Grants available for property owner habitat efforts

Grants are available from a variety of national organizations for conservation ideas by landowners and grassroots community organizations.

Some of the funds are contingent on streambank restoration aimed at controlling erosion and reducing water temperatures through tree planting. Others focus on projects that will be mutually beneficial to farmers, fish and wildlife.

The common theme in the grants is the promotion of local stewardship by supporting ideas from people who live and work in the community affected. Grants ranging from $5,000 to $50,000 also provide an opportunity to funnel natural resource restoration funds into Columbia County.

Time is short to apply for these grants, within deadlines coming up within the next few weeks. For more information or assistance in putting together a proposal, call Jean Johnson, Watershed Technical Specialist at the Columbia Soil & Water Conservation District in St. Helens, (503) 397-4555.

Program by outdoor writer at St. Helens Book Shop

Author Doug Lorain will be at the St. Helens Book Shop for a slide presentation and book signing on Thursday, March 9 at 7:00 pm. Lorain is the author of *Backpacking Oregon,* a comprehensive guide to all of the best longer backpacking trips in the state. The book features 27 detailed hikes with complete trail descriptions, route maps, and difficulty ratings, as well as tips and advice from the author's own experience.

Lorain has been exploring the back country of Oregon and the American and Canadian west for over 30 years. He has hiked close to 15,000 miles in Oregon, and nearly that many miles in other states and provinces combined. Over time he has been, in his own words, "charged by a grizzly bear, stared down by a mountain lion, bitten by a rattlesnake, served as lunch for countless thousands of ticks and mosquitoes, nearly washed away attempting river fords, and survived enough Pacific Northwest storms to turn the Sahara into a rainforest."

The slide show, approximately one hour long, will highlight many of his favorite backpacking adventures. Following the presentation, Lorain will be on hand to sign books and answer questions. *Backpacking Oregon* is published by Wilderness Press and is available in paperback at $16.95.

St. Helens Book Shop is located at 1550 Columbia Blvd., St. Helens. For more information call 503-397-4917.

Wu field office dates announced

Columbia County field office dates for constituents of Congressman David Wu have been scheduled for March, April and May. Field representative Ann Richardson will be available to discuss concerns or problems with federal agencies.

An appointment is not required, but may be made by calling Richardson in Wu's Portland office at 326-2901 or 1-800-422-4003.

The field office schedule is as follows:

- Vernonia City Hall, 10-11:00 a.m., March 7, April 4 and May 2.

The dates for other Columbia County cities are March 8, April 5 and May 3. The locations and sites are as follows:

- Clatskanie PUD, 11:00 a.m.- Noon,
- Rainier City Hall, 1-2:00 p.m.,
- St. Helens, Columbia Technology Center, Armstrong Room, 2:30-3:30 p.m.,

Dr. Seuss is on the loose...!

Students in Vernonia will join millions of children across the country in celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday on March 2. This nationwide birthday party is part of the National Education Association's Read Across America.

"This year, we are encouraging everyone, everywhere to become involved," said NEA's President Bob Chase. "Our goal for the day is to place every child in the company of a book."

In Vernonia, students at Lincoln and Washington Grade Schools and Mist School will enjoy green eggs and ham for breakfast, Happy Birthday cake and ice cream at lunch, RIF (Reading Is Fundamental) books for all students in kindergarten through sixth grades and many other events.

There will also be a half price Book Fair all week at Washington Grade School and during parent teacher conferences, Wednesday, March 1 from 1:00-3:45 p.m. and Thursday, March 2, from 1:00-5:00 p.m and 6:00-8:30 p.m.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
Laura Nichols
Thanks for your devotion to the Vernonia community.

Volunteers needed to aid census

The Beaverton Local Census Office is currently recruiting volunteers to staff the Questionnaire Assistance Center (QAC) which will be set up at the Vernonia Senior Center March 8 through April 14. Volunteers will be trained locally to help seniors, persons with reading or vision impairment, non-English speakers or anyone who has difficulty understanding the Census questionnaire.

Volunteers are also needed to staff Be Counted sites March 31 through April 11.

The importance of an accurate census count in Columbia County cannot be underestimated. The amount of Federal dollars allotted for road and bridge maintenance, senior centers, school resources, estimates of future school needs, grants for emergency medical services and more, are based on census figures. The population count is also the way the number of representatives per region, and thus political power, is determined

Volunteering to staff these centers, if only for a few hours a week, is a great opportunity to serve your community. To volunteer, call the Beaverton Local Census Office, 626-6786.

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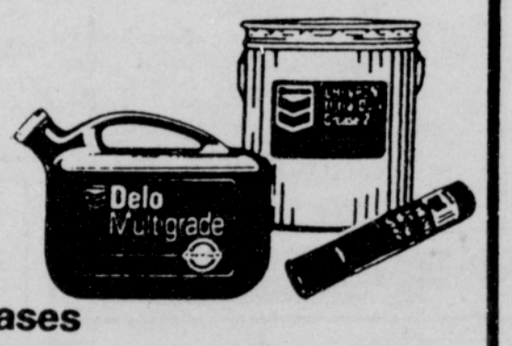
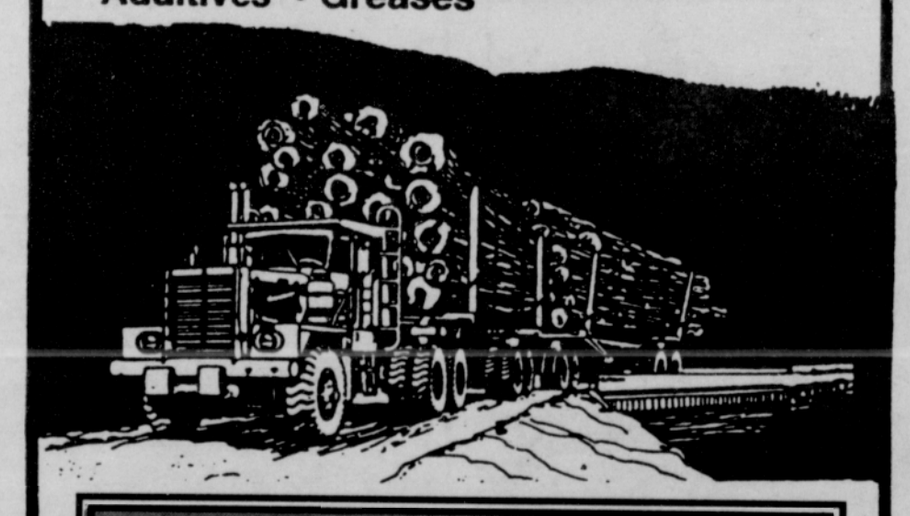
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