

**Letters**

**From page 3**  
at the Providence Health Center. The clean up will finish up with lunch at the Scout Cabin for all volunteers at 1 p.m.

Groups and organizations that have a specific area they would like to work on are asked to pre-register by calling Genny Fisher at 429-4019.

Workers are asked to bring garden tools, hoes, rakes, and especially weed eaters.

If there is anyone who works for, or has a connection to, a landscaping business, we are wondering if they might have left-over flowers from their spring plantings that they might be willing to donate. We would

like to plant as many flowers as we can in the parks and downtown.

**DeLoris Webb  
Vernonia Pride**

**Easy opportunity to help county families**

To the Editor:

I am writing to you about the Commission on Children and Families, of which I have been a member for nearly ten years. This organization meets monthly in St. Helens at the OSU Extension Building located in the "medical mall" on the Highway 30, just south of the junction of Pittsburg Road. Members of the public are always welcome at Commission meetings.

The Commission is a vital part of policy planning and service delivery to families and children in our County. Some of the programs funded and tracked by the Commission are Healthy Start, Court-Appointed Special Advocates ("CASA"), and the Teen & Family Transition Program. Through Healthy Start, parents with newborn babies can receive home visits from workers equipped to provide parent education and referral information to health and other services for the critical first three years of the child's life. These home visits have been proven to help at-risk families better parent their children, breaking the cycle of abuse and neglect into which many of the babies in our County are born.

The CASA program is designed to help children of all ages get through the experience of being placed in foster care. Whenever possible, a CASA volunteer, who has been trained to act as a first-hand expert on the individual needs of abused and neglected children in the custody of the State, is appointed by the Juvenile Court to represent the children in a family where removal from their parents has occurred. This kind of individual attention by a dedicated volunteer has been shown to improve outcomes for children and prevent juvenile delinquency later on.

The Teen & Family Transition Program, funded by the Commission and administered

by Columbia Community Mental Health, provides in-home counseling and behavioral intervention to teens in conflict with their families. Using a strength-based, solution-focused approach, this program increases the performance of our youth at school and decreases juvenile crime.

The Commission is made up of both professional and lay members, and is always accepting applications for membership from interested members of the public. This organization depends on the creative energy and life-skills wisdom of its membership, so please consider applying to join the Commission if you believe you have these qualities to share with our mission to improve the lives of our County's children and families.

If you are interested in Commission membership, please contact Jan Kenna, our energetic and knowledgeable director, at 503-397-7225.

Sincerely,  
**Jenefer Stenzel Grant  
St. Helens**

**Support for cookie sales is appreciated**

To the Editor:

Girl Scouts would like to send a huge thank you to our "little" community with the "BIG" heart for all your support in our cookie sales. Our Brownie Troop 945, Junior Troop 1858 and Cadet Troop 2067 sold cookies and the support from local residents was incredible! We could not have been successful without all your hungry cookie appetites. Another big thank you goes out to Randy and Sharon Parrow at Sentry Market for the support of our girls and for allowing them to set up "shop" for almost three weeks. Our open sales would not have been successful with

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