

# The INDEPENDENT

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"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

July 16, 2009



**Economic Stimulus at work:** Charlene Barel, shown power washing the Rock Creek Bridge, is one of several local youth working this summer because of an MTC contract for federal stimulus funds.

## Apiary Road scheduled to close to replace deteriorating culvert

Apiary Road will be closed beginning Wednesday, July 22 so the Columbia County Road Department can begin work to replace a failing culvert. The project is scheduled for completion by Monday, August 10. The closure will last 2-1/2 weeks and crews will work overtime to complete the project within that time frame. The date for delivery of the new culvert has been confirmed.

Road Department staff have determined that it is not possible to build a detour route around the work area. The

Road Department asks Apiary Road users to be aware that the road closure will require extra time for residents. A foot bridge and a parking area will be provided for residents.

The culvert is less than a mile from Hwy. 47, hindering access to Camp Wilkerson. Superintendent Dave Hill told *The Independent* that Nehalem Valley residents can access Camp Wilkerson via Pittsburg Road to Karth Road. These are gravel roads and, though some gravel has been added, they should be traveled slowly.

## Hot, dry weather puts forest use restrictions in effect

"We're into that part of the fire season where fire starts are more likely in our forests, on our own properties and within or adjacent to our communities", reports Mike Simek, Unit Forester with the Oregon Department of Forestry. The air mass has been very dry, with relative humidity falling into unusually low levels for western Oregon. Combined with the recent winds, hot temperatures and the very dry air mass, fire danger levels have quickly elevated. This means that any activity that potentially produces heat, sparks or flame is more likely to cause a fire. This is where citizen fire prevention becomes critical and public "Regulated Use" restrictions come into play.

"Active citizen participation in fire prevention is critical, and these regulated use restrictions clearly elevate the role we all play in preventing human

caused fires", Simek said. Human-caused fires continue to be the top cause of forest fires in this area. Residents and forest users will see the florescent orange "regulated use" signs being posted. These reflect the public use restrictions now in effect on all forestlands.

Simek also pointed out that most private timberlands have tighter restrictions or even clo-

See Fire Threat, page 5

## County adds Vernonia-to-Hillsboro bus, Mon. to Fri.

Columbia County Rider began new service from Vernonia to Tri-Met's Willow Creek Station in Hillsboro on July 1. The bus will leave Vernonia City Hall each day, Monday through Friday, at 6:15 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. and will stop at Stub Stew-

art State Park and Staley's Junction; it will arrive at Willow Creek Station at 7:00 a.m and 5:30 p.m. The bus leaves Willow Creek in time to arrive back in Vernonia at 7:45 a.m. and 6:15 p.m.

Columbia County Rider has

also expanded their West County FlexRoute with more trips between Vernonia, Scappoose, and St. Helens.

For more information, go to [www.columbiacountyrider.com](http://www.columbiacountyrider.com) or call 1-503-366-0159.

## NASCAR's Greg Biffle will be at Sunset Speedway

NASCAR Sprint Cup Driver, Greg Biffle, will be at Sunset Speedway on Saturday, July 18. Autograph sessions will be held from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. and again from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

before the racing action begins. Some lucky person will win a ride around the track with Biffle.

Early entry admission (starting at 1:30 p.m.) is \$30.00. Starting at 4:00 p.m., admis-

sion is \$20.00.

This will be the third consecutive year that Biffle has appeared at Sunset Speedway.

### 47J Town Hall

July 30 ~ 7:00 PM  
Vernonia Middle  
School Cafeteria

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See first drawings  
of new schools  
while enjoying hot  
dogs and chili