

Where Are They Now: Gloria Sanchez *continued from front page*

adjust. It actually changed me a lot. I had to meet different people from different cultures and be OK with it. It was different and sometimes it's good to do something different. It helped me to meet people and understand the world better."

Sanchez says she had hoped to improve her English when she came to the United States for her exchange year, and accomplished that goal. "I really wanted to learn English," she says. "I think it changed my older brother and he had a very good and nice experience. So I did it, probably without thinking about it too much. The main thing was to learn English. Everything else just came along with it. I really wasn't too aware of what it would be like, but I guess that was the best part of my trip."

Sanchez says her trip abroad helped instill a love of travel, which she

still enjoys. "I love to travel and I think that was part of it," says Sanchez. "I'm still a traveler now and I love to learn and see other places."

Sanchez notes that it was hard to be an exchange student before the internet and texting. "There wasn't the same technology we have now, so I couldn't talk to my parents every day," she said. "It was hard but it was OK. And after that I could do everything by myself. It helped me a lot in my studies later. When I went to university I could take care of myself."

After graduating from VHS, Sanchez returned to the winter season in Chile in the southern hemisphere, and finished her studies so she could pass her exams. She was accepted into the University of Concepción in Concepción, Chile, where she studied medicine.

Sanchez says after finishing her

initial studies she chose to begin working in her field, taking a post for the Chilean government in a remote area of Patagonia, in the very south of Chile. She spent four years in Puerto Natales practicing general medicine. "It is very cold there and it was kind of rough because it is very isolated and remote," she says. "It is very beautiful, with a lot of glaciers. It has a lot of tourists because it is near Torres de Paine, which is a national park."

Sanchez says she returned north to the capital city of Santiago to earn her major degree, studying to become a pediatrician. She spent three years in Santiago studying and three more years there working. While there, she married another doctor she had met in Puerto Natales, and later divorced; she does not have any children.

She has since returned to her

hometown of Puerto Varas where she now works in pediatric nutrition and also in the ICU at a hospital.

"Right now I am by myself," says Sanchez. "I deal with a lot of children each day and I love them. For my lifestyle it is good. I have dogs and my family. I have friends with children. I like to travel."

Sanchez says she has been back to visit the United States often, but this is her first return trip to Vernonia. "My younger brother lives and works in Washington, D.C. where he is studying for his Doctorate in Economy, so I have been to visit him several times."

Sanchez says her year in Vernonia definitely had an impact on her and how her life has taken shape. "It was a very nice year for me and it made me see the world differently," she says. "I like to go everywhere. I'm a traveler."

Plans for Dog Park in Vernonia Move Forward *continued from front page*

"Based on what people have been telling us about what they would like the park to be, and in order to be good neighbors to surrounding property owners, we looked at several spots we thought would work best, and decided on the Ivy Street location," says Smith. "The site is flat and shady and has grass growing on it, has available parking, and will require the least amount of work to create a secure dog park area. It just feels like a park."

Smith and Vaughn will voluntarily raise money to construct the initial park, and plan to create a "Friends" group that will help maintain it.

Smith and Vaughn coordinated the first Pet Fair last year, which was a huge success, raising \$1,200 for Bailey's Pantry, which provides pet food to those in need in the community through the Vernonia Cares

food bank.

"The Pet Fair started as a way to let more people in the community know there was a pet store here in town and then it grew from there as a way to benefit the greater need in Vernonia," says Smith. "When we started hearing the need at that event for a place for people to play with their dogs, and the opportunity was there for a second Pet Fair, we thought we could have it benefit the Dog Park idea. People have been really excited to help grow the fair and it was just so successful last year and there was really some wonderful camaraderie that came from it. To combine the two just made sense and give folks a real tangible reason to come out and support this."

The Pet Fair will be expanded this year with twice as many vendors and will include Nehalem BBQ,

Damsels in Defense, a bake sale by Vernonia's Oregon High School Equestrian Team (OHSET), pony rides, custom dog blankets, nail trimming by Happy Tails Pet Grooming, dog massage by local Reiki master Jeff Dolan, and pet photography by Christy Murphy. The Oregon Humane Society will be on hand with some pets available for adoption, as will Displaced Pets Rescue. The Humane Society will also be accepting dog license applications. There is no charge for vendors, but they are asked to make a donation from their profits to the Dog Park.

In addition there are plans for a sidewalk pet parade, several raffle baskets and items, and a table of used donated items available for retail purchase, with all proceeds going directly to the Dog Park; donations of clean items in good condition are being accepted.

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