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Forum editorial: Flu clinic workers get roses

PRAIRIE ROSES: To public health workers who have been working long hours to plan and staff influenza vaccination clinics throughout the Red River Valley region.

PRAIRIE ROSES: To public health workers who have been working long hours to plan and staff influenza vaccination clinics throughout the Red River Valley region. It's been no small task, in part because of early vaccine shortages, misinformation about the injected and spray versions of the vaccine and restrictions on patient eligibility. Nonetheless, clinics conducted thus far have gone off without serious problems. Clinic personnel have taken on the task with professionalism and sensitivity. In the process, the public is reassured that the public health system is doing good work to keep the flu outbreak under control.

LEAFY SPURGE: To Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty, who keeps playing to the national Republican base rather than paying primary attention to the major problems of his state. The governor's latest stunt was proposing a state constitutional amendment to limit spending to actual revenue collections. It's an interesting idea, but even the governor's own recent budget proposals have not achieved that balance. Moreover, the governor knows his proposal is dead on arrival at the Legislature. But, he also knows that Republicans who dominate the national party like spending-limit measures. He's running for president, so his proposal is for his party's consumption.

PRAIRIE ROSES: To the community's young people who again are "filling the dome" with foodstuffs for area food pantries. The Fill the Dome (Fargodome) effort began a few years ago and since has grown bigger every year. The students who swing into action put in countless hours of work. Sponsors are extremely generous with their time and resources. The foodstuffs collected will be distributed to area food pantries at a time when the need is great. And, in addition to the Fargo-Moorhead effort at the dome, Barnesville, Minn., students have started "fill the gym" in their area. Nice work by all.

LEAFY SPURGE: To professional airline pilots whose professionalism is being questioned by the Federal Aviation Administration and other regulatory agencies. Surely not all pilots are failing to live up to the standards of their profession. Indeed, most are. But it only takes a few to taint the entire pool of pilots. Air travel is stressful enough these days without passengers having to worry about pilots asleep or distracted in the cockpit. The agencies and professional organizations charged with ensuring pilots are at the top of their game should get tougher with those few pilots who are putting passengers at risk.

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