

Vernonia's Voice Hosts "Meet The Candidates"

Vernonia's Voice will host "Meet The Candidates," a political forum of candidates running for Columbia County Commissioner Position #2. The event will be held on April 15 at 7:00 P.M. at the Vernonia Community Learning Center, 939 Bridge Street.

Current Commissioner Rita Bernhard is retiring and leaving her seat vacant. Six candidates have filed to run in the primary election: Democrats Henry Heimuller, Russ Moon, Shawna Sykes, and Judith Taylor; along with Republicans Glenn Dorschler and Terry Luttrell.

The "Meet The Candidates" forum will consist of a series of questions and answers with questions being asked by a panel of pre-selected local residents and candidates' responses having a structured time limit. This will be followed by an "open house" where the audience can meet with the candidates and ask specific questions about their campaigns.

For more information about "Meet The Candidates," contact Scott Laird at (503) 367-0098 or email scott@vernoniasvoice.com.

Transfer Station Rate Adjustment Effective April 1, 2010

On Wednesday, March 17th, The Columbia County Board of Commissioners approved rate adjustments for the Columbia County Transfer Station, effective April 1, 2010. The new rates are as follows:

Commercial Hauler Rate	\$77.00/ton
Self Haul Rate	\$114.00/ton
Self Haul Minimum Rate	\$19.00
Senior Discount Rate (37% discount off Min. Rate)	\$12.00
Minimum Weight Limit	300 pound
Yard Debris Rate	\$45.00/ton
Unsecured Load Fee*	\$15.00

* An unsecured load is defined by: Any load that can drop, fall out, leak, blow or otherwise escape from the transporting vehicle. Trash in closed plastic bags that are below the sidewalls is ac-

ceptable as a restrained load. If bags are above the sidewalls, they must be restrained with rope, net, tie-downs, strap and/or covered by a tarp/canopy.

Revenue generated by the Transfer Station supports the Columbia County Solid Waste Program which includes the following programs:

- Household Hazardous Waste and Medical Sharps Program
- Dump Stoppers
- Bulk Community Clean Up Events

In addition, local haulers offer a 1-can, On-Call Service for a reduced rate. Call your local garbage hauler for further information and rates. The last rate adjustment for the Columbia County Transfer Station occurred in 1998.

PCC, MTC Launch GED Testing in St. Helens

On Friday, March 12 Portland Community College and Management & Training Corporation (MTC) launched a GED addendum test site for adult residents of Columbia County at MTC's site in the St. Helens Oregon Employment Department building.

The first round of GED testing brought in six Columbia County residents for a total of nine tests. PCC sent staff and tests to the site on March 12 at 8:00 AM for a full day of testing.

The addition of St. Helens as an addendum GED testing site is part of a larger conversation of how PCC can better serve Columbia County. The project began as an informal chat between MTC Manager Karin Miller and PCC Rock Creek Community Relations Manager Meryl Lipman, both members of the South County Chamber of Commerce. "Karin approached us with the idea last fall, and it echoed what we'd been hearing in focus groups and interviews from the county commissioners to displaced workers and everyone in between," said Lipman.

Since Columbia County is served by PCC's Rock Creek Campus and GED testing is run out of Cascade Campus, the next step involved a meeting between MTC Director Julie Gassner and the two campus presidents, David Rule and Algie Gatewood. When they met in September 2009, both presidents proved

enthusiastic and positive about the project. Rule said he saw the collaboration between the Rock Creek and Cascade campuses as, "a marvelous example of how the PCC District, as a whole, (could) come together to better serve the people of a specific geographic area (who had) a specific need." Rule immediately committed to the finance, which is estimated to cost \$6,061 for staffing and mileage the first year, not including infrastructure and materials.

Cascade's Associate Dean of Student Development, Joseph Fischer, took the lead from PCC's side and Miller worked from MTC's to bring the project to fruition. After approval at the state level, PCC's application was sent to GED Testing Services in Washington DC, who approved an addendum to their existing contract. Next, PCC and MTC tackled logistics. Those included, "payment, registration, protocols, staffing and scheduling," he said. PCC can now proctor the reading, writing and math portions of the test at MTC. The two organizations are still working out kinks in the online registration process. "The best idea is still to go down to MTC, talk to the staff there, and get an information packet," said Fischer.

Jennifer Dennis, who runs preparation classes for the GED test at MTC said her course consists of a series of pre-tests, followed by an individual planning

process, help with soft skills, study habits and one on one assistance. "In the past, we put together a checklist and sent (students) to Cascade," said Dennis, who stressed that, "many people in rural areas don't know how community colleges work; for them it was very daunting." The longer a client is laid off, Dennis said, the less money she or he has to spend on travel to Portland. She lauded the new partnership. "The fact that we can offer testing here is huge."

