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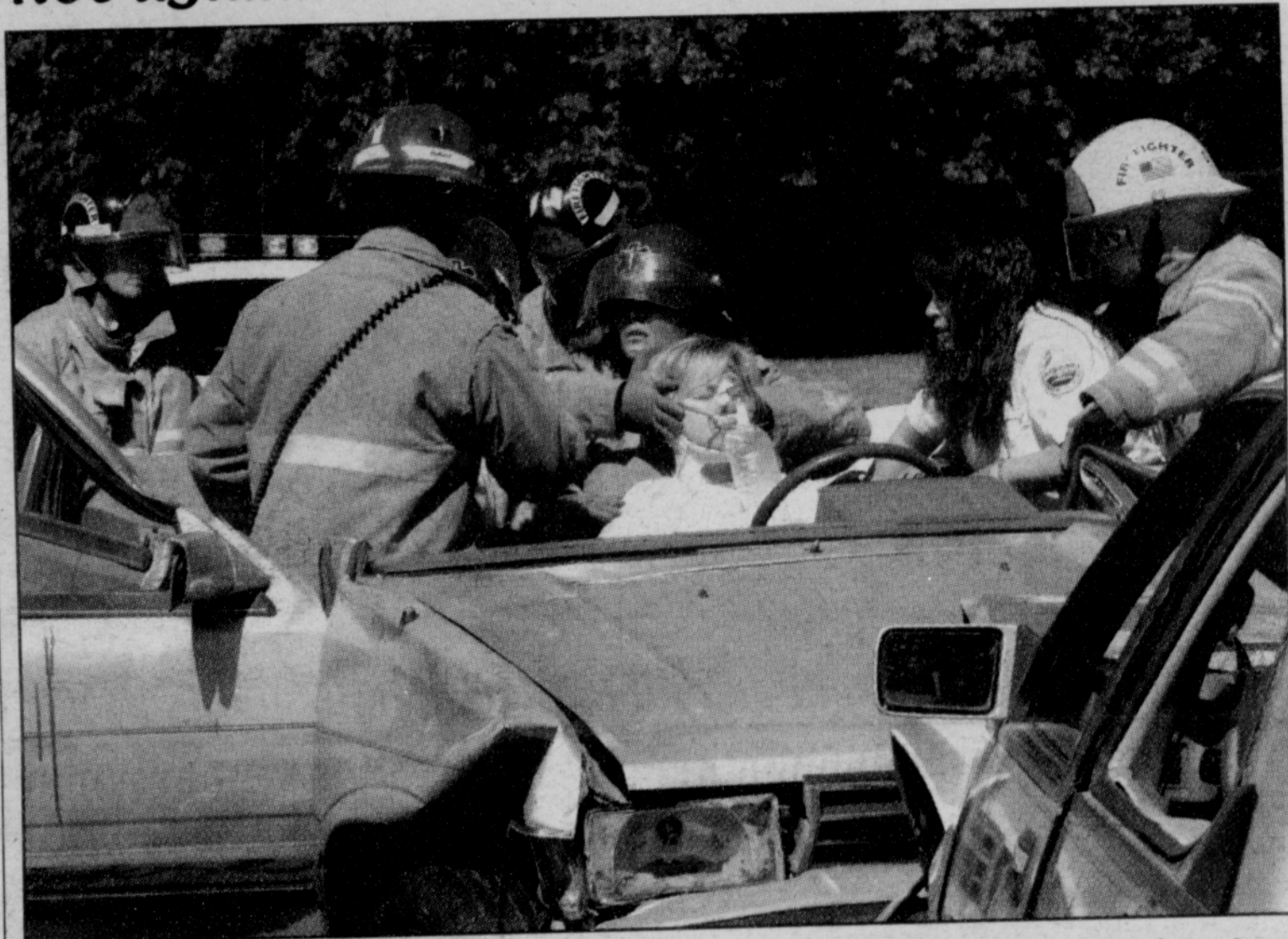
The INDEPENDENT

Vol. 20, No. 12

"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

June 16, 2005

Not again...



Emergency personnel free passenger from wreck. See pages 10-11 for the complete story.

