

Letters

Swift treatment was answer to disease

To the Editor:

My 10 year old daughter, Sarah Dahl, was treated for meningococcal infection from Tuesday morning at the local Providence Medical Clinic to Legacy Emanuel Children's Hospital and released Wednesday after-

noon with a follow up visit Thursday and antibiotics. Our clan has been treated with a strong one-time dose of antibiotics. Names of the children that Sarah had spent time with were given to the Columbia County Health Department.

I want folks to know that we love this town and appreciate and understand the concerns

regarding this meningococcal scare but urge everyone not to feed into the big media hype. Being aware, alert and taking precautions is very prudent. Sarah is friends with Mikila's older sister and was invited to a birthday party at Skate World in Hillsboro. The teenage boy that was killed by the infection was an avid skater. Was he at Skate

World? The river water is high. There's the weather change and the holiday stress and we live in a house that had been flooded. We trust in God. But there were a lot of kids up at Emanuel Hospital that have their own troubles and are going to have a rough road ahead of them that I'm sure trust in the Lord. I felt kind of guilty seeing Sarah happy, alert and looking very well during her stay at the hospital. If we weren't in the eye of the tornado it would have been a treat. Because Dr. Gilmore, in the Providence Vernonia Clinic, was on the ball and took action, Sarah received immediate response. The antibiotics she received cured her so well I'm surprised her freckles didn't fall off.

We have decided to work with Washington Grade School and have Sarah's school work done at home till she runs through her complete antibiotics. All should go well and she will return to school January 23. As for the rest of our clan, out of consideration for others and our peace of mind, we will take extra precautions by washing our hands before we go out and not renting so many movies at Sentry and getting those yummy jojos and cheese sauce at the Mini Mart. It would be nice if some computer savvy person would make a website where we all could share our stories. Perhaps if the folks in the scary movies said, "This is what I saw, this is what I heard..." the movie wouldn't be so scary.

Take Care,

**Amber Dahl
Vernonia**

Pleased with school district's response

To the Editor:

I just want to write a few words on how proud I am to live in a small community like Vernonia. With the recent scare with meningococcal disease, the community was getting the word out.

I really want to thank the Vernonia School District for doing everything possible to make sure our kids were safe when they went back to school Monday. They have sent out letters to keep parents informed on what was being done and information about this disease. I feel very grateful for having such a

dedicated and caring group of people who have the safety and well being of our children in their hands.

Thanks to all the staff for a job well done. Thank you Mrs. Kingsley and Mr. Miller and all the teachers for helping the kids with this issue and making our schools safe.

**Marilyn Atkins Gardner
Vernonia**

Great success with special food boxes

To the Editor:

Success!

We did it! Thanks to the help of numerous donors, 132 Vernonia Christmas meal food boxes were dispersed on December 20. These boxes contained the basic groceries for a Christmas meal for households in and around Vernonia. This project helped 429 people have a brighter Christmas.

Birds (frozen turkeys) flew in from as far away as Forest Grove, thanks to the Marquis and Vintage Care Centers. Locally, the Jazzercise group also herded a fair sized flock of birds our way. Many single wandering birds found their way to us, thanks to our faithful turkey herder, Pat Stacklie. Thanks, Pat (and Bob, her ever-faithful assistant.)

A number of people donated funds directly to Vernonia Cares for this project. Others gave through the check stands at Vernonia Sentry. Food was donated to Vernonia Cares, canned food drives yielded more canned and boxed foods and many other ways of contribution were enacted. Several freezers were used to store the turkeys until dispersal day. A great number of volunteers helped assemble the boxes. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Thanks, each and every one, for making this a totally successful project. None of Vernonia Cares Food Bank's general funds were spent to carry out this project, due to the numerous generous donors (from business, private, and organizational sources). Each of you demonstrate the compassion behind our food bank's name, "Vernonia Cares."

