

Community

Senior property tax deferral date nears

The Oregon Department of Revenue reminds taxpayers that April 15 is the filing deadline for the Disabled Citizen Property Tax Deferral Program and the Senior Citizen Property Tax Deferral Program. Applications and information are available by calling the local county assessor's office.

Both deferral programs allow qualified taxpayers to defer payment of their property taxes on their homes. The state pays the taxes to the county, main-

tains the account, and charges six percent simple interest, which is also deferred. Taxes are owed when the taxpayer receiving the deferral dies, sells the property, ceases to live permanently on the property, or the property changes ownership.

To qualify for either program, the property must be the taxpayer's principal residence and must have a deed or recorded sales contract. Total household income must be less than

\$32,000 for the year before application. Participants may remain on either program as long as their federal adjusted gross income does not exceed \$32,000. If a participant's income exceeds the \$32,000 limit, part of the taxes still may be deferred. Participants can come in and out of the program if their income changes.

In addition to meeting the income limitation and property ownership requirement, disabled persons must be receiving or be eligible to receive federal Social Security Disability benefits to qualify for the Disabled Citizen Property Tax Deferral Program. Senior citizens must be 62 years old or older by April 15 to qualify for the Senior Citizen Property Tax Deferral Program.

For more information, call the Department of Revenue's Tax Services line at 503-378-4988 or 1-800-356-4222. For Spanish, call 503-945-8618. For TTY (hearing or speech impaired only), call 1-800-886-7204. The Spanish and TTY numbers are answered by machine only. A representative will return the call.

Council of Seniors is seeking additional board members

The Columbia County Council of Senior Citizens Inc. (CCCSC Inc) is recruiting additional volunteers to sit on their private, non-profit Board of Directors.

Council President Ray Godsey is actively seeking someone from in Vernonia. "I would be happy to talk with interested individuals and/or send out informational materials to people," Godsey said.

The Council board meets on the second Friday of each month at 1:00 p.m. at the Columbia County Courthouse. The next meeting is March 14.

Among other duties, the Senior Council manages ColCo Transportation and the Area Agency on Aging in Columbia County. ColCo Transportation, which has been in operation for more than thirty years, provides transportation to senior citizens, disabled persons, school children and the general public in Columbia County.

According to Godsey, reduction of in-town rates, to \$1.00 each way, has increased ridership. "In January, we provided 116 trips in Vernonia," he said.

The Council of Seniors also provides financial assistance to county Senior Centers to operate the meals-on-wheels program, Monday through Friday.

"The meals are offered at a suggested donation for seniors citizens over age sixty, and we have been averaging 297 meals per month in Vernonia," Godsey said. "Volunteers assist in delivering meals-on-wheels to homebound individu-

als", he added. Senior Center cooks and ColCo drivers are employees of the Council of Seniors.

"The Council expects to continue...with the delivery of transportation, meals at senior centers, home delivered meals and other services to senior citizens in our county," said Godsey.

For more information about the Council of Seniors, visit the CCCSC Inc. office at 277 Strand in St. Helens, or call Executive Director Merri Reamer at 503-397-4000.

Free vision screening available

March is National Save Your Vision Month, and to celebrate, the Pacific University College of Optometry Vision Centers are providing free vision screenings for children and adults of all ages. Free screenings are available throughout the month of March.

Normal vision function is critical in the development of learning skills for infants and children. Screenings take about 30 minutes and provide important information about clarity of vision, eye health and eye coordination. These factors are essential for good vision and healthy eyes. Screenings are especially beneficial for younger children whose learning skills, such as reading and writing, and self-esteem in the classroom, depend on good vision and healthy eyes. Screenings are also available for area schools, businesses and community organizations through

Pacific's off-site screening program.

Pacific University's Vision Centers offer weekday, evening and weekend hours, with locations throughout greater Portland, including downtown, southeast and northeast Portland, Forest Grove and Cornelius.

For more information, call 503-352-2020 or Steven Fletcher at 503-352-2144.

GERALD RUSSELL 1920 - 2003

The Senior Center wishes to express our sincere sympathy to Etta Russell and family on the passing of Gerald Russell. Gerald was a past Center President and both he and Etta served here faithfully in years past.

His smile and laughter will be missed.

Senior News

By Karen Miller



No doubt about it, advertising for our Senior Center gets around town like

the wind; or rather with the help of the wind. We'd like to thank the sweet lady who literally ran after our sandwich board down the middle of Bridge Street, who wishes to remain unidentified, to all those who witnessed the strange event.

Ten of us went to the Rainier Senior Center last Monday for the Five Area luncheon. Read our column for future trips.

Mark your calendar for the second Friday of each month. Willoughby Hearing is here from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Come on in during that time or call our office for an appointment.

Call our office for information on Free Tax Help, a volunteer program administered through

the AARP Foundation in cooperation with the IRS and the Oregon Department of Revenue. This program is designed to help most elderly low-income, limited English proficiency and disabled taxpayers with the preparation of their tax return.

Seamstresses: Our yardage sale continues through March 15.

Surfin' Seniors on the Web: Keep up with the latest news on prescription drugs, Social Security and more. Updated daily by the staff of the AARP Bulletin at <www.aarp.org/bulletin>

So, why did the reporter go to the ice cream parlor? To get the scoop, of course. Now, to get the senior scoop, come on in, join in our "fireside chats" and read us in *The Independent*. Or, if you graciously haul our board back, come in and sit a spell.

INFORMATION NUMBERS
COLCO Transportation 429-4304
Senior Advocate.. 429-9112
Senior Center..... 429-3912

Then and Now... at Hutchins



1950s

Chevy V8 Convertible **\$2,595.00**
19" Black & White TV **\$169.00**
Washer & Dryer **\$699.00**
Refrigerator-18cu Ft. **\$649.00**

2003

Chevy Corvette **\$53,000.00**
20" Color Stereo TV **\$159.00**
Washer & Dryer **\$529.00**
Refrigerator-18 cu Ft. **\$449.00**

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