

## Community

### Health Notes

By Audeen Wagner



#### Summer Fun and Exercise

Now that summer is finally here, we can all look forward to outdoor activities—for all ages. It's much easier to get some exercise outside when the weather is nice. "The very best exercise is simply walking," says Laura Nichols, P.A. at Providence Family Medicine. "It's so easy to do, doesn't cost a thing, is easy on the joints, and is a great way to get some aerobic exercise." She also says that speed is not important, just a steady comfortable pace works for most people. A one-mile trek around the lake several times a week is not only very pleasant, but very good for you!

Or, how about swimming? Another easy-on-the-body, low-impact exercise that is enormously beneficial. Forest Grove Aquatics Center offers many organized programs such as water aerobics, swim lessons, fitness swims. And there are times for open public swimming, too. Call the pool at 503-992-3238 for their summer swimming schedule. Of course, Vernonia provides its own pool in Rock Creek—a great place to play in the water and get cooled off, and get some exercise at the same time.

#### Ticks

Summer fun can lead to some problems, too. The clinic warns us about the potential danger of tick bites. Some ticks can cause serious diseases, such as Lyme's disease. Luckily, we live in an area that has few ticks of this type. They are more prevalent in the eastern half of Oregon, but they are out there in our area, too, so be careful. Some precautions: wear protective clothing, spray with a repellent containing DEET, avoid brushy or swampy areas (stay on trails when hiking), check your skin, clothing, and gear (and your dog!) after hiking.

Finding a tick on your body may give you the heebie-jeebies, but if a tick is found on your skin, you should get it out of there.

Some advise carefully removing the critter with tweezers, but since it is easy to break off the head under your skin, a better way is to shut off the tick's air supply with a little vaseline applied at the site. Or heat a paper clip and apply to the bite; in either case, the tick will immediately back out!

Lyme disease is an infection caused by the bite of an infected tick. It is treatable with antibiotics but is somewhat hard to diagnose because the symptoms can vary greatly from person to person. The most prevalent symptom is a skin rash, called a bull's-eye, or target, rash, which occurs at the site of the bite. Other symptoms of early Lyme disease may include a flu-like illness. It is very important to be treated for Lyme disease, because it can develop into much more serious problems which may involve the heart, nervous system and joints. According to a study by the University of Minnesota, your chances of getting Lyme disease are slim if you remove the infected tick within 24 hours after it attaches itself to you.

#### Mammogram schedule

The next mammogram visit to Vernonia will be July 24. Call 503-429-9191 for an appointment.

#### State seeks members for Disabilities board

The Oregon Disabilities Commission, a 15-member body whose members are appointed by the governor, is seeking applicants to fill at least three vacant positions.

Commission members must be able to meet six times a year in Salem and to serve on at least one standing committee.

State law requires a majority of commissioners to be people with disabilities. The commission estimates that one in five Oregonians has a disability.

For further information, or to apply, call toll free 1-800-358-3117 (voice and TTY) or e-mail eugenia.m.cox@state.or.us

## Rose City MC again brings loads of good will



Following the flood of 1996, members of the Rose City Motorcycle Club put Vernonia Cares on the list of nonprofit organizations they support by soliciting donations and with fees earned from club-sponsored activities. For the sixth year, club members arrived in Vernonia, April 8, with smiles and more tons of food transported in a van loaned by Bob Lanphere Honda. Their efforts are greatly appreciated by Vernonia Cares and the people who are helped by the club's donations.

## USDA increases commodity eligibility guidelines

The USDA commodity eligibility guidelines have increased for 2002. If households are within the listed gross income levels, they qualify to receive USDA foods. These foods, which vary month by month, are available locally at Vernonia Cares Food Bank, 627 Adams Ave. The Food Bank is open Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

You are eligible if you are currently participating in the

Food Stamp Program, TANF, SSI, LIEAP, or State General Assistance, or if your income is equal to or below the following Income Guidelines:

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	GROSS INCOME
1	\$960/mo
2	\$1,294/mo
3	\$1,627/mo
4	\$1,961/mo
5	\$2,295/mo
6	\$2,628/mo
7	\$2,962/mo
8*	\$3,296/mo

\*for each additional member, add \$334 per month

Commodity foods are for home consumption only. They may not be used for commercial purposes.

## PCC memoir writing class scheduled

"Deep" Memoir Writing, a six week course sponsored by Portland Community College, will be held in Vernonia from June 27 to August 8. Classes will be held at the Vernonia Senior Center on Thursdays, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., with no class on July 4.

Taught by Carol Sawyer, a published poet and Ph.D. candidate in Consciousness and Transformation, the introductory class will cover using the five senses and other techniques for accessing memory and freeing the flow of self-expression. Sawyer, whose How-to/Memoir, *Pulling Up Stakes: a Pioneer's Guide to Starting Over at Sixty* is presently looking for a publisher, is particularly focused on aging and the creative process.

Those interested may register on the first night of class or by calling 503-977-4933. The fee is \$36.00; those over 62 years will receive a 50 percent discount.

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