

# New website helps with energy costs and bill paying

Nearly \$12 million in grants was announced last month by Governor Ted Kulongoski and Attorney General Hardy Myers for home weatherization and bill paying assistance for low income Oregonians. Additionally a new website has been established to help Oregonians access information about energy assistance programs, energy saving, and cost-saving strategies.

The new website, [www.war-](http://www.war-)

moregon.org, is a product of the Oregon Department of Energy. It is designed to provide Oregonians with an array of resources to help contain energy costs both at home and at work. The site includes information on weatherization, bill paying, energy use reduction, and offers many other important energy-related tips designed to save Oregonians money and preserve resources.

The grants secured by the Attorney General through utility settlements are expected to assist about 15,000 Oregon households with bill payments and weatherize the homes of more than 1,000 families. The grants provide \$5.5 million to help pay the energy bills of low-income households through Oregon HEAT, a non-profit company committed to raising and coordinating resources to help low-income Oregonians meet their household energy needs and move them toward energy self-reliance, and Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS). Such assistance has amounted to about \$300 per household in a typical heating season in the past; however costs are expected to rise significantly during the coming winter months. Another \$4.5 million is being allocated to weatherize low-income dwelling units, including existing housing and new, energy-efficient housing yet to be built through programs conducted by OHCS.

"This winter Oregonians will be faced with record heating bills," said Attorney General Myers. "These grants will have an immediate and lasting impact on the Oregonians most victimized during the price spikes of 2000 and 2001."

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# Bits & Bites

By Jacqueline Ramsay



ter caps in and out of doors lately, it's keeping my brain cells warm so I can mull things over faster.

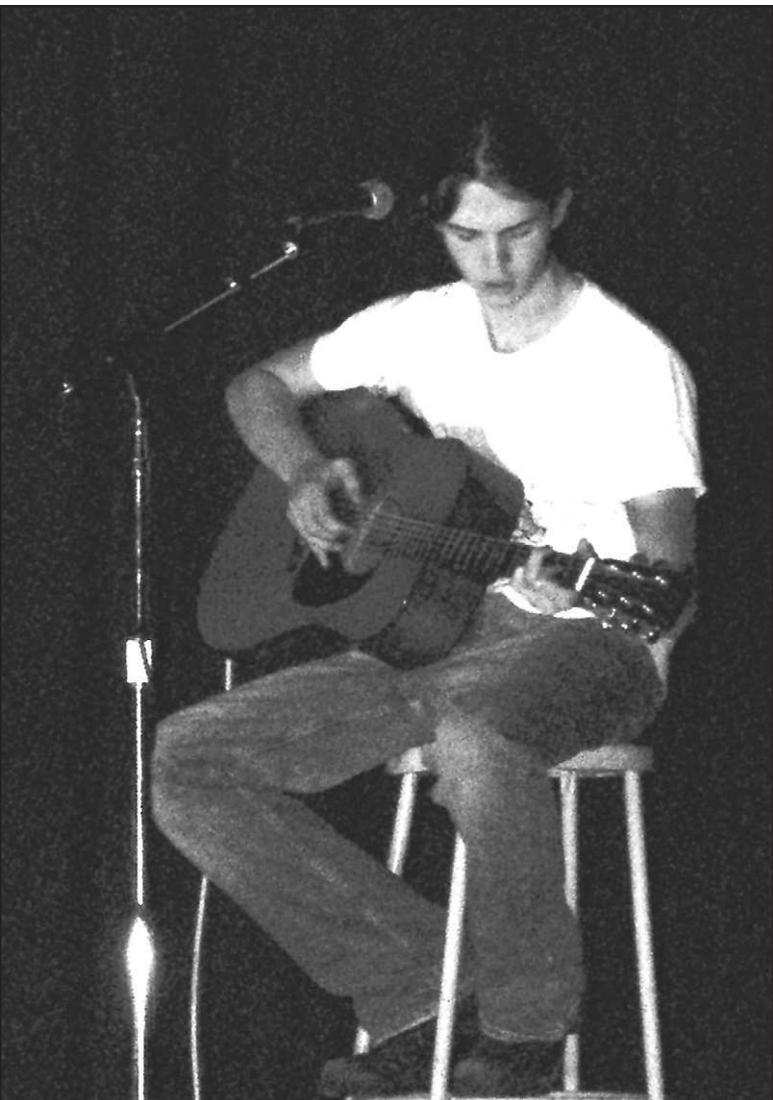
I see they have new signs posted along the school crossings. Good. While on this subject – how long has it been (or was there ever) since there was a flashing light at or over the school area?? I've been here since '86 but a friend insists it's there.

Those of you that stayed away from the Hands on Art Variety Show (for whatever reason) missed a very enjoyable evening. Singing, dancing, acting, readings, recitations, guitar, violin, spoons and Sally's Hat Parade. But, now I must digress to say Vernonia needs a Community Stage Building all on the ground floor where all can go without going up or down stairs. We have a jewel or two in this town that need to be heard. Yes, for one, I am speaking of Cindy Ball. She is a singer's singer. I, for one, think

she could sell tapes. Why isn't there a place for folks to keep alive or hone their talents? I understand Hands on Art wants to make their talent show a yearly event but, if forced to be held where the incapacitated can't easily get, it will be under-attended as it was on the 18th. I'm not alone in this thinking. You don't think so, call for a vote.

Now – how come the lake is allowed to be so low?? There is water in the river. The sun is regenerating the silt and algae and lilies are growing when they should be dying. Fix the pipe and fill the lake. Please. We advertise our lake and walking paths. Out-of-towners are jealous of it and our quiet walks in the wooded areas. A suggestion – Stop blowing leaves on the paths, fix the pipe and protect it with an outer cover. Homeowners wrap pipes to keep them from weather damage. You used to see asbestos (or some such stuff) wrappings on culvert-type pipes or am I too old to recall seeing it in out-of-the-way places like a ranch house in the hills?

Ok, I'll hush now with a tip from a 1927 cook book – to cook strong flavored vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower, etc., they should be cooked uncovered, so it won't permeate the house.



Above, Seth Brock performs on November 18 at the Hands on Art Variety Show held at Washington Grade School as a benefit for hurricane Katrina victims. More on page 28.

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