHIP, MICH. | Tinker Bell has been reunited with her owners after a 70-mph gust of wind picked up the six-pound Chihuahua and tossed her out of sight.

Dorothy and Lavern Utley

credit a pet psychic for guiding them on Monday to a wooded area nearly a mile from where 8-month-old Tinker Bell had been last seen. The brown long-haired dog was dirty and hungry but otherwise OK.

The Utleys, of Rochester, had set up an outdoor display

Saturday at a flea market in Waterford Township, 25 miles northwest of Detroit. Tinker Bell was standing on their platform trailer when she was swept away.

Dorothy Utley tells *The Detroit News* that her cherished pet “just went wild” upon seeing her.

Olbermann pressing on Hannity’s waterboard offer

BY DAVID BAUDER
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK | The debate over torture is getting personal for two of cable TV’s prime-time hosts.

After Fox News Channel’s Sean Hannity made a seemingly impromptu offer last week to undergo waterboarding as a benefit for charity, MSNBC’s Keith Olbermann leapt at it. He offered \$1,000 to the families of U.S. troops for every second Hannity withstood the technique.

Olbermann repeated the offer on Monday’s show and said in an interview Tuesday that he’s heard no response. He said he’ll continue to pursue it.

“I don’t think he has the courage to even respond to this – let alone do it,” Olbermann said.

Fox News Channel representatives did not respond to

requests for comment.

The two men are on opposite poles of a debate that has preoccupied the worlds of talk TV and radio. Hannity says waterboarding is a fair and necessary interrogation technique for suspected terrorists; Olbermann calls it torture, says it’s ineffective and should not be done by Americans.

Charles Grodin was challenging Hannity on the issue on Fox last week, and asked whether he would consent to be waterboarded.

“Sure,” Hannity said. “I’ll do it for charity ... I’ll do it for the troops’ families.”

It wasn’t exactly clear how serious the conversation was, since Grodin joked, “Are you busy on Sunday?” and Hannity laughed.

“I’ll let you do it,” Hannity said.

“I wouldn’t do it,” Grodin said. “I’ll hand you a towel

when you come out of the shower.”

Olbermann’s offer was quick. Besides the \$1,000 per second, Olbermann said he’d double it if Hannity acknowledges he feared for his life and admits that waterboarding is torture.

“The idea of putting somebody in a position they have volunteered for, for charity, to respond to their own unsupported claims, is in many ways priceless,” Olbermann said.

Olbermann, who hasn’t missed any chance to criticize his ideological enemies at Fox, concedes TV competition plays a part in his offer. But he said it was sincere, because he believes Hannity has had a damaging role in the debate.

“If you expose people to reality, even with someone who is denying reality, that can have a powerful and important impact,” he said.

PAY

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Ford, the association’s co-president.

Santulli signed a proclamation to make April 28 Equal Pay Day in Chemung County. Elmira Mayor John Tonello was not able to attend the event, but sent a signed proclamation declaring April 28, 2009 Equal Pay Day in Elmira.

“Secret salaries have to go away, so we are able to fairly negotiate salaries,” Tonello wrote in the proclamation.

Several attendees expressed concern about salaries not being socially acceptable topics of conversation.

“As a woman, you might not know you’re being underpaid,” said Polly Levine of Elmira. “If you can, find out what a man in the same posi-

tion as you is making. That can help you negotiate your salary.”

The Equal Pay Act was passed in 1963, granting equal pay for women doing equal work. Despite this legal guarantee, equal pay for both genders is not guaranteed. From doctors to ditch-diggers, women in every field make less than men for doing the same job.

Experts cite many possible reasons for this disparity. Women aren’t as driven or as competitive, some said. And this can result in not negotiating a raise as fiercely as men. Men are more likely to demand higher starting salaries, which permits them to continually make more money than women.

“Traditionally, women have been raised to play down what they do well,” said Maureen Puglisi, voter educa-

tion chairperson of the League of Women Voters. “Men are taught to talk about their accomplishments, which makes them better negotiators. ... But if you don’t negotiate now, it will affect your next job, because (your employer) will ask what you were paid. Then by retirement time, you’ll find you can’t afford to retire.”

The wage gap costs women a tremendous amount of money over the course of their lifetimes. According to economist Evelyn Murphy, president of the WAGE Project, it’s about \$700,000 for the average American full-time woman worker. This money could have allowed women to pay off debt, buy a house, pay for their children’s college education, or save for their own retirement.



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sen. Arlen Specter, D-Pa., sits on the Democratic side of the aisle during an emergency hearing on swine flu by the Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry subcommittee Tuesday in Washington.

SPECTER

Continued from 1A

Not long after Specter met privately with Republican senators to explain his decision, the party’s leader, Sen. Mitch McConnell, said the switch posed a “threat to the country.” The issue, he said, “really relates to ... whether or not in the United States of America our people want the majority party to have whatever it wants, without restraint, without a check or balance.”

