

## Columbia Humane Society is Surviving Under New Arrangement

*Director Lisa Beggio is making adjustments since Columbia County ended their contract with the shelter at the start of the year*

By Scott Laird

A recent change in the Columbia Humane Society's (CHS) relationship with Columbia County has left staff at CHS shorthanded and the animals they care for stuck in the middle.

In January of 2018 CHS, located at 2084 Oregon Street in St. Helens, began operating under a new, restricted budget after the Columbia County Commissioners canceled a contract with CHS to manage the welfare of stray, neglected, and abused dogs that have been taken into custody by the County's Animal Control Division.

The Humane Society and Columbia County's Animal Control, under the direction of the Sheriff's Office, are two completely separate entities, although they have shared a facility and have in the past worked in partnership to care for animals within the County.

The County Animal Control is responsible for lost, found, and neglected animals, and investigates complaints from citizens. In certain instances they may remove and take possession of an animal and shelter it. During the last four years Columbia County has had a contract with CHS to provide medical care, food, evaluations and enrichment programs, and shelter to the County's animals until they could be reconnected with their owners; if the owners did not reclaim them, CHS would then work to find them a new home.

According to Columbia County the contract with CHS was terminated after a review last year by the Columbia County Sheriff's Office. CHS's duties to care for impounded dogs are now being managed by the Sheriff's Office and Ani-



Lisa Beggio is the Executive Director of Columbia Humane Society

mal Control staff.

CHS, established in 1985, helps find new homes for displaced, surrendered, and neglected animals. They are a no-kill animal shelter meaning no animal is euthanized for spending too much time in the shelter or a lack of space; dogs often live at the shelter for many months. In certain situations dangerous or sick animals may need to be euthanized. They also promote awareness for spay and neuter programs to humanely control animal populations. CHS is a non-profit organization that relies solely on income from donors, small grants, fundraising events, and fees for their operations.

Not only does CHS help Columbia County dogs, they actively take dogs from other shelters around the country, and even from around the world. Dogs that have run out of time are often transported to CHS from shelters in California. CHS has also helped find homes for dogs that were lost or abandoned during natural disasters; they re-homed several dogs following Hurricane Harvey in Houston last year. CHS also actively participates

*continued on page 3*

## St. Patrick's Day Parade! Saturday, March 17 at 1:30 pm



Everyone is welcome  
Starts at  
Pat & Darlene Knight's house  
Bridge Street & State Avenue

## Creatures Has a New Owner

*Vernonia's pet supply store still has the products you and your best friends need*

Regular customers of Creatures Pet Store at 998 Bridge Street in Vernonia may have noticed a recent change. Longtime owner Michal Smith has sold the business to new owner Beth Smith, who took over at the start of the new year.

While Michal and Beth share the same last name, they are not related. Michal has moved to Madras, Oregon where she has opened a new Creatures pet store.

Besides a new owner, Beth Smith says not much will be changing at Creatures.

"The brands of feed we sell will not be changing," says Smith. "Michal built up a good business and people like it the way it is. I will be increasing the number of birds and small animals we have, because kids really like to come in and see pets in the pet store. I really just plan to build onto what Michal started."

Smith says she talks to former owner Michal Smith regularly to ask questions, or share information. "She is still helping me get settled in," says Smith. "I'm the kind of person that learns by doing, but I still have ques-



New owner of Creatures Pet Store, Beth Smith

tions about products or brands that she helps me with."

Smith has a lot of experience working in retail, which should come in handy in running her own retail business. She has worked in the restaurant business and spent numerous years working at Fred Meyer in Portland where she ran departments in the Garden Center, apparel, and candy. She also spent the past year working at Vernonia Hardware before jumping in and purchasing Creatures.

*continued on page 9*

## Logger Boys Heading to Pendleton for Third Straight Year

*Vernonia will face league rival Knappa in first round on March 1*

The Vernonia Loggers boys basketball team are heading to the OSAA U.S. Bank/Les Schwab Tires 2A State Championship in Pendleton on March 1-3. The Loggers earned the trip after defeating the Monroe Dragons 60-46 on Saturday, February 24 in the round of 16 in the State Playoffs.

The Loggers entered the playoffs as the #11 seed and upset the #6 seeded Dragons on the Dragons' home court. "We really played our best game of the season against Monroe," said head coach David Weller. "They followed our game plan exactly as scripted. I've coached about 200 games now

and this stands out as one of the top one or two games where the team put in the practice, followed the plan we discussed, and then went out and executed it."

Senior Clay Sullivan led the Loggers with 25 points. Junior Jake Handegard chipped in 16, and senior Andrew Vasquez added 10. "This was Clay's fourth state play-in game, with a trip to Pendleton on the line," said Weller. "I told him he is the veteran on this team, and he should know what to expect. I told him to go out and do what he is capable of, and he did. He played in control and didn't force anything. He showed real leadership."

Vernonia finished third in the Northwest League Playoffs after falling to Columbia Christian 48-37 and

then defeating Nestucca 51-47 to secure the final spot in the State Playoffs.

The State Tournament bracket has a bit of an unusual twist as #2 seed Columbia Christian, #3 seed Knappa and #11 seed Vernonia, three Northwest League rivals, are all in the same half of the bracket. The Loggers will face Knappa in the first round on Thursday, March 1 and could potentially face Columbia Christian the next day, depending on the results of both teams' games. The Loggers lost to Knappa twice this season, 69-48 on December 14 and 61-48 on January 25. The Loggers have lost to Columbia Christian three times, 58-42 on January 9, 78-63 on January 30, and in the League Playoffs.

"I love it," said Weller when

*continued on page 10*

inside

7 into the inferno

10 vhs winter sports

15 odot bridge project

