

## Letters

### Proud of Vernonia's emergency response

To the Editor:

Well, we have had a busy past few weeks. I just want to say a great big thank you to the professionals and volunteers that have put in countless hours to keep our community safe. Thank You!!!

One thing that was heard over and over again at town meetings after the flood last year was that folks felt that we were caught short and were unprepared. These last two weeks we have seen what our town leaders have been busy putting into place.

The first evidence of these new programs was when I received a phone call checking on my mother. The CERT team had been doing welfare checks

on seniors during the power outage and when she did not answer her door they contacted me to see if she was well and if we had adequate source of heat. Fabulous!!! (If you want to be on this list call the senior center.)

The next example of change was the automated reverse call back service from the 911 dispatch. Since then, I have found out that not only will they call landlines, but cell phones as well. To register your cell phone number call 1-800-696-7795 .

Also, the novelty of "shrink wrapping" the medical clinic and WOEC.

Thank goodness we did not have a major event again, and my heart goes out to other communities that did not fare as well, but I feel that our community is much more prepared

after experiencing the new services being implemented and I know that they will continue to make adjustments from what they learned during this "dry run".

The last few weeks have also given me an opportunity to fine tune my own preparedness and for our neighborhood to work together to solve issues facing us jointly.

So thank you; Chief Kay and Officers, Interim Chiefs Smith and Davis and VRFD, James Baribar, City Public Works, CERT volunteers, Dr. Phyllis Gilmore, Dr. Ken Cox and school staff, and everyone else who through selfless acts of volunteering make this a great place to live.

Proud to call Vernonia home,  
**Heather Lewis  
Vernonia**

### Vernonia a great town during emergencies

To the Editor:

I grew up in a small town in Montana and could not wait to get out in the "big city". After getting married and having a child we decided to return to the small town and chose Vernonia as our choice. I have been thankful many, many times in the past eight years that we made that choice.

During our recent 3-day power outage I was thankful for being in this small town. Here you see how a community comes together to make a bad situation livable. No one likes to be without power and cold or unable to get up the steep hill due to icy/snowy roads. I want to thank West Oregon Electric for having Debbie, Kellie and Phyllis answering your phones at all hours of the day and night for the updates on when we might be fortunate enough to have power again. The crews and office staff were giving up their family Christmas time to work diligently to restore power for our little town. Thank you to Sentry to allowing customers to be escorted into your store in the dark for those items needed. Thank you to all the unnamed citizens who took their time to plow those streets, the neighbors who had 4-wheel drive chained pickups for the rides back home and to those who lent a hand to someone who needed it.

Thank you for having the automated phone calls in place this past week when our town was in danger of flooding again. We appreciate our town being more prepared this year than last time and having people jump to help those in flood

danger. Thank you to VPD Chief Mike Kay and all the CERT volunteers, the Fire Department and volunteers, the Red Cross and volunteers who prepared meals and provided safe housing for the evacuees. Last year was certainly an interesting holiday season and so was this one – not to be forgotten by either of our foreign exchange students.

Thank you again to our little town and its wonderful caring citizens who look out for one another and for doing those good deeds.

**Kinnell Steward  
Vernonia**

### Reality: We need all the help available

To the Editor:

Vernonia fantasy...The other day I saw our mayor on T.V. telling everyone how we can get along on our own and how tough the people of Vernonia are...Well, lady, if we have the help of the Federal Government, the State Government, and every kind-hearted volunteer in Northern Oregon to help, yes, we can get along on our own...

The pure fact that our roads went un-plowed for four days of snow...and to this date (January 1st) many are still not plowed...well?

Let's face reality...we need and can use all the help we can get or, when you drive into town, the welcome to Vernonia sign is going to read "Closed due to mismanagement"...

Let's ALL help to make this town a better place.

**Bob Bertonneau  
Vernonia**

**More Letters on Page 20**

## Between the Bookends

By Nancy Burch, Librarian  
Vernonia Public Library



The other day someone was telling me about the new library in Seaside and how, because many vacationers visit the city wanting reading material, an area was devoted exclusively to books which could be purchased cheaply or exchanged. It

made me realize how closely libraries are reflections of the communities they serve in respect to their collections, services and policies.

With nearly all the news stories telling of the poor state of the economy and with that situation being reflected here in Vernonia, the library has resources to help. Newest acquisitions include *Cutting Expenses and Getting More for Less*, *1703 Money Saving Tips*, *Saving Money with the Tightwad Twins*, *Everything Meals on a Budget Cookbook*, and *The Tight Budget Cookbook*. These will be added to the collection which already includes many cookbooks such as *More-with-Less Cookbook*, books on household hints for stretching the dollar and for natural alternatives for nearly everything. The four computers may be used for job search, filing unemployment, and making resumés. Keep in mind the magazines including *Good Housekeeping*, *Prevention*, *Taste of Home*, *Consumer Reports* and *Cooking for Two* which may be checked out. Borrowing movies and audio-books from the library should help with the budget, and the library has a nice selection from which to choose.

For entertainment, the library offers a monthly family movie night and a movie night for mature audiences with free popcorn always available. **Mature movie night for the month will be Thursday, January 22nd at 7:00 p.m. with Fried Green Tomatoes being shown. Family**

### Movie Night will be Saturday, January 24th at 6:00 p.m. with Homeward Bound.

The public is always welcome to join in the monthly book discussion, which will be held Tuesday, January 20th at 5:30 p.m.

Passes to OMSI and the Children's Museum are made possible by the Friends of the Library and are available to be checked out.

Weekly programs for youngsters include the Monday morning pre-school story time and the Tuesday afternoon reading/activity hour at 3:30. Board games including Battleship, Chess, and Connect Four may be played at any time in the library.

**Testing for employment with the Census Bureau will be taking place in the library on January 21st and January 29th at 1 p.m. These positions pay well and, hopefully, they will be of help to some in the community who are without jobs.**

Hopefully, this New Year will mean that the future is becoming brighter for the community and the nation. Remember that your community and its needs are unique and the library is here to serve you in the very best ways possible to meet these needs.

I would like to thank everyone who adopted (purchased) books during the holiday. Twenty-one of the twenty-three books were adopted. These include books for young readers, young adults, an audio book, fiction and non-fiction for adults. These are being cataloged at present and should be ready to check out this week.

**Vernonia Public Library:** 701 Weed Ave.

**Hours:** Mon., Wed., Fri. 10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Tues., Thur. 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Sat. 10 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Preschool Story Time:** Mondays, 10:30 a.m. when school is in session.

**Phone:** 503-429-1818

## Policy on Letters

The INDEPENDENT will not publish letters that include personal attacks on private citizens. Because of space limitations, preference will be given to brief letters, 300 words or less.

All letters must be signed and include a verifiable address and phone number.

## NOTICE

The INDEPENDENT publishes on the first and third Thursday of each month. Because January has five Thursdays, there will be three weeks before the next issue, on February 5, 2009. The deadline for the Feb. 5 issue is Friday, January 30, 2009.