

## Church donates bears to fire department

The Columbia Press

We all need something to cling to in times of tragedy.

That's why local police and fire departments carry stuffed animals and other toys. They're meant to comfort a child whose family is facing difficulties, such as a house fire or domestic disturbance.

Warrenton United Methodist Church women delivered 192 stuffed bears to Warrenton Fire Department on Wednesday.

"It's something they decided we needed in the community," the church's new minister, the Rev. Kathy Matthews, said of her congregation. "We're a small church, but this is something we can handle."

The church has been purchasing the bears, ensuring the fire department never runs out, for about four years.

"It's needed," member Nettie Blair said. "We get donations from members and the bazaar we hold every year."

The bears are one of sev-



Cindy Yingst/The Columbia Press

Fire Capt. Willie Nyberg accepts stuffed bears donated by United Methodist Church. Making the delivery are, left to right, the Rev. Kathy Matthews, Nettie Blair and Margaret Thompson.

eral programs the fire department manages or does for the community, Fire Capt. Willie Nyberg said.

Next week, firefighters and volunteers will put Christmas food and gift baskets together for 100 needy families. They'll cordon off part of Main Avenue in front of the station for families who will pick them up Wednesday.

The Fire Department is working in conjunction with

Warrenton-Hammond Schools' Healthy Kids charity, which is running another program called Warrenton Wishes.

There's still time to adopt a needy family for Christmas. Kind-hearted souls are urged to contact the school's office at 503-861-3376. They'll be given information about children who need clothes and other items for the holidays.

## State delays Dungeness crab opening yet again

The commercial Dungeness crab season has been delayed a second time this year -- until at least Dec. 31 -- along the entire Oregon coast.

Testing shows crabs still are too low in meat yield.

While the season is targeted to open Dec. 1, it can be delayed to ensure a higher-quality product for consumers and to avoid wasting the resource.

Crab quality testing in late November and early this month showed half the region still didn't meet the criteria for an opening. The delayed opening will allow for crabs to "beef up," so to speak.

Commercial Dungeness crab is Oregon's most valuable fishery. Last year's season opening also was delayed, but still brought in the record high ex-vessel value of \$62.7 million, with 20.4 million pounds landed (about 22 percent above average).

Testing will continue to determine whether the season should open Dec. 31, be further delayed, or be split into two areas with different opening dates. In conjunction with the delayed ocean commercial season, commercial harvest of Dungeness crab in Oregon bays has closed for the remainder of the year.

Oregon Department of Agriculture monitors domoic acid levels in crab, and crabbing south of the Coquille River remains closed for domoic acid levels.

For more on health closures, call 800-448-2474.

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## Residents appointed to city boards; more spots open

The City Commission filled several open and expiring seats on various city committees this week.

• **Planning Commission** -- Chris Hayward, who owns Ocean Crest Chevrolet, was reappointed. He has served on the commission for 18 years and his term was to expire Dec. 31.

• **Community Center Board** -- Ron LeChurch, a retired mechanical engineer, was appointed to the Warrenton Community Center Board. Earlier this year, LeChurch ran for an open seat on the City Commission, which was created when Mark Kujala stepped down as mayor and Mayor Pro Tem Henry Balensifer was selected to fill the mayor's post. There are two vacant spots remaining.

• **Parks Advisory Board** -- Carol Snell, former director of the Northwest Oregon Housing Authority, was reappointed. Her term was to expire Dec. 31. There are two additional vacant spots on

the board.

• **Warrenton Budget Committee** -- Paul Mitchell, community outreach manager at Columbia Memorial Hospital, and Flint Carlson, retired assistant fire chief, whose seats were set to expire Dec. 31, were reappointed. Dan Jackson, a facilities manager who also serves on the school board, was appointed to a third open position.

• **Warrenton Business Association** -- Roxanne Williams-Morinville, general manager of Warrenton Kia, and Mike Moha, business manager for the school district, whose seats were set to expire Dec. 31, were reappointed.

A third open spot will be filled by Lois Perdue, Hampton Lumber Mill manager. One vacant seat remains.

### HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Residents are urged to apply for any vacant seat. For information, contact City Recorder Dawne Shaw at 503-861-2233.

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