

Business Notes

Local firm now provides comprehensive building maintenance



The name on their truck tells the story: For precision building maintenance, Barney Eastlick and Michael Botchie are the people to call.

Finding the right people for building maintenance can be a complicated process. A licensed CFC technician may be needed for work on air conditioning; a licensed maintenance electrician may be needed for certain electrical repairs; another person for some commercial remodeling, another for the water system.

Precision Building Maintenance solves the problem. Michael Botchie and Barney Eastlick, with a combined 30 years of experience and several certifications, can handle all of those situations. Between them, they have the certifications and licenses for all commercial facility maintenance

needs, including welding and the installation of overhead doors, even conveyor systems.

"When anything goes wrong inside your walls, we fix it," said Botchie.

Operations manager Marie Botchie handles the inside work for the Vernonia business and will schedule service as needed. The team also responds with 24-hour service to handle any emergency that may arise.

Precision Building Maintenance is registered with the state Contractors Construction Board and is licensed, bonded and insured. They may be reached at 503-708-6809.

Your voice is heard when you speak from the ballot box.
Register to vote today.



The Health Habit
503-429-0501

Complete Co-Ed Gym Facility
PERSONAL TRAINING AVAILABLE



Weight Loss/Gain
Body Building
General Conditioning
Toning & Shaping

Wolff Tanning
Nutritional Counseling
Olympic Weights
Full Line Apparatus

OPEN: 7a-9p M-F, 7a-5p Sat • 16720 Noakes Rd., Vernonia, OR 97064

Chamber hears presentation on fraud

"It's your money...protect it!" was the message Vernonia Police Officer Jim Gaskins brought to the Vernonia Chamber of Commerce at their April meeting. Gaskins presented the information on protection from fraud at a presentation sponsored by U.S. Bank.

There are steps businesses can take to protect themselves from bad checks and other fraud, according to Gaskins. He outlined several rules businesses should establish and follow, including requesting photo identification, requiring employees to write their names on all checks they accept, never accepting third party checks, never cashing payroll checks, accepting checks only for the amount of purchase and never come from taxpayers.

The actual number of bad checks passed in Columbia County is far in excess of this simple example, according to Gaskins. In Vernonia, staff is not available to regularly investigate bad checks, but they are available to discuss the problem with local businesses that

have questions about specific incidences.

Store owners who fail to implement strict rules to prevent accepting bad checks must accept some responsibility, Gaskins said. As an example, he made a comparison of two stores, just across the street from each other: One had a policy of always accepting checks to avoid offending customers. Across the street, employees were constantly reminded to ask for and record identification for every check. The first store had losses of approximately \$25,000 per month. At the second store, losses due to bad checks were almost nonexistent.

Gaskins distributed information about other frauds, including employee theft, credit card fraud, identify theft and computer crimes. He concluded by saying that fraud is usually difficult to investigate and prosecute, but just as a driver is responsible for removing the keys and locking the car, business owners are responsible for protecting the assets of their small businesses.

accepting starter or counter checks.

By being committed to maintaining clear, consistent check cashing policies and constantly encouraging employees to follow them, businesses can limit the amount of loss they have due to bad checks.

To illustrate the scope of the problem, Gaskins said to assume that 1000 businesses each accept 20 checks per day. If only one percent of these 20,000 checks are returned, there would be 200 bad checks per day in Columbia County or 73,000 bad checks per year. According to Gaskins, bad checks are not prosecuted because of the enormous volume of these crimes and the number of judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys and deputies necessary to prosecute them. To prosecute these crimes, testimony would also be needed from all store employees and bank personnel involved. Jails could be completely full of bad check writers and the millions of dollars to pay for all of this would have to

Wu field rep will meet the public

Ann Richardson, field representative for Congressman David Wu, will hold community office hours at the following locations and times on Tuesday, April 24 and Tuesday, May 22:

Vernonia City Hall, 1001 Bridge Street, Vernonia, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Columbia Technology Center, 375 S. 18th, Armstrong Room, St. Helens, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Rainier City Hall, 106 West "B" Street, Council Chambers, Rainier, 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Clatskanie PUD, 423 N. Nehalem, Meeting Room, Clatskanie, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Although not required, to schedule an appointment, call the Portland office at 503-326-2901 or 1-800-422-4003. For special accommodations, contact Richardson at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

GREEN'S VARIETY

Clothing for the Entire Family
Linens • Decor • CDs
Books • Toys • Notions
and Much More

VARIETY IS OUR NAME

Open 10 - 5 Tues - Sat
831 Bridge, Vernonia
503-429-4333



VERNONIA INN

Enjoy a quiet weekend with us.

FULL SIZE, IN ROOM

\$55⁰⁰ HOT TUBS \$80⁰⁰
REG. ROOM \$45⁰⁰

Queen Beds • Private Bath • Separate Entrance
Cable TV • Phones • Handicapped Access

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL

1-800-354-9494 / 503-429-4006

GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

900 MADISON AVE., VERNONIA, OR 97064

Just one block off scenic Nehalem River Hwy. (Oregon 47)



FARMWOMAN'S NURSERY

10% Off Flowering Trees & Shrubs

Through April 30, 2001

GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE
OPEN THUR-SUN, 10 AM-6 PM



12891 KEASEY ROAD, VERNONIA
(7 miles out of Vernonia)
503 429-8200

