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The INDEPENDENT

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"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

July 18, 2002

A labor of love...



Loren Dennis, top, has been spending his spare time doing the same thing he does when he's working...setting bricks, with the assistance of Nathan Carrier, who is shown covering the engraved bricks with tape so the cement grout doesn't fill the engravings. At left are some of the engraved bricks. Engraved bricks can still be ordered; see article below for information.

Improvements continuing at Shay Park

Improvements are continuing at Shay Park. A roof now shelters the old engine, and a concrete and brick sidewalk has been installed around it.

The sidewalk installation is a joint effort of the City of Vernonia and Vernonia Pride, and is funded partly with the proceeds from sales of engraved bricks. Local contractor Loren Dennis constructed the sidewalk and set the bricks.

Those interested may still purchase a brick engraved with your name, or in memory of someone else. Vernonia Pride

is still taking orders for the \$25.00 bricks. They will be engraved on the Saturday of Jamboree by Fred Bass, from Bass Memorials and Stone Art, who

Bike trip Saturday on proposed linear trail

Bicycle enthusiasts can preview about 25 miles of a proposed linear trail between Vernonia and Scappoose on Saturday, July 20, by joining a ride along an old railroad right-of-way from Pittsburg to Scappoose.

Participants will meet about 10 a.m. at Chapman Landing in Scappoose, then take a bus to

will work on bricks already installed in the walkway. For more information, call Donna Webb of Vernonia Pride, at 429-5201.

the Spar Tree Restaurant for breakfast and the starting point of the ride. To add an interesting historical element to the day, there will be a stop at the divide between the two local watersheds (Nehalem and Columbia) for a short hike to an abandoned railroad tunnel. Everyone should be back in Scappoose by 3:00 p.m. Riders

Meeting on museum fills council chamber

People concerned about keeping the museum in Vernonia open and accessible to the public, filled the Vernonia City Council meeting room Monday night, and expressed what Mayor Cindy Ball characterized as a "mostly gracious exchange of opinion."

Although most people involved in local museum operations were under the impression that the collections in both Vernonia and St. Helens had been conveyed to the Columbia County Historical Society, extensive research by county staff could find no documentation to support that position, explained Columbia County Commissioner Tony Hyde. (The St. Helens museum is in the old county courthouse and the Vernonia museum is owned by the City of Vernonia, with museum expenses paid by the county.) According to Hyde, the only documented agreement is for museum operations, which would indicate that the county retains ownership.

Having completed their research, the county had already arranged to reopen the museum in Vernonia—with staffing by local volunteers—so access was no longer a concern, provided there are enough volunteers.

Enid Parrow, who has volunteered at the museum for several years, said that the muse-

um was closed for three months this winter because the furnace needed to be repaired, then because the president of the county historical society changed the locks, but that it had seldom been closed for lack of volunteers.

Questions of inventory remained. The past two curators, Barbara Werner and Robb Wilson, had each prepared complete inventory lists, but the lists are missing. County Counsel John Knight said that there should be written agreements for materials given to the museum, with any special conditions noted. No one asked about artifacts missing from Vernonia.

**Vernonia Museum
Open Friday,
Saturday, Sunday
1:00-4:00 p.m.
Arrangements can be
made for groups.
Volunteers needed.
For information, call
Enid Parrow:
503-429-8134.**

Costley named to Council vacancy

The Vernonia City Council is now at full capacity, with the appointment of Brett Costley, July 8, to fill the vacancy created when Mario Leonetti resigned as Mayor, and Councilor Cindy Ball was appointed to fill the mayoral position. Costley is already familiar with many ongoing projects in the city, having served for nearly two years on the Vernonia Planning Commission.

The only other applicant was Sam Hearing, a longtime Vernonia resident and former businessman.

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