

Mackenzie Carr-Our Rodeo Queen

By Scott Laird

Vernonia's own Mackenzie Carr was named 2008 Columbia County Rodeo Queen at this year's County Fair on July 21. Mackenzie, a 17-year-old senior at Vernonia High School, served as a princess in the 2007 Rodeo Court. I had a chance to chat with Mackenzie about this exciting honor prior to the Vernonia Jamboree Parade in which the 2007 Court was participating.

Vernonia's Voice: Tell me about the horse you're riding today.

Mackenzie Carr: "I have two horses I ride. This is Pedro, my parade horse. I also ride Charlie, my Rodeo horse."

VV: What are your plans after high school?

MC or Mackenzie unless she goes by Mac: "I plan on going to University of Portland to study Engineering unless I get a scholarship from somewhere for volleyball. Otherwise I'll go to U of P."

VV: What are your duties as a member of the Rodeo Court?

MC: "We go to a lot of civic functions, make appearances at schools and sign autographs for the kids. And of course we make appearances at the area rodeos and ride in parades. We won first prize in this year's Rose Festival Parade. Oh yes, and we



get to dance a lot!"

VV: How will your responsibilities be different next year as the queen of the court?

MC: "Same duties, bigger crown!" (Laughs!) "No really, the queen doesn't really have anything special to do; it's just a bigger crown."

VV: How do you think serving on the court and being the queen will affect your future? What do you think you will gain from this experience?

MC: "Well... I won't be as shy."

VV: Anything else about being the queen that you want to tell our readers?

MC: "Yes, I'm looking forward to another year of huge curls and lots of hairspray!"

Congratulations to our 2008 Columbia County Rodeo Queen, Mackenzie Carr!

Ford Leadership Projects Move Forward

Staff Article



Many of you may have noticed the two additions to Vernonia's downtown streetscape that were added last winter. Two historically themed metal archways, entitled the Vernonia Gateway Project, were designed and installed by the first Ford Institute Leadership Program (FILP) class, and took their place at the openings of two pocket parks on Bridge Street. A river/wildlife themed archway is in place at the outdoor seating area at Black Bear Coffee Shop. A Mill Pond themed arch was installed

next to Grey Dawn Gallery, future home to another public area. The first FILP class is currently fundraising to complete the third archway in their series, and is waiting to hear the results of a grant application through the Columbia County Cultural Trust.

The third archway's theme is Vernonia's first schoolhouse and will be the gateway for a newly poured walkway next to the Vernonia Community Learning Center. This new walkway is part of the second FILP class' project, and leads to the main project: the installation of a Garden Courtyard located at the back of the Learning Center.

The second FILP class recently unveiled a design concept for their Courtyard project. The public garden space will have an historic theme and will feature native plants. The courtyard design features a small stage area for concerts and other performances, benches, and other seating areas and a paved walkway.

The two Leadership classes, Cohort One and Cohort Two, joined forces to raise funds for their respective projects, each earning almost \$1,000 during the Cycle Oregon visit in June.

Cohort Two is also currently raising funds independently for their project. They are selling garden stepping stones through the Learning Center and will have them available at the Salmon Festival. Raffle tickets are being sold for the quilt that class members are creating. There will also be a yard work raffle; the winner receives an hour of labor by a crew of four.

The Vernonia Gateway Project's group wanted to correct a mistake that was published about their financial situation. During the recent city budget process, it was noted that the Archway Project, which had used the city as its financial administrator, had overspent its budget, which may have resulted in the city incurring expenses of \$3,000. Upon further investigation, this assumption was proved incorrect. Mistakes resulted in other bills being paid from the archway funds. The project did not overspend and did not cost the city any additional funds to complete the first two archways. For the third archway, the group is partnering with Hands on Art as its fiscal administrator.

If you would like more information about the Courtyard Project, you can contact Josette Mitchell at (503) 429-7601. If you are interested in further information about the Vernonia Gateway Project, please contact Dan Brown at Grey Dawn Gallery, (503) 429-2787. Dan also wanted to clarify a point made in a previous newspaper edition, "A recent newspaper article graciously gave much credit to me for the completion of the two previous archways. While I certainly had an active part in the process, the project could not have been finished without the help of many in our project group and we look forward to working together again on this next archway."

If you have enjoyed the archways and have found them to be a beautiful addition to Vernonia's downtown, you are invited to be a part of this project. Donations can be sent to: Vernonia Gateway Projects, c/o Grey Dawn Gallery, 879 Bridge St., Vernonia Oregon 97064. Checks should be made payable to Hands on Art Center and all donations are tax deductible.

Vernonia Has International Visitors

By Rhonda Persyn

Kevin Borders, long time Vernonia resident, returned from Japan with his wife and two children this month. Kevin has been living in Japan for the past six years and now speaks English and Japanese. He works for a high-tech custom cabinet company called Abe which mainly caters to large businesses in Tokyo and surrounding cities. His wife Chihiro teaches beginning English as a second language and they have two children the oldest a boy, Chance, a girl Maria and their third child is on the way.

"It's always nice to be home" Kevin said as he was enjoying our cool eighty degree afternoons without the extreme humidity they have in Japan. Kevin and his family visited his father, Steve Borders of Vernonia; his grandparents, Bob and JeanAnn Borders of Baker; and his mother, Lori Evjen of Forest Grove. They also visited the gravesides of Kevin's great grandparents, Henry and Isabelle Anderegg who both passed away last year.

Kevin's family enjoyed Vernonia Lake the most; the ducks are probably still full from all of the bread and popcorn! They watched several wild bunnies as they began to walk around the lake, remembering where the best crappie and bass holes were. The children were amazed at the blackberries everywhere and picked and ate until they were full. As they finished their walk around the lake a Swallow flew out of a birdhouse by the concession stand; they could not believe that a birds really lived in there.

While in Oregon they shopped for school clothes and visited OMSI,

Portland Saturday Market, Tillamook Cheese Factory, and the coast. While here, Chihiro also received a free donation of books from Beaverton School District, now in the process of updating their literature, which she will use in her classroom in Japan.

Learning about some of the differences between the US and Japan was interesting. For instance the meals served in US restaurants are two to three times larger, they have a "Bullet Train" that travels 180 mph yet the av-



erage driving speed is 35 mph. They also drive on the left side of the road and the steering wheel is on the right side of the car.

It was exciting for the grandchildren to experience hummingbirds for the first time and to catch the thistle seeds blowing in the wind and making wishes - - they said they looked like fireworks! Everything we take for granted, or forget about as we grow older, is always exciting and beautiful through the eyes of a child. We look forward to the arrival of the new grandbaby and their next visit to Oregon.