

Health Fair at Mist offers free tests and information

A Health Fair will be held February 10 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Mist-Birkenfeld RFPD Main Station. Sponsored by the Nehalem Valley Community Corporation the Health Fair will provide a variety of services to increase awareness of health issues.

Participants may avail themselves of several tests, many of them free, including tests of cholesterol levels, blood sugar (No need to fast before this test.) and blood pressure.

Mammograms may be scheduled at the Peace Health Mobile Unit which will be on site at the Main Station on Hwy 202, west of Mist. To schedule a mammogram, call 1-800-438-7562 and ask for the Mammogram Unit. If you do not have insurance, they will help arrange your mammogram at no cost. If you are insured, they will bill your insurance company. There are 15 slots available, so call early.

Anyone with known prob-

lems such as breast cysts, tumors or cancer, will require more technical mammography. The portable unit can detect only possible problems. All testing will be done by fully qualified and trained professionals in an easy, friendly manner.

If you live in the Mist-Birkenfeld Rural Fire Protection District and need a ride to and from the Health Fair, call 503-755-0213.

Also included at the Health

Fair will be information and forms for end of life issues, as well as nutritional and other health related topics.

The public is invited to join in, get to know more about yourself, visit a bit, enjoy refreshments and celebrate your life! The main fire station is located on Hwy. 202 between Mist and Birkenfeld.

For more information, call Mary Crawford at 503-755-0510 or Helen Horton at 503-755-0231.

INSIDE:

Entrepreneurs prepare for future..... pg. 4

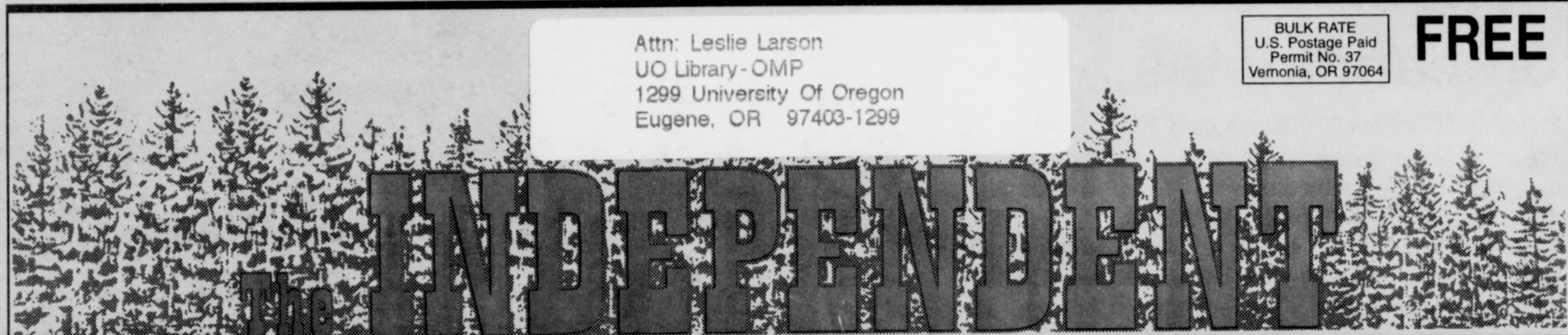
Food for your Valentine... pg. 7

Banks School District debt fading..... pg. 9

Attn: Leslie Larson
UO Library-OMP
1299 University Of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1299

BULK RATE
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 37
Vernonia, OR 97064

FREE



Vol. 16, No 3

"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

February 7, 2001

Lest we forget...February 8, 1996



This photo is of the Vernonia Senior Citizens Center before the flood crested, forcing nearly four feet of water into the building.

Flood led to better preparation

Some people were still asleep when the big flood hit because it had been raining so hard that the woods were mostly shut down and roads were in bad shape—but not as bad as they were going to be.

