

The INDEPENDENT

Vol. 18, No. 24

"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

December 18, 2003

Sounds of the Season...



Members of Cub Scout Pack 201, with families and friends, enjoyed an evening of caroling as they strolled throughout town

Blood Drive recognizes local needs, too

The need for blood is rarely expected and sadly, every two seconds someone in the United States needs a blood transfusion. Being sure that blood is available can be difficult because it has a shelf life and must come from volunteer blood donors.

Patients rely on volunteer blood donations to save their

Counties receive federal grants for emergency food and shelter

Oregon will receive grants totaling \$2,571,031 from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Emergency Food and Shelter (EFS) Program to supplement food, shelter, rent, mortgage, and utility assistance programs for Oregonians with non-disaster related emergencies. Included in the total are \$43,595 for Columbia County and \$22,353 for Clatsop County.

lives.

A Red Cross bloodmobile will visit Vernonia January 2, in recognition of Joel Glass, a Vernonia resident who recently received 111 units of blood after a hunting accident.

The blood drive will be held at the Vernonia Fire Station, 555 East Bridge, on Friday, January 2, from 12 noon to

The EFS national board is chaired by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and composed of representatives from national charities and relief organizations. In each jurisdiction funded, a local board establishes priorities, selects local non-profit and government agencies to receive supplemental funding, and monitors program compliance.

4:00 p.m. Donors must be at least 17 years old, weigh a minimum of 110 pounds, have positive identification, and be in good general health.

Take a moment to donate blood. One hour of your time can help premature babies, cancer and surgery patients, accident victims and others who need blood and blood products to live.

Blood products are often needed in the following ways: red blood cells, blood's oxygen carrying component, are often used to treat surgery patients; platelets, which aid in blood clotting, are often needed by cancer patients during chemotherapy; plasma, the liquid portion of blood, is often used to treat trauma victims; and cryoprecipitate, a clotting factor found in plasma, can help people with blood disease lead normal lives.

Vernonia Lions aim for skate/BMX park

The local Lions Club is starting the process of developing a skateboard, inline skate and BMX bike park in Vernonia, the Vernonia City Council was told at their December 15 meeting. Making the presentation for the Vernonia Lions, George Tice said that club members have been visiting other communities, talking with people involved in the development and operation of skate parks, and researching the various kinds of construction. Between fundraising and construction, the group expects the project to take two to three years.

The Lions goal is to develop the project as a community-wide effort, working with the city, fire district, schools, service organizations, businesses and churches. They are willing to take the lead in raising the \$50,000-\$100,00 needed but, because they do not want to handle the accounting and administrative functions, are seeking arrangements with the city or another non-profit organization to handle those areas of the project. They will be looking for potential sites on both city-owned and privately owned properties.

As soon as they have developed more information, including possible locations for the park, a public meeting will be scheduled, likely in February or March. City staff will work with the Lions in developing site information.

Highway 47 work starts

Bridge work has started on state Highway 47, which is both Vernonia's main street and the major transportation route for the upper Nehalem Valley. Soon to follow will be culvert replacement and shoulder work, as needed, plus resurfacing from the Sunset Highway to the north end of the Vernonia City

Limits. In the process, there will be some major disruption of traffic, Vernonia Public Works Director Robyn Bassett told the council.

Bassett and City Administrator Mike Sykes have been meeting with personnel from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to obtain more information on scheduling and how it will affect the community. They will be meeting again in an effort to coordinate scheduling and minimize negative impact on the community. Council has scheduled an informational Town Hall meeting at the Scout Cabin, February 17 at 6:30 p.m., with staff from ODOT to explain the project and answer questions.

Senior Center

A new Vernonia Senior Center may become reality, starting this spring. Representing Community Action Team, which will administer the project, Jim Tierney told the council that, as soon as the city completes acquisition of land adjacent to Vernonia Lake, an option for property west of there will be obtained for the building site. In addition to the senior center, the building will house Vernonia Cares and offices for county and/or state services. The City of Vernonia has obtained a \$600,000 Community Development Block Grant for the project, but there is still a need to seek approximately \$400,000 in grants and/or loans, Tierney said.

Transportation plan

Council members were somewhat less than enthusiastic about a transportation plan developed and recommended for Columbia County by Landsman Transportation Planning; actually, they were appalled.

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