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The INDEPENDENT

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"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

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A growing effort



Thanks to Banks Boy Scout Cody Barnett, a brand new greenhouse has been constructed at Banks Elementary School. The greenhouse was Barnett's Eagle project and, with help from friends and his mentor, Rob Garcia, the structure went up very fast. Barnett and Garcia are pictured above, between the greenhouse and the brick wall, facing toward the camera.

City will thin trees from Bolmeier Park

The City of Vernonia awarded a contract to Gwin and Sons Logging to cut and remove some of the mature trees from Ora Bolmeier Park. Plans have been in place for a long time to thin some of the trees because growth in some areas is too dense for park use, but the job was postponed when log prices

plummeted. The need has become more urgent, however, because the daughter of Mrs. Bolmeier, who was a long-time teacher and city clerk, has donated playground equipment for the park and the space is needed in order to utilize them.

A complaint about horse manure on the bridge to the linear

trail extension from Anderson Park, triggered a response from another citizen. Jacqueline Ramsay told of going home from Vernonia Lake, getting a broom, returning and sweeping the path. She then gave the broom to the caretaker, with instructions for its use.

47J forms special budget review team

Despite voter approval of stopgap Ballot Measures 19 and 20, a statewide financial crisis exists. To help deal with the situation, Vernonia School District has formed a Budget Assistance Team – composed of budget committee members, school board members and administrators – to study continuing budget projections and

make recommendations to the board. Budget committee members Noni Andersen, Robyn Bassett and Cindy Naillon, and board members Leslie O'Leary, Cari Levenseller and Tim Titus volunteered to serve on the team.

The first meeting will be October 9 at 7:00 a.m. in the District Office.

Ballot Measures 19, 20 pass in county

With slightly fewer than 50 percent of registered voters casting ballots, Columbia County voters approved Ballot Measures 19 and 20 in the September 17 Special Election.

Of those who voted on Measure 19, 56 percent favored taking \$150 million from an education endowment fund to help meet immediate education needs, and eliminated the en-

School board format has students speak

Students will be included in Vernonia School Board meetings, in a change instituted by Superintendent Mike Funderburg. Now, instead of principals submitting written reports of activities, they will develop a more comprehensive report with student representatives at the elementary, junior high and high school level. The students will then report each month to the board, with the principals available to answer any questions. The principals will also supplement student reports, when necessary.

The new format was initiated at the Sept. 12 meeting, with Lincoln Grade School students Ryan Sandstrom and Logan Hendricks telling about their experiences at school. Both boys told the board there were "a lot of nice people there."

Anna Naspini reported for Washington Grade School, describing the programs presented at both Lincoln and Washington on Sept. 11. She also invited board members to the Rattling Thunder Intertribal Pow Wow on Sept. 20 at 9:00 a.m. The assembly will be this year's first Run for the Arts activity, paid for with funds raised last spring.

Melissa Grebenc left Outdoor School at Camp Wilkerson in order to report for Vernonia High School. She gave an excellent description of

Freshman Orientation, then discussed the Renaissance assembly on the first day of school to recognize 45 students who maintained a grade point average of 3.5 or better, or who increased their GPA by .5, for the final quarter of last year. She also told the board that the (Student Body) President's Challenge this year is to raise money for juvenile diabetes, and invited board members to last night's open house.

Elementary Principal Kirk Sherrill, who attended Outdoor School this year, praised the work of the teacher/organizers Cathy Ward and Marilyn Peterson, and the exceptional group of high school counselors. Although he apparently had a personal garment run up the flagpole, he also laughed as he said, "...sixth grade boys are fun."

On a more serious note, Sherrill told the board that two-way communication was purchased and is now in use by playground supervisors on the WGS playground, following an incident when first aid treatment for an injured child took "too much time." He also thanked parent Linda Garrymore for her gift of a small first aid pack that can be worn on the playground to facilitate prompt treatment in case of injury.

Funderburg also introduced a program of recognition for community members or organizations that have volunteered exceptional time or services to the district. The first recipients are the Manning office of the Oregon Department of Transportation, Vernonia City Hall employees, Tim Titus and West Oregon Electric Cooperative, Dick Titus of Northwest Excavating Services, and Chief Paul Epler and the Vernonia Fire District.