

The City of Spokane

## Weekly News Update for Oct. 26

*Information about COVID-19 is evolving rapidly, and our important work as a City is continuing. We want to make sure our City employees have up-to-date information on both COVID and employee news. We will provide this update, as needed, to communicate what you need to know, while we work to reduce the spread of this disease in our community and continue to provide critical public services.*

### **A Message from Mayor Woodward**

Fall can be a time when patience is short and disagreement is close by. Daylight wanes and the natural reset the sun provides becomes scarcer, creating a natural lull.

At times, life can take on the characteristics of the season. Challenges mount and bandwidth to deal with them feels stretched to breaking. Enthusiasm becomes clouded by disagreement and disappointment.

In those tough stretches, focusing on outcomes is crucial to pushing through.

Draw energy from the mission. Carefully consider what voices are already represent and which ones are missing. Seek multiple points of view to include different filters and vantage points. Look for people who want to work with you on a shared outcome, even if how you get there may still require some discussion.

Some associate working together with like-mindedness. While that can be the case, differing viewpoints, experiences, and perspectives are healthy and helpful as long as the interaction is based on mutual respect for the process and what everyone is trying to achieve.

Dialogue and debate is powerful when done within the confines of decorum and absent divisiveness. It also helps to have balance in the conversation so that no one point becomes over-weighted.

Working together as partners with a mutual foundation of support, respect, and consideration for the other participants can be transformative to an engagement and a community.

Too often we go to our own corners, share information sparingly to move others along a pre-determined path, all the while losing sight of our destination. Outcome-based, mission-driven approaches require us to set aside ego, bring a balance of voices to the discussion, listen closely to hear what is being shared, deeply consider the input, and make decisions that take us where we all want to go.

That can be hard especially as passion and emotion enter the equation. Allow yourself and others the space to learn and adjust along the way. The outcomes might surprise you.

## ARPA Open Houses

A promotional graphic for ARPA Open Houses. The top half has a dark blue background with the City of Spokane logo on the left, which includes the text 'CITY OF SPOKANE' above a stylized mountain and river. To the right of the logo, white text reads: 'The City of Spokane is receiving more than \$81 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act pandemic recovery funds.' Below this, in large white letters, is 'Join the conversation.' The bottom half has a light blue background. On the left is a large QR code. To its right, text reads: 'Participate in ThoughtExchange' followed by the URL 'tejoin.com/scroll/961107889'. At the bottom right, it says 'More information at my.spokanecity.org/arpa'. On the right side of the graphic, there is a circular inset photograph showing two people, a man and a woman, both wearing glasses and smiling as they look at a laptop screen together.

Open houses are drop-in style from 5-7 pm each night in the cafeteria/multipurpose rooms of the high schools:

- Today: North Central High School, 1600 N. Howard St
- Wednesday: Rogers High School, 1622 E. Wellesley Ave
- Thursday: Ferris High School, 3020 E 37<sup>th</sup> Ave

## Meet the Food Network's 'Kids Baking Championship' Winner!

Are you hopeless when it comes to dessert making/decorating? Fear No More! Any [donation to our United Way Giving Campaign](#) by Monday, Nov. 1 will grant you access to a virtual Meet 'N Greet and cake decorating tutorial from reigning Kids Baking Championship winner: [Keaton Ashton](#)! Keaton won Season 9 of the hit reality competition show "Kids Baking Championship" on Food Network. He will demonstrate professional cake decorating techniques that will make your dessert the talk of the party! He will also answer any questions about his time on the show! Don't miss out and donate now!



## Network Changes for Kaiser & Premera Members

There are changes that will affect each of you at Open Enrollment. [Please consider these changes](#) when making your medical plan decisions as they relate to Open Enrollment.

### Network Change for Kaiser Members

Kaiser Permanente has notified their Members that they will no longer include MultiCare as "in-network" providers effective January 1, 2022. (Rockwood Clinic, Valley Hospital, Deaconess Hospital, etc.)

#### What that means to you:

If you are a Kaiser Permanente Member, you do not have coverage for MultiCare providers beginning January 1, 2022.

#### Emergency Care:

The Valley Hospital or Deaconess Hospital can be used ONLY for Emergency Care beginning January 1, 2022 for Kaiser Members.

### **Network Change for Premera Members:**

Premera Members will no longer be able to see Kaiser Permanente Providers in-network. This will affect members who kept their provider with Columbia Medical Associates (CMA) after CMA moved to Kaiser in 2019.

#### **What that means to you:**

If you are a Premera Member and have continued to use Columbia IPA Providers, Premera will no longer cover these providers as in-network beginning March 1, 2022. You can continue seeing these providers out-of-network with NO preventative care services covered. Kaiser will bill you the difference between what Premera pays for services and the actual cost of the service.

**Premera Network Reminder for** Managerial and Professional A & B, Exempt Confidential, Fire Managerial, Court Commissioners, Judges, Mayor, Council Members & Council Staff  
Premera Plan 7 uses the “Heritage Prime Network”

#### **What that means to you:**

Providence Providers are NOT in-network providers. You still have access to Providence Providers if you are a member of one of the above unions/groups or associations, however, you will pay the “out-of-network” cost shares for covered services. (Some services such as Preventative care are NOT covered out-of-network)

You will have an opportunity during Open Enrollment, November 1, 2021 through November 12, 2021, to change insurance providers. For more information visit [SharePoint](#).

### **“Long-Term Care Payroll Tax” – Opting-Out**

To opt-out of this Payroll Tax, as a result of purchasing a qualified, private, Long-Term Care (LTC) Insurance policy, you will need to apply for an exemption from the Employment Security Department (ESD). As a reminder, **if you do not have a qualified, private, LTC insurance policy by Monday, Nov. 1, 2021, our understanding is that you can never “opt-out” of the tax.**

To learn more visit [SharePoint](#).

### **More Information to Assist You**

*Here are some more resources from our Employee Assistance Program:*

- [Maintaining Healthy Relationships](#)  
Riding out 2020 and 2021 were tough for many people due to the global pandemic, which many people will continue to navigate going into 2022. However, getting through the pandemic can be a bit easier when you have supportive people in your life. Those relationships, whether they are friends, family, a spouse, or a significant other, can be a lifeline. Recognizing their value may leave some to wonder how to maintain those relationships. [Click here](#) for tips that can aid in maintaining healthy relationships.
- **Building Social Bonds**  
Strong, healthy relationships are essential throughout your life. Social ties with family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and others impact your mental, emotional, and even physical wellbeing.

**Employee Information Portal** ([covid19.spokanecity.org/](https://covid19.spokanecity.org/))

Remember, this Employee Information Portal is a great resource for employees to stay current on what's happening with the COVID-19 response. The [Employee Information Portal](#) can be accessed from work or home, using a computer or mobile device. All of the emailed information we have sent to employees is archived here.