

## Between the Bookends

By Nancy Burch, Librarian  
Vernonia Public Library



It's certainly been an interesting week (weather-wise) in Vernonia. Hours have been just slightly irregular at the library—opening a little earlier one day and a little later another, but all in all the library has been open to serve the citizens nearly all of the time as scheduled. Friends of the Library meeting has been rescheduled for Tuesday, January 20th at 6:30 p.m., with the book discussion group to meet that same evening at 7:00 p.m. Anyone interested in either or both of these organizations is encouraged to attend. New members and membership renewals (\$5.00 for an individual and \$10.00 for a family) in The Friends are being accepted now for 2004. The sole purpose of this organization is to aid the library by providing materials or implementing programs and services that would not otherwise be available to the community.

The Friends of the Library will help sponsor the Oregon Chautauqua program scheduled for Tuesday, February 17, at 7:00 p.m. Be sure to mark your calendars for this presentation entitled, "The Great Depression: Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" Historian and folklorist Twilo Scofield will be using photographs, personal accounts, songs, and materials from the WPA files to illustrate the plight of Americans during the hungry years of 1929-1933. This free, public program is made possible by funding from the Oregon Council for the Humanities, an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. If you've been unable to attend one of these Chautauqua presentations, ask someone who has and they will assure you of both the educational and entertaining value of these programs. The Friends of the Library and members of the library board will provide refreshments, while the Staggenborgs, of Vernonia Inn, are once again generously donating a room for Ms. Scofield following the evening's entertainment.

The after-school reading enrichment program has been funded, again, with a grant obtained by the Columbia County Commission on Children and Families, through the State of Oregon. Even though some sessions have already taken place, funding approval was late, so not much publicity has been given the program to date. Flyers, with the upcoming schedule, will be available at the schools and the library. Most of these sessions for youngsters ages 7-12 will be held on Monday afternoons (only when school is in session) at the library, at 3:30 p.m., under the direction of Trish Maldonado or Orissa Burghard. Lasting about an hour, these enjoyable programs include stories (read by adults as well as youngsters) and activities/crafts. Watch for schedules because there is discussion of some activities being held on Friday afternoons since students are dismissed early on Fridays.

Pre-school story time is always available to youngsters on Monday mornings at 10:30. This is a good opportunity for moms and kids to get out of the house and enjoy an activity with others.

Federal tax forms have arrived and are available in the library. There is a charge of .10 a copy for items duplicated on the library's copy

machine.

Library patrons were generous in adopting (purchasing) items as gifts for the library at Christmas. Nearly 20 of the books and books on CD were purchased and have been added to the library's collection. Examples of these materials are *Skipping Christmas* by John Grisham in CD format, *Morality for Beautiful Girls* by Alexander McCall Smith, *Christmas in the West* by Sam Travers, *I Love You Like a Tomato* by Marie Giordano, *The Opposite of Fate* by Amy Tan, and *Valley of Light* by Terry Kay. Thanks to all who purchased these items for the library.

Recent additions to the Sally, Jane and Arthur Connolly Collection include *All Over Creation* by Ruth Ozeki, *The Solace of Open Spaces* by Gretel Ehrlich, *The Book Lover's Cookbook, In Flanders Fields* by Norman Jorgensen, and *One Vacant Chair* by Joe Coomer. Be sure to take a look at Jorgensen's beautiful interpretation of John McCrae's poem about Christmas on this battlefield during World War I. Another recommendation is Coomer's, *One Vacant Chair*. This novel is about Aunt Edna, who paints portraits of chairs—not people in chairs, just chairs. The old house where Edna has lived, and taken care of her mother until her recent death, is filled with these paintings and with the chairs themselves. Told by Edna's niece, Sarah, who has stayed after the funeral to help clean up the last of a life and travel with her Aunt Edna to Scotland to help scatter the ashes of her grandparents, this novel reveals Edna's remarkable secret life, as well as the fragile business of living and dying. It has some wonderfully poignant and humorous descriptions of characters and events such as Reverend Roberts while conducting both a funeral and a wedding and James, the blind black man whom Aunt Edna marries.

