

MS Society will use Vernonia as home base for weekend bike ride

If you're looking for an unusual weekend get-away this summer, you may want to consider two days of cycling fun and adventure from Vernonia to Seaside through the Jewell Wildlife Refuge. This get-away includes a 150 mile cycling challenge through some of Oregon's most breathtaking scenery, one night's accommodation, food, and all of the cycling support needed for a safe and chal-

lenging ride.

Organized by the Oregon Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, this year's Portland MS150 Bike Tour is being held July 30-31 and is expected to draw 400 local area cyclists. The ride begins and ends at Vernonia High School.

"If you need to get out of town for the week end, the MS150 two-day Bike Tour is a great way to do some cre-

ative sightseeing, get in shape and, most importantly, make a contribution to the search for a cure for MS," said Cheryl Sheppard, director of special events for the Oregon Chapter.

Each cyclist is sponsored by friends, colleagues and family members, who pledge money for every mile completed. Proceeds support local health-related and educational services which reach

more than 3,500 people in Oregon and Clark County, Washington. In addition, a portion of the funds are used to support national research efforts to find the cause and cure for Multiple Sclerosis (MS); a chronic, unpredictable and often disabling disease that attacks a person's nervous system.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is dedicated to

advancing the cure, prevention and treatment of MS and to improving the lives of those affected by the disease. For more information on the services offered by the Oregon Chapter, please call 1-800-422-3042.

Individuals interested in registering for the Portland MS150 Bike Tour should call the Oregon Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society at 1-800-422-3042.

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"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

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Let it Rain . . .



Dallas contractor J. W. Fowler is installing storm drain system on A Street.

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Vernonia, rural Scappoose top increases in real estate values

A 28% increase in local real estate prices brings with it both good news and bad news.

The good news is that your property has increased in value. The bad news is that your property taxes are likely to increase because your property is more valuable—even if you did nothing to improve it.

A report issued recently confirms what home buyers and real estate agents have known all along — that the hot real estate market continues to inflate home prices.

The report, called the Assessors Certified Ratio Study, analyzes sales of property from May 1, 1993, to April 1, 1994. The report compares 1993-94 assessed values with the sales price and determines how those assessed values are to be adjusted so that the 1994-95 assessed values are at 100 percent of market value.

"The real estate boom that started in 1990 is continuing unabated," said Tom Linhares, Columbia County Assessor. "In fact, if anything, the rate of increase is greater this year than previous years," Linhares said.

Generally, residential values have increased 20 percent, personal property mobile homes have increased 5 percent and commercial and industrial property have remained the same. Each area of the county is analyzed separately. The increases range from 18 percent in Rainier to 28 percent in rural Scappoose and the City of Vernonia.

A total of 1,463 sales were analyzed throughout the county. During the first three months of 1994, deeds recorded by the County Clerk

increased by 27 percent over the first three months of 1993. Building permits were up by 36 percent, during the same period.

While higher real estate values are good news for sellers, property owners will likely see higher property tax bills next October.

"Despite lower tax rates due to Ballot Measure 5, it looks like residential property taxes will be up approximately five to ten percent next year," Linhares said.

Linhares attributes the higher home prices to a generally favorable real estate market combined with the strong influence of people moving to Columbia County, especially from the Portland

Metropolitan area.

"Without a doubt, what is driving these increases is the migration of people to St. Helens, Scappoose and Vernonia," Linhares said. "Even Vernonia is experiencing a tremendous real estate boom market," he continued. To a lesser extent, the in-migration is also affecting Rainier and Clatskanie, according to Linhares.

The ratio study was presented on Tuesday, July 5, to the Columbia County Board of Ratio Review, a five member citizen panel that will review the report and make recommendations to the assessor. The ratio study is also reviewed by the Oregon Department of Revenue.

CHANGE IN PROPERTY VALUES 1993-94 TO 1994-95 (Selected Columbia County communities)

LOCATION	1993-94	1994-95	% INCREASE
St. Helens	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 120,000.00	1.20%
	X 20,2322	X 18,0422	
	\$ 2,023.22	\$ 2,165.06	1.07%
Columbia City	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 123,000.00	1.23%
	X 21,4723	X 19,2823	
	\$ 2,147.23	\$ 2,371.72	1.10%
Scappoose (City)	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 120,000.00	1.20%
	X 20,3428	X 17,8428	
	\$ 2,034.28	\$ 2,141.14	1.05%
Scappoose (Rural)	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 128,000.00	1.28%
	X 13,6784	X 11,1784	
	\$ 1,367.84	\$ 1,430.84	1.05%
Vernonia (City)	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 128,000.00	1.28%
	X 17,6418	X 17,5116	
	\$ 1,764.18	\$ 2,241.48	1.27%
Vernonia (Rural)	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 119,000.00	1.19%
	X 10,0824	X 9,9552	
	\$ 1,008.24	\$ 1,184.31	1.17%