

Mackenzie Carr Crowned Rodeo Queen

Vernonia resident Mackenzie Carr was crowned as the 2008 Columbia County Rodeo Queen at a coronation ceremony held on January 5th at the County Fair Grounds. Ms. Carr is the daughter of Alan and Barb Carr of Vernonia. She is a graduating senior and Valedictorian of Vernonia High School and was selected as the 2007 Homecoming Queen. She is a member of the varsity volleyball and track teams and a past member of the Oregon High School Equestrian Team, for which she earned three varsity letters. Mackenzie is also a member of The National Honor Society and Who's Who Among High School Students. Mackenzie served as a Princess on the 2007 Columbia County Fair and Rodeo Court. Her rodeo partners are Charlie, a 17-year-old Thoroughbred gelding, and Pedro, a 15-year-old Paint gelding.

Joining Mackenzie on this year's court are Princess Molly McCarter and Princess Katie VanWinkle. Ms. McCarter is a junior at Scappoose High School. Ms. VanWinkle is a junior at St. Helens High School.



Pictured left to right: Princess Molly McCarter, Queen Mackenzie Carr, Princess Katie VanWinkle

Vernonia Cares Food Bank In Operation: Pre & Post December Flood

By Sandy Welch

Vernonia Cares Food Bank, located at 627 Adams Avenue in Vernonia, has been in operation since 1985 assisting families within the Vernonia area with emergency groceries. Before the flood of December 2007, "Cares" (as it is known by many) provided three days' worth of groceries to low income clients on a monthly basis. The December flood waters entered the building, flooding its offices and main pantry with four-plus feet of contaminated, muddy flood water. The water also entered the food storage trailer, inundating it with three feet of water. The entire operation (pantry, freezers and refrigerators, office, and food storage) of Vernonia Cares was wiped out in one event.

Many volunteers came together to muck out, rinse, and disinfect all areas. Within five days after the flood, the food bank was back in operation! Through the generosity of literally hundreds of donors, food, freezers and computers were supplied. Because the need of the Vernonia area was so immediate and great (over 400 homes flooded and over 200 condemned), the usual eight hour per week schedule was extended in December to ten hour daily operation. Free groceries are given to any Vernonia area household who experienced the flood waters in their home, to those housing flood survivors, and to former Cares clients. Most days in December saw over fifty families a day utilizing the resources of the food bank. Cares also gave out more than 200 Christmas holiday grocery boxes on December 21. The same day, Cares had ninety-seven families utilize the food bank before Cares staff took a few days off for Christmas.

The food bank staff knew it was vitally important to make food available as quickly as possible and on an ongoing basis, because as people rebuild their homes, offices and lives, the need will continue. As of January 2008, the food bank hours are Tuesday (10:00 am to 2:00 pm) and Thursday (10:00 am to 7:00 pm). There are no income-based restrictions to receive food at this time and food will be dispensed every three to four days, since

many people have a food storage problem (a number of families are living in trailers until their houses are renovated). Food is given to anyone within the Vernonia area (Vernonia, Mist, and Birkenfeld) who needs this assistance. Former Cares clients who live in Timber and Buxton may continue to receive groceries as well.

As Cares moves forward, so do the needs. Perishable groceries are the most quickly depleted (milk, cheese, meat, produce, eggs, butter or margarine, yogurt, cooking oil). Laundry soap, fabric softener, and cleaning detergents fly off the shelf nearly as fast as they are donated or purchased. Funds given will also help restore refrigeration and office equipment, software, and office paper products. Cares is thankful to the Vernonia American Legion Post 119 which is allowing Vernonia Cares to operate from the main room. (This room is about ten times larger than the former pantry.)

Since Vernonia Cares Food Bank is a non-profit (EIN #93-0901900), all donations are tax deductible. Financial donations may be mailed to Vernonia Cares at PO Box 126, Vernonia, OR 97064. Receipts will be issued upon request.

Columbia Community Mental Health

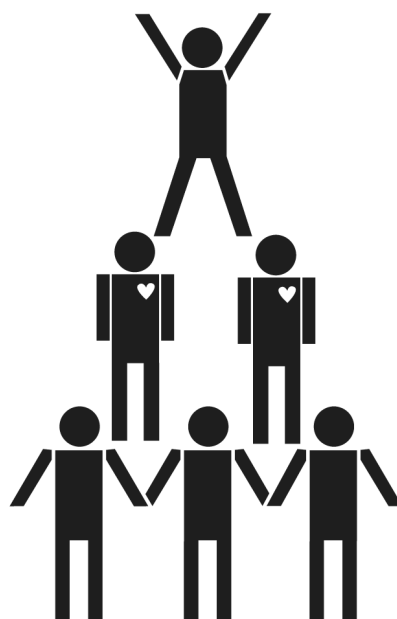
Due to flooding we have moved to a temporary office location:

**Vernonia Community Learning Center
939 Bridge Street
Vernonia, OR 97064
800-294-5211**

Throughout the holiday season many contributions were made to our community out of the generosity in the hearts of others. Vernonia Cares Food Bank would like to recognize the loved ones of our generous friends who made donations as part of our "Caring Tree" project.

Donations made in memory of~

Edison G. Aldrich
Bradley Gavin Crowston
Walter & Katherine Kusiowski
Jim & Helen Meacham
Forrest Wayne Erickson
Dave Ruehmann
Don Fennell
Steve & Rick Grady
Dolores Thomas
Sheri (Hiveley) Wilson
Frank L. Wolf
John Ricker
George Smith
Sue Wenzl
Marjorie & Thurman DeHart
Frank & Cora Lange
Gene Weller
Nevab (Stevie) Taylor
Stan Congdon
Joseph N. Riley



Donations made in Honor of~

Tessie Aldrich
Vernonia Christian Church
McDaniel Family & Friends
Flood Victims
The Great Community of Vernonia
The Spirit of Giving

May this New Year bring peace and health to all in our great community!

Happy New Year From Vernonia Cares Food Bank