

Between the Bookends

By Nancy Burch
Vernonia City Librarian

The library's Summer Reading Program is off to a great start with approximately 50 youngsters "celebrating animals" at the first session. Those attending enjoyed hearing about and petting Don and Nancy Dailey's pet llama, the Tatmans' turtle and rabbit, and Kitty Savage's pet duck. This past Thursday was a "celebration of music", with the youngsters singing and making musical instruments under the direction of Bonnie Schorzman.

Thursday, July 17, there will be a "celebration of insects". The final two sessions will be Thursday, July 24, and Thursday, July 30. All programs will be held at Hawkins Park at 10:00 a.m. Youngsters are being encouraged to read during the summer and books are available to be checked out at each program, as well as from the library. Come join the fun with this year's Summer Reading Program.

Recently ordered and due to arrive any day,

is a selection of paperback mysteries entitled "Midnight Creepers." This selection of 70 titles is geared for young adults and includes selections by R.L. Stine, V.C. Andrews, Christopher Pike, Lois Duncan, F. Pascal, Carolyn Keene and Lois Lowry. Lowry's *The Giver*, included in the selection, was justly named winner of the 1994 Newbery Medal and is one of those books that gives the reader "food for thought."

Newest novels for adults include Nora Robert's *Public Secrets*, and Nelson DeMille's *Plum Island* (#1 on the *New York Times* best seller list). If you're looking for a good romance or a good mystery, you won't go wrong with either of these.

Vernonia Library is located at 919 Bridge Street. **Library Hours:** Monday and Friday 1-5 p.m., Wednesday 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m. **Preschool Story Time:** Wednesdays, 10:30-11 a.m. Call 429-1818 for information.

Letters to the Editor

Sevig family sends thanks for the help

will see you in Norway!

Sincerely,
Kathy, Dan, Chris, and
Kara Sevig

To the Editor:

We would like to thank all of our friends in Vernonia for the help given us and the kindness shown as we said goodbye to Vernonia, our home for the past 18 years.

Thank you to the many friends who lent many hours of help with our moving sale, packing, and loading: Kathy Denckla, Susann Ragsdale, Jan LaVoie, Barb Prpich, Cathy Black, Marie Krahn, Nancy Dailey, Mary Miller, Sue Minger, Rian Ragsdale, and Matt Minger.

Thank you to Tucker Wy-song for preparing a wonderful "going away" dinner for us, and thanks to those who helped him, including Janelle Wiggins, Katie Eggie, Deon Owen, Katja Schutz, and Woody Buxton.

Thank you to the Vernonia High School staff, present and former members, for the lovely dinner at the Rheinlander, and especially to Ward Nelson and Billie Wallace for organizing it.

Thank you to Glenda DeLemos and District 47J for the "goodby" party at Camp 18 and to those who came to wish us well.

Thank you to the Vernonia Education Association for the gift certificate to the Harbor-side. We enjoyed our meal and evening out.

Thank you to Dolly Keenon, Kathy Denckla, Rose Dettmers, and Sue Minger for the Bon Voyage party at the VHS gym. We enjoyed so much visiting with friends and students, former and present, who came to bid us bon voyage.

Thank you to all who have called, sent cards, given gifts, or expressed in person best wishes for our future in Stavanger, Norway. We invite you all to visit us. We will fly to Norway on August 2nd and will be looking for permanent housing. Our address at the school where Dan and I will teach and Kara will attend is as follows:

International School of Stavanger, Treskeveien 3, 4042 Hofrsfjord, Norway; e-mail, intschol@iss.stavanger.rl.no; phone, 011-47-51-55-91-00

Thank you, friends for all your love and kindness. We

Scout Cabin deserves attention of public

To the Editor:

There was a rousing public discussion at the City Council meeting, July 7, of what to do with the old Scout Cabin in Hawkins Park. Apparently there has been a stop-go-stop in the process of efforts to save this cabin, and much of this could be due to recent changes in city personnel.

Attention has also been centered on building a new municipal building and it appears the real value of Vernonia, as this writer sees it, is getting buried. One speaker at the meeting spoke truly that progress can also be found in preservation.

Most people agree tourism is important to Vernonia. It is unlikely tourists will be so interested in our new city hall. They have seen lots of those, and bigger and better, but they WILL look at an historic scout cabin.

They might even wonder (when they see the new city hall) whose rich relative came to see us.

Jetta Gomes
Vernonia

Thanks for great 4th of July celebration

To the Editor:

We would like to thank the community for their support of our 4th of July celebration. This is the first year we didn't reach our goal of \$3,000, the cost of the fireworks. It isn't too late to send in your donation if you haven't already done so. We would like to thank Pat and Darlene Knight for the benefit spaghetti dinner with all proceeds going to the fireworks fund. A thank-you also to the following organizations and businesses for their donations...Vernonia Chamber of Commerce, *The INDEPENDENT*, Vernonia Sentry, Western Auto/True Value Hardware, Cedarside Inn Inc., Red Curl and The Lions Club, Wall and Wall Attorneys-at-Law, Skidmore and Son Trucking,

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Gladys' Family Cookbook is here!
Pick it up at The INDEPENDENT,
\$8.00 per copy, or call 429-6541.
Makes a great gift for showers,
birthdays, or for no reason at all!

