

CASA for Kids Receives Community Grant

CASA for Kids, Inc. has received an \$11,000 Community Grant from The Oregon Community Foundation to build organizational capacity to advocate for abused and neglected children in Columbia County.

The mission of CASA for Kids is to ensure that all children in foster care can grow up in a safe, permanent home. The organization recruits, screens, trains and supervises volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) who work in the best interests of the children.

"Foster children need more

help than the system can provide," said CASA for Kids executive director Kathryn Bourn. "A child with a CASA has the best chance of success."

The grant funds will enable CASA for Kids to expand its staff to supervise more CASAs, Bourn said. Eight new CASAs just completed training and have been sworn in to take cases. The new CASAs are: Scott Kelly, Janelle JahaAdams, Kristen Hinze, Becky Hamshar, Melissa Campos, and Shelly Thompson, all of St. Helens, Jean Hoffman of Deer Island, and Tami Kemp of Warren. The new CASAs are enabling

the Columbia County program to serve 21 more foster children, Bourn said.

"We still have a tremendous need for more CASAs," Bourn said. "In November alone, 15 children in Columbia County went into foster care." The organization currently is recruiting volunteers for its February 2012 class. The OCF grant funds will enable CASA for Kids to continue to train and support new CASAs.

The mission of The Oregon Community Foundation is to improve life in Oregon and promote effective philanthropy. OCF works with individuals, families, businesses and

organizations to create charitable funds to support the community causes they care about. Through these funds, OCF awards more than \$60 million annually in grants and scholarships.

The OCF makes grants through an application process that involves local citizens in the review and evaluation of requests for funds. Application materials are available through the foundation's Portland office. Individuals or businesses interested in establishing a fund may contact the Portland office at 1221 SW Yamhill, Suite 100, Portland, Ore. 97205, (503) 227-6846, or visit www.oregoncf.org.



Columbia County Circuit Court Judge Ted E. Grove and CASA for Kids executive director Kathryn Bourn congratulate the newly sworn Court Appointed Special Advocates (holding certificates, from left to right): Melissa Campos, Becky Hamshar, Jean Hoffman, Janelle JahaAdams, Scott Kelly, Kristen Hinze, Shelly Thompson and Tami Kemp.

Columbia 9-1-1 Appoints New Administrator

The Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Operations Manager Lee Knowlton has accepted the position of Administrator.

Knowlton began his career at Columbia 9-1-1 in February of 1987 as a Communications Specialist. He was promoted to Chief Dispatcher in 1988 where he was in charge of day-to-day operations. In addition to those duties, he also became involved in many aspects relating to the administration of the agency including hiring, training, personnel matters and budgeting.

Knowlton's job title was later changed to Operations Manager which more clearly identified his job duties.

Knowlton has an Executive certificate from Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) and is a graduate of the Oregon Executive Development Institute.

Knowlton also served the community of Vernonia for 14 years as a member of the Vernonia Volunteer Ambulance Association as an EMT. He lives in Vernonia with his wife Susan and has four grown children.

New Spencer Park Design

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construction of the new school campus. The City of Vernonia now owns the current school site after FEMA bought the property for \$13.2 million. The School District is leasing the current school site from the city and will continue to lease the lower half of the property which contains the grand stands, restroom facility, and football, baseball and softball fields.

The School District is required to construct Phase One of the project as part of the land swap deal, which will include the replacement ball fields. Phase One is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2013. The City of Vernonia will add additional amenities as part of the Phase Two design plans as funds become available.

Vernonia City Administrator Bill Haack stated that the City is currently discussing the possibility of the re-appropriation of Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) funds awarded to the City for construction of the Vernonia Bicycle Skills Park through the State Local Government Grants program. The

City received that grant, which includes funding for a picnic shelter, restroom and parking, in the fall of 2007. Haack is currently working to develop a proposal to present to OPRD that would allow the City to use those funds to develop a Master Park Plan for the entire 180 acres of open space that stretches from Vernonia Lake, along Rock Creek to Anderson Park, and for development of Phase Two of the New Spencer Park. Haack stated that during a recent meeting with OPRD Director Tim Woods in Vernonia, OPRD seemed open to considering the idea of re-tasking the grant funds for those purposes.

At the Town Hall Meeting, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff were on hand to discuss the improvements to Highway 47 and Missouri Avenue as part of the new school project. ODOT staff stated that there is a need to remove some trees as part of the project and that ODOT will be looking for local contractors to bid on that work.

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10-5 Tue-Sat, 12-4 Sun

Senior Center Activities

5-Area Luncheon: There are no luncheons scheduled for November and December.

Connie's Fabulous Breakfasts: Fabulous breakfasts are available to the public on Fridays for a cost of only \$3.50. The event happens at the Senior Center (446 Bridge Street) from 7:30 to 9:00 AM each Friday. Meal price includes a beverage, too. Enter through the side, parking lot door. What a deal!

Week Day Lunches: The Vernonia Senior Center offers nutritious and tasty lunches each weekday for a \$4 donation for seniors over 60; cost is \$5 for anyone under 60. To-go meals are available for \$5. These are available to the public, not just Senior Citizens. (Mealtime is noon; late arrivals may not be served.) You can reserve your lunch by calling by 11:15 AM, or further in advance if possible, to assist the cooks as they prepare the day's meals. Meals on Wheels are available for a \$4 donation for seniors over 60. Please contact the Senior Center for an application.

Maple Bars available locally! Connie King, the cook at the Senior Center, is making maple bars each day. The maple bars are available to the public, too, and only cost \$1 each. Availability is subject to quantity on hand. You can assure yourself of a good supply by pre-ordering them directly from Connie by calling the

Senior Center (503-429-3912) any week day, from 7:00 AM-3:00 PM. Please allow one day lead time for larger orders. The Center's front door opens at 9:00, but the side parking lot door opens at 7:00. Ah, sweet treats!

Thrift Store: Bargain prices can be found in Vernonia's Senior Center in their Thrift Store. The retail store is open Monday through Friday, from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM. The Thrift Store provides funds for the Senior Center's facility and its many activities. Donations can also be dropped off during those same hours, and donated clothes need to be clean and in good condition so they are "sales ready". We are offering half off during the first week of each month. Buy locally and support your local Senior Center.

For after hours drop-offs please contact Pauline 503-429-5810.

Special Days: On the last Wednesday of the month Wauna Credit Union will be serving ice cream. On the last Friday of the month we will serve birthday cake and ice cream to celebrate that month's birthdays.

Membership Dues: Another way to support Vernonia's Senior Center is to pay the \$15 annual membership dues. Checks may be mailed or dropped off at the Senior Center. Anyone 50 and older may join.

Questions? Call: (503) 429-3912