

The INDEPENDENT

Serving the upper Nehalem River valley. Published monthly on the last Wednesday of each month, by Public Opinion Laboratory Ltd., 1206 State Avenue, Vernonia, OR 97064, as a free newspaper. All material protected under U.S. Copyright laws. Editors and Publishers, Dirk & Noni Andersen, (503) 429-9410

Opinion

Failure to vote risks new district's status

Last month, a tax base for the new Emergency Communications District lost by 115 votes of the 9,031 ballots cast.

Most people agree that prompt dispatching of 911 calls is critical, yet only 743 of nearly 1500 registered voters in the Nehalem Valley went to the polls. Of those, 210 voted against the measure, 400 voted for it and 133 skipped it.

To all of you who say "Why bother, my vote doesn't count"...try out those numbers. It would have taken only a few of you to assure stable funding for emergency dispatching.

While you're trying to calculate the numbers, here's something else to think about: State law does not require emergency dispatching, it requires only that 911 phone calls *be answered*. What's done after that is up to local districts because Uncle Government isn't going to take care of it.

When the City of Vernonia can no longer scrape up the \$50,000, or more, needed for emergency dispatching under the present system, communications will be slow and uncertain, not just in town but also in rural areas, because our rural fire districts can't afford the service by themselves.

There will be another election, June 26, and another opportunity to provide county-wide funding for emergency dispatching, this time through a one-year levy instead of a tax base.

Let's put this on a more personal level.

Recently, we had an unwanted "opportunity" to try our emergency dispatching system. Within five minutes of our 4 a.m. phone call, four emergency medical technicians and an ambulance were at the door; they were followed shortly by two or three more EMTs.

They quickly and efficiently started emergency treatment and provided transportation to the hospital. Their presence was reassuring, their concern obvious, and their skills exemplary.

Fortunately, the emergency wasn't life-threatening, but if it had been, we hate to think of what could result from slow or uncertain dispatching.

If you need firefighters, EMTs or police, do you want to rely on a haphazard dispatching system? Or do you want prompt, professional dispatching of emergency personnel?

Do you still think your vote doesn't count?

Between the Bookends

By Nancy Burch
Vernonia City Librarian

Once again the Department of Education is sponsoring a summer reading program in which students reading at least ten books receive a certificate from the Governor and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The books must be read between May 15 and September 15 and certificates will be issued for each student who brings the list of books with signature of parent or guardian to the library. We will also have a special prize for the individual reading and listing the most books.

A special thank you goes to the Walters' family for recently donating a nice selection of children's books to the library. If you have books that your children no longer use, we would be glad to add them to our collection to make them available to the young readers in Vernonia.

Another welcome addition to our library is an updated book on etiquette given by the Study Club in memory of Amy Kamholz. This informative book explores such topics as funerals, public displays of affection, profanity, sexual harassment, telephone manners, foreign menu terms, food stuck in teeth, and ear piercing. The correct method of dealing with almost any situation is included and I would like to publicly thank the Study Club for remembering Amy Kamholz in this manner.

To give readers an opportunity to look

into the place where Northwesterners live, the Oregon State University Press is making available books that are out of print. We have recently purchased the first two of these publications, "Nehalem Tillamook Tales" and "Oregon Detour" for our library. "Nehalem Tillamook Tales" is a collection of Indian legends while "Oregon Detour" is a work of fiction which has been the object of fifty years of censorship in Weston, Oregon, where Nard Jones, its author, lived from 1919 to 1927. Although Jones claimed that the book was "only fiction", he actually changed events and characters of the wheat-growing town of Weston (Creston) very little. The novel was considered in 1930, and is still considered today, as being "about Weston" by the majority of its residents. Whether you read this with the assumption that it is based on fact or is purely fictitious, you'll get an enjoyable insight into life in a small northwest town during the 1920's. I enjoyed reading the book, but have to admit that without all the publicity of its having been banned, it probably wouldn't have been so highly publicized and thus republished. Watch for others in this series of Northwest Reprints as they become available.

Library Hours: Monday and Friday 1-5 p.m., Wednesday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Preschool Story Time is every Wednesday from 10:30-11 a.m.

Letters to the Editor

Thanks for the help

To the Editor:

As Co-chairpersons of the Vernonia Community Health Fair, we would like to thank all those responsible for making the 1990 Community Health and Fitness Fair such a huge success!

To the scores of participants whose displays and health checks were made available to our community, thank you. Your time volunteered, for the most part free of charge, showed us all how to be well and fit in the 1990s.

To the community volunteers, the Fair Committee itself, the high school and grade school students and the local Lions Club, who helped set up, maintain and disassemble the equipment in the high school gym, thank you. You all remind us of what being good neighbors and living in a small community is all about; we can al-

ways find those who will help and follow through.

To the many sponsors, whose contributions added to our health care and safety offerings during our Play-4-Health Month and the Fair, Thank You: West Oregon Electric Cooperative, Vernonia School District, Sword Logging, Astoria Red Lion, Sunnyside Service, General Telephone, Lions Club, NAPA Auto Parts, Cornelius Fred Meyer, Western Auto, Kayla Cota and Carmen Finley.

A special thank you to the Class of 2000 and their directors, Dana Hyde and Elizabeth Marxer, for showing us through their play that we can make the world a healthy place to live.

And to the Vernonia Community who not only came to the fair, but who participated in the many health and fitness activities before and during the fair, Thank You. You are on the right track to

health and fitness in the 1990s.

Without all of You, we couldn't have done it!

Barb Fulmer
Lynn Dougherty
Vernonia

Group makes plans

To the Editor:

The Columbia County Small Woodland Association is an organization dedicated to the protection, management, use and enhancement of Oregon's forest resources. The association is composed of owners of less than 5,000 acres of Oregon forestland; it was founded in 1967.

The objectives of the association are to help preserve the rights of private woodland ownership; educate the public and policy makers on the value of the state's forest resources and the need to

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