Gratefully,
**Sandy Welch, Exec. Director
Vernonia Cares Food Bank**

Between the Bookends

By Nancy Burch, Librarian
Vernonia Public Library



Remember the impressions that people used to have of libraries...musty smell, librarian shushing people to maintain voices to no more than a whisper and then hurrying them out the door, shelves containing only books which were stamped when being

checked out? Times have certainly changed! Libraries are now mostly well-lit, airy spaces where, in most cases, normal conversations are carried on by patrons as they visit, choose materials to be checked out electronically, use computers or attend library sponsored programs. Libraries have become true focal points—hearts of communities. When reflecting on library activities of the past few years (especially since the new library was built in 1999) and listing current and upcoming activities, I am so impressed with, and proud of, the Vernonia community whose citizens support the library and its programs to the extent that it is such a community focal point.

At its establishment in 1928, the library was open from 1-5:00p.m. on a trial basis and Lois Malmsten, the librarian, received a salary of \$4.00 a month. When the librarian requested a leave of absence in 1932, the library board members each worked one day a week...thus saving enough for subscriptions to *National Geographic* and *Good Housekeeping* magazines. At the end of 1932, the library contained 1,808 books, the number of registered patrons was listed at 811 and circulation was 14,623 for that year. (Isn't that remarkable—very few books, but high circulation. Each patron must have read nearly everything in the library. Remember this was before television, but Vernonia did have a movie theater then.) These facts and figures come from early handwritten library board minutes that contain a wealth of history relevant to Vernonia and its library.

The library at present is open 37 hours a week, contains 21,231 physical units, has 1,888 registered patrons, had circulation totaling 26,288 last year, offered 90 programs for children and 20 for adults with a total attendance of 1,700 at these programs, and 4,800 people signed in to use computer time.

Upcoming events include: *Coyote Tales*, a Chautauqua presentation by Curtis Yehnert on Saturday, January 21st at 2:00 p.m.; Bedtime Stories/Activities with Camrin Eyrrick on Thursday, January 26th at 6:30; Family Movie Night

(*The Parent Trap*) on Friday, January 27th at 6:30, as well as regular Preschool Story time at 10:30 a.m.; After School Reading/Activities at 3:30 on Monday afternoons and Chess on Friday afternoons at 2:00. (Camrin's Bedtime Stories are now on a regular schedule—the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 6:30.) Book discussion group will meet Monday, February 20th at 5:30 to discuss *A Sudden Country* by Karen Fisher. Library hours will be extended any Tuesday evening for youngsters wishing to do homework. Schoolwork will be the only activity taking place in the library during that time and any youngsters wishing to use the library for this purpose must be at the library prior to the regular 7:00 p.m. closing time.

The book adoption was a great success this year with nearly all of the books being adopted (purchased as gifts) for the library. Of the total cost of \$330.00, all but \$30.00 was paid by generous library patrons to the St. Helens Book Shop to add these materials to the library's collection. This is a great selection including *Teacher Man* by Frank McCourt, *1776* by David McCullough, *The Children's Blizzard* by David Laskin, *Highest Tide* by Jim Lynch, *Jan Karon's Mitford Cookbook*, *Ordinary Wolves* by Seth Kantner, *The Spiderwick Chronicles* by Holly Black and *The Beatles: The Biography* by Robert Spitz. Thank you so much to everyone who enabled us to add these items to the library's collection.

Other new acquisitions include: *On the Run* by Iris Johansen, *Every Breath You Take* by Judith McNaught, and *Nothing but Trouble* by Michael McGarrity.

The library is now subscribing to *The Oregonian* for anyone wishing to keep up with the daily local and world news in written format.

Anyone wishing to donate books for the Friends of the Library's Spring Book Sale may drop them off at the library anytime during library hours. It is the time of the year to renew or start a new membership in this organization whose purpose is to supplement library projects and materials.

What do **you** think? Have libraries and their services changed and could they be considered "hearts of the community"?

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. - 4 p.m.
Preschool Story Time: Mondays, 10:30 a.m., when school is in session.
Phone: (503) 429-1818