

Best selling author will visit

Jane Kirkpatrick, the award-winning author of ten books, including *A Sweetness to the Soul*, and winner of the Wrangler for the Outstanding Western Novel of 1995, will be at the Vernonia Public Library

on Sunday, September 22 from 1-2:30 p.m. Kirkpatrick will sign copies of her books, including her newest novel, *A Name of Her Own*. This work of historical fiction is based on the life of Marie

Dorion, the first mother to cross the Rocky Mountains and remain in the Northwest.

The public is invited to meet Kirkpatrick, enjoy refreshments and discussion with the author and, if you

Meeting set for future adoptive parents

The Oregon Department of Human Services is in critical need of foster and adoptive homes. There will be an informational meeting for people interested in providing foster care or becoming adoptive parents on Tuesday, September 10, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the State Office Complex, 500 N. Hwy 30, St. Helens, Confer-

ence Room A.

For those wishing to continue to become certified as foster parents or to adopt through the agency, a core training will be offered the following Tuesday evenings for five weeks, April 22 through 29, at 6:30 p.m.

There are currently over 400 children in Oregon waiting to be placed in permanent adoptive homes. In Columbia County alone, there are over 80 children in substitute care, some of whom will be returned to parents or relatives, and some of whom will be freed for adoption. Children who need homes range in age from newborns to teens. They may need just a few days of shelter, or many years in a warm, loving home. Many of them have special needs stemming from neglect

or abuse to being born affected by drugs or alcohol.

Foster parents are reimbursed for the children's living expenses, and health coverage is provided for children placed by the State. There are no fees involved for families who wish to adopt through the State, and Adoption Assistance is available for those who will adopt children with special needs.

Foster or adoptive parents can be single, married or divorced. They can live in a house or an apartment; work inside or outside the home; have children of their own or not. Foster and adoptive parents need to be caring, patient, flexible and possess a sense of humor. They do not need a large income, just a large heart.

CASA volunteers needed to advocate for children's needs

While the state Department of Human Services, particularly the Child Welfare Division, is being reorganized, CASA volunteers are out talking to those involved in a child's case, reviewing files, spending time with the child in order to make a recommendation to juvenile court as to what they believe is in the child's best interest.

CASA volunteers have been trained to do this work and judges find it valuable. Twenty-five years ago, in fact, it was a Seattle judge who developed the concept, because of concern about making decisions on children's futures without sufficient information. The concept has been so successful, there are now 900 CASA programs, nationwide, helping over one million children.

CASA is an acronym for

Court Appointed Special Advocate, and CASA volunteers are trained to represent abused and neglected children in court. One of CASA's strengths is that it is a community-based solution to a problem. Though it's a challenging commitment, no particular background is required. CASA of Columbia County has volunteers who are employed full or part-time, retired and stay-at-home moms, to name a few. CASA volunteers have represented over 50 abused and neglected children in Columbia County's Court in just the last year. Trained volunteers are needed to represent the abused and neglected children in Columbia County.

New volunteer training will begin in late September. For more information, call 503-366-7644.

Members needed for senior board

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is seeking individuals interested in serving on the advisory committee. Members assist in planning, monitoring and advocating senior citizens issues and services in Columbia County. The committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Columbia County Council of Senior Citizens Inc. (CCCSC Inc.) on issues relating to senior citizens. Especially needed are representatives from the Clatskanie and Vernonia areas.

The Advisory Council meets on the first Monday of each

month at 1:00 p.m., usually in St. Helens. September's meeting will be Monday, September 9 (due to the Labor Day Holiday) at the Columbia County Courthouse in Room 308.

Applications are available at the CCCSC Inc. office, 277 Strand in St. Helens, or by calling 503-397-4000.

CORRECTION

Recognition Night for Vernonia High School students who have earned the Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) will be October 23.



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