

VERNONIA'S voice

reflecting the spirit of our community

volume 5 issue 2

Chief Ralph Painter Honored at Memorial Service

On Friday, January 14, 2011, fallen Rainier Police Chief Ralph Painter was memorialized in a Ceremony of Honor at the Chiles Center on the campus of the University of Portland.

It was a day of tearful farewells, of pomp and ceremony, of kind words of remembrance, and of ritual.

First responders and police officers from

around the region, the country, and Canada attended the ceremony, including officers from as far away as Chicago and several Canadian Mounted Police. A procession of first responder vehicles, which began in Longview and traveled through Rainier to Portland and the site of the memorial service, was reported to include about 500 vehicles. Citizens lined the highway to pay their respects to the fallen Chief.

St. Helens Police Lieutenant Terry Moss served as Master of Ceremonies and Officer Kevin Tinter served as Ceremonial Commander of the Multi-Agency Honor Guard. The Portland Police Bureau Highland Guard provided bagpipes and drums.

Approximately 4,000 people attended the ceremony, almost half of them men and women in various blue, grey, tan, brown, green and even red agency uniforms.

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Vernonia Schools to Receive \$11.2 Million in FEMA Grants Funding Will Help Build New Schools Outside Floodplain

Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden and Congressman David Wu announced that the Vernonia School District will receive \$11.2 million from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The new grant comes in addition to the \$150,000 in funding that the school district received through Congressional appropriations request by Merkley and Wyden in fiscal year 2010.

According to FEMA, the agency will acquire the existing Vernonia K-12 school buildings through its Flood Mitigation Assistance program. The

\$11.2 million in proceeds from the acquisition will go towards the construction of a new school campus outside the floodplain. Groundbreaking for the project took place last month.

According to School District Superintendent Ken Cox, \$10.4 million will go towards the new construction; \$800,000 will be held in reserve for the demolition of the

current school site, which was not included in the original \$38 million budget for the school project.

"I want to thank FEMA staff from Region 10 and Oregon Emergency Management, especially Dennis Sigrist, as well as, locally, Dan Brown," said Cox. "I appreciate all their work and effort to get this done for our kids and our community."

"This grant will do more than just construct a school, it'll help rebuild a community and create jobs," Merkley said. "I'm thrilled these unspent disaster funds have found the right home."

"This announcement means that the federal government and FEMA are doing the right thing for the families of Vernonia who have worked tirelessly to put their lives and their community back together," Wyden said.

"Money can't build the spirit of community that the citizens of Vernonia have shown since the flooding," said Wu, "but \$11.2 million can certainly build a top-notch school, create some jobs, and foster new hope for a better future. This is a proud day for a much-deserving community."

School Town Hall
February 10th, 6:30PM
Vernonia School Cafeteria
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Vernonia's KLS Surveying Awarded Grant for Renewable Energy Study Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Announces Investments to Study Feasibility in Rural Communities

KLS Surveying, a firm in Vernonia, OR has been awarded a \$50,000 Grant to provide surveying for a Biomass and carbon baseline verification study.

U. S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced on January 20, that USDA Rural Development, through its Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), has selected 68 study grants for funding nationwide to determine the feasibility of renewable energy projects.

Of the 68 projects awarded for funding across the US, the Vernonia--KLS project was one of

only twelve to receive the maximum allowable grant of \$50,000 and was the only grant in the US awarded for a carbon sequestration study project.

According to Kim Wallace of KLS Surveying, KLS was approached by Catherine Mater of the Pinchot Institute, who has been working to develop carbon banking and biomass fuel generation for Vernonia. "They needed a local business that would work in partnership and sponsor the study," says Wallace.

Through the USDA grant, KLS is evaluating the feasibility of development of the Vernonia Thermal

Energy Center (VTEC), adapting the latest woody biomass survey scanning technology currently employed by land survey professionals to a single-pass biomass/carbon monitoring scanning system, dramatically reducing annual carbon monitoring costs.

"This new scanning process is a technology that can be used in our business," says Wallace. "This could develop into a good business venture for us."

"The Obama Administration is committed to helping our nation

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