

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

The children and teens of today are our hope for tomorrow. It is important for us as parents, caring adults and communities to help set young people on the path for a healthy future and support them as they work to create positive change. April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and this year's campaign is focused on youth. Youth in our county experience sexual violence at a higher rate than youth elsewhere in the state. In 2013, 10% of Columbia County teens reported being sexually assaulted in a survey by the Oregon Health Authority. This April, the campaign, It's time...to talk about it! Your voice. Our future. Prevent Sexual Violence, encourages individuals and communities to support healthy sexual development.

Young people face many challenges during adolescence. Stereotypes and negative messages in the media do not make the process any easier. By learning and talking about healthy sexuality, adults are able to support the teens in their lives. It is time for adults and

communities to be a resource to teens so they learn and grow.

How can we support teens during this time of change and discovery? Young people need age-appropriate information about healthy sexuality and relationships from trusted adults. The first step is to start an open dialogue. Ask questions and, most importantly, listen. We can all play a role in modeling healthy behaviors, promoting positive skills, and creating safe environments. It is important to empower the voices of youth and challenge negative, unhealthy messages.

It's okay if you do not have all the answers. It is more important to welcome questions and learn together. SAFE of Columbia County offers a variety of resources to help prevent and respond to sexual assault, www.safeofcolumbiacounty.org.

To create a vision for a future without sexual violence, every voice can play a role in a healthier, safer tomorrow for all.

You can use your voice to start the conversation. You can support the voices of young people, and together we can amplify our voices for a healthy future. It's time...to talk about it!

United Way of Columbia County

Another campaign year has come to a close. The United Way continues to be impacted by the economic climate in our area, including the fact that over 73% of our workforce commutes out of area to work, as well as changes in annual company campaigns and corporate foundation guidelines. At campaign end this year the United Way is 12% below the amount raised last year.

The United Way awarded \$129,391 to local organizations in 2014. Among the recipients were several Community Action Team programs for a total of \$32,684; Columbia Community Mental Health-\$5,811; Columbia Pacific Food Bank-\$31,109; SAFE of Columbia County-\$6,846; and Vernonia Cares-\$16,052.

To assure that for this year-two funding cycle there would be the same allocatable dollars available for partner agencies as was awarded last year, the United Way Board reduced personnel costs and operating budget. The Board then made a decision to withdraw funds from the reserve account to help cover operating expenses. They understand that demand for services continues to rise and funding is at a critical level for many of these programs. The borrowing of funds from the reserve account means they will all have to work even harder in the upcoming year to increase support for United Way and their efforts to help change lives in Columbia County.

Some programs/agencies were not eligible for funding as they did not apply in year one. As always donor designations are paid as directed. Eligible organization/programs received at least the same amount of allocated funds as last year. Any reductions in funds are due to lower donor designations. Partnership with United Way of Columbia County is not an entitlement to funding. The good news is that the total of allocated funds is exactly the same as was disbursed in 2013.

It is important to remember funds must be raised locally and they stay local to provide services to the residents of Columbia

County. It is never too late to donate: www.unitedwayofcolumbiacounty.com

The United Way of Columbia County would like to thank everyone in their community for their continued support of United Way in their mission, "To increase the organized capacity of people to help one another." The Board also recognizes and appreciates each Community Partner's accomplishments and commitment to change lives in Columbia County.

United Way Board of Directors invites the community to help them celebrate their 50th Anniversary of working for the common good of the residents of Columbia County. Watch for the United Way float in community parades and join them July 26, 2014 in Clatskanie City Park at the Rhythm on the River Blues Benefit. More information www.rhythmtheriverblues.com

Get all your
Garden Essentials
at the 1st Annual
**Vernonia Community Garden
Fair & Plant Sale**
May 10th 9am-4pm
at the Vernonia School Commons
1,000 Tomato Plants,
vegie & flower starts plus
many gifts for Mother's Day
Interested in being a vendor?
Contact Penny Costley
503-429-0196

Help with Groceries

Oregon Food Bank received increased USDA-TEFAP Eligibility guidelines which allow more help for households with groceries. The new gross income guideline for a one-person household is \$1,799 with \$626 for each additional member. "This is good news for people who need grocery help," states local food bank director Sandy Welch. "We hope more people will utilize the assistance we offer at Vernonia Cares," she concludes.

Vernonia Cares Food Bank (VCFB), located at 627 Adams Avenue, is open Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM. Any questions may be answered by calling the food bank's phone, 503-429-1414. If not open, leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Registration requires about ten minutes, as clients present proof of address and list how many people are in their household. They sign a document stating they fall within the target income eligibility guidelines. The goal of VCFB is to provide, on a monthly basis, three days' worth of emergency groceries. "Every item we can provide is one less item families have to purchase," encourages director Sandy Welch. "We want to help!"

The Birk
"it's not that far"

APRIL 4TH... CARRIED AWAY
APRIL 5TH... BRITNEE KELLOGG
APRIL 11TH... JUST PEOPLE
APRIL 12TH... CHAMPIONSHIP
APRIL 13TH... GUITAR SHORTY
APRIL 18TH... COUNTRYSIDE RIDE
APRIL 19TH... LEWI LONGMIRE
APRIL 25TH... THE SMOKING FLOWERS
APRIL 26TH... THE STACY JONES BAND
MAY 3RD... KEVIN SELFE & THE TORNADO
MAY 10/11TH... ROGUE RIVER BAND
MAY 14TH... RICK ESTRIN & THE NIGHTCATS
MAY 17/18TH... CALICO THE BAND
MAY 22ND... FREEWAY REVIVAL
MAY 23/24TH... SUGARAY RAYFORD

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NOTICE OF BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

A public meeting of the Budget Committee of the City of Vernonia, Columbia County, State of Oregon, to discuss the budget for the fiscal year July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015, will be held at Vernonia Learning Center

939 Bridge St, Vernonia OR 97064. The meeting will take place on April 18th at 6pm

The purpose of the meeting is to receive the budget message, the Budget Document and to establish the agenda for future meetings. No deliberation will take place at this meeting.

An additional, separate meeting of the Budget Committee will be held to take public comment. Any person may appear at that meeting to discuss to proposed programs with the Budget Committee.

The meeting for public comment will be on:

Date: April 23, 2014 Time: 6:00 pm Location: Vernonia Learning Center

A copy of the budget document may be inspected or obtained on or after April 21st, 2013 at City Hall

1001 Bridge St, between the hours of 9am - 5pm Monday - Friday