

Remembering those who fell



Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters and Medics honored those who died in the collapse of the World Trade Center after a terrorist attack on September 11, 2001.

9-1-1 Levy renewal on ballot

The Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District will place a request to renew its Operating Fund on the November 4, 2003 ballot. The proposed Operating Levy rate will be two cents less than the current 9-1-1 Operating Levy, which was approved by voters in 1998.

The 9-1-1 Operating Fund is due for a five-year renewal since the current levy expires next year. With people throughout the district demonstrating strong support for the 9-1-1 service, the District's citizen Board of Directors voted unanimously to place the request on the November ballot. In order to maintain continuity and quality of service, the District recognizes that the time to renew the Operating Fund is now.

This is not a new tax, it is a renewal of the Operating Fund that will maintain this essential and reliable service to everyone in Columbia County," said Dee Wooley, a Clatskanie resident and president of the board for the district. "The substantial upgrades we committed to are nearly complete, providing a blanket of uninterrupted radio service for all fire, emergency medical and law enforcement agencies throughout the county. And we were fortunate to be able to do that using grant funds from outside the county. The District has been efficient while improving services. As a result, the rate will decrease slightly for the renewal."

The 9-1-1 District has accomplished what it said it would do by improving essential

equipment while at the same time increasing reliability and service. The number of calls to the district have more than doubled in the last ten years. Plus, the construction of the county-wide microwave/radio system will be complete in October. "District 9-1-1 dispatchers handle more than 10 calls an hour, or more than 240 calls a day," says District Administrator, Sally Jones. "We successfully connect 16 different emergency service agencies with people who need their help. 9-1-1 is a vital link for the safety and livability that our neighbors deserve, and receive."

The Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District Operating Fund supports all ongoing functions of the 9-1-1 call center, including 24-hour staffing, training and coordination with local and state emergency operations. The five-year renewal will maintain the level of service citizens throughout Columbia County now receive.

For more information on the Operating Fund renewal or the Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District, contact Sally Jones, District Administrator at 503/397-7255, ext. 223, or sjones@columbia911.com, or District Board members.

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Did You Know...

By Chief Michael J. Cahill
Vernonia Police Department

The role of American law enforcement is to detect and deter law breaking. Police officers are enforcement officers representing their specific governmental areas. In Vernonia, law enforcement officers obtain their authority through the city Charter and State Law. These officers enforce both local and state laws.

Let's first talk about "detection" of crime and law breaking. Officers go about this several ways. One is to patrol the community. The officer can utilize this time for more than one objective. For example while patrolling a school zone the officer can look for minor vehicle violations that many drivers may not know exist. Such as burnt out brake lights, stolen license plates, and many other minor violations. By using the time to reduce speeding in the school zone the officer is also providing a preventive service that could eliminate problems for drivers later.

Most criminals get around

the same way we do. In a car. By far, more violent and dangerous criminals are apprehended by patrolling police officers than any other means. Oregon's largest single drug arrest was on a lonely state highway in Harney County. A lone state trooper pulled over a car with pounds and pounds of cocaine in it. The drugs had made their way from the country of Colombia only to be stopped in rural Oregon by a traffic officer. The reason for the traffic stop was a minor vehicle violation.

Crime deterrence is another aspect of police work. Deterring crime means several things to police officers. It can mean setting up stings that are highly publicized either before or after a sting, and sometimes both before and after. The stings create a public awareness that law enforcement personnel are selectively enforcing a particular law during a particular time.

The Three Flags program we often see in British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon is a good example of a highly publicized sting where law enforcement selectively enforces speeding, seat belt usage, and drunk driving while patrolling specific targeted highways. Generally, stings are associated with problematic holidays or events that have a history of public injury or reduction in quality of life. Other stings may be completely secret until they have succeeded in meeting their goal, and then a press release is written to inform the public. Drug investigations for example.

Upcoming "Did You Know" topics;

"How much do you weigh when you come to a sudden stop at 25 mph?"

"Who has the right of way when there is no painted crosswalk?"

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