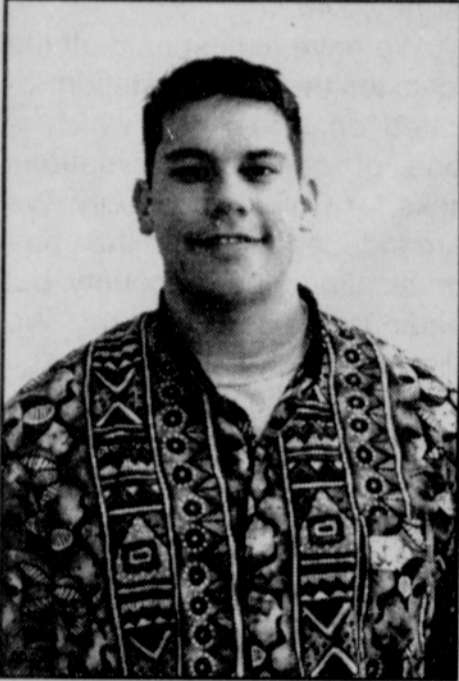


Business Notes

Dan Rodriguez is new owner of Vernonia Family Dental practice

Though many people were sorry to see local dentist Scott vanDyken return to Port Ange-



Daniel Rodriguez, D.D.S.

les to work with his father, they can relax with the knowledge that his replacement is just as comfortable to work with.

Daniel R. Rodriguez, D.D.S.,

purchased Vernonia Family Dental and is now practicing here three days per week. He works two days each week in Raleigh Hills with his brother, Robert, who is also a dentist, and who will work in Vernonia from time to time.

The brothers attended elementary school in Sandy and high school in West Linn. Daniel earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Portland State University, then attended Creighton University School of Dentistry in Omaha, Nebraska.

He and his wife, Sarah, have a 15 month-old daughter, Sarah.

Patients who knew van Dykens' staff will be happy to know that the same friendly faces will greet you, at the same place in the Vernonia Credit Union building. The phone number will also remain unchanged.



This photo has just a sampling of the 80 plus motorcycles whose riders and passengers enjoyed good weather and a ride in the hills while participating in a Poker Run. The Lyon's Den was one of the stops on the day-long activity.



After gaining 11 years of experience working with contractors in the Hillsboro area, Troy Jerman of Vernonia has opened his own electrical contracting business, Century Electric LLC, for commercial, residential and industrial applications. Jerman can be reached at 503-429-4218, or look for the Century Electric ad in The INDEPENDENT Service Directory.

New Food Stamp application form simpler, more user-friendly

Access to food assistance has become easier for thousands of low-income Oregonians with the statewide introduction of a new, two-page application for the Food Stamp Program. Since mid-June all Adult and Family Services (AFS) offices have been using a new two-page application for people requesting food stamps or daycare assistance. This replaces the longer ten-page application previously needed to apply for all AFS programs.

Oregon is one of the hungriest states in the nation, and excessive paperwork is cited most often by anti-hunger advocates as a barrier in accessing food stamps. The shortened application was produced through a collaborative effort between AFS and anti-hunger advocates, including the Oregon Law Center, Oregon Food Bank, Oregon Action and the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force.

The simplified process has been successfully tested in several AFS offices over the

past eight months. Several state and county agencies are also distributing the new application as a community resource for clientele.

The new application is one of a number of changes made in the Food Stamp Program during the past year. Outreach efforts, improved customer service at AFS offices, and the recent expansion of guidelines regarding client resources have combined to increase the number of Oregon households receiving food stamps by over 22 percent between May 2000 and May 2001.

Not only does this increase bring enrolled food stamp households back up to pre-welfare reform levels, it brings an additional \$2.9 million in federal food dollars into the state each month.

People wanting more information about food stamps can call Oregon SafeNet, a health and human service hotline, Monday through Friday, at 1-800-SAFENET (723-3638).

Mortgage funds for rural housing

USDA Rural Development recently announced that congressional legislation now permits Guaranteed Rural Housing (GRH) loans to be used for refinancing both existing guaranteed loans and refinancing USDA Section 502 direct subsidized loans. The change provides an opportunity for guaranteed loan borrowers and direct subsidized borrowers with satisfactory payment histories, to take advantage of lower interest rates.

"With interest rates at their current low levels, many rural Oregonians with GRH and direct subsidized loans have an excellent opportunity to refinance those mortgages at possibly lower interest rates," said Rural Housing Program Director Stan Schmidt.

The Guaranteed Rural Housing program is used primarily to help eligible buyers purchase homes in rural Oregon with no down payment and 100 percent financing. No monthly mortgage insurance is required with the loan and closing costs may be included.

To be eligible for the program, homebuyers must meet income guidelines, show the ability to repay the loan and demonstrate a history of meeting obligations. Eligible income limits in Oregon for a family of four range from \$60,400 to \$64,250, depending on the county.

Participating lenders make the loans, which are then guaranteed by the Rural Housing Service of USDA Rural Development. Sufficient funding authority is available for the guarantee program.

For more information, call 503-414-3335.

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