

## Scout Cabin Gets New Finish Coat

Members of the Friend of the Scout Cabin, local Boy Scouts and Vernonia Pride made short work of applying a new coat of finish to the Vernonia Scout Cabin, a local landmark, on Thursday August 14<sup>th</sup>. All the volunteers pitched in and finished the job in just a few short hours, making sure the building looks good for the next few years.



## Superintendent Explains K-2 Blended Classes *continued from front page*

along with Miller. Miller noted that by adding a fifth teacher class sizes have been reduced from thirty-one students to twenty-three students. "That is a significant difference and played heavily into our decision making," said Miller.

Miller told the parents that there were several additional factors involved in the decision. Miller stated that in each of the last six to seven school years there has been a need to blend different grades as a reaction to class sizes. "By moving to a consolidated K-2 program we can eliminate the need for switching those blended classes every year." Miller noted that the plan, in most cases, would call for a student to have the same teacher for all three years in the blended program.

Miller told the audience that the District has a positive history of blending classes. Most recently they have used a blend model for K-1 students with good results. "It worked," said Miller. "Teachers found ways to make it effective and address the variety of student needs and parents were not concerned because they saw it in action." Miller also pointed to the highly successful Mist School, which operates as part of the Vernonia School District and blends approximately twenty-five K-5 students in a single classroom.

Miller explained that the school has already instituted a blended reading program for grades K-2 where students are assessed to determine at what level

they are reading and then grouped so they are working with a teacher on skills that are appropriate for each student's developmental level. "In terms of addressing individual needs this consistent program actually allows us to be more focused on individual skills that students need," said Miller. Miller pointed out that there is always a wide range in abilities, knowledge and comprehension levels in any straight grade level class.

Miller told the audience that students, in addition to working in ability level groups for reading, will also be assessed and grouped for math instruction. He explained that each student will have a homeroom teacher who will also teach science and social studies and other projects but that students could have different teachers for reading and math. Miller said that the homeroom class learning will be integrated, so students in all three grades would learn the same subject matter but the expectation of final product work would be different for each grade level.

Miller noted other factors that were involved in the decision to blend classrooms included consistency in instruction by teachers,

## Head Start Recruiting Preschoolers Now for Fall

Head Start, a federally funded pre-school program, is seeking students for the 2014-2015 school year. Applications are being taken from all three and four year olds in Columbia County. Recruitment for fall enrollment is now in progress. If parents are interested in enrollment information they are urged to phone immediately.

Perspective students must be three or four years old by September 1, 2014. Children must be from limited income households or have a disability and/or special needs to qualify.

Head Start incorporates a total family program that includes nutrition, education, medical and dental services for the enrolled child and home visitations. USDA approved meals are served. Training on various subjects and on the job training is offered to all enrolled families. Transportation is not available.

The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) and the State

of Oregon prohibit discrimination in all USDA programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability.

The Vernonia Center is located at 500 California Avenue next to the Blue Heron Hollow Apartment complex. Families who live in the Mist, Birkenfeld and Vernonia areas may phone (503) 429-9243 or 503-369-7249 for more information.

The Clatskanie/Rainier Center is located behind the high school in Clatskanie. Families in the Clatskanie, Quincy, Westport, Knappa, Rainier and Goble areas may phone (503) 728-2940 for more information.

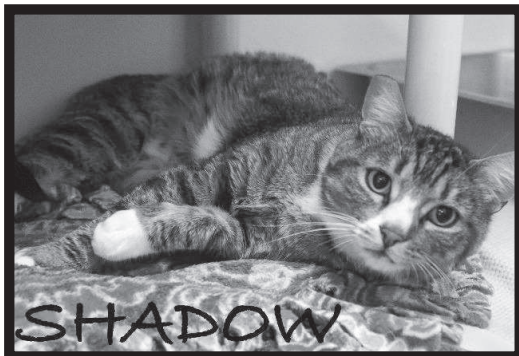
Students in the St. Helens area attend class at the center on Columbia Blvd. next to McBride School. Families may contact (503) 397-4114 for more information.

Head Start is an agency of Community Action Team, Inc., serving Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties.

which is a natural result of a teaching team working together in this format. Miller also noted an expansion of student's peer groups as being a benefit of blended classrooms.

Overall, about six parents expressed concerns or asked questions about the new classroom format. At least three parents spoke in favor of the blended classrooms. At the end of the discussion several audience members thanked Miller for his explanations and the Board for allowing the discussion to go on for so long. Several audience members said they still had concerns about the program. Board Chair Langmaid and Miller both thanked the audience for being in attendance and for making their concerns known. "We need this type of support and concern from all parents," said Miller. "It's a tough job we have to educate our children and it's a partnership when it's done best."

### Columbia Humane Society Featured Pet



Shadow is a cattery favorite. He is about four years old, is very friendly and gets along with everyone really well. He was recently brought back from a home visit because he was a little shyer than what the people were looking for. Give him some time and let him settle in and he will show

you what a great cat he is. If you have any questions about him please don't hesitate to call 503-397-4353 or email [animalwelfare@columbiahumane.org](mailto:animalwelfare@columbiahumane.org).

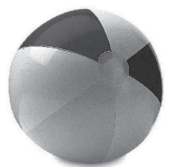
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Email: [animalwelfare@columbiahumane.org](mailto:animalwelfare@columbiahumane.org)  
Phone: 503-397-4353

### Are you a senior citizen? Do you need assistance?

Karen Miller with Community Action Team is available for consultation for senior services in the Vernonia area. Help is also available for energy assistance. 503-366-6581

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