

Creature Comforts ~ For the Holidays

By Michal Smith

Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas to all!

We're delighted to be this year's hub for Mike's Christmas Tree Farm fresh cut Christmas trees and fresh wreaths! As many of you know the trees are beautiful and full and most important-local. All tree prices are the same here or there and we will be offering free hot chocolate on the weekends 'til Christmas.

Of equal importance is our local Bailey's Pantry; a living tribute to Bailey, a golden retriever/lab mix, now residing in heaven and once owned by

Vernonia's own Carol Davis. Bailey was such a special dog in her life that after his passing she created an extension of the Vernonia Cares Food Bank called "Bailey's Pantry" as a tribute to him but also as an emergency food assistance resource for families in need. Without the pantry, many needy families would likely share their "people food" with their pet(s) to keep all the family members fed. This month will be our second annual Paper Puppy and Kitten sale to help fund the shelves of Vernonia Cares Food Bank with quality pet food. Please remember the pets in need in our area and donate to Bailey's Pantry

either directly to the Vernonia Cares Food Bank/Bailey's Pantry or through Creatures pet store this month. Our paper puppy or kitten will sell for only \$1.00. Your name (or name of your choice) will be written on the animal you choose and be displayed on our windows throughout the holiday season. Our goal will be to raise at least \$425 by December 31 to present to Bailey's Pantry to buy quality dog and cat food.

New in the store this month is the *Blue Buffalo* Naturally Fresh cat litter. The litter is made of ground walnut shells resembling coffee grounds, is clumping, and knocks out odor surprisingly well!

Diamond Naturals Grain Free Dog Food in 4 flavor varieties; *No Thrush*, the first ever DRY thrush fighting formula for goat and horses; heated outdoor pet pads by *Aspen Pet* for those special barn pets; enzyme burning *Specialty Pet Candles* for the home and so much more! For more deals, pet and product information be sure to "like" our Facebook page (Creatures Pet shop). Holiday hours will vary throughout the month to better accommodate our customers please inquire in person or call 503-429-pets (7387); open 7 days a week!

WOEC Current: Santa Photos and Energy Assistance

By Sarah Rossi

Santa Claus will be visiting West Oregon Electric Cooperative to help raise funds for our "Care to Share" energy assistance program. He will be available for keepsake photographs on December 12th, from 3 pm to 7 pm, 13th from 2 pm to 6 pm and the 14th from 10am to 2pm at the WOEC office.

All proceeds will go to help families in the West Oregon Electric Co-op community. These special photographs make great gifts! Individual, family, and group photos all for the same low cost! Also, due to a generous donation by Five Star Builders the first 50 participants for the Santa Photos fundraiser will receive a \$5 credit towards their photo purchases. (Credit does not apply to the sitting fee)

Prices:

- Sitting fee per group \$5
- (Includes one free photo in card w/envelope)
- Additional copies in card w/envelope \$2
- Additional 4x6 copies (no card) \$1
- Photo packages with 8x10, 5x7, & wallet photos also available for purchase. Great package prices of \$5, \$10, or \$15.

Energy Assistance is available for WOEC members in need. There will be more West Oregon Electric Cooperative families receiving energy assistance this winter due to a large donation (\$5,000) from CoBank to our Care to Share program. Through a wonderful

new program "CoBank Sharing Success," WOEC was able to receive matching funds for our \$5,000 donation to the energy assistance program for our members. CoBank's Sharing Success program created a charitable fund designed to benefit cooperatives and charitable groups they support throughout rural America, so when West Oregon Electric signed up to



be a member of CoBank we became eligible for this fantastic new program. Leigh Taylor with CoBank was pleased to present a "big check" to WOEC to help local families with energy assistance. WOEC works hard to raise money to help WOEC members in need, and this donation ensures there will be \$10,000 available this winter.

If you find yourself in a difficult situation and are unable to pay your electric bill, please call the WOEC office before you get disconnected for non-payment to prevent having to pay additional fees. We would like to help by making payment arrangements with you, and discussing options for energy assistance.

