

## Community

### Senior News

By Karen Miller

I guess I won't be bringing Vernonia Vern home with me after all, but he couldn't have found a better home in a better place! Congratulations to Don Foster, winner of the logger doll raffled away at our Christmas dinner. Don is owner/operator of Rising River Ranch Adult Foster Care, so we know Vern will get good care! Way to go, Don!

I am enjoying my Kentucky Dogwood poster of a photograph by Christopher Burkett, raffled off at Dan and Heidi Brown's opening weekend at Grey Dawn Gallery here in Vernonia. My husband thanks Dave VanMeter for drawing my winning ticket. He loves trees and the poster is going in his new rec room.

A group of us enjoyed an evening trip on the COLCO van December 16 to watch the Christmas ships and have dinner at the St. Helens Cafe. Thank you to the little birdie who graciously donated some extra money to all of us for the occasion. Everyone got home safely that rainy night in spite of an extra stop or two; well, houses are hard to see in the dark.

A note from Willie Brewer at the senior flea market: The flea market portion of the center will be closed for business from 12:00 to 12:30 during the lunch hour beginning January 3.

The Senior Companion Program has begun in Vernonia. We still need help, though, and are looking for a senior man who would like to receive a small income for visiting isolated seniors in Vernonia. We are aiming towards 20 hrs. per week. Our current companion is looking for more female clients. Your referrals greatly appreciated.

The St. Helens Senior Center will be hosting their delicious annual crab dinner Saturday, January 20. Cost: \$15 for 3/4 pound of crab meat, cole slaw, potato salad, baked beans, garlic bread, crab dip and drinks. Sponsored by St. Helens Senior Center, SNAPP and COLCO. Call our office for further information.

Our new year is upon us and I am sure you would agree that

### Welcome Additions

#### COLTON J. KINNERSLEY

Colton James Kinnersley was born December 23, 2000, to Dan Kinnersley and Jaime Ceballos of Portland. He weighed 7 lbs. 6 oz. and was 21 inches long.

Grandparents are Mary Ann Odam of Indiana, Tom and Cindy Murray of Texas, Bill Kinnersley of Yakima, Wash., and Gordon and Marsha McLaughlin of Vernonia.

Great-grandparents are Lorraine and Larry Borst of Vernonia, Jack Odam of Vernonia and Bonnie Kissire of Portland.

resolving to be a better neighbor would make this world a brighter place. I would like to share this. I found it on a plaque at a (where else) senior thrift store out of town:

*Good neighbors are a blessing*

*They bring you peace of mind*

*You never have to ask them*

*They always have the time*

*One such as you, dear friend*

*Is very hard to find*

Thank you, Zada Snook, a Vernonia resident for the past 65+ years, and who has been the best neighbor to my family anyone could ever have. We love you. Happy New Year, Grandma Snook!

#### INFORMATION NUMBERS

COLCO Transportation

..... 429-4304

Senior Advocate.. 429-9112

Senior Center..... 429-3912

## Help your landscape plants survive freezing temperatures

Cold can damage outdoor woody plants. Plant cell fluids freeze and rupture cell walls, resulting in ruptured bark or scorched leaves, explains Ross Penhallegon, horticulturist with the Oregon State University Extension Service.

The amount of temperature fluctuation from daily high to low usually affects how well plants will fare in subfreezing weather.

"A night of extreme cold followed by warming during the day on the south and west sides of the plan can cause bark to split and foliage to become scorched or frost-burned," said Penhallegon. If the plant is actively growing, sub-freezing weather will damage the non-dormant growth.

On the other hand, if the plants are dormant and the temperature remains cold, there is rarely much damage from cold.

The key is to protect the plants as best as possible from the cold. Penhallegon recommends the following tasks to help minimize cold injury to your fruit trees, berry bushes and landscape plants:

1. Mulch all perennials with three to six inches of organic material such as shredded

leaves, compost or bark chips, coarse enough to drain well. Also, mulch outdoor potted plants to prevent their roots from freezing.

2. Prevent ruptured bark by draping the plant with burlap or shading the plant in some way during the day to prevent the alternate freezing and thawing. Or paint the tree or shrub bark with white exterior latex paint to help avoid splitting. Mix the paint one to one with water. Check the plants in a few weeks to see if there is bark damage.

3. Once plants get cold, keep them cold rather than allow them to thaw during the day and freeze at night. It is the freeze-thaw action that does the damage.

Scorched leaf tips and margins (desiccation) are a common problem after a cold spell, particularly in broad-leaf evergreens including rhododendrons and azaleas. They take on a droopy look. Dry cold winds are often the cause.

"The injured leaves will eventually drop," said Penhallegon. "In most cases, the plant will recover in the spring, so don't prune the plants until then."



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## Birds have special needs in winter

As winter comes on, ponds, puddles and shorelines may freeze. Resident birds will have a harder time finding drinking water. Backyard bird watchers can help birds out by keeping fresh water available throughout the winter.

Water will attract birds more readily to an area than any other thing you can provide, explains Dan Edge, wildlife specialist with the Oregon State University Extension Service.

Lure wild birds into view by providing water in birdbaths or other artificial puddles. The containers should be shallow from one-and-a-half to three inches deep, preferably with gently sloping sides. The surface of the bath or puddle should be rough so the birds can get sure footing. Cement is ideal.

Place a few water-smoothed stones or flat rocks at the water's edge for a place for birds to get out of the water,

stand and rest nearby. Even if you only have a small windowsill, porch or patio, a shallow tray of water with some rocks or plants place nearby is much better than doing nothing for the birds. Make sure cats cannot reach the watering area.

Many birds are attracted to dripping water. Hang a bucket full of water with a small hold in the bottom over a birdbath or shallow pan and watch the birds come by. Use a mister or dripper especially designed for this purpose.

Keep water unfrozen during cold spells by adding fresh lukewarm water or by placing an electric oil dipstick heater inside a piece of conduit in the water. There are also small birdbath heaters available at garden, farm or bird feeding stores. Birds need water, not only for drinking and bathing, but also as a source of water borne foods such as insects and algae.

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