

Old Grads Picnic “A Good Time”

By Bob New

The Vernonia “Old Grads, Old Timers, Oregon-American” picnic was held on Sunday, August 20, 2017 at Anderson Park. Numbers were down this year and we attributed this to the occurrence of the eclipse.

Those that were there had a good time,



was the oldest. So she asked what month was the birthday of each. Both were born in April. Hmm. So then she asked what day they were born on. It turned out Ed Culbertson was born SIX DAYS before Ben Soejima so Ed got the money in the envelope. They both had a good laugh over that. Oldest female grad was Phyllis New Larson of VHS 1944. Person traveling

I’m sure. I know I did.

The usual happy groups could be seen catching up and conversing. There was a terrific deal on hot dogs, chips and a soda for only \$3.

DeDe Thompson Webb did a great job of announcing winners of oldest female grad, oldest male grad and person who came the longest distance to be at the picnic. For the men? Ed Culbertson and Ben Soejima are both members of VHS 1942. So, to solve the dilemma, DeDe came up with a plan: Which of these gentlemen

greatest distance to be at the picnic? Could be wrong but I think it was Jan Pearson Coxey of Washington, DC.

Sadly, Ralph Keasey of VHS 1946 died the night before the picnic.

The park was filled with motor homes and campers in tents. I saw several bicyclists that were not Vernonians so obviously the old SP&S track into Vernonia, now used as Banks-Vernonia Linear Trail, is getting a fair amount of use.

WOEC Holds Annual Meeting

West Oregon Electric Cooperative (WOEC) held its Annual Meeting on August 19, 2017 at the Vernonia Schools Commons.

During the meeting members elected Jim Buxton as District 3 representative from Vernonia and Keasey to the Board of Directors and Larry Heesacker was elected as District 7 representative for Manning, Hagg Lake and Yamhill County.

Board President Robert Van Natta addressed the members and mentioned an upcoming increase in cost to purchase power from Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) that will be passed on to members in the form of a rate increase.

Finance Manager Dan Huggett told the members the co-op received approximately \$800,000 from FEMA in this fiscal year for reimbursements for expenses from damages in 2015. Huggett reviewed the Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2016. He said storms in 2017 cost the co-op about \$800,000 in repairs. Huggett discussed the Oregon Power Up program and reminded members that they need to

sign up for the program to round up and help other members who are having difficulty paying their bill. Huggett said the co-op has installed a new phone system that will provide 23 voice lines instead of 6 lines to take calls after hours. He also reminded members of the Budget Billing option and about the Smart Hub system that offers other payment options.

Members asked about the recent maintenance outage in the Chapman area that lasted for 10 hours for four days, and asked why members were not better informed about the pending planned outage. Members were told that phone calls were made to all affected members but no mailing was done.

Operations Manager Don Rose told the members about recent projects to increase reliability including replacing a bad section of underground wire on Hayward Road, replacing overhead line going over the tunnel on Highway 26 with underground line, upgrading the Necanicum Substation and the maintenance at the Chapman and Mist substations.

General Manager Bob Perry spoke briefly and introduced guest speaker State Representative Brad Witt.

Witt addressed his concerns about what he called the rural vs. urban divide in Oregon, and around the country, and said, in his opinion, this is a main problem for Oregon. He said he and others at the state legislature are attempting to define the middle ground and find ways to agree.

Following the conclusion of the meeting, members enjoyed a BBQ lunch provided by Terrel’s BBQ and entertainment by the musical band Timberbound, who performed songs by Woody Guthrie written when he was employed by the BPA, along with other songs about the Vernonia region.

Correction

In our August 17 issue in an article about the Jamboree Auto Show we incorrectly identified the person on the right in this photo as Louis Lardy. It is actually Tommy Saenz, of Tommy’s Window Tinting which is one of the show’s sponsors. *Vernonia’s Voice* regrets this error.



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