

# State budget topic at Nov. 15 Town Hall



Left to right, State Senator Betsy Johnson, State Representatives Brad Witt and Debbie Boone during recent Town Hall in Vernonia.

Twenty-six Vernonia citizens took time out of their Sunday evening plans, November 15, to attend a Town Hall meeting with State Senator Betsy Johnson, and State Representatives Brad Witt and Debbie Boone.

The Town Hall was billed as an opportunity to discuss Oregon's budget shortfalls, revenue options, and other issues before the Legislature convenes in February.

After being asked about the projection for state revenues and what will happen to services provided by the state, Johnson responded that since Oregon relies on income taxes, "the most volatile funding," the

enue options, and other issues before the Legislature convenes in February. After being asked about the projection for state revenues and what will happen to services provided by the state, Johnson responded that since Oregon relies on income taxes, "the most volatile funding," the

state is projecting about a \$4 billion problem and they may have to make \$2 billion in service cuts to balance the budget. Witt and Boone concurred with Johnson's explanation of the budget problems facing Oregon.

There will be a January election with Measures 66 and 67 asking voters to approve ideas to increase revenue by adding additional taxes for corporations and individuals making over \$125,000 or couples making over \$250,000. Specific information on these measures will start showing up in mailboxes in January.

Other discussion centered around the need for green and small business opportunities in this area and the possible use of the state's income tax "kicker" refunds for a rainy day fund to help balance the budget during economic recessions.

# Chance to Become Scholarships given \$55,000

The estate of Portland resident Mona Dobbins recently allocated \$55,000 to be directed to The Chance to Become Endowment Fund of Columbia Learning Center.

The Chance to Become Scholarship program is a unique program in that it targets non-traditional scholarship candidates, with recipients nominated by local educators rather than the customary application process associated with most scholarships. As of

2009, Columbia Learning Center (CLC) has awarded over 100 Chance to Become scholarships with a value in excess of \$500,000. Each scholarship is \$5000 awarded to the student over a two year period.

Chance to Become scholarships have helped area students attend Oregon State University, University of Oregon, Portland Community College, Concorde Career Institute, Lower Columbia College, Clackamas Community Col-

lege, Eastern Oregon State College, Portland State University, Mt. Hood Community College, Brigham Young University and many others.

The Chance to Become program is supported through private donations and the annual fundraiser, Black Tie & Blue Jeans.

CLC was founded with a mission to create and nurture an environment which values life-long learning, building community relationships, and is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations to Chance to Become may be sent to the Columbia Learning Center at 375 S. 18th Street in St. Helens.

# Too many ads not good for kids

A child parked in front of the television to watch Saturday morning cartoons is getting an unhealthy double whammy: inactivity and a barrage of junk-food commercials.

"The average American child sees more than 40,000 advertisements each year," says Jennifer Young, nutrition and physical activity coordinator for Oregon Public Health Division's Office of Family Health. "Half of those ads are for food and 97 percent of those are for sugared cereal, high-calorie snacks and fast food."

The Nutrition Council of Oregon is fed up. In October, it launched Marketing Junk Foods to Kids: Oregon's Parent Awareness Campaign. The statewide campaign includes ads in 200 TriMet buses, posters and bookmarks in child care and health care facilities, and a Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/TooManyAds](http://www.facebook.com/TooManyAds)) with useful links to information on marketing to kids and providing them with healthy food.

The Nutrition Council is aiming its campaign at parents of young kids. "Children younger than eight years are cognitively defenseless against advertising," says Young. "They don't understand sales techniques and accept claims at face value."

The Nutrition Council hopes the campaign will raise awareness among Oregon parents about food marketing and provide parents with the information they need to help their kids make good food choices.

"There's strong evidence that television ads for food and beverages have a direct influence on what children choose

to eat," says Young. "The majority of ads targeting kids are for products high in calories and low in nutrients; foods completely out of balance with healthful diets and contributing to the current obesity epidemic."

The Nutrition Council of Oregon urges parents to learn all they can about how food marketers target kids, so that they can help their children make good choices about the foods they eat and develop good eating habits that can last a lifetime. They offer these three suggestions:

- Offer children healthy food choices;
- Limit TV and computer time;
- Teach kids to be media literate and understand the tactics advertisers use.

The Nutrition Council of Oregon is a group of nutrition professionals representing public health, academic settings, nutrition and food programs, and non-profit organizations interested in promoting the health of Oregonians through healthy food choices. For more information, visit the "Too Many Ads" Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/TooManyAds](http://www.facebook.com/TooManyAds).

# NWS gives new signs to county

Columbia County has obtained four road signs from the National Weather Service (NWS) to use during flooding events.

Representatives from the emergency management and roads departments visited the NWS Portland forecasting office recently to pick up the signs and discuss forecasting for the upcoming winter. The NWS purchased signs for Columbia County as well as other counties within its forecasting area in order to promote safe driving during conditions where heavy rains have flooded local roadways. The red signs say, "Flooding Ahead: Turn Around, Don't Drown".

## Midway Veterinary Clinic

Senior Discounts

Open in Vernonia  
Wednesdays and Saturdays  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Call for appointments  
**503-429-1612**  
805 Bridge Street  
Vernonia

Small and Large Animals



Great Deals!!

up to **SAVE**  
to **50%**



**Save on Hundreds of New Pet Items in stock! For Birds, Fish, Reptiles, Dogs, Cats +**

Custom Arrangements  
(503) 429-2000  
[www.VernoniaFlorist.com](http://www.VernoniaFlorist.com)  
[Lisa@VernoniaFlorist.com](mailto:Lisa@VernoniaFlorist.com)

Pet Supplies & Grooming  
(503) 429-PETS (7387)  
[www.CreaturesPetShop.com](http://www.CreaturesPetShop.com)  
[Ben-n-Lisa@CreaturesPetShop.com](mailto:Ben-n-Lisa@CreaturesPetShop.com)

Open Monday thru Saturday, 10AM to 6PM Closed Sundays  
736 Bridge Street, Vernonia Visa/Mastercard Accepted

**See page 3 for Vernonia Library Column**