

Authorities concerned that date-rape drug may be in use locally

Authorities have received information that GHB, a date-rape drug common in some parts of the country, may now be in Columbia County, including Vernonia.

The effects of gammahydroxybutyrate, or GHB, are dramatic and dangerous. Five

to twenty minutes after the drug is taken, users experience euphoria followed by periods of drowsiness or unconsciousness. These periods alternate until the drug leaves the system. The drug also causes loss of memory for the period it is active.

At high doses there is a chance of coma, according to Michael Gibson, PhD, an associate professor of molecular and medical genetics at Oregon Health Sciences University. These reactions are enhanced if combined with other adulterants (i.e. alcohol) and can lead to respiratory arrest and death.

A nearly tasteless, odorless drug, GHB can be ingested in a variety of ways. It can be added to drinks (alcoholic or non-alcoholic), mixed in powdered form with other pow-

dered drugs, or combined with plant material.

GHB is one of several drugs called the "date-rape drugs" because they are used to obtain chemical submission in alleged sexual assault cases. Dr. Zane Horowitz, Oregon Poison Control Center (OPC), says that use of the drug is under-reported to OPC as local agencies become more accustomed to dealing with GHB cases. Since the victims have no memory of the time when the drug was active in their sys-

tems, the perpetrators feel that they can avoid prosecution for rape.

The drug was created in the 1960s as an anesthetic/sedative but was not pursued. According to Gibson this "unique compound has undergone a renaissance" and is now available illegally on the street.

"The concern is that street-purchased GHB is a real risk... individuals have no idea of the concentration they are taking. Also, there may be caustics in the material from home synthesis," Gibson said.

Open Your Heart, but use your feet to fight hunger

Columbia Pacific Food Bank will hold its third annual "Open Your Heart to Hunger" run/walk. The 4-mile run/walk fundraiser will be held Saturday, February 24, in St. Helens.

Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. under a tent in the parking lot of Red Apple market on Columbia Blvd. The run/walk will start at 10:00 a.m.; it will end at Grace Baptist Church on N. 17th Street. Complementary soup, bagels and beverages will be available for all participants.

Registration fee is \$10.00 per person, or \$15.00, for participants who want a short-sleeved T-Shirt. Long sleeved shirts will also be available. The price for a family is \$25.00 and includes two short-sleeved T-shirts.

All proceeds will go to Columbia Pacific Food Bank to

help offset operating costs associated with the distribution of food to its 20 member agencies. The agencies include emergency food cupboards located throughout Columbia County, such as Vernonia

Cares, H.E.L.P., H.O.P.E., Turning Point, and St. Vincent DePaul, along with senior centers and group homes.

For further information, call Tracie Smith at 503-397-9708.

Health insurance topic of guide

A new consumer publication from the Oregon Insurance Division may help answer any questions regarding obtaining health insurance, your insurance policy and your health care rights.

The free booklet, a *Consumer Guide to Health Insurance*, is designed to help Oregonians better understand their insurance policies and make informed health care choices.

The booklet discusses what kinds of insurance plans are available, identifies resources to obtain coverage and explains your options if you lose your employer sponsored group health insurance coverage.

It also summarizes your health care rights under Oregon's *Patient Protection Act*, the *Unfair Claims Settle-*

ment Act, and other laws and rules. In addition, the booklet includes sections on frequently asked questions and a glossary of health insurance terms.

Also included in the booklet is information on how to file a complaint with the Insurance Division against an insurance company or agent.

To receive a free copy of the booklet, write to: Publications, Oregon Insurance Division, 350 Winter Street NE, Salem, OR 97301-3883, or send an e-mail request to <dcbs.insmail@state.or.us>

The booklet also is available on the division's website: <www.oregoninsurance.org>

Church Bulletin Bloopers

Stewardship Offertory: "Jesus Paid It All".



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Church Directory

VERNONIA COMMUNITY CHURCH

Grant Williams, Pastor
957 State Avenue
Vernonia, 503 429-6790

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Children's Church w/Nursery
Evening Fellowship 6:00 p.m.
Nursery Care

AWANA, Wednesday 3:15 p.m.
Prayer Meeting, Wed. 7:00 p.m.
Men's Group, Thursday 7:30 p.m.

GRACE REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

D.J. Dickey, Pastor
Grant & North Streets
Vernonia, 503 429-3110

Sunday Services: Adult Prayer & Children's Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday Service:
All Family Bible Study, 7:00 p.m.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Joel Stith, Pastor
410 North Street
Vernonia, 503 429-6522

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

Every Wednesday:
Ladies' Bible Study, 9:15 a.m.
Children's Choir 3:00 p.m.
Family Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.

Women's Fellowship, 2nd & 4th
Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

John Cahill, Pastor
359 "A" Street
Vernonia, 503 429-1161

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

Evening Worship
Saturday, 6:00 p.m.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Pastoral Associate
Juanita Dennis
960 Missouri Avenue
Vernonia, 503 429-8841

Mass Schedule
1st & 3rd Saturdays 4:30 p.m.
2nd & 4th Sundays 12 Noon

Religious Education
2nd & 4th Sundays 10:30 a.m.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Roger Kruger, Pastor, 397-6883
2nd Ave. and Nehalem St.
Vernonia, 503 429-1941

Sabbath School 9:15 a.m.
Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m.
Tuesday Prayer, 7:00 p.m.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

Lee Knowlton, Branch President
1350 E. Knott Street
Vernonia, 503 429-7151

Sacrament Meeting, Sunday 10 a.m.
Sunday School & Primary 11:20 a.m.

Relief Society, Priesthood and
Young Women, Sunday 12:10 p.m.

ST. AUGUSTINE (CANTERBURY) EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Rev. Robert Grafe, Pastor
375 North Street
(Vernonia Grange Hall)
Vernonia, 503 429-3700

Sunday Services, 10:00 a.m.

NEHALEM VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH

Jerry James, Pastor
500 California Ave
Vernonia, 503 429-5378

Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Nursery available
Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.

VERNONIA FOURSQUARE CHURCH

Pastor Paul Pastor
850 Madison Avenue
Vernonia, 503 429-1103

Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School

Wednesdays 7:00 p.m.
Evening Service
Youth Ministry
Children's Ministry
Nursery Available

Men's Ministry 7:45 a.m.
3rd Saturday, each month

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

662 Jefferson
Vernonia

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.