

# Flooded Homes Returned To Green Space

What begins as the acquisition of a severely flooded home, ends in the demolition of the home and the property returned to green space forever. Community Action Team, Inc., (CAT) is working with the demolition contractor as their liaison with the city, county and federal agencies in completing this process. In submitting a Request for Qualifications, the City of Vernonia and Columbia County required the demolition contractor be able to show that they were able to recycle as much of the materials as possible. The contractor that won the bid for these homes is Custom Excavating by Dean Larson and their sister company Trails End Recovery. The team, out of Warrenton, Oregon, is known for their commitment to reducing waste in the landfill. They have projected that they will be able to recycle, on average, 90% of the materials coming from these homes.

The staging area at the millsite that was pictured in the December 2<sup>nd</sup> issue of the Independent showed a pile

of wood from three of the homes being demolished. That pile of wood only covers about 1/6<sup>th</sup> of the cemented area it sits on. This staging area is where ALL the recycled materials are sorted, so EVERYTHING on that cement pad will be reused or recycled in some way. When you see how much material is being stored there, you can appreciate the amount of materials coming out of these homes that is NOT going to a landfill.

It's important to note here that the big transfer bins outside of the homes or at the millsite are NOT garbage bins for everyone to dump their stuff. Custom Excavating and Trails End Recovery (CE-TER) sort the materials as they go and, while some things do go to the landfill, most do not. Simply put, dumping garbage in these bins is illegal and known as "theft of services." This additional material adds to the cost of labor and time to sort it and dispose of it properly. So CAT, CE-TER and the City of Vernonia are asking that people do not

dump their garbage in the transfer bins and for neighbors to keep an eye out for such behavior.

CAT and CE-TER have received inquiries and requests as to what was going to happen to a specific item on one of the properties, so CE-TER has initiated a process to allow our local citizens to take items that do not have a particular market value attached to them. And if they do have a value attached, CE-TER is willing to work with local residents to come to some sort of agreement. Either way, CE is doing their best to give back to the community and they intend to do so until the project is finished. CE-TER is also interested in recycling as many materials locally as possible and using local labor, resources and stores as needed. In order to preview any items available, CE-TER requires you sign a Letter of Indemnity, which basically translates to "enter at your own risk." You will need an approved, itemized list before picking up any items. You will also need to negotiate with the Field

Manager a designated time to preview or pick up any approved items at the properties or the collection sites, as it is a liability issue to be on the site when they are working. There have also been numerous instances of vandalism on these properties, so if stopped by the local police, you will need to prove you belong on the premises by having the documents CE-TER provides with you.

For additional information on how to preview or request items from the contracted properties, please contact the CE-TER Field Manager at (503) 741-6867 and leave a voicemail. Or you may also leave a message at the main office at (503) 861-6030.

We want to thank the citizens of Vernonia for all the assistance and patience you have shown in making this a smooth and successful process. Look for the next article "Deconstruction and Demolition," explaining the methodology of the deconstruction and demolition process.

# Student Project Hopes to Help With Flooding

The last Vernonia utility bill included some extra sheets of paper. One of those extra sheets was a survey called "The Social Impacts of Flooding: A Case Study on Vernonia."

Maybe you didn't notice this extra sheet in your bill, or maybe you haven't opened and paid that bill yet. But we would like to encourage you to take ten minutes when you finish reading this article and go find that survey, fill it out, and return it to the City of Vernonia.

The survey is part of a project being conducted

by three sophomore students from Westview High School in Beaverton, which will be entered into a competition in the Intel Science and Engineering Fair. The project is not part of the students' required coursework, but is something they have chosen to do on their own time.

The students, Adarsh Patra, Sidharth Sengupta, and Raghav Tripathi, have been working with Vernonia City Administrator Bill Haack, Dan Brown from Columbia County Flood Relief and Sean Pickner with the Vernonia GIS Project, to capture information from

local citizens about the impacts from the last two flood events in Vernonia in 1996 and 2007. They are asking for help in compiling information directly from those impacted in the form of the survey. Completing the survey takes less than ten minutes and is very simple.

The students will enter the results of their project in the competition and compete against other student projects in the Beaverton School District. If their project is chosen, they will move on to the state level and, from there, they could compete at the international level.

The group has been working with Portland State University Professor of Geography Dr. Heejun Chang who is mentoring them with their work.

But the students are not just interested in winning a competition. They also hope to provide some real benefits for the people of the Vernonia community.

"In the end, we hope to help the people of Vernonia," says Sengupta.

"The Vernonia community is in a non-ideal location and is currently very vulnerable," says Tripathi. "We hope we can offer some potential solutions."

As part of their project, the students will be using computer programs to simulate various precipitation events as well as maps of where water goes during flood events. One intention of the project is to create models for how future cities could be developed, taking into account new weather patterns that are developing because of global climate change.

"We need a new model for protecting cities," says Sengupta. "We are hoping that what we learn about Vernonia could be translated to other cities."

