

Man reported missing had suffered a heart attack

The body of 46 year-old Michael Hlavka, of 916 Rose Avenue, Vernonia, was found Monday by a woman who was looking for the source of water that had been running untended in the yard of neighbor who was out of town.

At the time of his death, Hlavka apparently was watering the yard at 831 Third Avenue for a friend who was on vacation. He was in the back yard, behind the house, and couldn't be seen from the

street. An autopsy revealed the cause of death as a massive heart attack.

He had been reported miss-

ing by his employer a couple of days before he was found, according to Vernonia Chief of Police Jim Walters, who had

gone to the man's home at the employer's request. Walters found no one at home and no one in the yard.

Local man injured in accident that closes Hwy. 47

A Vernonia man was injured Tuesday at about 10:45 a.m. when he apparently lost control of his van, crossed the center line on Hwy. 47 near Wilson Cutoff Road, and was hit by a truck and lowboy trailer loaded with a timber processor.

Garrett "Gadget" Abney was thrown out of his van when it spun around from the initial impact and was hit a second time. He was in fair condition at Emanuel Hospital with rib fractures, multiple abrasions and bruises. The truck driver wasn't injured.

The truck, owned by Heavy Hauling, Inc., was hauling a wide load and had the required pilot car leading the way. The highway was closed in both directions while a diesel spill resulting from the accident was cleaned up and the vehicles were removed.

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It feels funny...



Children in a local preschool concluded their school year with a trip to Don and Nancy Dailey's "farm" in Vernonia to feed and pet the llamas, see how big the chicks have grown that they hatched in the Dailey's incubator, pet the rabbit and dog, and just act like kids. Above, preschool operator Kala Cota helps hesitant youngsters become comfortable while feeding a llama. Before leaving the farm, each child gets a sticker that says "I touched a llama today." The Daileys arrange visits for all ages, too.

Citizens ask Council for law enforcement

Citizen complaints about what they consider inappropriate or inadequate police response, dominated "topics from the floor" at the June 4 meeting of the Vernonia City Council.

Craig and Treasa Staggenborg sought Council help because guests at their Vernonia Inn Bed & Breakfast, will not tolerate the noise caused by the operation of an off-road motorcycle (a "dirt bike") and other noisy, recreational vehicles adjacent to the inn. Unable to reach an accommodation with the operators of the equipment, the inn-keepers asked the police department to enforce the city's noise abatement ordinance so guests could rest in peace.

The Staggenborgs felt the response was inadequate for a number of reasons. After "numerous complaints" from guests, Staggenborg said, he left a message on the police department's answering machine asking for a return call. There was no response, but six days later Police Chief Jim Walters went to the inn to talk to Staggenborg about the neighbor's complaint that he was staring at her. (Staggenborg told the council that he became a "bit defensive" when she called him a "pervert.") He noted that the side of the inn that faces the neighbor has six rooms, plus the manager's apartment.

He also explained the noise problem to Walters and said he expected a full house because of a church convention over the Memorial Day weekend. Walters told him to call the dispatcher if there was a problem.

Two days later, one family attending the church function tried to take a nap, but the motorcycle started in again. They

called the front office asking that something be done so they could rest. Staggenborg said he called dispatch, as instructed, but the officer who responded apparently felt the noise was not a violation of the city noise ordinance.

The Staggenborgs sent their complaints to the council in writing and, two hours before the council meeting, Police Chief Jim Walters met with them to discuss the situation, and also visited the neighbors.

Walters also told the council that he had referred the question to City Attorney Julie Koontz six days earlier, because he didn't know who to cite, the minors operating the equipment or the parent. Koontz had not been told it was an ongoing problem, and hadn't looked at it.

A second complaint was presented by Betty Wall, a Weed Avenue resident who feels she is being besieged by skateboarders who build ramps and jumps on the corner where she lives. In addition to finding it difficult to use the sidewalk for walking, Wall expressed concern about the danger to the skateboarders when they dart out into the street.

Wall and other Weed Avenue residents have been asking for police help but said the only response they get is that it's "legal to ride on Weed Avenue sidewalks." They have not been able to get the police department to consider the reckless and dangerous behavior with or without skateboards. "We need some relief," she said.

Walters told the council that he "really can't do anything about it" because it is legal to ride skateboards on Weed and Adams Avenues, and on Maple Street.

47J shows stable financial condition

Like many school districts in Oregon, Vernonia schools are wearing out, but unlike many, Vernonia doesn't need to worry about cutting personnel or programs.

The ultra-conservative spending policy the district adopted last year had the desired result and not only stopped a skid into a chasm of red ink, but created some cash carryover. Because the state funds schools mostly on a per-student basis, inflated enrollment figures from prior years were causing a hardship when overpayment was "adjusted" resulting in less income for the following year.

The Budget committee held two meetings in May and will

reconvene June 14 to complete its review of the budget proposed for 2001-2002. The meeting will start at 7:00 p.m.

City sets Town Hall meeting on energy and water conservation

Are you tired of that bright street light shining in your bedroom window? If so, you may be able to nominate it for a blackout.

With increasing costs and the potential for power shortages, the City of Vernonia is going to be looking at a variety of ways to utilize energy efficiently. One way will be to turn off some of the street lights, or to use lights that need less

power. The public is welcome and there will be opportunity to speak, though time will be limited.

power.

Water conservation will also be part of the mix. Not only is it very expensive to operate the city's water filtration plant, there is concern about the water supply if this ongoing dry trend continues.

The Town Hall meeting will be Monday, June 25, at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernonia City Council meeting room. The city wants you to bring your ideas.