

“Hands On Development” Provides Structure for Developmentally Disabled

“Hands On Development” is a new program that is running during the month of July in Vernonia. The program is designed to assist developmentally disabled children during their summer break from school.

“Our mission is to provide summer camp activities for kids who need structure and routine in the summer,” says Eric Urban, one of two teachers that are helping with



Eric Urban teaches sign language during Hands On Development.

the program this year. Urban is the Special Education teacher for the Vernonia School District. The other teacher helping with the Hands On Development program is Diane Martin, an in-home autism consultant with NW Autism & Ability Services in Clatskanie, who has worked in the past as an elementary Life Skills Instructor for the Clatskanie School District.

“A lot of kids with disabilities rely on routine and highly structured activities and when they don’t have that, certain behaviors can come out,” said Urban during a recent visit to the program.

The day camp atmosphere at Hands

On Development provides just the types of activities that are needed, including social skills, story time, arts and crafts, and play time. The program meets on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:00 to 3:00 PM after the Summer Meals Program at the Grace Family Fellowship Church. Children must attend with an adult to take part in the program.

“We’re really pleased that we’ve been

able to dovetail our program onto the Summer Meals Program,” says Urban. “That has been a fantastic resource for us, with lunch, and they are also providing an afternoon snack for us as well. And the church has just been great in letting us use their space and their yard for play time; they have

really made it possible for this to happen.”

Jeana Gump, the mother of a developmentally disabled child, was the originator of the idea for a summer camp type program. “Every summer with Savannah was getting harder and harder,” explains Gump, about her motivation for starting the program. “By the end of last summer I was thinking that we were going to have to move away from Vernonia and find a place that had a year round school for her. As soon the school year ended she would lose her structure and just fall apart. But we didn’t want to leave Vernonia; we love it here.”

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Vernonia Baseball Plays at State Tournament

The Vernonia Senior National Boys baseball team competed in the Junior Baseball Organization (J.B.O.) state tournament on July 11th-14th in Corvallis at Williams Field.

The boys won their opening game of the tournament, defeating McKay 13-5. The boys lost their next game, going down to Colton 5-4 in the bottom of the seventh inning, in what Vernonia head coach Joe Walters said was the team’s best game of the year. The Vernonia boys were knocked out from the double elimination tournament the following day after a 10-5 loss to Barlow. Vernonia finished the tournament in tenth place; the entire J.B.O. Program has a total of eighty teams competing in Oregon.

The Vernonia boys, led by head coach Walters and assistant coach Eli Everett, qualified for the trip to state after previously winning the Washington County tournament. The boys finished their regular season with a 12-2 record and then swept their three games at the county tournament to earn their spot at state.

Walters has built a team of talented young players. Five of his players will be freshman at Vernonia High School next year and Walters hopes his players will help bring success to the high school program in the coming years.

Walters says he was just able to piece together enough play-



Bailey Morrison had a great season pitching for the Vernonia Senior National team.

ers this year, eleven, from small town Vernonia, to compete in the organized league. (Walters actually had to get a waiver from the league because he is supposed to have twelve players) It’s a mix of players who have several years of experience playing baseball (Jake Butcher, Hayden Cieloha, Bailey Morrison, Brett Elliot are team leaders), to two players (Nick Bennett and Noah Ryland) who had never played the game of baseball before this year. One player, Tristen Bevill is Walters nephew from Reedville and comes out to Vernonia to play. Orion Hopkins is a sixth grader who was brought up a level to fill out Walters’s roster.

J.B.O. provides an opportunity for Oregon youth from ages 9-16 to participate in an organized

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Get Ready for Echoing Evergreen Day Camp!

It’s time once again for Vernonia to get ready for Echoing Evergreen Day Camp.

Camp will be held on August 5th through the 9th at Vernonia’s Airport Park. Camp starts at 9:30 AM and ends at 3:00 PM each day of the week. Volunteers and teens will set up camp on Sunday evening, August 4th at 7:00 PM and will stay to enjoy smores and a campfire.

Echoing Evergreen Day Camp is organized by the Vernonia Boosters and provides a day camp experience for all local children. It is run completely by volunteer adults and students. Middle school and high school students volunteer as camp councilors and help with activities throughout the week.

Camp registration forms are available at Vernonia Sentry Market and Black Bear Coffee Shop.



Anyone interested in being a volunteer at camp please contact Katie Poetter at 503-799-8946.

Echoing Evergreens Camp is looking for donations of craft supplies to help with camp this year including: small Kleenex boxes,

water bottles, small plastic or cardboard containers, egg cartons, and any other craft supplies you would like to donate. Any contribution is greatly appreciated since this is an all volunteer camp.