POLICY ON LETTERS

The INDEPENDENT welcomes readers' letters, but all letters must be signed and include a verifiable address and telephone number, though the address and phone number will not be printed. We reserve the right to shorten or edit letters for clarity. Letters containing libelous statements or personal attacks on individuals will not be printed.

Ike Says

By Dale Webb, member
Izaak Walton League, Nehalem Valley Chapter

As morning dawned and people began to stir from their homes on the last Saturday of May, unbeknownst to them, there was a fire in the local woods. The plume was quite visible north of Vernonia, yet few people noticed it. Within two days, the plume would flow west and stretch out into the Pacific Ocean, yet there were no sirens as officials scrambled to the source, no calls for man power to help battle it. It was mostly unnoticed.

Among the first people to notice the plume were two anglers who put in at the boat launch at Pittsburg. After boating less than a quarter of a mile, they were so engulfed by the plume that they had to quit fishing and just rode the river to the take out spot.

The plume continued for well over a week and eventually burnt itself out. Many of you are wondering what kind of fire would we let burn in our forest without mobilizing to put it out. Trees are worth lots of money and we surely would spend lots of money trying to protect them. Millions of dollars are spent each year to protect federal, state and private timberlands. Yet this fire caused little concern except for maybe our district fish biologist. Now you have the clue needed to realize that the fire I'm talking about didn't refer to the consumption of timberlands by fire, but the consumption of a stream by siltation. To me, they are one and the same. Elk Creek, a tributary of the East Fork of the Nehalem River, was consumed in a stream fire during the last week in May. This stream now looks very much like a burnt-over forest.

One big difference between a forest fire and a stream fire is that the plume from the stream fire is a lot more detrimental than the plume from a fire that consumes forest. The smoke from a forest fire is diluted by the great air shed that surrounds us, but a fire in a stream is confined within its banks and often, as in this instance, can't dissipate until it reaches the Pacific Ocean.

Others may argue with me about the differences between a forest fire and a stream fire, but I find them very similar. Each usually starts from a specific cause, either natural or man made, i.e., lightning strike/beaver dam failure, or careless match/man-caused landslide. Each consumes biological materials; forest fires burn vegetation, stream fires move large amounts of soil. Creatures are destroyed in both types of fires. Deer, elk, squirrel and birds are suffocated by lack of oxygen that is being consumed by a forest fire and the heat it generates. In a stream fire, fish and aquatic insects are suffocated by huge amounts of silt and the abrasiveness of it in the flowing waters. In both cases, the landscape that remains is usually bleak

and lunar-like.

I was gravely concerned when I saw this stream fire, while riding home with a co-worker, as we got our first glimpse of the silt plume in the Nehalem River at Natal. I new something was seriously wrong, causing the Nehalem River to be muddy in the first week in June! As we proceeded up river, we kept carefill watch and when we crossed the East Fork of the Nehalem it was evident that the stream fire was somewhere up it. After I got home, I immediately jumped into my personal vehicle and started tracing the silt upstream. Hawkins Creek was the last place where the East Fork was discolored, but when I viewed Elk Creek I knew I had found the culprit. We had some significant rainfall over that weekend, but the creeks were flowing well within their banks, so it was evident that the stream fire was not caused by a flash flood type of situation. Within a few days it became clear that whatever had happened up Elk Creek was a system failure, not an isolated event.

I notified State Forestry and the Department of Fish and Wildlife. State Forestry sent two people to drive around the road systems looking for violations of the Forest Practices Act. The Department of Fish and Wildlife did nothing because they have neither the laws nor the manpower to engage such problems. This is not to say they weren't concerned, and they did keep in touch to see what we were finding out about the situation. State forestry officials found no violations of the Forest Practices Act and no cause for the stream fire.

Finally, I decided it was time to lace up the cork boots and take a look for myself. I started at the locked gate to the old entrance at Camp 8 and worked my way upstream. The brush was thick and within a short distance I was drenched from the morning dew, but the day was warm and I was hot. I noticed immediately that the stream looked altered from other, healthy, streams in our area, with very little rock and mostly mud. Even though it looked all mudded in, it also looked scoured out. The banks were under-cut, the holes around large woody debris were exaggerated and the abundance of silt was overwhelming. I saw at least four major landslides that had entered the stream-system, yet none of them appeared to be recent. There was an old, abandoned beaver pond that had blown out, but the creek was still discolored above it. As I walked farther upstream, the creek became clearer. I finally ran out of time, climbed out of the canyon and returned to my pickup.

I had found no smoking gun and I was perplexed as to why a stream would basically "melt down" during a time of low flow. As I left the canyon, I noticed a more recent logging operation on the west side of the stream and

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