



Community school meeting

by Jeneile Wiggins

Monday afternoon, December 4, a meeting was held at the American Legion to discuss the Community School Concept and whether or not such a program could be successful in the Vernonia area. The guest speakers were Sue Horton, who is employed by the State Department of Education, and Bob Stuart, director of the very successful Community Schools program in Molalla, Oregon.

The program began with an explanation of the Community Schools philosophy. The basic concept is to keep the schools open and in use after school hours. Students enter the school buildings at 8 a.m. and leave at 3 p.m. Ms. Horton explained that after school hours equipment and facilities just aren't being effectively utilized. Under a Community Schools program the building would be kept open and managed by a Community Coordinator thus allowing local residents to use the cafeteria, machine shops, sewing rooms, gyms and whatever other space is available.

The Community Schools concept is meant to strengthen the existing school program through greater involvement and to utilize available community resources. Molalla, Oregon is a good example of a Community School in action. Schools there are kept open 24 hours a day and community participation in the various programs is excellent. Director Bob Stuart said that the first important step to a Community School is to hire a responsible coordinator who will get acquainted with the community and establish its needs. He stressed this to be a crucial step and time is needed to successfully evaluate what the true community needs are. Once recognized, the Coordinator can begin to implement programs to meet these needs. June Wilson, Chairperson for the Vernonia Recreation Council suggested that education classes for adults and an intramurals program for youths would begin to meet this communities needs.

Director Stuart felt that Vernonia and Molalla have many characteristics in common and people in Vernonia should be receptive to the Community Schools Concept. Mr. Proehl, Superintendent of Schools explained that the problem in Vernonia was not a lack of interest but rather a lack of funds necessary to hire a full time coordinator. He stressed that volunteers were not enough, and that a responsible person was needed to be in charge of a Community School. Unfortunately no state funding is presently available for funding of a Community School here, but the situation may change when the new legislature takes office. Meanwhile the city and school districts are urged to join hands to help facilitate a Community Schools Program here in Vernonia.

Chamber of Commerce reports

(Note: The Vernonia Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in Vernonia. To this end, a monthly report will be submitted to keep all citizens informed of our activities. For anyone wishing to attend meetings, we meet regularly on the second Tuesday of the month, at 8:00 p.m. in the West Oregon meeting room. The public is cordially invited.)

The December meeting of the Chamber was an especially busy one. The first item on the agenda was finishing up preparations for Santa's annual visit, which the Chamber is sponsoring with the help from the VFD and Vernonia Market Place.

Also in the Christmas mood, President Marv Meyers reported that he had picked



Dennis Bartlett, chaser for Farr Brothers logging measures an old growth Douglas Fir at 5 feet on the butt. photo Jenelle Wiggins

Vernonia CPAC meets

by Ned Mawhirter

On Wed. evening Dec. 6 the Vernonia City Citizens Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC) met in City Hall. Members Heppler, Proehl, Sutherlin, Port, Jaques and Miller were present and secretary Susan Humphrey.

Minutes were read and after conferring that in fact at the Nov. 15 meeting the CPAC had made tentative approval of Logger Estates subdivision, the minutes were approved.

Application for variance was received from Disney Marine Inc. for Unit B of the Riverside Mobile Home Park. The greater part of the meeting was taken up with checking the submitted plans of this application

against the zoning and other requirements.

In the end three items were listed as concern. One, in the impact statement from Police chief Gordon McLoughlin a need for a rear exit to the Mobile Park was listed. Also there was a question about meeting requirements for screening fences. The primary problem listed though was the CPAC's concern that Riverside Dr. be improved to carry the traffic load of the expanded mobile home park.

The CPAC recommended approval of the plans pending clarification of these problems.

Also present were Mr. and Mrs. *continued on page 2*

Santa Claus coming to town

Reliable sources at the North Pole report that Santa is busier than ever this year preparing for the rapidly approaching Christmas season. However, he will be taking time out of his busy schedule to personally double check all the requests from Vernonia and the surrounding area.

