

Attn: Leslie Larson
UO Library-OMP
1299 University Of Oregon
Eugene OR 97403-1299

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. Postage Paid
Vernonia, OR 97064

FREE

Vol. 17, No. 16

"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

August 15, 2002

Hooked on Fishing...



The Banks Bar-BQ, Truck & Tractor Pull expanded again this year, with 102 youngsters registered for the fishing derby.

Banks Bar-BQ, Truck & Tractor Pull

The 57th annual Banks Bar-BQ gets off to a good start Saturday morning with horseshoe tournaments. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. at Sunset Park.

Weigh-in for stock tractors begins at noon, with the Tractor Pull starting at 2:00 p.m. There will also be a Tractor Pull on Sunday at 1:00 p.m. Registration starts at 3:00 p.m. for Saturday night's Pickup Pull.

Saturday night also features a dance, with the Beer Garden open from 6:00 to midnight.

While waiting for the Sunday morning parade, which starts at 11:00 a.m., there's plenty of time to enjoy the Lions Club Breakfast at the hamburger stand in the park, go to the Brown Derby to sign-up for the parade, and join in the 9:30

a.m. Community Worship Service at Kelly Field.

At noon on Sunday, the famous Bar-B-Q sandwiches go on sale, kids' activities start with the Kids Zone-Bale Maze, sponsored by F.F.A., and the Beer Garden opens. Then, depending on your preferences, you can enjoy the Tractor Pull or take in an afternoon of Bingo with the Lions Club.

The kids will be busy at the Greased Pole and Frog Jump, or the Kids Pedal Pull, sponsored by Fisher Implement.

Closing out the weekend, will be the 4th annual Combine Demolition Derby!

While you're in town, don't forget to check out the Banks Merchants Sidewalk Sale on Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The

merchants have promised bargains galore while you take time to see what Banks has to offer on the other end of town!

City will hold Town Hall to discuss parks

Vernonia City Council has scheduled a Town Hall meeting to discuss proposed agreements and rates for the use of Parks Facilities, on Tuesday, Sept. 3, at 5:00 p.m. in the Anderson Park picnic shelter.

Council and the Parks Committee want to standardize a facility use agreement and rates throughout the City parks system and want to hear comments from the public.

This Town Hall meeting will be a potluck! Bring your favorite food dish and eating utensils.

School board deals with varied problems

A standing-room-only audience remained for the entire Vernonia School District board meeting, August 1, to watch or participate in discussion of three significant issues—air quality problems at Washington Grade School, drug testing of athletes, and out-of-district placement policy. None of the issues was directly related to school funding problems.

Air quality complaints at Washington Grade School

Superintendent Mike Funderburg reviewed actions in regard to air quality at WGS. Beginning with an Oct. 16, 2001, letter from the Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division (OSHA) in response to a complaint that employees and students experience sinus infections, nausea and headaches in the WGS basement, Funderburg traced the district response. An Oct. 22, 2001, reply to OSHA cited the district's attempts to limit the use of the basement since 1996, and the recommendation of the long range facilities plan to retire the facility as soon as possible. The response included documentation of efforts to mitigate dampness and mold. In December, 2001, the district received notice from OSHA that the complaint had "been investigated and necessary action has been taken to correct any hazards identified."

In February, 2002, the district contacted Clayton Group Services (CGS) and received a proposal for work to "determine the extent of possible mold-related issues in the school building and evaluate the current provisions for providing outdoor air to the occupied areas." However, the district did not respond to CGS and no analysis was performed. Funderburg praised the efforts of a parent,

Marie Botchie, to make him aware of the problem. In a positive response, Botchie said that the goal should be to make the school as healthy and safe for all children as is possible.

Since taking over as superintendent, Funderburg has asked OSG for a restatement of their proposal, talked with the Scappoose School District about their handling of a similar situation, and contacted Liberty Northwest (the district's workers' compensation carrier) about conducting further air quality testing.

He also contracted with CGS to complete the physical testing, which was done July 24. Preliminary reports indicate that the problems are not related to the flooding of '96, but may be related to dry rot and the accumulation of water in the basement caused by overfull gutters. CGS will issue a complete report by the time of the next board meeting. Liberty Northwest will also conduct air quality testing in September.

The district's new maintenance supervisor, John Lewis (who started July 29th) spent a good deal of his first four days on the job cleaning the gutters at WGS and the high school. All of the affected drains have been cleared and are now working, according to Funderburg. Members of the Vernonia Education Association, the local teachers union, said they had been trying for a long time to reach a resolution to the air quality problem, but have agreed to wait for results of scientific testing before considering further action.

Fiscal responsibility for a new school building was discussed by Botchie and Director Jim Krahn, with Botchie insisting that the state had an obligation to pay for a safe and

Please see page 8