

The INDEPENDENT

Vol. 23, No. 13

"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

July 3, 2008

Summer is here



The temperature at Vernonia's official Rock Creek station was 99°F on Saturday, June 28. The thermometer above was on the front porch of a local home.

Hot weather brings along beginning of Fire Season

Fire Season officially began for Northwest Oregon as of July 1. The fire season designation includes lands protected by the Oregon Department of Forestry within Columbia, Clatsop, Multnomah, Washington, Tillamook and Yamhill counties. Regulations that affect forest operations and open burning are now in effect.

Those working in the woods must have fire protection and fire fighting equipment on the job site. In addition, a fire watch is required to be on the operation site after the shutdown of equipment. The first level of precaution for forestry operations is called an "Industrial Fire Precaution Level 1." This is the first level of a four level system that regulates fire risks associated with industrial equipment operated within the forest protection district.

For open burning, the declaration of the fire season means that no open burning is allowed until significant rains occur in the fall.

Fire officials want to alert all landowners to check areas where burning has been conducted recently, especially any heavy accumulations of piled woody debris. These old burn areas are known to hold hot spots that can come to life under warm and windy conditions.

Mike Simek, Protection Unit Forester with the Department of Forestry, is reminding everyone that the severity of the fire season is dependent on the weather from this point forward. "It has been a cool and wet spring," Simek noted "however, those in the fire business know that the fire season could be a difficult one, especially if drying continues through summer and into the fall." The recent high temperatures, wind and low humidity have cured grasses and markedly dried out forest fuels.

Please see page 4

Celebrate July 4th

BANKS

Banks will celebrate the 4th of July starting at 2:00 p.m. at Sunset Park with a Family Fun Festival.

The Festival will include kid's games and rides, cotton candy, strawberry shortcake and barbecue ribs.

At 6:00 p.m. there will be auto racing at the speedway and fireworks will start at 10:00 p.m.

VERNONIA

Vernonia's July 4th celebration will start with a parade at 7:00 p.m. There is no entry fee and it's open to everyone who wants to celebrate the 4th of July. Join the fun at Weed Ave. and Bridge Street, beside City Hall, no later than 6:30 p.m.

A great fireworks display will start at dusk on the high school grounds.

Volunteers available to help flood victims

Columbia County Flood Relief Volunteer Center is open and has people to assist in home rebuilding projects. Stop by their office at the Vernonia Community Learning Center or call them at 503-429-4948 to discuss your needs.

Poker tourney to help injured man

A Texas Hold'em Poker tournament will be held at Schlegel Hall on Sunday, July 13, with sign-in at 11:30 a.m. and a start time of noon. The buy-in will be \$40.00 and half the proceeds will be donated to help support Paul Meeuwsen.

Meeuwsen was paralyzed from the chest down in a motorcycle accident while jumping his dirt bike. He is now undergoing extensive physical and occupational therapy at Good Samaritan Hospital in Portland.

To reserve a seat at the tour-

nement, call Rob at 503-869-3681 or Terri at 503-869-3679.

A fundraising campaign has also been set up for Meeuwsen through the Catastrophic Injury Program of the National Transplant Assistance Fund. Tax deductible checks, to be used for injury-related expenses only, can be sent to NTA, 150 N. Radnor Chester Rd., Suite F-120, Radnor, PA 19087. In the memo section of the check print: In honor of Paul Meeuwsen. Or go to www.transplantfund.org.

**Special
Dog License Clinic
in Vernonia
SEE PAGE 7**