

Free car seat check-up set for child passenger safety awareness

A free child safety seat clinic will be held Saturday, February 19, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Mountain View Motors, 2175 Columbia Blvd., St. Helens. The clinic is sponsored by the local chapter of Oregon Safe Kids, in partnership with the Oregon Child Safety Seat Resource Center and Mountain View Motors.

The event is being held in conjunction with Child Passenger Safety Awareness Week,

February 13-19, as part of a national effort to help reduce injuries and loss of life to children who are passengers in motor vehicles.

According to Jay Tappan, St. Helens Fire District and spokesperson for the Safe Kids Chapter, spot inspections conducted recently by the Oregon Department of Transportation showed 43 percent of Oregon's children under four are still not

riding in an approved safety seat as required by state law. Of those children who are buckled up, four out of five are not restrained properly. Tappan says that this is a big reason why over 2,000 children die and 300,000 are injured nationally each year in traffic mishaps.

"The seat clinic is a great opportunity for families to have their car seats examined by safety specialists for proper installation, condition, and to see if there might be a recall on their particular seat," Tappan said.

In a related effort, Oregon

State Police Sgt. Mike Dingenman says that OSP officers will be working with local law enforcement in heightening enforcement of seat belt and child restraint rules during this same time frame.

"Our officers will be stepping up enforcement of adult safety belt laws because it's a proven fact that most adults who don't buckle themselves also don't buckle their kids," said Dingenman. He added that 23 children under the age of 14 died in 1999 in car crashes in Oregon.

Other organizations supporting the safety seat clinic are St. Helens Fire District,

Oregon State Police, Columbia County Public Health, Columbia County Traffic Safety Commission, General Motors, Head Start/Even Start, St. Helens Police Dept., Rainier Police Dept., St. Helens High School Parenting Program, St. Helens HIPPI Program, Community Partnership Program, Columbia County Commission on Children & Families, and Community Action Team.

Ridge Riders elect officers

Officers for the coming year were elected at the 1999 Vernonia Ridge Riders year-end banquet on January 15 at Lew's Place. Approximately 30 members attended.

George Bellingham will serve as president in 2000, assisted by vice-president Tony Gilbertson, secretary Shelly Lende, treasurer Jeri Cropp, and publicity secretary Liz Brainerd.

The trophy for the 1999 All Around Ridge Rider went to Vern & Beth Weaver.

For more information about the Ridge Riders, or to join the saddle club, please contact George Bellingham at 503-429-9523.

Time to sign up for crop program

The federal Agriculture Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2000 provided \$1.2 billion for assistance to farm producers who have suffered losses of greater than 35 percent on 1999 crops due to natural disasters. Provisions of this program cover all crops, insured, non-insured and non-insurable.

Advance payments of 35 percent will be issued after ap-

plication approval. Final payments will be made after all applications, nationwide, are processed and the national payment factor is determined.

Signup for this program ends Feb. 25, 2000. Potential participants should call the Washington/Columbia Co. FSA office for more information or for an appointment, at (503) 648-3174 Ext. 2.

Sew-N-Things changes location

Dorothy Sullivan's Sew-N-Things, has been around for what seems a lifetime — around 25 years — starting in her own home and establishing a downtown presence in Ray Deeth's Banks business building at 180 S. Main. After several years in that location she re-

turned to her home location, only to reappear in the Marcus & Marcus Antique warehouse on Main and Banks Road.

Coming full circle, she is now back in the Deeth building providing the same quality fabrics and professional sewing.

Pick up INDEPENDENTS at office

Over the years, *The INDEPENDENT* has developed a self-correcting distribution system for a press run of 3,200 papers based on the average demand at each drop, maximizing the readership and minimizing the waste of unused papers.

Occasionally a missed drop results in a "borrowing from Pe-

ter to pay Paul" phenomenon when, in order to get papers, the missed person "borrows" from another drop, leaving that supplier with less papers than needed for his customers.

To prevent this from happening, we ask those missed to come to *The INDEPENDENT*, 725 Bridge Street, to pick up your papers. Thank you.

Earned Income Credit may aid you

The maximum income for a family with one child is \$26,928, with maximum Federal EIC of \$2,312, and \$116 from state.

A family with no children and income under \$10,200 may qualify for Federal EIC of up to \$347 and State EIC of \$17.

Directions for both federal and state credits are included with the tax forms.

Doing your income taxes may not be fun but, if you qualify, could pay you more than it costs you.

A family with two or more children and income under \$30,580 may receive up to \$3,816 from the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit and \$191 from the state.

Program honors family businesses

Applauding the innovation and hard work of family-owned businesses, Oregon State University's Austin Family Business Program has opened nominations for the 2000 Oregon Family Business of the Year awards.

In conjunction with corporate partner US Bank and award sponsors MassMutual, Perkins & Company, P.C., and Tarlow, Jordan & Schrader, the awards are open to any family business with the exception of prior winners, who may not win again in the same category. Nominations may be made by anyone, including employees and business associates and should be sent by May 15.

Clean-up day plans get underway

The sixth annual Vernonia area Beautification/Clean-up/Earth Day is scheduled for April 29. Vernonia Pride and SOLV (Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism) are joining forces once again to organize and fund this event, which is a time of pride and fun for all.

Beautification areas and sites for litter pick up are being targeted now, and enhancement projects are being planned. SOLV-It has already awarded four \$250.00 grants for projects, and Vernonia Pride has promised matching funds where needed. The ball is rolling, but it will take groups, organizations, families, individuals — volunteers of all ages

and skill levels to make it happen!

Call Genny at 429-1204 or Donna, 429-5201, if there is a site you feel needs attention, or for more information. Meanwhile, plan to set this day aside so everyone can work together and make a difference in this place we call "home."



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Mentors needed for Wheels Park

Youth in Action is looking for adults to act as volunteer consultants/mentors with youth working on the campaign to develop a Wheels Park in Vernonia. Knowledge of fund raising through grants, or other avenues, would be helpful to the youth who will be doing the actual work.

Anyone who can help is asked to call Lisa Orth at 429-3018 after 6:00 p.m.



ANNUAL MEETING TIME

Election of Officers • Door Prizes
February 23, 2000 – 7:30 p.m.

Senior Citizens Center, 446 Bridge Street, Vernonia
Please use side entrance.

429-8031



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