

Health Notes

By Audeen Wagner



School Physicals/Immunizations:

It's only July, but Providence Family Medicine is thinking about "back to school" already. They remind parents and students that it is time now to make that trip to the clinic to get sports physicals, immunizations, and a checkup out of the way ahead of the rush before school starts.

It is important to bring immunization records with you to the clinic, so they can determine for you what, if any, immunizations are needed (there have been some changes in the schedule for shots and boosters, so it is especially important this year). The clinic can help you determine your child's immunization status.

Even if you just need a quick shot, you will need to call the clinic to make an appointment. And it is a good idea to take care of this requirement now, before the school year is upon us—things can get a little crowded at the clinic in August.

Health Partnership for Columbia County

There has been much activity in the past year or more by a group called the "Community Health Partnership." This committee is made up of volunteer community leaders from Columbia County whose mission is to improve health services for the county. The first phase of the partnership involved surveying the county's health care needs, and interviewing community leaders, employers, doctors and more. Through this effort, much valuable information was collected, and was presented to the public in September, 2001 at a meeting in St. Helens.

At the meeting, it was reported that the most-desired improvement to healthcare in the county would be a 24-hour Urgent Care or Emergency Room service, and a local hospital. An interesting finding was that, while there were 72,000 doctor visits reported, an estimated 60,000 local residents used out-of-county doctors. Also, revealed is that Columbia County is a grossly under-served area, with only 14 local full-time physicians. Compared to national population norms, the county is short 19 physicians and 40 specialists.

It was found that a Critical Access Hospital (CAH) would fit the county's needs better than a regular hospital. CAHs have been in existence for about five years; a major benefit is that they are eligible for full rebates on Medicare and Medicaid payments. It would provide "short-stay" hospital care, and emergency room and other optional services. "Having hospital and emergency care in the county," the Health Partnership reported, "would benefit our community in saved lives, quicker response in emergencies, and in convenience/less transportation." Having a CAH would also attract more doctors to the county, since doctors tend to practice where there is a hospital nearby. How this affects Vernonia remains a question, since the CAH would be located in St. Helens, about the same distance that local patients must travel now for hospital care or other extended services (to Hillsboro or Portland).

Thanks to Pam Rahn, Coordinator of the Health Partnership, Co-chairs Brian Burrignt and Carolyn Keasey, and the hard-working members of the Partnership, some positive action may be a reality in the future, resulting in improved healthcare services for Columbia County residents. For more information about the Partnership and its activities, interested people may call Rahn at 503-396-1804.

Next Mammovan visit to Vernonia is Wednesday, August 21.

Volunteers needed for "families" board

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners is soliciting applications from county citizens willing to serve on local boards, committees, commissions and advisory boards. These committees help shape public policy for the county.

The County will be consider-

ing appointments of lay members from the Clatskanie, Rainier and Vernonia areas to the Columbia County Commission on Children and Families.

Interested parties are asked to call the Board of Commissioners at 503-397-4322.



Winning smiles, too!
This Vernonia team was delighted with their third place win at Newberg, in the Washington County Girls Softball League for ages 14 and under. From left, in the front row, are Miranda Nutting, Jessie Gehrke and Sam Jeffers; middle row, Kristin Kelly, Jessica Shaw, Erin Gehrke and Stephanie Benes; back row, Coach Jim Kelly, Kristina Lamping, Kristin Cota, MacKenzie Bassett and Coach Chris Cota.

Thank you...

Without your generous support, Vernonia could not enjoy Fourth of July Fireworks!

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| Vernonia Lion's Club | Jim & Ginger Johns |
| Christopher & Ruth Burkett | Holce Logging |
| Skidmore & Son | Mike Pihl Logging |
| Summer Country Massage Clinic | |
| Archie Dass Logging, Inc. | Daniel E. Koch, Inc. |
| Western Auto Associate Store | |
| The Yard Doctor | Gwin & Sons Logging |
| Allied Logging, Inc. | RSG Forest Products |
| Keenon Land Services | Marie Krahn Massage |
| Sports People | Triple S Service |
| West Oregon Electric Cooperative, Inc. | |
| Vernonia Inn | Art & Enid Parrow |
| Spiralz | Loren & Robin Dennis |
| Karen Parrow | Lew's Place |
| Rod Alexander Floor Covering, Inc. | |
| Vernonia Booster Club | Vernonia Sentry |
| Carey's Create-A-Cate | Cub Scout Pack 201 |
| Vernonia Area Chamber of Commerce | |

—Vernonia Pride

SUMMER MUSIC CAMP



in Vernonia
July 29 - August 2
10 AM - 2 PM

Beginning & intermediate
activities for children
age 5 and up. No prior
music experience required.

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