According to MTC Manager Karin Miller, MTC can pay for the test if the student is enrolled in their program. The only other GED testing site in South Columbia County is the Northwest Educational School District (ESD), which offers monthly GED testing to students under 18 years old. But, since the entire GED consists of five tests, and only two can be taken in a day, "that takes a long time," said Miller. High school students can also test at MTC if they have the proper releases.

The first round of testing went "very smooth," according to Fischer. "The facilities are great and the staff is very helpful," he said. GED testing will be held at MTC every third Friday, with the next available time slot being April 2.

"Henry Knighton Days" Historic Festival In St. Helens

The 1850's will live again in Olde Towne St. Helens this summer.

From June 4 through 6, Henry Knighton Days will celebrate St. Helens' heritage. The festival is named for Henry Montgomery Knighton, founder of St Helens.

According to Columbia County history, Knighton brought his wife and children to the St. Helens area with a land claim. By 1852, he had brought enough interest to the area to entice the Pacific

Mail Steamship Company to come to St. Helens, but after the docks burned, the steamship company settled in Portland.

From steam ships and steam tractors to "Oregon is Indian Country," an Oregon Historical Society exhibit featuring the nine recognized Oregon Native American tribes, the event will have something for everyone. Other planned exhibits include spinners, toy makers, wood crafters, musicians, a Conestoga wagon with mule team and even a dulci-

mer demonstration.

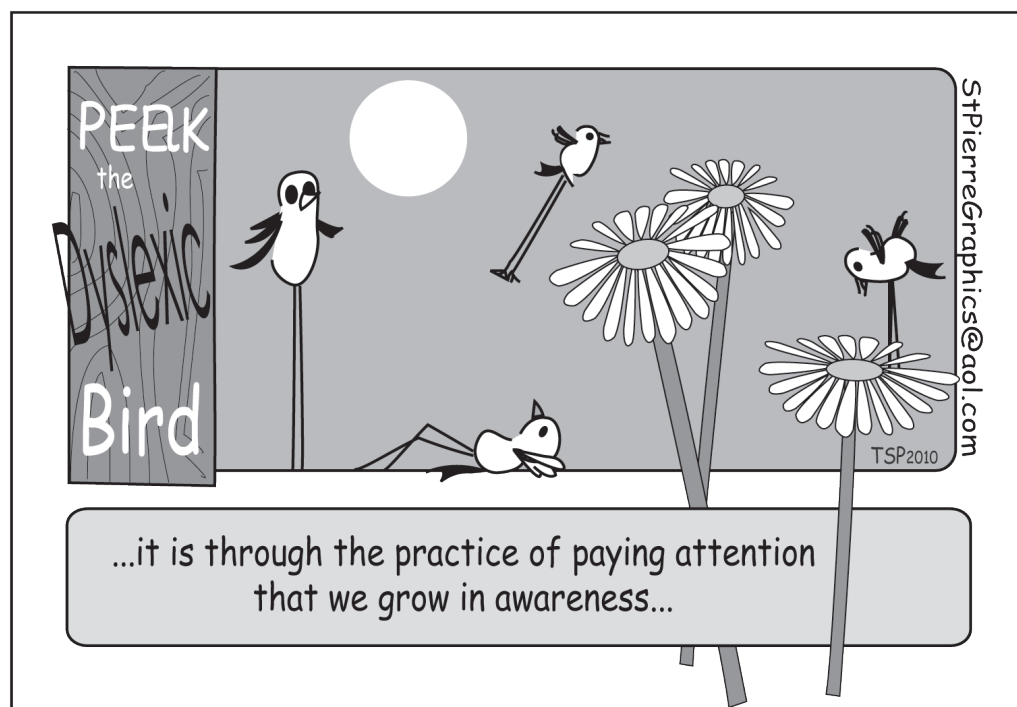
Don't know what a dulcimer is? Come down to the festivities in June to find out!

The three day event is taking shape, but something is missing. You! We need you to help bring history to life. Do you have insight into life as it was in the 1850's? Please share your knowledge with us!

Community support and input is welcome. Committee meetings are nor-

mally held at 6:00 PM, on Tuesday evenings. Call for more information. Your help and input in planning will be much appreciated.

For more information contact the Historical Society of Columbia County (503) 720-7001, or South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce (503) 397-0687. The Historical Society of Columbia County is a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation.



Need body work?

At Meyer's Auto Body

we'll take your order and give you great service.

MEYER'S AUTO BODY
493 BRIDGE STREET,
VERNONIA
503-429-0248