As a result of last fall’s elections, Democrats control the White House and have a large majority in the House. Specter’s switch leaves them with 59 Senate seats. Democrat Al Franken is ahead in a marathon recount in Minnesota. If he ultimately defeats Republican Norm Coleman, he would become the party’s 60th vote – the number needed to overcome a filibuster that might otherwise block legislation.

Specter, who has a lifelong record of independence, told reporters, “I will not be an automatic 60th vote.” As evidence, he pointed out he opposes “card check” legislation to make it easier for

workers to form unions, a bill that is organized labor’s top priority this year.

His move comes as Democrats are looking ahead to battles on health care, energy and education.

Specter was one of only three Republicans in Congress who voted for Obama’s economic stimulus bill earlier this year, a measure the senator said was needed to head off the threat of another Great Depression.

Specter called the White House on Tuesday to notify Obama of his decision to switch. The president called back moments later, according to spokesman Robert Gibbs, to say the Democratic Party was “thrilled to have you.”

Several officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said discussions of a possible switch had reached into the White House in recent days, although Gibbs said he had no details.

Gibbs said Obama would raise money for Specter as well as campaign personally for him if asked.

Specter told reporters at his news conference that Gov. Ed Rendell, a Democrat, had suggested a meeting in Washington for this week at which the party’s leadership could for-

mally “endorse my candidacy.”

In Pennsylvania, State Rep. Josh Shapiro, a Democrat, swiftly announced he was no longer interested in running for the Senate next year. The only announced Democratic candidate has been Joe Torsella, chairman of the State Board of Education.

Among Republicans, former Rep. Pat Toomey is expected to run. He had been poised to challenge Specter, who defeated him narrowly in a 2004 primary.

“I welcome Senator Specter and his moderate voice to our diverse caucus,” Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said in a statement that was a jab at the Republicans.

Other Democrats spread the word on Twitter in a way that reflected surprise. “Specter to switch parties? Wow,” said a message sent by Sen. Claire McCaskill of Missouri.

At his news conference, Specter grew animated as he blamed conservatives for helping deliver control of the Senate to Democrats in 2006, making it impossible to confirm numerous judicial appointees of former president George W. Bush.

SEVEN-DAY FORECAST

WETM 18 Storm Team

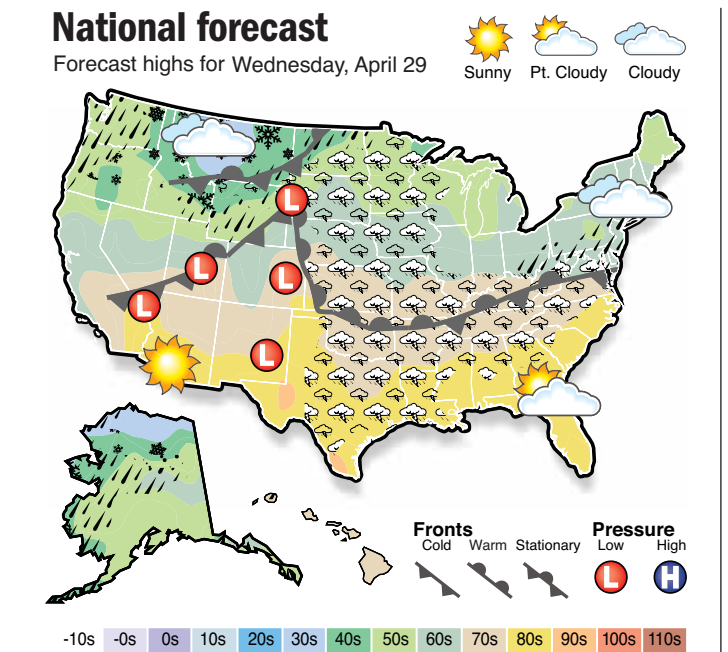
Meteorologist Nick Bannin

Meteorologist Joe Pasquarelli

Meteorologist Vanessa Richards



Today	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
Mostly sunny	Inc. clouds, afternoon showers	P. sunny with showers, storms	A.M. clouds to sunshine	Partly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny
High 65 Low 41	High 65 Low 35	High 70 Low 48	High 64 Low 46	High 62 Low 38	High 66 Low 40	High 69 Low 36



WEATHER HISTORY

In 1963, a tornado touched down south of Shannon, Miss., killing three people. The storm was so violent that asphalt was ripped from Highway 45 and thrown hundreds of yards.

MOON PHASES

First	Full	Last	New
FRIDAY	MAY 9	MAY 17	MAY 24

SUNRISE | SUNSET

Sunrise today	6:06
Sunset today	8:05
Sunrise Thursday	6:05
Sunset Thursday	8:07