

## Community Workshop for Transportation Plan

The City of Vernonia is in the process of updating its Transportation System Plan and is asking citizens to participate. A Community Workshop will be held on Thursday, January 13 from 5:30 to 8:30 at the Vernonia Community Learning Center. This is a drop-in style open house, so stop by at any time for informal presentations and discussions.

Please bring your ideas and comments for possible future bicycle, pedestrian and roadway improvements in Vernonia. Transportation planner and engineers will present an overview of existing facilities and possible system options.

If you have questions please contact Joann Glass or Carole Connell at City Hall, 503-429-5291.

## Construction To Begin on Dennis Edwards Tunnel

In mid-January, ODOT will begin construction to improve the Dennis Edwards Tunnel on U.S. 26 (Sunset Highway)—located 34 miles west of Portland. Work includes relining the tunnel, upgrading the drainage system and replacing lighting. The tunnel will also be fitted with a bicycle warning system to improve the safety of bicyclists using the tunnel. ODOT has selected Johnson Western Gunitite Company as the project's contractor.

Two open houses have been scheduled so area residents can learn about the latest project schedule and to meet the contractor and project manager. A Cannon Beach Open House is scheduled for Wednesday, January 12, 2011 from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM at the Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce, 207 N Spruce St. In addition a Banks Open House is scheduled for Thursday, January 13, 2011 from 4:30 PM—6:30 PM at Banks Christian Academy, 22785 Northwest Fisher Rd. in Buxton.

To minimize disruptions to travel, the tunnel will be open everyday during the daytime. It will also be open on weekends, holidays and Oregon spring break. Full weeknight closures of the tunnel begin mid-January 2011 and will end prior to Memorial Day weekend. The tunnel will be closed on Sunday nights from 10:00 PM until 6:00 AM and Monday through Thursday nights from 8:00 PM until 6:00 AM.

A signed detour route will direct

travelers around the Dennis Edwards Tunnel during the nighttime closures. The detour route is a combination of Timber Road and Oregon 47. The route increases driving distance by 15 miles—or about an additional 25 minutes. ODOT is working to improve safety along the route. ODOT will maintain the route during the entire project, including plowing on Timber Road during snow conditions.



For more information contact: Lili Boicourt, ODOT Community Affairs at 503-731-8247 or Lili.D.Boicourt@odot.state.or.us Additional information is available at: www.DennisEdwardsTunnel.org



*New Vernonia City Councilor, Marilyn Nicks, Mayor Josette Mitchell, and Councilor Willow Burch took the Oath of Office at the start of the January 3, 2011 City Council Meeting. With a majority of the five positions changing, the Vernonia City Council has a new look to start the new year.*

## Student Project *continued from page 6*

says he is interested in studying biotechnology and applied physics. Tripathi says he is interested in applied physics, as well as neurology and the science of people.

The students are also encouraging feedback and input from

community members about their project. "We want the community to be fully part of this," says Tripathi.

"We hope our work can help create more resilient communities," concludes Tripathi, "communities that can bounce back."

*If you have questions, concerns or input about this project or the survey, please email the students at: AdarshRaghavSidharth-WHS-Science@googlegroups.com.*

## Josette Mitchell is New Mayor *continued from front page*

can't afford everything we want," explains Mitchell. She notes that, as a municipality, the City of Vernonia is mandated to provide certain things: streets, water, sewer, and public protection. "If we can't do those things with the money we have, then we certainly can't do luxury things," says Mitchell. "People are realizing it and are

willing to forego those things or be part of making them happen even if the city isn't funding it. The Christmas celebration this past year was a perfect example of that."


Mitchell has been part of the Ad Hoc Budget Committee that has been closely monitoring City spending for the last six months. She thinks the new

processes put in place have had mixed results. "It's more work for city staff," says Mitchell. "But I think it heads off big issues before they happen, or at least makes us look for alternatives. It really keeps department heads accountable for their budgets, and staff is realizing that every penny counts and it all adds up."

"At the end of two years, if Vernonia is financially better off and the projects are further towards completion, than I will be happy with the job I've done," says Mitchell.

*Vernonia's Voice* would like to welcome and extend our best wishes to Josette Mitchell as the new Mayor of Vernonia.

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