



# H1N1 spreads rapidly, affecting Parkland students

by Victoria Smith

Originally called "swine flu" because tests initially showed parallels to the viruses normally occurring in North American pigs, this new strain of the flu was actually found to be very different from such viruses and is more accurately known as H1N1.

H1N1 was first detected in the U.S. in April 2009 and has continued spreading through the nation and worldwide. Flu activity is now rampant in 37 states with increasing rates and higher numbers than expected this early in the season. Each year in the U.S. on average 36,000 people die from flu-related complications and 200,000 are hospitalized from like causes.

It is passable the same way as the seasonal flu, person-to-person through sneezing, coughing and spreading germs in other similar ways. The most successful way to prevent getting infected or infecting others with any form of flu is through vaccination, but impeccable hygiene and germ monitoring are also effective preventive methods. Use common sense: wash hands often, do not rub eyes, cover mouth when coughing or sneezing and dispose of used tissues immediately.

If considering receiving a vaccine, both

regular flu vaccines and H1N1 vaccinations are becoming more readily available. They can be administered via shot or nasal spray and are created similarly. They are similar in safety and side effects. Negative effects are rare and many government agencies are carefully monitoring the new H1N1 vaccine, such as the CDC and FDA.

Symptoms of H1N1 are not unlike those of the seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, stuffy/runny nose, body aches, chills, headache and fatigue. Also like the regular flu, the illness varies from person to person in severity, ranging from mild to very serious cases. Most of the time people recover without any treatment, but deaths have occurred,

mostly in people in the high risk category. People at the highest risk level for infection are the elderly or young children, pregnant women and people with immune deficiencies, asthma, diabetes, heart or other previous health problems. Those infected with the flu are contagious one day prior to being ill and five to seven days after or longer.

Treatment for the regular flu and H1N1 is available in the form of "antiviral drugs" such as Tamiflu and Relenza. These drugs help cure patients faster and assist in preventing complications by decreasing the virus's ability to reproduce. These treatments however, are mainly given to those at higher risk while healthier patients are able to "ride out" the illness without substantial difficulty.

To discuss H1N1's relevance to PHS students and all residents of the

Lehigh Valley, the following is an excerpt from an interview with Mrs. Seremula, a nurse here at Parkland.

In response to the question about whether there have been any outbreaks of H1N1 at Parkland, she said, "Many students have exhibited flu-like symptoms, and there have been some confirmed cases of swine flu called in at Parkland, but not more so than any other high school in the area."

When asked about how Parkland handles students who are diagnosed with the flu she said, "Our general rule is that if they have a fever of 100 degrees or higher, they must stay home until they have been fever-free for 24 hours."

When questioned as to what Parkland's procedure in the event of an increase in these cases is, she answered, "The Department of Health would determine what to do if that should happen, but all the schools in the district are aware of the situation and are keeping track of these cases."

Then she was asked if Parkland offers any flu vaccinations, and confirmed, "No, we are not offering any vaccinations to students."

Students are encouraged to stay informed and take precautions at all times.



photos by Alex Hess  
Nurses take precautions while dealing with patients.

# AHL Phantoms Stadium proposed for Allentown

by Aanand Shaah

With the additions of the Iron Pigs stadium and the Sands Casino, the Lehigh Valley seems to keep adding more and more venues of entertainment to its denizens. The Philadelphia Phantoms, the AHL development-league affiliate to the National Hockey League Philadelphia Flyers, were displaced from their home arena after the Spectrum Stadium was shut down for demolition. While they have temporarily migrated to Glen Falls, New York, recent information indicates that the Brooks Group has put Allentown and the Lehigh Valley Area as hot spot for a new and permanent stadium.

Until recently, Allentown mayor Ed Pawlowski was originally reluctant to endorse and meet with the owners of the Phantoms due to the state and national deficits. The recent \$27.8 billion dollar state budget however, has opened the doors to negotiation between Allentown and Brooks Group. The recent legislation passed by the state government, has allowed the stadium to be financially funded and productive to the city of Allentown.

With the use of the new stadium, Allentown plans to open up a profitable commercial center of shops, restaurants and marinas. To do this, the state plans to allot all the tax money received from the revenue of the games and various events held there, back to the city for a zone marked for improvement as stated by city officials. Essentially, the Allentown plans to use this hockey arena to develop the riverside of Allentown into

a highly developed social center. Mayor Pawlowski actually even said, "If it all works out, it will be the most important development project the city has ever seen."

Jill Thoet of Upper Macungie Township said, "I may actually have reason to go



photo courtesy of Comcast



photo courtesy of Times Union

Former Stadium of the Philadelphia Phantoms

to the city-area of Allentown. Before, I would only go there with my kids for doctor's appointments and flu shots. If the arena was built, my kids and I would be making frequent visits to that area."

The new bill also plans to utilize the taxes collected from the introduction of table games in Pennsylvania and create sales/amusement taxes on concert and theater tickets. Besides hockey, the

new arena is projected to gain revenue from hosting shows and concerts such as the Disney on Ice program. Again, the provisions of the bill allow all the taxes collected, to be redistributed to the city of Allentown and the rest of the Lehigh Valley respectively.

The hockey team and players at Parkland have shown a great deal of enthusiasm for the new project. Senior

Dan Miller said, "It will not only bring a legitimate hockey team nearby, but it will also cause the interest for hockey in Allentown to go up. I think I know where my weekends are going to be spent."

Though negotiations between the city and the team owners are still taking place, the initiation of construction has been projected to begin in the spring of 2010 and to finish by 2012 for avid hockey players.

# Mr. Gombos becomes Orefield Middle school's new principal

by Brandi Tebo

The Parkland Board of School Directors approved the replacement of Dr. Rodney Troutman as Principal of Orefield Middle School by Todd M. Gombos on Tuesday, September 15, 2009.

Dr. Rodney Troutman was promoted to Assistant to the Superintendent for Educational programs and he is confident leaving his duties in the capable hands of Todd M. Gombos.

Graduate of Moravian College, Gombos was a social studies teacher for six years prior to his involvement in the administrative field. Gombos was then promoted to Assistant Principal, and more recently, the Principal of Saucon Valley High School since 2006, where he earned his tenure. Subsequently, Mr. Gombos served as the Assistant Principal at Nazareth Area Middle School and the Dean of Students at Palmerton Area High School. Gombos earned his Masters in Educational Leadership from Wilkes University, his teacher certification from East Stroudsburg University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Moravian College.

Dr. Louise E. Donohue, Superintendent of Schools, said, "Todd is genuinely motivated as a school leader to work on the behalf of all students. We believe he will be a great partner to join Ms. Michelle Minotti, Principal of Springhouse, and the staffs of both middle schools in leading the Parkland Middle School program."