The students are using GIS data about Vernonia streets, streams, parks and other landmarks. They have spoken with Washington Grade School Principal Aaron Miller about how the floods have impacted Vernonia schools. Patra says they have also been in contact with Weyerhaeuser and received soil data they have been using in their modeling.

"We believe the FEMA model for helping communities in the kind of disaster Vernonia experienced is very outdated," says Sengupta.

"It's a one-size-fits-all, which doesn't always work," added Tripathi.

The students, though only sophomores in high school, have varied but exceptional interests as they continue their learning. Patra says he is interested in aerospace engineering and biotechnology. Sengupta

*continued on page 7*

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

There is the **potential for a quorum** of the Vernonia City Council during the months of January, February, March, April, May and June, 2011. The Mayor and all Councilors will be attending meetings to gain knowledge and understanding so they may better serve the community.

**Kick-off your savings plan with S.T.A.R.T.**

It's first and 10...time to start saving! S.T.A.R.T. Savings Today And Rewards Tomorrow™ is the new savings program that makes saving easy and rewarding.

Huddle up and build your savings game plan – you can save a little every week, every month or with every check card or credit card purchase. And before you know it, you've scored a touchdown with savings of \$1,000!

And you'll score big! When you save \$1,000 you'll earn a \$50 U.S. Bank Rewards Visa® Card. Keep a balance of \$1,000 or more for a year and you'll earn another \$50 Rewards Card.

So don't delay the game...S.T.A.R.T. today at your local U.S. Bank branch, or call 800-720-BANK (2265).

All of us serving you®

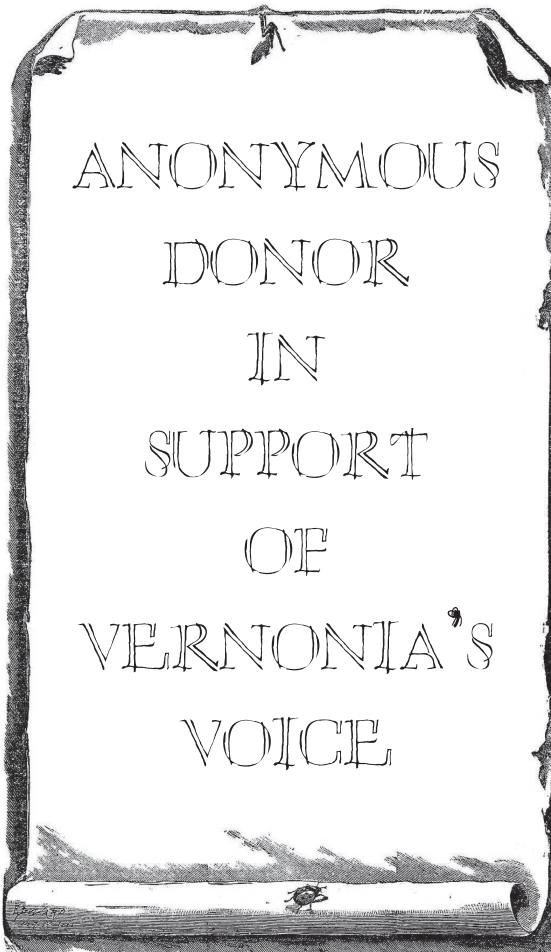


Vernonia Branch  
905 Bridge Street  
503-429-6271

**usbank**

usbank.com/START

Enrollment required. A qualifying transfer from your Package Checking account to your Package Money Market Savings account must be scheduled and maintained. You must open and/or maintain an active U.S. Bank Package, including a Silver, Gold or Platinum Checking account AND a Money Market Savings account. A minimum deposit of \$50 is required to open a Checking account and a minimum of \$25 is required to open a Money Market Savings account. All regular account opening procedures apply. Certain conditions apply to U.S. Bank Packages. Credit products are subject to normal credit qualifications and approvals. Other conditions and restrictions may apply. Program is subject to change. See the S.T.A.R.T. Program Agreement for detailed information. The U.S. Bank Rewards Visa® Card cannot be redeemed with additional funds, nor can it be used at an ATM. Terms and conditions apply and fees may apply to Rewards Cards. For complete terms and conditions see the "U.S. Bank Rewards Visa® Card Agreement" available at www.usbank.com/rewards. ©2010 United products offered by U.S. Bank, U.S. Member FDIC.



**AIR-PRO** "Your Indoor Air Quality Experts"

**HEATING & COOLING LLC**

**OVERSTOCK CLEARANCE**

Limited Time Only  
**FREE Electric Furnace**

With purchase of matching heat pump.  
Offer available on select systems. Call your local York dealer for promotion dates & details.

**YORK** Come On Home To It's time to get comfortable.

**503-397-3003** 967a 3rd Avenue, Longview

HEALTHY SOLUTIONS CLIMATE

WALCO AIRPRO 3687P ORE COB 152932