Another recommendation I'd like to make is for an author, April Henry. Ms. Henry lives in Portland and has written several novels about Claire Montrose, who formerly worked for DMV determining whether vanity license plates were acceptable. After Claire inherits a valuable painting in Ms. Henry's first novel, *Square in the Face*, she changes occupations, but continues to conclude most chapters with license plates for the reader to decipher. *Learning to Fly* is the one of Ms. Henry's novels that is not about Claire Montrose. This novel is about 19 year-old Free Meeker who is pregnant, has a shaved head, nose ring and a tattoo of Chinese characters around her biceps. In the chaos of a fiery automobile accident, Free assumes the identity of a hitchhiker and a gym bag filled with \$740,000. With each offering, I think Ms. Henry gets better and better. Her latest release is *Buried Diamonds* and I highly recommend it as well as her other books. Through e-mail with Ms. Henry, a request has been made that she visit the library later this year and she has responded favorably. Watch for more information regarding this and "IBCNU".

**Vernonia Public Library:** 701 Weed Ave.  
**Hours:** Mon., Wed., Fri. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.;  
Tues., Thur. 2 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Sat. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Preschool Story Time:** Mondays, 10:00 a.m., when school is in session.

**After School Reading Program:** Mondays, 3:30 p.m., when school is in session.

**Phone:** (503) 429-1818

## Letters

### Editor should not belittle non-voters

Noni Andersen's opinion piece in the January 2 edition of The Independent attempts to belittle the non-voters in the recent 911 election. To me it only indicates that she doesn't agree with the voting laws of Oregon. Perhaps we should all go around complaining about laws we don't like. But then again she took great exception to that when people tried, emphasis on tried, to complain to the city about overzealous enforcement of laws that some people didn't like.

It doesn't take a genius to figure out a non-vote at times carries more weight than a no vote under current law. And I would suggest that many of the non-votes and no votes may indicate that people are unhappy with the way 911 is managed or financed.

The federal government is responsible for implementing the 911 system and they imposed a tax on every telephone to pay for the system. We pay for 911 every time we make a phone call. In addition to that we pay taxes to support city, county and state police and fire departments. Most ambulance services are provided by profit driven organizations.

These police, fire and ambulance organizations should pay any additional funds necessary to finance 911 through their tax revenues. They alone should determine each organizations share based on call volume or some other formula determined by them. Voters in the smaller communities of Columbia County should not be asked to subsidize the larger communities.

Previously each of the emergency responding emergency organizations had their own dispatching methods. Consolidating these functions should have saved taxpayers money. Instead it has created another layer of government with more taxing authority.

Frank Schrier  
Vernonia

### Merchants say thanks for local support

To the Editor:

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who shopped locally during the Christmas season. It really makes a difference to the local merchants – and you helped make our Christmas successful and prosperous. Happy 2004 to everyone!

Sincerely,  
Dennis & Marilyn Nicks  
Vernonia

### Measure 30 is good for the community

To the Editor:

Measure 30 is Good for the Community.

If passed, Ballot Measure 30 will sustain Oregon's current budget preventing further cuts in jobs and services. If it fails, the state will have to cut about \$800 million from community services. Education will be hardest hit with a \$428 million cut. Public Safety (police) will be cut \$83 million, and Human Services will have to reduce expenditures by \$269 million. One of the Human Service programs earmarked for cuts is In-Home Services for Seniors. Loss of funds for this program will put more seniors in nursing homes, a higher cost alternative to staying in their own homes.

The failure of Measure 30 will also hurt our economy. The state would lose \$1.9 billion in decreased state spending, lost federal matching dollars, and decreased spending by laid off workers according to the Oregon Center for Public Policy.

The cost of Measure 30 is rather small. The typical Oregon taxpayer will pay \$81 per year for the next three years. This tax increase will be offset by reductions in the federal tax rate during the same period.

The Community Action Team Board has taken a position in support of Measure 30. Please join them in supporting our communities.

Rocky Johnson  
Executive Director  
Community Action Team

## NOTICE

The INDEPENDENT is published on the first and third Thursdays of each month. Because January has five Thursdays, the next issue will not be published until February 5, 2004.

The deadline for the next issue will be January 30, 2004.