

VERNONIA'S voice

reflecting the spirit of our community

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Made In Vernonia Shop is Open

A new business is open in Vernonia called *Made in Vernonia*, featuring, you guessed it, items that were made in Vernonia.



The store front is being organized by Kathy Larsen, who managed the Vernonia Open Air Market this past season, and is located at 847 Madison Avenue in the reception area of the New Day Massage office, just a block off Bridge Street.

continued on page 19

Mission To Haiti: Twelve Year Old Allegra Poetter Travels to Haiti to Help

By Scott Laird

On January 12, 2010 a catastrophic, magnitude 7.0 earthquake struck the country of Haiti, leaving over 300,000 people dead, and approximately one million people homeless. The Haitian government estimated that 250,000 residences and 30,000 commercial building had collapsed or were severely damaged. Reconstruction in the country has been slow and some people believe the country will never fully recover.

In Vernonia, immediately after the earthquake hit, Allegra

Poetter, a young girl of ten, was moved to try to do something to help the people of Haiti. She held several bake sales on Saturday mornings and organized a fundraising breakfast, eventually sending \$1,000 to the Haitian Christian Outreach (HCO) Mission to assist the devastated country.

Almost two years later, Haiti is still a country in need and Allegra Poetter once again stepped up to try to help. On October 13 she flew to Haiti and spent ten days at the HCO Mission, working in the health

continued on page 19



Vernonia US Bank and Kiwanis Team Up for Holiday Giving Tree

The Vernonia Kiwanis are once again providing the Holiday Giving Tree as part of the Community Closet Project they sponsor. The Holiday Giving Tree will be set up in the lobby at the Vernonia branch of US Bank on Bridge Street the week after Thanksgiving, and will be there throughout the holiday season.

Community members are encouraged to come in and take a tag from the tree that contains a gift request, returning with the gift, wrapped and ready to be given to a child in the community.

The Holiday Giving Tree is an extension of the Kiwanis Community Closet project which distributes personal hygiene items to children in the community through several outlets. The Community Closet is a collaboration of several groups and organizations. In addition to the Kiwanis, the Vernonia School District, Head Start and local churches, the Vernonia Prevention Coalition (VPC) has played a major role in making the program successful.

This year the Giving Tree will contain requests for coats and shoes for children. In addition there will be tags with requests for dignity items to help stock the Community Closet.

"This year for the Giving Tree we are focusing on some of the older children in our community," says Nicole Larke, Director of the Vernonia Kiwanis and also Manager of the Vernonia US Bank. Tags on the trees this year will again be requesting shoes and coats for children, this year for ages thirteen and up. Dignity items will be gladly accepted for all ages and items.

"People don't need to take a tag to participate," says Kiwanis President Lee Anne Krause. "Last year people just brought in things like a package of combs."

Last year was the first year for the Giving Tree at US Bank and the response was more than overwhelming. "Last year we collected sixty-nine coats and shoes through the Tree," says Larke. "In addition we collected a lot of closet items. And then people in this wonderful community of ours took it upon themselves to go further and we started getting things like dish and laundry soap, toilet paper and other household items. All of that went to Vernonia Cares so they benefited from it as well."

According to Larke the Community Closet has become a resource to help combat an issue that many people don't even know exists within the community.

"The reason this Community Closet project was started was because there was a need expressed through the schools that there were a lot of children and families in our community who did not have the resources available to purchase things as simple as toilet paper, tooth brushes and deodorant and other items," says Larke. "That cry for help was heard and through several partnerships, the needs were assessed and from that the Kiwanis Community Closet was created."

The Kiwanis have

worked closely with the schools over the last year-and-a-half to help provide items of need for local families. "Whether people know it or not, we do have a lot of homeless children and families within our

continued on page 6

Final School Town Hall
New Spencer Park
See the proposed design plan
December 6th, 7 pm
at the School Cafeteria

inside



schedule of
december 3rd events 9

local coupons
holiday shopping guide 10-12

We Need You To Help Celebrate the Spirit of Christmas

You can help Vernonia get ready for the 2nd Annual "Spirit of Christmas In Vernonia," scheduled for December 3rd.

Help decorate downtown on Saturday November 26 starting at 10:00 AM. Meet at the VCLC Courtyard and help hang lights, wreaths and garland and make our town festive for the holiday season. For more information contact Joni Jackson at 503-956-0445.

We are also looking for participants in the evening Lighted Parade on December 3rd. This annual event is one of the highlights of the holiday season in Vernonia and is open to all trucks and vehicles. There will be competitive judging only for log trucks this year, with a trophy awarded to the best decorated log truck in the parade. At the conclusion of the parade, the trucks will return and be on display at the school parking lots and the VHS Senior Class will host a Chili Feed to raise funds for their Senior Trip. For more information about the Lighted Parade contact Sharon Bernal at 503-819-7924.