

## Become a CASA For Columbia County

CASA of Columbia County will be holding a CASA 101 orientation session on January 15, 2009 at the Columbia Learning Center, 375 S 18th Street, St. Helens from 6:00 – 7:00 PM. This is an opportunity to learn about why abused and neglected children need CASA's, what a CASA is and is not and how to apply and become the voice for a child.

CASA's are Court Appointed Special Advocates for children. Currently, there are over 200 children in foster care in Columbia County that would benefit by having a CASA on their side. We need your help. At this time, we are able to advocate for only about 10% of the children in need.

CASA's are volunteers from varied backgrounds and are trained ordinary citizens that investigate, report and speak in court on behalf of a child that has been taken into protective custody of the State and placed in foster care. CASA 101 is the first step to understanding and helping a child. To make a reservation to attend this short orientation session, or for more information, call 503-366-4133 or 503-396-6538.

## Jamboree Committee Begins Meeting

The Vernonia Jamboree Committee will hold its first meeting and hold officer nominations for 2009 on January 7, at 7:00 PM at City Hall. If you would like to help organize the Jamboree or have an event that you want included, please come to this meeting. Interested community members are always encouraged and needed to be involved. For more information Donna Webb 503-429-5201, fax 503-429-9411, cell 503-819-0040.

## Get a Life Marching Band to March In Inaugural Parade

The "Get a Life Marching Band" of Portland, Oregon will join approximately 100 other units from around the country in the Presidential Inaugural Parade in Washington, DC. on January 20. The Band features members from Washington, Arizona, Ohio, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, as well as Oregon—including Shawn and Dan Baker of Vernonia.

The group is scrambling to prepare for the trip since it only recently learned of its selection. "We applied for the parade back in November but learned in early December that we hadn't made the cut," said Steve Tolopka, the group's Music Director. "Then the Inaugural Committee called at the last minute inviting us to replace another group that dropped out of the parade."

The last-minute opportunity has the band gearing up for something else it rarely does: fundraising. Band members normally defray their own travel expenses, but the short notice and sagging economy have the group looking for angels. "It will take nearly eighty thousand dollars to get to the Inauguration so we're grateful for any assistance, large or small," says Executive Director Bob Pulido.

Donations can be made at [www.getalifemb.org](http://www.getalifemb.org), where the audio and video submissions from the band's parade applications are also available for online viewing.

For more information contact: Steve Tolopka 10321 SW Todd Ct. Portland, OR 97225, 503-292-3996

## Events Calendar

### "The Dangers of Club Drugs" - January 15, 7PM

This is a community informational interactive meeting sponsored by the Vernonia Prevention Coalition, and presented by the Vernonia Police Department and Vernonia school students. At the Vernonia Middle School.

### Vernonia Senior Center Police Academy - In January

For senior citizens beginning in January; call Karen Miller for signups 503-429-9112 or Chief Kay at the Vernonia Police Department. January Birthdays Celebration at the Vernonia Senior Center. All are welcome!

### Upcoming Vernonia School Dates to know:

January 8 - No School  
January 19 - MLK Day  
January 23 - End of 2nd Quarter/1st Semester  
February 12 - School Board Meeting  
February 13 - No School  
February 16 - President's Day, No School

Visit [www.vernoniasvoice.com/events](http://www.vernoniasvoice.com/events) for more info and pictures.

### In Vernonia – Did You Know...?

- That the Vernonia Chamber of Commerce is a voluntary organization promoting financial growth for members by partnering with community organizations resulting in the economic vitality in the Upper Nehalem Valley.
- That dues for one year are \$35, and that general membership meetings are held every other month on the second Wednesday
- That a weekly email is sent out updating and informing members of local happenings events, and news that is pertinent to them and their community.
- That the Chamber sponsors the Holiday Bucks program in Vernonia to encourage shoppers to visit local businesses. This year's winners were:  
\$25 Winners: Jeana Gump, Shannon Ervin, Bonnie Holce (2)  
Amy Etta, Sue Lundy, Mary Lou Busch  
\$50 Winners: Shari Vanderschelken and Judy McDonald

*The chamber has a community calendar; just go to: [www.vernoniachamber.org](http://www.vernoniachamber.org). If you would like any events added to this just email the chamber at [info@vernoniachamber.org](mailto:info@vernoniachamber.org).*

## Readers lend their voices...

To the wonderful people of Vernonia!

Thank you so much for the tremendous response to the raffle for the dog basket benefiting the Pet Food Division of Vernonia Cares. We made \$164 at the Christmas Bazaar. The winner of the basket full of dog goodies was Val Mack. Kathleen Pennington was the winner of the "pamper yourself" basket donated by Kathy Larsen.

The basket was filled with goodies donated by local people. Eileen Williams gave a certificate for animal communication and a phone consultation for training. Mosquito Lodge Lavender a certificate for beautiful jewelry, Vernonia's Voice a year's subscription, The Independent a year's subscription, and Columbia County Animal Control a microchip. Also making donations were Tobie Finzel and Chailey's Choice.

A special thank you to The First Friday Group for sponsoring the raffle and Tobie for selling tickets.

When you're filling your bag to donate to Vernonia Cares, please don't forget to add a can or two of pet food. They get hungry, too. Thank you again for your tremendous response!

