

The INDEPENDENT

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To help others...



Vernonia Lions President Bill James presented Vernonia Cares Director Sandy Welch with a donation to help provide Christmas food boxes to needy families.

Donations needed to help fill Christmas food boxes

If supporting funds allow, Vernonia Cares Food Bank plans to offer Christmas holiday food boxes to low income households within the Vernonia community. Registration opened November 1 and the deadline is December 9. The boxes will be disbursed during the week before Christmas as registered households pick them up from Vernonia Cares Food Bank.

The holiday food boxes will contain the basic groceries for a Christmas meal. "Our target group is the households who fall within the food bank income guidelines," said Vernonia Cares Director Sandy Welch. "That is \$1475 gross income per month for single person households, plus \$503 per month for each additional person in the household."

Applications may be obtained and submitted at the food bank, which is open Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00

a.m. to 2:00 p.m. It is located in the American Legion Hall at 627 Adams Avenue. Forms may also be requested by calling 503-429-1414. Please leave clear information with names and addresses. All applications must be received by Vernonia Cares by December 9. That allows time to fill the boxes with the appropriate amount of food for the household size. Only pre-registered households will be served.

"At this point, we are planning to provide this service and praying the food and funds arrive to support it," Welch emphasized. "We've been unable to set aside the usual holiday groceries during the year because of the high demand for monthly food assistance during 2005. We've had great support for the holiday food boxes from our community in the past and I'm looking to them again this year. Thus far, the Vernonia Li-

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Old error causes Goodman resignation

By Noni Andersen

Vernonia City Council member Shirley Goodman has resigned after learning she is not an eligible voter in the City of Vernonia. She was elected in November, 2004, and was serving her first year in office.

The Knott Street property

Northrup Creek recreation area open to public

The Northrup Creek area north of Jewell on the east side of the Clatsop State Forest is again open to the public, according to the Oregon Department of Forestry.

Area roads have been closed for the last five months for construction of Northrup Creek Horse Camp. Although the campground is not completely finished, ODF has reopened the area to the public. The area near the Foster Mainline logging road is popular among hunters.

Nearby trails remain under construction and, due to the wet weather, are not recommended for use by horses at this time. All trails near the campground are limited to non-motorized use and closed to all-terrain vehicles (ATV). ATV use in the campground also is prohibited. Campground rules are posted for more information.

Construction of the 11-site campground began last May and will continue through the winter, with several sites closed to public use during this time. Some sites are available for camping, and fees will be charged for campground use.

Northrup Creek Horse Camp will hold a grand opening in the spring of 2006. For more information about the facility, contact Bryan Nielsen, Astoria District Recreation Coordinator, 503-325-5451.

where Goodman lives is partially within the city limits and partially in Columbia County. For more than two decades, she has received ballots for elections regarding city issues and candidates, therefore, she considered herself a resident of Vernonia.

State law is specific regarding residency for voting purposes. If a property is within two jurisdictions, as in this case (county and city), the location of the residence determines the jurisdiction for voter registration. The Goodman residence is in the county portion of their property so when she first registered to vote from that address...about 25 years ago...she should have been placed in a rural Vernonia precinct, not in a city precinct. The mistake was made long ago and was just recently discovered.

Some residents have asked what could be done to put Good-

man back on the council. That is technically possible, but it would be a lengthy process. Like most jurisdictions, the Vernonia City Charter requires a candidate for office to reside in the city for at least one year. Before Goodman could do that, she would have to move into the city; build or move her home inside the city limits, or request annexation into the city. Annexation would be difficult because the city's Urban Growth Boundary does not include the part of Knott Street where the Goodman home is located.

After all that she would still have to wait at least one year in order to establish residency.

The Vernonia City Council accepted Goodman's resignation, with regrets, at their November 7 meeting. The city will advertise for applicants to fill the councilor position, then the council will interview and vote on a replacement.

47J Board reinstates food service employee; looks at finger scans

The November 10 Vernonia School Board meeting began with a call from the district's attorney, who recommended a reinstatement agreement for a former district employee.

Following that cryptic beginning, the board ended the meeting by voting unanimously to reinstate a food service person with a reinstatement agreement. No additional information was provided to the public on the issue addressed.

In between the odd beginning and end, other business was conducted.

Finger Scans

Board member Kim Wallace reported on a trip that she, parent Liz White and two students took to observe how the fingerprint scanner worked at the Rainier school cafeteria. They

were all impressed by the way the cafeteria lines moved in

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Keenon appointed interim surveyor

Vernonia resident Jerry Keenon has agreed to serve as interim Columbia County Surveyor to fill the vacancy resulting from the death of long-time County Surveyor Phil Dewey.

The County Surveyor is an elective position and Mr. Dewey's term would have run through 2008. Keenon will serve until January 3, 2006, allowing time for the county Board of Commissioners to advertise the vacancy and appoint an interim surveyor until the May, 2008 election.

Mr. Dewey's obituary may be found on page 21.