Before the sun went down on February 8, 1996, sixty percent of Vernonia had been inundated. More than 80 percent of Mist was under water. The upper Nehalem Valley was cut off from the rest of the world because the roads were gone. Phone lines were down, too; the only communication was by radio.

The next morning, the sun came out and everybody had a good look at a community literally covered in MUD. Everybody in town went to work on the cleanup and wet vacs became the most valuable commodity in town. People emptied their freezers, taking food to be cooked at St. Mary's so displaced neighbors would have warm meals.

These small communities

were on their own and they did a magnificent job of managing until help started arriving — three days later.

They also learned a lot about emergency preparedness. Vernonia and Mist were way ahead of most of the county at that time because they had functioning emergency operations teams. Due to lack of planning at the county (and higher) level, the teams had been operating pretty much in the dark, trying to plan for emergencies without sufficient knowledge or training.

Several lessons were learned:

- Vernonia's rivers and hills create a need for evacuation centers in three different areas.

- Washington Grade School is not a good evacuation center because the kitchen and the power are in the basement,

which flooded.

- Emergency operations centers are needed on both sides of Rock Creek because high water prevented emergency vehicles (ambulances, fire trucks, etc.) from crossing the bridge.

Since that time, a more complete emergency plan has been developed, both locally and on the county level. But no one in the Nehalem valley is relying solely on a plan. Training is also ongoing to prepare, as much as is possible, for appropriate responses to different types of emergencies.

If only one lesson was learned in 1996, it was this:

We cannot (and should not) rely on help from other areas, so we must be prepared to take whatever action is needed in any emergency. We must be self sufficient.

Meeting will review results of City survey

City of Vernonia will hold a town hall meeting Feb. 26 to discuss results of its recent survey. The location will be announced.

School report cards show varying results

By Schann Nelson
and Noni Andersen

Vernonia, Banks and Jewell schools showed both improvement and declines in categories measured for the annual Oregon School Report Cards issued by the state in January. Mist and Lincoln Schools, in the Vernonia district, were not rated because of the small numbers of students.

Overall Rating

The Overall rating for each school is based on a combination of individual measurements of Student Performance, Student Behavior and School Characteristics, as defined statistically with an adjustment for improvement over time. Washington Grade School retained its Overall rating of satisfactory in the 2001 report. Vernonia High School's Overall rating rose from satisfactory to strong. A decrease in Overall rating from strong to satisfactory went to Banks Elementary School, with Banks Junior High retaining an Overall rating of strong, and Banks High School improving from satisfactory to strong. Jewell School was rated strong in both 2000 and 2001.

Basis of Ratings

While improvement on the report card is a positive sign, there are problems with the report cards. The "grade" is based on extremely limited data because only *measurable* categories are included. Additionally, the titles used for three of the four categories — Student Performance, Student Behavior, School Characteristics — are misleading, since each category has a very narrow statistical definition. Because the report card does not measure individual achievement, a satisfactory rating is given only

when 60 percent of students meet or exceed a state benchmark.

Another problem with the report cards, for small districts such as Vernonia and Jewell, is that scores on state assessment tests can vary widely from one year to the next because of the small numbers of students tested each year. Therefore, while report cards provide a snapshot of a school's performance, they may be slightly out of focus and should not be used as the sole evaluation tool of a school or a district. Many important aspects of student behavior are not included.

District Report Cards

In addition to individual schools, report cards are issued for each school district in the state. District report cards do not receive a rating, but report on the same categories as school report cards. Student Performance is shown in reading, writing, math multiple choice and math problem solving in third, fifth, eighth and tenth grades. The district report cards also show Student Behavior (based on attendance and dropout rates), District Characteristics (based on percentage of students tested) and Professional Experience of teachers and administrators.

School Report Cards

The school report cards include five sections, four of which will be discussed in detail here. These four sections are available from the state online at <ode.state.or.us>. The fifth section will be added by the local schools or districts before report cards are mailed to the public in March.

Please see page 8