Carol Davis  
Vernonia

To the Editor:

I need to say "Thanks" to my helpers that I forgot to mention in a previous Thank You. Mike Tetlow, George Tice's side kick, helped with all the moving of things to and fro from my house and other places. My friends, Brenda and Darrell Rutter, of Portland were the first people to call me last December during the flood and offered Sadie and me a place to stay. We stayed with Brenda and Darrell for almost two weeks. As usual, they were wonderful host and hostess. My life-long friend, Patricia McEntire Peterson, was also here to help and various occasions. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!!

Janelle Thomas-Cedergreen  
Vernonia

Dear Citizens of Vernonia:

This year's Turkey Drive for the Vernonia Cares Christmas Food Boxes has been very successful. Thank you one and all!!

You have come forward with turkeys and cash donations to make it all come together. Many of you came forward with a \$30.00 donation to sponsor an entire Christmas food box for a family, or a \$10.00 donation for a turkey purchase. The dollar savings in meat products allows Vernonia Cares to stretch their funds in to the New Year for clients. This time of year is difficult for all families as the flexible budget item for everyone is the food category.

Vernonia Sentry and all employees have been instrumental to the success this year by accepting and storing check stand donations. In addition, the donation of 100 turkeys by Sentry and their storage at the store is greatly appreciated! The ability to store that

volume of meat has always been one of the biggest challenges of this effort. THANK YOU VERNONIA SENTRY!!

This has been the sixth annual Turkey Drive and has been a tremendous success!! THANK YOU ALL AND TO ALL A HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

The Turkey Herders of Vernonia

To the Editor

I just wanted to say thank you to everyone who entered and participated in the Lighted Christmas Parade in early December in Vernonia. The effort that goes into decorating and preparation is really appreciated. This was the best turnout for participants, and seemed to be enjoyed by everyone in the community who came out to watch and enjoy the show! Thanks also to Janelle Thomas-Cedergreen and Vernonia Pride for their help in organizing the event, and to Helen Hudson and Synda Allen. Also, special thanks to Mike Pihl Logging for entering four trucks! and to the the Mist-Birkenfeld Fire folks who came all the way down to be part of the parade. And I can't forget the Vernonia Fire Crew who got old engine out and lit up and brought Mr. and Mrs. Claus through town.

This year's winners for best lighted log truck went to Matt Poetter from Weller and Sons, and to Ray Cota- who's truck theme of "Let it Snow" certainly came true.

Thanks to our local businesses who provided prizes: Sentry Market, Black Bear Coffee, Mariolino's, and Cafe 47.

Thanks again to everyone who helped make this another great Vernonia Parade!

Shirlee Daughtry  
Vernonia

Thank you, Vernonia, for donating towards the Holiday Food Boxes. Donations came from all directions--businesses, individuals, churches! It was amazing! You funded the entire cost of the food boxes. Thank you! Certainly this brightened over 500 people's Christmas holiday!

Special thanks to Sentry Market for donating 96 turkeys, and then storing all of them until recipients came and picked them up with vouchers. Sentry also allowed recipients to use vouchers to redeem their fresh potatoes in the same way. Thanks, so much! It saved us a great deal of work to do it this way.

Some people donated funds, some gave through the check stand giving at Sentry, and many gave food. Because of your donations, Vernonia Cares Food Bank was able to give 200 holiday food boxes without expending any of the food bank's general funds.

Thanks, also, to the volunteers who worked to put the boxes together and those who delivered the food boxes to those people who were stranded due to the weather. I've always said that the day we give out the Holiday Food Boxes is the best day of the year! Thanks for making that wonderful day possible, Vernonia.

Sandy Welch, Exec Director  
Vernonia Cares Food Bank

To The Editor

I've lived in my home on Airport Way for over thirty years. My husband and I consider ourselves Vernonian's and we would also like to think of ourselves as good neighbors. We love our property and our home, which we expect to live in for the rest of our lives. We live across from the end of the Vernonia Airport and we've never had any problems, but now we find ourselves embroiled in the proposal made by Tim and Michelle Bero to rezone their (Primary Forest) PF-76 property to Airport Industrial and build an airplane manufacturing business in an industrial park. The proposed industrial park will sit across from our home and, in place of the beautiful forested land we currently view, we will see buildings, a dramatic increase in traffic on our narrow dirt road, and a parking lot.

When the application for the zone change was first submitted by Mr. Bero we were surprised that we learned about it from the neighborhood, rather than Mr. Bero himself. The neighbor closest to our home told us Mr. Bero told her what he planned to do with his recently purchased property and when our neighbor asked whether he had to go through a process to be approved, he told her it didn't matter because it was a "done deal". He told her he wouldn't tell her what she could do on her property and no one could tell him what he could do on his. She was stunned silent by his confidence and wondered what he knew that we didn't.

The neighbor next to her had researched with the county extensively before purchasing their retirement property because they wanted to be sure the surrounding property could not be built on. The planning department at Columbia County told them Primary Forest was the single most difficult zoning to change. Now the planning department is recommending approval. The prior owner of the Bero property was not allowed to sub-divide his property. What suddenly changed?

Next to those neighbors is an animal rescue that operates a dog boarding business out of the home. Their property extends to the other side of the road and an easement agreement exists between that property and Bero's, set forth in the early fifties for private and residential use. Those neighbors have never been approached by anyone regarding the use of their easement for commercial business.

Our neighbors have all rallied together. We are concerned about numerous things, including the reduction in value of our properties that would be sitting across from an industrial park. We are concerned about traffic increasing by their own estimation to some where between 40 and 200 vehicles per down our tiny road. We are concerned about run-off from a property that already sits at a higher elevation than ours. We are concerned for the wildlife and the existing wetlands on the property that will be