Saturday, December 16, at 10 a.m. Mr. Claus will arrive at the laundromat in town to meet with all those who want to make sure of their annual orders. Rumor

has it that candy canes will be available for all those who take advantage of his comfortable lap. Unfortunately, all the elves are busy finishing up at the Pole and Santa won't have any helpers to take pictures, so parents are urged to bring their own cameras.

So, for a good time, and those special moments that only Santa can provide, bring the kids to the laundromat on Saturday, December 16, at 10 a.m.

A new project that the Chamber is starting early was on the agenda. We would like to see the town have a 4th of July celebration again, complete with fireworks. Initially, we're planning an old fashioned 4th, with families bringing picnic lunches, spending an afternoon visiting with neighbors, enjoying our short Oregon Summer, and then watching the fireworks. The Vernonia Fire Dept. has agreed to help set off the fireworks. Anyone who has any ideas on this subject would be welcome at our meetings, as would any other organizations who would like to help defray the costs of such a display. (For a very nice fireworks display, we have been given an estimate of \$1,500). To pay for this, the Chamber would like to hold one or more Bingo games. The City Council is considering legalizing Bingo for non-profit organizations, and hopefully will vote on it at their next meeting.

Hanukkah with the Kahns

by Jenelle Wiggins

Kenny and Carol Kahn have a unique way of celebrating the holidays. Although Kenny comes from a strict Orthodox Jewish upbringing, and Carol was raised in the Episcopal Church, they have worked out a way of celebrating both faiths under the same roof.

The Jewish holiday of Hanukkah, which means 'festival of lights', always takes place in the month of December and lasts for eight consecutive days. This year the 1st day of Hanukkah falls on December 25th, Christmas day. On that day, as is the Jewish custom Kenny will light two candles in the Menorah, which is a traditional candle holder. According to Kenny the lighting of the candles commemorates the first successful revolt for religious freedom in the Western world. The candle flame signifies the relighting of the eternal flame of the Menorah which was believed to be handed down from Moses and the Burning Bush.

In addition to lighting candles on each of the eight days of Hanukkah, there are traditional games and songs. Kenny and his family will play a game of chance with a spinning top called a dreidel. A traditional meal of latkes will be served which is a special prepared potato pancake. Kenny tells us that nowadays there is usually a gift exchange during Hanukkah, but originally the holiday was more spiritual than material as Christmas once was.

The Kahn's are toymakers by profession and live outside of Elsie with their four children. While we talk the whole family is preparing for the next morning when they will rise before dawn and drive to Portland to sell their wares at the Saturday Market. The colors and cheerfulness of the Kahn's household puts me in a festive mood and I listen as Carol Kahn makes plans for their Christmas celebration.

"Christmas time was always a very magic time for me as a child, and Kenny and I try to pass that magic feeling on to our children. I remember one Christmas eve my father assembled an entire swing set for me. The next morning all I got for a present was a string which led out the door. I followed the string and to my delight found a swing set attached to the other end!"

The Kahn Christmas tree is traditional will most of the ornaments handmade. Last year the children made gingerbread men and hung them on the tree so whenever a guest stopped by there was something to munch on. And of course there is always a feast on Christmas day.

"Carol and I have our separate religious heritages," Kenny explains, "and we feel it is important to explain these differences to our kids. But most of all we want our children to believe in mystery and love and to develop their own sense of faith. We are interested in how they conduct themselves, not what they call themselves. And so our children are brought up with two beliefs but they are always encouraged to hear and see God wherever it exists."

The last item to be discussed was some kind of memorial for Mrs. Evelyn Heath, who recently passed away. Mrs. Heath was the Secretary of the Chamber for 16 years until poor health forced her to resign last year. Because no public services were held, the Chamber wanted to do something that will help us all to remember her. It was moved, seconded and passed that we will place a book in the Library in her memory. The book will be one of Ray Atkinson's pictorials on Oregon, as Mrs. Heath was especially interested in the State and it's history.

The next meeting of the Chamber will be January 9th, at 8 p.m. Any interested parties are welcome to attend.