Full agenda for Vernonia School Board

Two students, Rebecca Young and Yolande Gendron-Herdon, gave a lively report to the Vernonia School Board, June 9, on activities in the junior high. With considerable give-and-take, Young and Gendron-Herdon told the board about the year's activities including dances, a fashion show and a talent show won by "the amazing" Madeline O'Leary. The girls also said the middle school is proud of Scarlet Debeikes for winning a scholarship to NASA summer space camp in Portland.

Lindsey Lennon, newly elected high school student body president, reported on the drug and alcohol awareness week held recently. Activities during the week-long effort included collecting pledges from about 30 percent of students to refrain from using, a program

where one student is pulled from class every 15 minutes to represent those killed in alcohol and drug-related accidents, a presentation from Oregon Trauma Nurses and the final SKID program on Friday.

Randy Shockey thanked the PTA for purchasing nine graphing calculators for his class. PTA representative Jennifer Martin added that the PTA has also repaired and installed benches at the high school. Martin asked for volunteers to help assemble new playground equipment on Saturday, June 25. A group of volunteers from the Hillsboro PTA will pre-assemble and lay-out the equipment in Hillsboro, then bring it to Vernonia to lend their experience with the project. Martin said that six to eight strong people are needed who can commit an entire day in order to

complete the project.

Joel Glass asked high school principal Curt Scholl to describe a typical day for a charter school student. Scholl explained that it is somewhat difficult to describe because of the broad range of student participation in the charter school. Students can enroll in both the charter school and the high school, and many have done so because this allows them to take advantage of the technology-based classes provided in the charter school. The charter school, located in Modular 4, has 25 computer stations available. Students who have difficulty learning a specific subject (math, for example) in the typical classroom environment, can take the course through the charter school, where the subject is presented through an in-

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City budget eliminates planner, adds one officer

At the June 6 public hearing for the City of Vernonia's 2005-06 budget, City Administrator Robyn Bassett proposed some changes that had not been presented to the budget committee prior to their approval of the budget.

Two major changes dealt with the reallocation of personnel funds. The position of City Attorney/Planner was eliminated and some of those funds will be used to hire an additional police officer in order to provide 24 hour coverage. Some of the funds will be used, as needed, to contract for planning or legal work.

City Attorney/Planner Julie Steffen said, "I've been here five years, nine months, and though this wasn't my decision, I choose to view it as a blessing. I'll take this opportunity to devote time to my family. I thank the City and Council members for allowing me to work in this great community. It's been a wonderful run." Stef-

fen's last day will be June 30.

When the Council reconvened after the hearing, they adopted the budget as amended.

The council meeting started on a positive note with Mayor Sally Harrison recognizing 17 members of the new OSSOM group who were present. OSSOM (Oregon Student Safety On the Move) is a student-based prevention group who support and sponsor activities that promote healthy life styles (voluntarily agreeing not to use drugs or alcohol, for example). At the time of the meeting there were 73 members in the local group.

Park Manager Dan Lucas, from L.L. "Stub" Stewart State Park, showed council a map of the park. He said there will be 17 miles of trail in the park, eventually including a single track challenge mountain bike trail. The park will open in 2007 with most of the camp grounds

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July 4th fireworks and parade

The annual Fourth of July festivities in Vernonia are set for another great fireworks display, preceded by the community parade.

The July 4th parade has traditionally emphasized youth entries, but everyone is welcome. There is no entry fee, so decorate your bikes, wagons, horses, cars, or yourself and join the fun. The parade will start at 7:30 p.m.; to join in, entries should arrive by 7:00 p.m. on Weed Avenue, alongside City Hall.

Fireworks will start at dusk on the playing fields of the schoolgrounds. Bring chairs or blankets -

but leave your personal fireworks at home. If you arrive early, you can enjoy hot dogs or hamburgers served up by the Booster Club before Tom Ramsay and his assistants from the Vernonia Fire District start the pyrotechnical display. Cub Scouts will also be selling popcorn.

To help Vernonia Pride defray costs for this expensive display, the Buckhorn Restaurant will hold a spaghetti dinner, June 30 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. For

only \$7 adults can enjoy spaghetti, salad, roll and dessert; kids' plates are \$4 for 11 and under.

