

# The INDEPENDENT

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"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

May 7, 2009



The Banks Junior High Jazz Band entertained as bidders looked over items for the silent auction portion of the annual Banks Community Auction. Those attending could also enjoy a spaghetti dinner prepared by FFA alumni.

## Swine flu update

As of 2:00 p.m. yesterday, 45 cases of H1N1 influenza virus had been confirmed by the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory in Hillsboro. Three cases were confirmed in Washington County, but none in Columbia County.

"Our laboratory work continues and these numbers are likely to change," Mel Kohn, M.D., state public health officer in the Oregon Department of Human Services, said. "As this virus becomes more widespread, there will be more transmission in Oregon."

The state Public Health Division has adopted CDC recommendations that now do not advise school closure, in general, for a suspected or confirmed case of this novel virus. Instead, similar to seasonal flu, local school district decisions on closure should be based on the magnitude of faculty or student cases.

See Flu, page 5

## Free health tests today and Friday

Free health screenings will be available at the Vernonia Lions Mobile Screening Unit on May 7-8 behind Washington Grade School.

Student tests for vision and hearing will be performed May 7 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and May 8, from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Tests for community members will be provided May 8 from noon to 5:00 p.m. and will include vision, hearing, diabetes and blood pressure. No appointments are needed.

## Help Stamp Out Hunger, Saturday

You can Help Stamp Out Hunger on May 9. The National Association of Letter Carriers and the United State Postal Service will be collecting non-perishable food items to help families in need in our community.

Residents inside Vernonia

## Free immunization for K-7 students

Columbia County Public Health will be providing free immunizations for kindergarten through seventh grade for those immunizations needed to stay in school.

Parents are urged to take advantage of the free immunizations on May 8 from 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Parents must sign a permission slip for their child to receive immunizations.

Contact school nurse Heidi Brown for info: 503-429-7941.

city limits should place food donation items at your mailbox on May 9 before your letter carrier arrives. Suggested items include canned meats and fish, canned soup, juice, pasta, vegetables, cereal and rice.

All donations will stay in the community.

## Town Hall on ideas for new schools

Vernonia Schools hosted a Town Hall meeting, April 28, to share information on schools that have been visited for ideas about what Vernonia's new schools should be like.

Just over 50 people attended the meeting and break-out groups to review information. There were to be six stations but, due to technical difficulties with computers, some stations were discussion only. Most of the site visits unearthed the same positive attributes – flexible spaces, lots of light, lots of storage, and many also had internal courtyards to provide air and light.

The "Boot" site, currently the preferred site for new schools has shown "no fatal flaws" in its initial geo-tech study. Wetlands on site can be dealt with and drainage will take care of any other water problems, those present were told.

Planning will continue through July, then nine months of detailed planning is expected (including three months of initial site preparation). The schools should start going up in

2011, according to the schedule BOORA Architects outlined.

A presentation at 3:00 p.m. today, in the middle school cafeteria, will be on alternate versions of potential space uses. The final program on the use of space will be at 3:00 p.m., May 14, before a BOORA presentation to the Board at 6:00 p.m.

## Help Make Vernonia Shine on May 16

Vernonia Pride invites the community to come out on May 16 and help "Make Vernonia Shine".

Registration will start at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot at Providence Medical Center.

Participants are asked to bring tools such as hoes, rakes, and weed-eaters for cleaning yards, parks, etc.

There will NOT be a free dump day or a place to take yard debris this year.

Free lunch for volunteers will be from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., in the covered picnic area at Anderson Park.

## Free child seat safety clinic today

Columbia County Safe Kids, in partnership with Alliance for Community Traffic Safety (ACTS Oregon) and several community partners, will hold a free child safety seat check-up today, May 7, at the Vernonia Fire Station, 555 E. Bridge Street, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

The clinic provides an opportunity to have a child safety seat checked by a certified technician who can correct misuse, help with installation and teach you how to correctly

install the seat. Technicians can also check for seat recalls. There is no cost to have a technician check your child safety seats. Please plan to spend 30-60 minutes at the event.

Additionally, through a grant funded by the Oregon Department of Transportation, Columbia County Safe Kids is also able to provide low-cost child safety seats to families in need. Families can get a coupon for a reduced cost seat from several

See Safety, page 4

**VHS Equestrian Team  
Good Luck at State, May 14**