

Letters

Update on progress of Kendra Barker

To the Editor:

After the article and photo of Kendra appeared in your newspaper about 4 months ago we have been overwhelmed with the generosity of the Vernonia community as well as the support of strangers who don't know Kendra or any of her family. Thank you to the Vernonia Lions Club for setting up the donation fund to help with the expenses related to Kendra's cancer recovery treatments. Thank you to all of you who opened your hearts and your wallets to help. Thank you for caring and praying. Thank you for your show of love and support. Thank you for your genuine concern.

Kendra had her final radiation treatment October 21. Fortunately, she was able to stay at Ronald McDonald House, right next door to the hospital, for the final 6 weeks of daily radiation treatments. She will continue with weekly chemotherapy treatments until March 15, 2004. Once every three weeks an overnight stay at Dornbecher is required for treatment. The other chemotherapy

can be administered in Eugene. We were jubilant with the results of the MRI in late August that showed the tumor was gone. But, due to the nature and location of the cancer and the potential for additional mutated cells, the treatments will continue.

Thank you for all the calls, prayer chains, cards, gifts, concern, encouragement and support during the last 4 months. We will keep you posted on her progress. Thank you to *The Independent* for printing the article and this letter of appreciation.

The Family of Kendra
Nicole Barker
Vernonia and Springfield

Successful effort puts initiative on ballot

To the Editor:

Putting together an initiative to present to the public for consideration is no easy task. Finding property owners who will allow you to locate yourself on their property to obtain the required number of signatures is extremely difficult! We wish to salute J.J.'s Marketplace in Scappoose for the numerous days of allowing us to be there

getting over 1,170 valid signatures from registered voters in Columbia County. Also, a big thank you to Hi School Pharmacy in Scappoose and Clatskanie and Vernonia Senior Center. Because of you we reached our quota and the initiative will be on the ballot in 2004.

Sincerely,
Thelma Bonar
Tamara Maygra
Dorothy Robertson
Warren

Apologizes to all for Jensen killing in 1988

To the Editor:

To the family of Richard N. Jensen, Jr., and to the community of Columbia County.

Life is a process of making mistakes, learning from them and making wiser choices. No one is perfect, but we can become better with each new day when we are ready to learn.

I committed a horrendous crime that I'm ashamed of, and will have to live with for the rest of my life.

In 1988, I took the life of a beloved member of your community.

I shot and killed Mr. Richard

N. Jensen, Jr.

To this day, I realize there may be people who hate me. I even hated myself for the crime I committed – for what I did, but not for who I am.

Good people are sometimes capable of doing bad things and allow stupidity to overcome rational thought.

I blindly followed the wrong crowd. I'll live with that for the rest of my life, but I'm still a decent human being with faith, ambition, feelings and a vision for my future.

I pray that, somehow, others may view my crime as a deterrent, and live their lives in a more positive and meaningful way, instead of allowing poor judgement to destroy them.

Even with endless talent and exceptional intellect, when we're unethical, we can lose everything we've worked hard to achieve.

I have learned a lot from my prison experience. Without faith, loving support of friends and family, life is meaningless.

My years in prison have been enough time to think about my crime, but that's not enough punishment for me.

If I am released in 2009, I never want to serve another minute in prison, but I do want to share my life serving my community. It's not what we do occasionally that makes us who we are, it's what we do consistently.

Good people sometimes do bad things. I am not the same person I was in 1988.

I made a mistake, but I'm not a mistake.

My deepest, heartfelt apology goes out to the Jensen family, and to those who knew Mr. Richard N. Jensen, Jr.

Sincerely,
Rufus L. Washington, Jr.
Ontario

Grade Schools' efforts are a help to Food Bank

Dear People of Vernonia,

Thank you, Washington and Lincoln Grade Schools, for your donation of 2,150 lbs. of food to this food bank. That's over one ton of food! You exceeded last year's total by 107 pounds. Super work, students and staff! Thank you, parents, for sending the food with your children to support this food drive. Also, thanks to Bonnie Holce and Patty Fetherston, who organized this whole project.

Vernonia Cares statistics show a 30% increase in client numbers from this time last year. We've served 3,156 people thus far in 2003 (1487 of whom are children). On behalf of the households who receive this food, again I say a heartfelt "thanks."

Be proud of yourselves, students, for a job well done! Thanks, students, for proving that the youth are another part of Vernonia Cares!

Gratefully,
Sandy Welch, Director
Vernonia Cares Food Bank

Thanks to Ray for continued assistance

To the Editor:

Thanks, Ray Pelster.

I came into town the other day from my home outside of Vernonia to see Ray with his leaf blower clearing the sidewalks. Many other times I have seen him trimming flowers in our lovely flower boxes, trimming trees, and picking up trash. I believe the town owes him a great big "Thank you" for many years of caring for our beautiful home town.

Lulu Lamping
Vernonia

Between the Bookends

By Ann Krutsinger, Library Assistant
Banks Public Library



The library will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday on Thursday and Friday, November 27 and 28. We will be open Saturday, November 29, at the usual time.

If you are planning to pre-order books for the Annual Holiday Book Fest, please turn your order

forms in soon, or call the library to find out more about this event. The Holiday Book Fest will be held Thursday, December 4 from 3-6:00 p.m.

Libraries are resources for the newest fiction and latest mysteries. Libraries are also places to do research. We, at the Banks Public Library, like to keep tabs on the books that our patrons may be borrowing from other libraries so that we can make informed choices about materials that our patrons want. If you have a particular area of interest and would like us to consider purchasing a particular book, please bring us the title.

Health is always a popular topic, from mental health to yoga videos and exercise books, or diet books and various ailments that afflict us as we age. Some examples of the latter are arthritis, lupus, diabetes, and cancer.

One of the books we have purchased because of patron interest is *How to Prevent and Treat Cancer with Natural Medicine* by Doctors Michael Murray, Tim Birdsall, Joseph Pizzorno

and Paul Reilly. In this book you will learn how to assess your cancer risk through a screening questionnaire, how to change your internal environment so cancer can't survive, and discover the science behind the emotions and attitudes that play a role in prevention and treatment of cancer. You can also find out what combinations of foods, vitamins, herbs, minerals and supplements can help you prevent, treat, or cope with cancer.

Another recently purchased book is *The American Diabetes Association Diabetes Cookbook*. Since managing your diet is the key to managing diabetes, this cookbook provides delicious, wholesome recipes that are appropriate for the diabetic. There are fresh, healthy and flavorful recipes for soups, appetizers, quick meals and snacks, main dishes and side dishes, breads, desserts and cakes. The authors also include advice on how to plan balanced meals that keep blood glucose levels in check. Perhaps if we all ate recipes from this cookbook we could slow down the rate of diabetes in this country.

Banks Public Library: 111 Market Street.
Hours: Tues., Wed., Thurs., 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.;
Fri. and Sat. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Preschool Story Time: Wednesdays, 10:15
a.m., through July.
Phone: (503) 324-1382
Internet: www.WILnet.wcccls.lib.or.us
to browse library resources or to
reserve materials electronically.

Town Hall on Economic Development Monday, November 17, 6:30 p.m. Scout Cabin in Hawkins Park

City of Vernonia has funds for targeted training for local small businesses. These funds are part of a larger grant for marketing Vernonia in an effort to encourage visitors to spend some time and money in Vernonia. How the training funds will be used depends, in great part, on what local businesses feel is needed. Businesses have received a survey form to help in making that determination. Vernonia also needs to update its economic development strategy, which was last done in 1996.

Please join local businesses in an effort to help guide the future of Vernonia and its people.