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Be a Piece of the Puzzle Reaping What Volunteers Sow—Did You Know?



By DeAnna Pearl

On Saturday November 3, the Vernonia Volunteer Celebration, sponsored in collaboration by the Vernonia Prevention Coalition (VPC) and the Vernonia Area Chamber of Commerce (VACC) was an evening of Did You Know?

For example, did you know the Meals on Wheels uses 8 volunteer drivers to serve over 2100 dinners last year!

This year's theme for the volunteer celebration was "Reaping What Volunteers Sow." The purpose was to celebrate the efforts made by groups and individuals whom volunteer and support the livability of Vernonia.

The partnership of the VPC and VACC was created to help invigorate the community to work together to support a safe and healthy community. The VPC's mission is to develop safe and healthy neighborhoods through collaborative planning, community action, policy advocacy and enforcement. But did you

know the mission of the VACC is to be the heartbeat of Vernonia area businesses, acting as a catalyst in bringing community, government and business together and creating a strong community of choice. Did you know there are over 262 business registered in Vernonia?

Throughout 2012, as many years in the past, the citizens of Vernonia have reaped many rewards of the countless hours volunteers put into serving community and its interests. Another example of did you know, Summer Meal Program volunteers spent over 1000 hours to serve over 4074 meals! Further, did you know four Pacific University student volunteers provided **960 hours** of mental health services to VSD 47J students in 2011/2012 school year. Great news! They are back helping again this year. Both of these activities directly serve area children in building resiliency: reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors. (Voice, Feb. 2010)

One of the greatest things we

can do as a community is to celebrate the capacity, whatever that may be, of individuals, groups, programs and agencies that service our community. Often times the individuals or groups listed above do not take the time to get out of the trenches and celebrate their efforts. Taking the time to celebrate the outputs and the following outcomes is important because it helps us recognize where we have been and how far we have come in realizing our mission. Some individuals are uncomfortable to even shed light on their work. However, sometimes the greater good is to give the receiving individuals an opportunity to say thanks. And we as volunteers need to let them. Did you know, The Vernonia Rural Fire Department has **27 volunteers** that have responded to request for help from **489 families!**

Did you know: We are **NOT** just a small community trying to put on a hotdog feed. We **ARE** a community recovering from a disaster to rebuild a school, health center, senior center, food bank, waste water treatment, etc. to provide a safe and healthy environment for our community and our youth. We are **NOW** sitting at the table with county, state, federal agencies and private philanthropy. We **CAN** no longer be inarticulate about our needs and expectations. We are **NOT VICTIMS** of our circumstances nor at the mercy of the kindness of others. We are **BECOMING** creators of our own destiny. Vernonian's and our

surrounding communities are reaping what our volunteer corps have sown for this year and beyond. We **ARE** developing safe and healthy communities where volunteerism is celebrated and positive outcomes are the norm.

If you would like to know more about the VPC or volunteer opportunities, please contact DeAnna Pearl, @ (503) 369-7370 or DeAnna@vernonia-or.gov. If you would like to know more about becoming a VACC member, meetings are the second Thursday of the month at 12:30 at the New Hong Kong or email vernoniachamberofcommerce@gmail.com.

2012 NEW VPC Board Member

Other Prevention Sector

Breane Mares Prevention/Intervention Specialist
Columbia County Mental Health

The CCMH Prevention/Intervention Specialist position is to provide evidence based and best practices service in regards to prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, gambling and suicide prevention. Breanne is a Applied Suicide Intervention Skill Trainer (ASIST) as well as a prevention partner for programs throughout Columbia County. She brings to the table a passion to support services where she has capacity.

The VPC welcomes Brianne and CCMH prevention services back to Vernonia and throughout Columbia County.

Breanne Mares
Prevention/Intervention Specialist
Columbia County Mental Health
briannem@ccmh1.com
(503) 396-7637

OSSOM

Operation Student Safety On the Move

Over 30 OSSOM students have registered at VHS for the 2012-2013 school year.

This year they are focusing on asking kids, "How do you stay Above the Influence?"

The AI program is about focusing on positive behaviors of teens and how they stay safe and healthy.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Are you feeling desperate, alone or hopeless? Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline a free, 24-hour hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Your call will be routed to the nearest crisis center to you.

Veterans Suicide
Prevention Hotline
1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press 1

Spirit of Christmas In Vernonia

Christmas Cookie Bake Off

Saturday
December 1st

\$2 per entry
Adult and Youth Categories

Competition Rules

- ☞ Cookies ONLY
- ☞ Adults and Youth judged Separately
- ☞ No late registrations
- ☞ 6 plated cookies per entry
- ☞ Participants may stay for judging
- ☞ Judge selections final!

Questions and Register:
DeAnna Pearl, Cookie Coord.
VPCpartnered@gmail.com
(503) 369-7370

Donations accepted for
Community
Giving Tree



Personal Hygiene
Supplies &
Toilet Paper

Location:

Vernonia Learning Center
12-2pm

12:00—Registration
1:00—Judging Begins
2:00—Award Ceremony

Cash Prizes Awarded
Youth judges needed