

## Library Presents Two Chautauqua Programs

The Vernonia Library in conjunction with the Vernonia Friends of the Library will present two Oregon Chautauqua Programs made possible with funding from the Oregon Council for the Humanities.

The first program will feature Jeni Foster presenting "Birdsong: Birds as a Metaphor in American Folk Music." The program will take place on May 12 at 7:00 pm. Ms. Foster will show how bird songs and flight are used as metaphors for life, love, freedom, and death in cultures throughout the world and how these songs reflect an American sense of adventure, opportunity and freedom.

On May 22 at 7:00 pm, Matt Love will present "The Portland Trailblazers' Championship Season: An Oregon Story." Mr Love will discuss the impact of the Portland Trailblazers 1977 NBA Championship season, using slides, lecture, oral histories, and audio and video clips. Love shows how this memorable season is one of the signature events in Oregon sports history. This program was rescheduled from October 15, 2007.

Both of these Chautauqua programs will be held at the Vernonia Library and will be followed by refreshments.

## Spring Brings Baseball Into Full Swing

The Spring Sports Association has four T-Ball teams this year sponsored by local businesses: Holce Logging, True Value, Wauna, and Sentry Market. The Association has implemented a new division to its program this year, the JR Midget team. The team is for 7-9 year olds who are above T-ball level but not quite ready for all fundamentals of full baseball. Absolute Marble and Granite sponsors the JR Midget Team. The Association would like to give a special thank you to all the terrific sponsors.

Melissa Zavales said, "Our goal here in Vernonia is to create 'ALL AMERICAN BASEBALL TEAMS' for players and the community. We encourage the public to watch our games and to be involved. We have a wonderful group of volunteers who help with the Spring Sports Association: Brent Dass, baseball president, Melissa Zavales, t-ball president, and Kathy Fetch, softball president. We also have many parent volunteers. Without them the program would not exist. Thank you."


The program has come a long way in the past couple of years. Melissa added, "Unfortunately, the flood hit the group hard (as it did most people), and we had to start from scratch. We would like to extend a very huge thank you to the Friends of Baseball program that donated over half of our equipment."

"We also had a couple of work days in which volunteers gathered together to do field maintenance and build tables with wood donated from Exterior Wood Products."

The Spring Sports Association holds fundraisers throughout the year.

On Father's Day weekend, Saturday, June 14th, there will be a baseball extravaganza at Spencer Park. There will be a home run derby, pop can drive, blood drive, car wash, and of course a delicious BBQ. Please come and join in the fun. There will also be a Fireworks stand again this year with dates to be announced and the third annual golf tournament Saturday, August 23rd. This event has been a great success for the teams. Please join in the activities and help make Baseball in the city of Vernonia an "All American" community event.

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**HAPPY 1ST BIRTHDAY WYATT LEE WOODALL!**

## On the Shelves: A Brief History of the Vernonia Library

By Nancy Birch

*The Vernonia Library was officially established in 1928, making it eighty years old this year.*

"At a meeting in the city hall Monday night, a board of directors and committees were appointed to advertise, solicit books, subscriptions, money, and the general support of all the people of Vernonia, as the library is for everyone in the city, camps, schools, etc." This is taken from an article in the May 1925 Eagle newspaper. Dates are a little vague, but Vernonia did have a library by 1925 with 645 registered borrowers, 1087 total volumes and yearly circulation of 4160. Even so, the library was not officially established by city ordinance until Feb. 21, 1928. This information about the library was found and copied from articles in The Eagle (researched by Delores Webb) and also from library board minutes. Thanks to some unknown person, the original hand-written minutes of library board meetings from February 1928 through July 1988 have been preserved. (Minutes from that time forward have been computer generated.)

The history of the library is told in these articles and board minutes—of the fluctuation of circulation in relation to population and later in relation to television and other sources of entertainment; of fund-raisers such as tag sales, paper drives, teas, rummage sales, etc. to help fund the library; of expenses and revenues (right down to the penny); of borrowing books through the Carnegie Association, and so much more.

Circulation for 1932 was 14,623 when Vernonia's population was estimated at 2500 and there were 1800 registered borrowers. By the late 1930's circulation was under 10,000 per year. In 1950, only 3641 volumes were circulated and there were 570 registered borrowers. The statistics from 1950 remained fairly consistent through the 1950's and '60's.

The May 1944 board minutes read as follows: "There was a discussion of the suitability of detective stories for the library, a topic presented by the librarian. She was directed to write the state librarian concerning this matter."

The library was part of the building (between the U.S. Bank and the mortuary) shared by the police, city offices, and fire department until some time after the closure of the Safeway store in September 1959 (I could not find a definite date.) when 919 Bridge Street became its new home. Once again space was shared with city offices. Council meetings and municipal court were held in the space when the library was closed. This arrangement continued until the new library was completed in October 1999.

The purchase of encyclopedias and other reference books, often mentioned in early years, became less important by the late 1980s as computers with reference CDs and Internet access became sources of information in the library. In the 1990s, the state library ceased to provide materials for library patrons, severely limiting the sources for small libraries to pretty much what they could purchase on their own. The book budget of \$1,000 for 1988-'89 (when I was hired) has increased enough each year so most books requested by patrons may be obtained. Nearly all of the funding for the library comes through the City's budget. A small yearly grant is received from the state for children's programs, and The Friends of the Library help supplement programs and materials.

Without a doubt, the most important and exciting event in the last twenty years has been the construction and move to the new building. Watching the foundation being poured, the walls going up and finally moving in were like seeing dreams come true. The increase in circulation was noticed immediately—doubling in the first year. The new space allowed expansion of programs for youngsters and the introduction of presentations such as Chautauqua programs for adults. In that first year, 1999-2000, the library's automated search/circulation program (Athena) was introduced with nearly all of the entries being done by volunteers. What a joy it was not to type and file cards for each library item.

Currently there are 2,037 registered library patrons, 22,399 titles in the collection, an average of 2,000 items are circulated each month for a yearly total of about 25,000, and the library is open 39 hours a week. A weekly preschool story time is held each Monday at 10:30 and an after school activity/story time takes place at 3:30 (also on Mondays). The library does have "detective" stories as well as videos, DVDs, audio books, music CDs, and four computers with Internet access.

Another quote from the 1925 Eagle is one that remains true today. It reads "The library is your library and it is open to everyone. Its success depends upon your patronage."

The following is a poem written by a former librarian, Edna Owens Engen that was found among the board minutes:

### Buried Treasure

There are treasures to uncover  
And adventures you can't beat.  
There's a jolly bunch of people  
Whom I know you'd like to meet.  
They're all there, waiting for you,  
If you'll take the time to look.  
Waiting just to be discovered  
In the pages of some book.

Library staff will be happy to provide these newspaper articles and library board minutes to anyone interested in reading them. (The hand-written minutes are a part of history just by themselves.)

### Upcoming Library Events:

- Family Movie Night (Saturday, May 10th -7 p.m. — Snow Buddies)
- Chautauqua programs on May 12th (Birds as Metaphor in American Folk Music) & May 22nd (1977 Championship Trail Blazers) both at 7 p.m.
- Ballot drop site until 8 p.m. May 20
- Book Discussion (Monday, May 26th -5:30 — Three Cups of Tea)
- Mature Movie Night (Thursday, May 29th — Rain Man)