

The INDEPENDENT

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"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

February 7, 2008

Icy Danger



Unseen ice on Highway 26 caused this wreck, resulting in major injuries to a Vernonia man. See story below. Photo courtesy of Chris Updegrave (who also helped at the scene).

Icy road causes serious injuries to Vernonia man

Robert Williams, owner/operator of Williams Metal Fabrication in Vernonia, was injured in a motor vehicle accident on January 26.

While heading home from Portland on Hwy. 26, Williams hit a patch of ice west of North Plains, slammed into the guardrail, flipped three times and came to rest on the guardrail. Williams was ejected from the truck, and was hospitalized with several broken bones — sternum, four ribs and both sides of his pelvis.

Williams returned home Monday, February 4, but it's estimated he will be in a wheelchair for 12 weeks, and unable to work, before starting to walk again.

An account has been set up at Wauna Federal Credit Union for donations to help Williams and his wife, Natalie, until he is able to work again.

Banks residents die in icy wreck

Two Banks-area residents, Misty L. White, 28, and Martin J. Arthur, 41, were pronounced dead at the scene of a motor vehicle accident at approximately 10:25 p.m. February 3, after losing control of a 1989 Volvo on an icy section of Hwy. 6 near Banks.

White was eastbound when she hit ice, making the Volvo hit the eastbound guardrail, cross into the westbound lane, and crash into a 2007 Hyundai driven by Matthew S. Olson, 19, of Forest Grove. Olson was not injured.

Connor White, White's 4-year-old son was in the rear in a child safety seat and was LifeFlighted to an area hospital with serious injuries. Arthur's 6-year-old nephew, Tyler Arthur, was also in the rear and was transported by ambulance with possible injuries.

Hwy. 6 was closed at that section for about four hours.

Last day to file with FEMA or SBA

Today, February 7, is the final day for individuals with damage resulting from the severe storms, wind, mudslides, landslides and flooding of December 1-17, 2007 to register for disaster assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and for filing applications for loans to repair physical damage with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

Oregonians who live in Clatsop, Columbia, Polk, Tillamook, Washington or Yamhill Counties, who suffered damage during December 1-17,

Volunteers needed

Columbia County Flood Relief (CCFR) still needs volunteers to help residents with flood recovery cleanup and rebuilding. Call 1-503-791-9629 to sign up.

CCFR also has free cleaning supplies, paint and painting supplies available. Call the same number for more information.

Certificates of Appreciation to flood emergency volunteers

There were meetings of the Vernonia City Council on January 22 and February 4. Information from both meetings is presented here.

First responders from the Flood of 2007 who handled emergency events until the State Fire Marshall team came in to take over, were presented with certificates. More than 25 certificates were given out to those who performed services to the community ranging from answering phones to opening shelters and cooking food. Three lifesaving awards were also given, to Norm Brown, Ben Davis and Dean Smith for manning rescue boats that probably saved lives. (See

photo on page 4)

Discussion of employment contracts, for Temporary City Finance Director (Dick Kline) and Interim City Administrator Aldie Howard, were initiated, then were moved to executive session to discuss compensation packages. Since the meeting on January 22, it has been announced that Kline's last day will be February 28 and Howard's contract will be finalized at a future council meeting.

A new Economic Development Committee was proposed and the first reading of an ordinance setting up the committee was unanimously approved. The new Economic Development Committee was proposed and the first reading of an ordinance

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Architects bringing free design ideas

Architects Without Borders will be at the Vernonia Library at 1:00 p.m. Saturday, February 9, with conceptual designs for people who either want or need to raise their homes. The work on them was done as a volunteer effort.

Flood recovery is Town Hall topic

The Vernonia Town Hall at Washington Grade School, on January 31, was attended by over 100 citizens. FEMA had representatives on hand to talk to individuals after the meeting, as did SBA.

FEMA representatives discussed the temporary housing units, stressing that they are no longer using the trailers that had the formaldehyde problem

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USGS, NWS will discuss floods and forecasting

Representatives from the U.S. Geologic Service and the National Weather Service will be in Vernonia to present information on floods and forecasting. They will show how the Clear Creek water flow gauge is used in measuring and forecasting water levels on the Nehalem River.

The public meeting will be held at Washington Grade School at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 21.