

## Auditions now open for "Grease"

Auditions for "Grease", the ShoeString Community Players' (SSCP) annual summer musical for 2008, will be held Tuesday, January 8 through Thursday, January 10, at 6:30 p.m. at Olmscheid Auditorium, St. Helens High School on Gable Road.

According to "Grease" director, Bill Cade, SSCP is looking for volunteers to round out its production team. Positions available include choreographer, music director, choral director and rehearsal pianists.

"Grease" performances will be July 5, 11, 12 and 17-19 at 7:00 p.m., plus Sunday matinees July 6 and 13 at 2:00 p.m.

The ShoeString Community Players is an all volunteer, Oregon non-profit organization established in 1982 and supported in part through memberships and the business community.

For more information, contact director Bill Cade at 503-397-3245 or at [www.sscpmusicals.com](http://www.sscpmusicals.com).

## Will FEMA affect taxes or benefits?

Some Oregon disaster aid recipients have expressed concern that their state and federal grants might cause them to lose Social Security benefits, pay additional taxes, or give up income-based benefit programs. Officials with Oregon Emergency Management (OEM) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) say those concerns are unfounded.

In most cases, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Social Security Administration do not count federal or state disaster aid as income.

Here are answers to the most common questions:

Question: If I earn more than a certain amount each year, I must repay \$1 of my Social Security payment for every \$2 earned. Will FEMA grants add

to my income and require me to repay Social Security?

Answer: No. FEMA grants for housing and Other Needs Assistance (ONA) are not counted as income.

Question: Will receiving a grant cause my income to increase to the point that I am no longer eligible for Medicaid, welfare assistance, food stamps or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) administered by the Children, Adults and Families (CAF) group of the Department of Human Services?

Answer: No. Grants for housing and ONA are not counted as income in determining eligibility for any income-tested benefit programs funded by the U.S. government or State of Oregon.

Question: Do any FEMA or

## Bits & Bites

By Jacqueline Ramsay



It's Christmas Eve morning. I awoke from a dream of remembering reminiscences on my mind. You savvy? Bygone years. I'll pass them on, maybe stir up some happy thoughts for you from your long agos.

The earliest recall I must have been four or five. The gift was a layette for my (Effanbee Bubbles) baby doll. I still have them both, although "Effie" is worse for the wear as I left her out in the dew one night – blistered her hands, legs, feet and fingers – but I still love her. Her eyes still open and close, though. Do you suppose that

state grants count as income?

Answer: Yes. The IRS considers mitigation grants to make homes and businesses safe from future disasters as taxable improvements to private property. However, these mitigation grants are awarded separately from grants to individuals registering for disaster assistance.

For information or to find copies of Social Security publications, visit the website at [www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs).

was an early sign of being a bad parent??

Jumping ahead to the teen years. A radio (my very own) from friends and patrons I worked with in a cafe. Then the first Box of Candy from a fellow. Aaah – no, I didn't keep the box. Then came marriage – a practical gift of card table and four folding Cosco chairs. My grandkids are still sitting on the chairs.

Don't wear the jewelry much any more. Now it's flowers, candy, nuts and cheese, but my teenage granddaughter made my Christmas this year. She called (from a grocery store) to ask me what she needed besides celery, onions and carrots for her stuffing ("I've got the bread mix and chicken

broth.")? Hal-a-loo-ya – she's learning how to cook.

Christmas Day my family was house-bound with colds, so I stayed home. A great big Thank You to Bill James and family for having and hosting the Christmas Dinner in the Scout Cabin. Cheerful, warm, bright and friendly, even saw on Channel 6. Ham and turkey, plus candy and cookies and cakes. And with the snow coming down it was an almost perfect Christmas Card day. Thank you again, Bill.

This has been a real White Christmas. Don't forget Vernonia Cares food bank. Remember the Vernonia Senior Center and the Golden Oldies.

Remember to smile and say Hi.

## In The Service



Air Force Airman Patrick R. Peets has graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

During the six weeks of training, the airman studied the Air Force mission, organization, and military customs and courtesies; performed drill and ceremony marches, and received physical training, rifle marksmanship, field training exercises, and special training in human relations.

In addition, airmen who complete basic training earn credits toward an associate degree through the Community College of the Air Force.

Peets is the son of Patrick and Tracy Peets of Vernonia and a 2007 Vernonia High School graduate.

## Disaster legal services are now available

Disaster Legal Services are now available to Oregonians, according to the Oregon Emergency Management Agency (OEM) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The toll-free number is 1-800-452-7636. Call M-F 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The purpose of Disaster Legal Services (DLS) is to help provide for disaster legal services for low-income individuals who, prior to or because of the disaster, are unable to secure legal services adequate to meet their disaster-related needs.

When the President declares a disaster, the Federal Emergency Management

Agency (FEMA), through an agreement with the Young Lawyers Division of the American Bar Association, provides free legal help for victims of that disaster. FEMA utilizes this agreement under the authority of Section 415 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Re-

lief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 100-707).

The assistance that participating lawyers provide typically includes:

- Assistance with insurance claims (life, medical, property, etc.).

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- Fire Suppression • Light Search & Rescue
- Utility Control • Disaster Medical Operations

**Classes Start January 17th at 7p.m. in the  
Scout Cabin at Hawkins Park, Vernonia**

**To apply, contact Sgt. Mike Kay 503-429-7335  
Vernonia Police Department**

**Must be 16 years of age and have a valid drivers licence**