

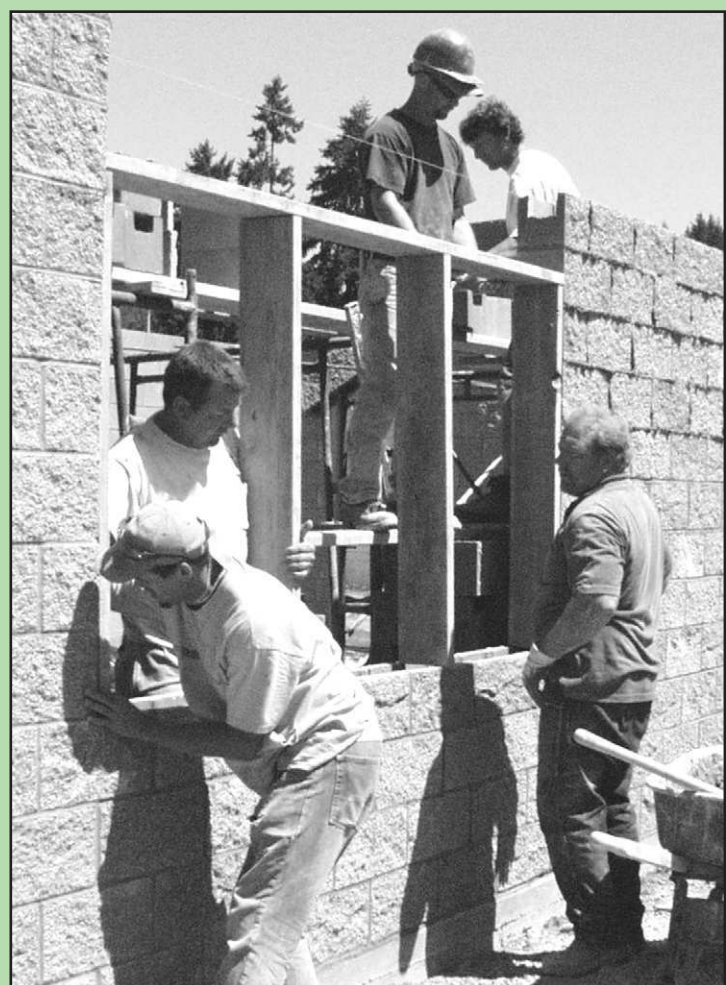
The **INDEPENDENT**

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"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

August 5, 2004

Volunteers at work...



A great group of volunteers from J&S Masonry, of Portland, joined their supervisor Loren Dennis, of Vernonia, to erect the walls for the Boosters concession stand at Vernonia High School. Lonnie and Marvin Dennis were part of the crew, also. The eight-person crew put up the walls of the 34x24' building in about six hours. The labor and materials were all donated.

Bassett is interim administrator

Robyn Bassett was appointed interim city administrator at a special meeting of the Vernonia City Council on July 29. Bassett, who is the city's director of public works, will do double duty until a new administrator is named.

A process for selecting a new administrator will be discussed at the August 19 meeting.

Bassett gave a presentation at the July 19 council meeting on the Wastewater Facility Upgrade. Upgrades needed include increasing one to two pipe sizes on three of the gravity collection systems in town, upgrading Pump Station No. 2 to a 12-inch-diameter force main, increasing the pump size in the Main Pump Station by 2008, and adding a new pump station. The City will be looking for grants and/or loans to cover some of these costs, but, in accordance with plans begun years ago, sewer rates are being increased in July from \$31.00 to \$37.00. Further increases may be needed next year, depending on the suc-



Mayor Cindy Ball presented a plaque to outgoing administrator Michael Sykes, in appreciation of his service to the City of Vernonia. Sykes was thanked for his efforts at a picnic in Anderson Park last Monday. Of course, he was also roasted by the many people who have become friends during his five years with the city.

cess of finding other funds. The council unanimously approved the resolution increasing the sewer rates.

The City of Vernonia and the Vernonia Ridge Riders entered into an agreement on the use and management of the equestrian area in Anderson Park. The agreement outlines the

Ridge Riders' responsibilities for the arena area, including garbage disposal, while giving the Ridge Riders a portion of camping fees for campers in the equestrian area.

Dana Anderson asked for and received approval to do mechanical work out of his hanger at Vernonia Airport, and to have signage. The airport is zoned light industrial.

In other business, the council approved new library fees, including late fees on books of \$.10 per day.

47J sets hearing on design/build proposal for new middle school

Vernonia School District will hold a public hearing August 12 at the school district office for public comment on utilizing a design/build method to build a new middle school. The school board is responsible for local contract review and, under Oregon law, is responsible for deciding whether to use the design/build process.

According to information provided by the district, use of the design/build method would exempt them from public con-

tracting rules, which would allow "substantial savings."

The Willamette Education Service District has agreed to serve as consultant to manage the process. A compressed time frame is anticipated for the process to select a contractor and subcontractors would be selected by the design/build contractor.

A complete copy of the findings (reasons) for using the design/build method is available from the district office.

Tragedy strikes local communities

Manning teen drowns in pond

Joseph Rigert, 16, of Manning, drowned Monday afternoon, August 2, in Dierickx Pond, which is just south of Banks.

According to the Washington County Sheriff's Office, Rigert and two friends, Mike Doner, 16, and Eric Vanderzanden, 14, were swimming between a stationary dock on the bank and a floating dock, which was about 75 yards from shore.

The three boys were friends and often swam at the pond. One of them tried to help when Joseph started yelling, accord-

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Vernonia woman dies in wreck

A Vernonia woman was killed and four Vernonia residents were injured, one critically, in a two-car crash on Highway 47 near the Pebble Creek Trestle, shortly after 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 3.

According to the Washington County Sheriff's Office, Heather Forster, 19, lost control of her southbound Honda Accord, crossed the centerline and "T boned" a northbound Kia Sephia driven by Alan Russell, 72.

Russell's wife, Diana, 60, was killed in the collision. He

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**Join us for the
48th Annual
Vernonia
Friendship
Jamboree
and
Logging Show
August 6, 7, 8, 2004**

**Complete schedule in the
special Jamboree issue**