

Vernonia Cares Director Sandy Welch is honored as Citizen of the Year

Sandy Welch, the 2003 Jamboree Citizen of the Year is the director of Vernonia Cares Food Bank. She is also a native Vernonian, and is in complete agreement with this year's Jamboree theme that proclaims Vernonia as the "Best Little Town in America."

Sandy has been director of the non-profit emergency food

agency for only two years, but her volunteer experience in helping establish the Vernonia Foursquare Church, in 1979, then helping to maintain it over the years, has given her a wealth of experience in helping others and working with volunteers.

Sandy started working as a child, picking strawberries like

most of the other children in Vernonia, and still remembers her first pay check.

"We were paid at the end of the season, then," Sandy explained, "and my first check was for \$17.00. I thought I was rich!"

She also knew exactly what she wanted to do with the money: She went to Miller's Department Store (Miller's was in the brick building at the corner of Bridge and Madison, which also housed J.C. Penney at one time.) and bought a new shirt and slacks, especially for Jamboree!

After high school, Sandy worked at various jobs and married Ron Welch, who is now a building contractor. Ron and Sandy raised three children in Vernonia, with Sandy doing a lot of home schooling.

Their two daughters are grown and their son is a sophomore at Vernonia High School. They also have four grandchildren.

Sandy was "extremely" surprised at her selection as Citizen of the Year but said she accepted the honor in order to bring attention to Vernonia Cares and the many volunteers who help keep it running. The client load has nearly doubled



Sandy Welch's friendly smile puts people at ease.

in the past two years and, with-

out volunteers, it would be impossible to maintain the service to people in need.

In addition to helping on Tuesdays and Thursdays when Cares is open, volunteers transport the tons of food that come to the food bank each year, work on fundraising activities, handle many behind-the-scenes jobs such as re-packaging foods that are delivered in bulk, and serve on the board of directors.

Sandy has also been tireless in carrying the message of need to the community. There are many good reasons to proclaim Sandy Welch as Citizen of the Year.

Fun Run added to Jamboree will also be benefit Vernonia Cares operations

A "Fun Run" held last summer as a benefit for Vernonia Cares Emergency Food Pantry was so popular that it was added to this year's Friendship Jamboree – and with an interesting twist, as well!

Participants in the 5-1/2K "Dare to Care" Fun Run/Walk will actually lead off the Jamboree Parade on Saturday. The run will start at 10:50 a.m. from the corner of Bridge Street and Weed Avenue, alongside Vernonia City Hall.

Registration is from 10:00 to

10:45 a.m. Entry fees are \$15 per individual and \$30 per family. The registration fee includes a raffle ticket.

There will be awards for Overall first, second and third place, plus first, second and third place awards for men and women in each age group – 0 to 10, 11 to 20 and 21 to 30.

Awards and raffle drawing will be at noon at Vernonia Cares, 627 Adams Avenue.

For more information, call Sandi Welch at 503-429-1414 or www.signmeup.com/20855

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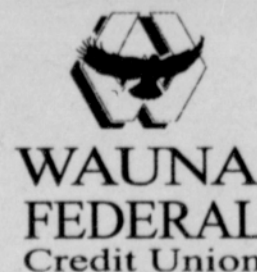
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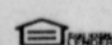
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**Welcome to
Vernonia
Friendship
Jamboree
Aug. 1, 2 & 3
2003**