Oregon Heat, St. Vincent De Paul, and WOEC's Care to Share energy assistance funds are available to qualifying members. If you are in need of assistance paying your electric bill, please call Mary who administers these funds at 503-366-8014.

If you are on a fixed or limited income the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) may be able to help. LIEAP funds are used to help pay electric, oil, wood, natural gas or propane heating bills. Eligibility is based on the number of people and total gross income within a household. To qualify, a household must meet federal income guidelines. A list of utilities, state and local social service agencies and community and charitable organizations and other resources are on the Department of Energy's web site at www.oregon.gov/energy, or call 1-800-221-8035.

To learn more about LIEAP or to schedule an appointment, call one of these numbers:
 Columbia County- -----503-397-4951
 Clatsop County-----503-325-1400
 Washington County----503-648-6646
 Yamhill County-----503-472-0457

Handgun Found in City Hall Restroom

On November 22, 2013 a firearm was found in the outer public restroom at City Hall. The firearm was subsequently secured by Vernonia Police Department staff. Due to safety concerns, City Hall was closed while the VPD attempted to identify an owner and determine whether or not an actual

threat to City Hall or staff existed.

Later in the day the owner of the firearm was identified and it was determined that the incident was accidental and there was no threat. The firearm was being held at the Vernonia Police Department until reports were complete.

Vernonia's Voice is published on the 1st and 3rd Thursday. Our next issue will be December 19th.

TOO BUSY?

Call your LOCAL bookkeeper

Edi Sheldon 503-429-1819

edisheldon@gmail.com

Licensed tax consultant • Full service payroll
 Personal & small business bookkeeping • QuickBooks assistance
 CORPS, S-CORPS, LLC, Partnerships • Personal one-on-one service

LTC #29629 - Oregon licensed tax consultant
 RTRP #P00448199 - designated as a registered tax return preparer by the Internal Revenue Service
 The IRS does not endorse any particular individual tax return preparer. For more information on tax return preparers, go to www.IRS.gov.

Vernonia Cares Food Bank
 PO Box 126, 627 Adams Avenue
 Vernonia OR 97064
 November/December 2013

Dear Friends,

People are preparing for the holidays. However, this year, many people will not be able to celebrate because they are faced with serious economic problems. Some have lost jobs, others cannot find employment. Some are restricted by a budget which cannot cover their basic living expenses. There are those in our community who have lost their homes. Grocery budgets are depleted. It's hard to believe that people in America go to bed hungry, but it is true. Food pantries like Vernonia Cares provide emergency groceries to help out. As the weather blows colder, the need for nutritious food grows higher.

For twenty eight years, Vernonia Cares Food Bank seeks to help alleviate hunger and it's root causes in the Vernonia area. Twenty-seven percent of our clients are children; senior citizens comprise another sixteen percent. We assist an average of 414 people per month. We depend upon donations of food and money to supply groceries and to keep our doors open for those who need us the most. The United Way of Columbia County provides about one-third of our budget, with volunteers lending support through fundraisers to help meet the other two-thirds of our expenses. We receive no government financial support.

Would you consider a donation to assist us? We are aware that the current economy has stressed everyone's budget. A gift of any amount helps us. Please complete the information slip below, and place it with your donation into the envelope you'll find with this letter. We appreciate donations to our general fund which keeps our pantry open year round. A second option is to designate your gift towards a special holiday food box. It contains the basic groceries for a Christmas meal, including a turkey. Or, your gifts may be given in honor of or in memory of those you designate. Their names will be published in The Vernonia Voice in the December or January issue. If you want a tax-deductible receipt, it will be provided, if you designate that request on the slip. Your generous contribution will allow us to continue to be your hands extended to the hungry who reside in and around Vernonia.

Thankfully, Sandy Welch, Director

Enclosed is my donation to Vernonia Cares Food Bank. (Please print clearly)

My Name _____

Street _____

City, State and Zip _____

Please choose ONE:

Designate this gift towards the General Fund OR

The Holiday Box Fund (estimated cost is \$30) OR

Given in memory of _____

Given in honor of _____

Please send acknowledgment to (name and address) _____

I would like a tax deductible receipt mailed to me.

Vernonia Cares Food Bank

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EIN#93-0901910