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## Free seasonal flu shots

The Urban League of Lancaster County will be hosting a free seasonal Flu Shot Clinic on Nov. 3, 2009 from 2-6 PM, according to Melinda Zipp, Coordinator of Project Hope.

She told *NewsLanc* “It will be the seasonal flu shot, not the H1N1. It is free to anyone ages 4 and up. No appointment necessary, will be walk-in.”

## EDITORIAL: What should Lancaster General do?

1) In the interest of transparency, improved performance, and since it is a Public Charity, LGH should open its board and committee meetings at least once every three months to the public and media so that proceedings can be observed, questions posed, and issues discussed.

2) Three members of the Board of Trustees should be elected by the public to four year terms.

3) In recognition that LGH’s huge profits (well over a hundred million dollars each year) are in large part a result of its market dominance, at least

20% of earnings should be spent each year towards public health and education. **An extra \$25 million in funding would make a huge difference in the quality of health and services in our community.**

4) LGH should hold three public forums over the next year to explain and hear comments about its proposal to build a hospital within three miles of Ephrata Community Hospital in West Earl Township. We have not encountered a single person who doesn’t consider the notion bizarre. Minimally, explanations and public discussions are in order.

## Smithgall / Gray letter controversy reveals all!

Charlie Smithgall’s letter of October 18, 2000 to High Real Estate Group could be summarized in a simple sentence: “As mayor, I will do my best to see that the City provides \$5 million of financial support to the proposed convention center hotel.”

He kept his promise, for good or for bad, at taxpayer expense in the form of a city agency (RACL) building and leasing the hotel to Penn Square Partners (and thus avoiding real estate taxes), arranging for millions in state and city

aid, and causing the city to guarantee tens of millions in dubious debt. (He also appointed board members to the Convention Center Authority who walked in lock step to ram the project home, without regard to its feasibility.)

Love him or hate him, that’s Charlie Smithgall who pushed the envelope of legality at one point in a letter anticipating action by City Council to get Clipper Stadium built.

Far more disturbing is the following Smithgall revelation to *NewsLanc’s* (continued on back)

reporter Cliff Lewis: “**High representatives “were in every day with a different deal.” At one point, Charlie Smithgall said, the High Group even pushed for the City to pay for the hotel in its entirety.”**

This is evidences that rather than public spirited leaders they purport themselves to be, High and the *Lancaster Newspapers* were acting in the tradition of nineteenth century Robber Barons, or

**NEW ERA:** An editorial “**Health reform and higher taxes starts**” states:

*“U. S. Rep. Joe Pitts has a message for Pennsylvania and other states that have gone through protracted budget fights: Get used to it...Health care reform bills being discussed now call for a substantial boost in spending on Medicaid, the government health insurance program for the poor...Since Medicaid is funded by both the federal and state governments, both would be required to pick up the additional cost.”*

**WATCHDOG:** Not only does the dog wag his tail, but he opposes any health care reform

as *NewsLanc* describes such antics, “predators.”

Any lingering doubt should be dispelled by Mayor Rick Gray’s account of a representative of High presenting a copy of the 2000 letter to him in 2006, implying that it represented an unfulfilled commitment by the City. How low can they sink?

that does not include a “*consumer (public) option*” provision.

**We can’t get something for nothing. Either we pay more to cover the uninsured or we reduce costs sufficiently to offset the added expense. It’s as simple as that. And we can’t afford the former.**

Only by injecting real competition through an expanded, pay-as-you-go, consumer option plan and taking other steps, such as limiting malpractice awards, can we free ourselves from a system devastating to our economy in its high costs and mediocre in providing health care as compared to other advanced nations.

## **LETTER: LGH needs 11 publicly elected trustees**

*“The answer to NewsLanc’s question of ‘**What should Lancaster General do?**’ will always be ‘Whatever is of the greatest benefit to LGH’ as opposed to the community the public charity is meant to serve.*

*“...The final word on every decision — especially financially-impacting decisions — sits ultimately with the Board of Trustees. And with the [current members from High, Lancaster*

*Newspapers, F&M and Fulton Bank], there will not be even a remote chance of any of these Trustees going against the monopolistic and self serving desires of Lancaster General Hospital.*

*“I would mandate eleven elected positions (a majority of the twenty-one LGH Board of Trustees) as a step toward offsetting Lancaster General Hospital’s always-agreeable Board of Cronies.”*

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