

Proud to be Vernonia's Biggest Losers

By Scott Laird

These folks are losers, and they aren't afraid to admit it. Trish Maldonado, Shelley Cota and Karen Davis are responsible for bringing together this group of losers- losers of weight that is.

"We were looking for a way to provide support and encouragement for people who were trying to lose weight," said Cota recently. "And we wanted to provide a place to gather and share ideas right here in Vernonia. We didn't want to have to travel out of town to a Weight Watchers group or something like that, so we started our own group." The group is just finishing its fourth term, or first year, of meeting.

Here's how it works. The group starts tracking weight loss every three months. It costs \$25 for new members, \$20 if you are a continuing member. The group meets every week on Monday's at 5:30 PM for a weigh-in, then to discuss how members are doing with goals, to share tips for success and to offer encouragement and advice. At the end of three months the top two "losers", the people that have lost the highest percentage of weight, are declared the winners and split the money pool 60%-40%.

"I am excited that this has been so successful," said Maldonado, herself a biggest loser each of the three previous terms. "I've always finished second," said Maldonado. Maldonado has used the camaraderie and accountability of the group to lose a total of almost eighty pounds with losses of around 10-12%. "We had about twenty participants the first time and almost thirty this last time."

Maldonado has started talking with local business owners to acquire additional prize donations to encourage even more participation. "I have pledges of a teeth whitening from Vernonia Dental, a cut and style from Spiralz Salon, a month of Jazzercise classes and eight personal training sessions from Penny Costley, and a one month gym membership from Terry's Gym. I am really pleased that we are getting so much support for what we are all doing."

The group is open to both men and women. A new term is beginning on May 12th. "Our weekly meetings are short and sweet," said Maldonado. "We know people have lots of commitments, so we try not to take up too much time. I really think the support that being part of a group offers helps people. I think a little competition helps some people, and I know that having someone you can call on when you need help makes a difference."

If you would like to participate in Vernonia's Biggest Losers or want more information, call Trish Maldonado at 503-429-6012, or email her at trishmaldy@aol.com

Dr. Gilmore To Receive Public Service Award

Dr. Phyllis Gilmore from the Vernonia Providence Clinic will receive a Public Service award from the Oregon Fire Service on May 16th for her work during the flood in December 2007.

Bill Goodwin, Division Chief at Columbia River Fire and Rescue, nominated Dr. Gilmore for the award. "I was so impressed by how caring and concerned Dr. Gilmore was for the citizens of this community. She just kept saying, 'These are my people, we have to take care of them.' I was just so impressed with her compassion and dedication," said Goodwin.

Dr. Gilmore and her husband have been invited to attend the annual ceremony which will be held at the Portland Expo Center.

Local Pampered Chef Helps Vernonia Schools

By Scott Laird

For about four years Lee Ann Krause has been a consultant for The Pampered Chef, direct sellers of kitchen tools. Since the Flood of 2007 in Vernonia, Krause has used her business to help raise funds for the Vernonia Boosters.

"This has helped keep me sane," said Krause. "I'm so tickled that I've been able to help in some way."

Krause, a Nike employee in her other life, has been using her Nike benefits to augment her donations. "Nike matches up to \$5,000 of donations to charitable causes each year for each employee," said Krause. "I am taking full advantage of that benefit by donating my commission to help our community and getting my donation doubled by Nike."

Krause has donated three sets of BBQ equipment she has received as bonuses as well as over \$3,000 in cash.

"This has helped me stay busy during this very difficult time," said Krause.

"I believe giving is at the core of every person," said Krause. "I believe in giving back and paying forward."

You can help Lee Ann Krause's efforts by making a purchase from The Pampered Chef at www.pamperedchef.biz/leeannkrause. Click on "Order Products", and enter "Vernonia" as Host.

You can contact Krause at wakandlak@yahoo.com or call her at 503-816-9810.

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