

## Holiday Bucks deemed a success

The Vernonia Chamber of Commerce wants to thank everyone who participated in the Holiday Bucks Program.

In one month's time \$150,000 was spent locally by just the customers who participated in the program. Quadruple that number and you'd

probably have an accurate count of the monies spent locally in one month.

Following are the winners of the Holiday Bucks gift certificates: Sharon Gibson, Rauna Johnson, John Brewer, Roxana Sherman-Heath, Scott Benzell and Danielle Fife.

## Your grange needs your support

The Vernonia Grange will hold a special meeting January 11, at 7:00 p.m., to discuss the future of the building and the local Grange organization. This meeting is open to the public. In 1902 the National Grange organization chartered the chapter in Vernonia, and the current Grange hall was constructed in 1907.

Due to the lack of membership and participation, this oldest running Vernonia family organization is in jeopardy of losing its long-time charter. Those interested in learning more or being involved are invited to this town-hall type meeting starting at 7:00 p.m. in the Grange Hall on North Street.

## Open house to meet the Sheriff

An open house to allow the public to meet Columbia County Sheriff Jeff Dickerson will be held January 13, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., at the Columbia River PUD, Community Room, 64001 Columbia River Hwy.

(Hwy 30), Deer Island.

There will be light refreshments and an opportunity to ask the Sheriff questions. This open house is sponsored by the Constitution Party.

## CCMH Plan 2010 meeting set

Columbia Community Mental Health will discuss their Plan 2010 at a community meeting on January 14, from 4 to 6:00 p.m. at Columbia Community Mental Health, 58646 McNulty Way, St. Helens.

This is a unique opportunity for the community to meet and talk about the alcohol and drug and mental health needs of our children, youth, adults and families. Information from this meeting will be used to guide Columbia Community Mental Health's Implementation Plan for the two years.

After a brief overview, attendees will choose one of the following breakout groups. Each group will review strengths, weaknesses and list priorities for funding and activities.

1. Children's Mental Health
2. Adult Mental Health
3. Alcohol and Drug Services

Questions? Call Jan Spika Kenna at 503-397-7225 or email Jan.Kennaj@co.columbia.or.us.

## Jail will soon accept postcards only

In an effort to improve efficiency and reduce threats to safety and security by minimizing contraband, the Columbia County Jail is moving to limit incoming and outgoing inmate mail to postcards only, according to Sheriff Jeff Dickerson.

"The processing of inmate mail is very time consuming and labor intensive," Dickerson says. "Additionally, mail coming in sealed envelopes increases the likelihood that contraband will make its way through the security measures we set up.

"Going to postcards will cut down on the time we need to take in that screening process, thus saving the taxpayer the costs involved in that screening."

A number of Oregon Jails are making the transition to postcards beginning in January, with a final implementation date of March 31. On that date, the Columbia County Jail will accept and mail out inmate mail only on postcards. The exception will be for legal and official mail.

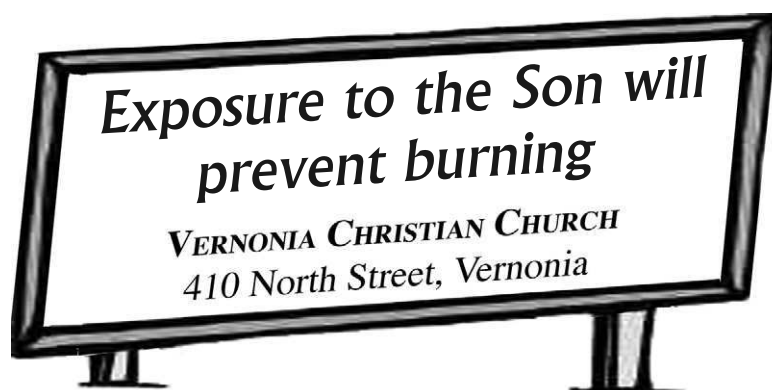
"We will begin at the first of the year to replace envelopes and writing paper with post-

cards in all indigent and intake packets issued to inmates," the Sheriff says. "We will also replace stamped envelopes with postcards on the commissary menu.

"We will spend the first few months of the year, letting people know of this new policy, and on March 31, the only envelope

mail allowed to come into or go out of the jail will be official and legal mail."

The Sheriff's Office will be posting the new guidelines in the Sheriff's Office lobby and on the agency website at: [www.co.columbia.or.us/sheriff](http://www.co.columbia.or.us/sheriff) in the coming weeks.



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## Senior News

With no power outages and very little snow over Christmas and New Year's day, Vernonia seniors, and undoubtedly many others, enjoyed a pleasant holiday season. Some special cheer was served up to more than 100 people of all ages, who gathered at the Senior Center for the wonderful free Christmas dinner put on by the Friends of Vernonia.

Good, freshly prepared lunches are served at the Center, Monday through Friday at 12 noon. A \$3.00 donation is suggested for those 60 and older, and \$4.00 for those under 60. Did you know you can also get meals to go? Call the center (503-429-3912) to place your order, then pick up your meal for just \$4.00. Maple bars are also made fresh daily for \$1.00 each. If you want a special treat for a gathering of any kind, you can call a day ahead and order the number of maple bars you need.

Unless bad weather interferes, the Golden Oldies entertain every Wednesday from mid-morning until 2:00 p.m., with a few breaks in between sets. Donations in the tip jar are appreciated, especially to help pay for gas, because some of these musicians come from as far as McMinnville, others are from Banks, Buxton, Mist and Vernonia.

This month's 5 Area lunch will be hosted by Scappoose Senior Center on January 25th. Sign up in advance for free bus transportation.

The Center is looking for a senior-oriented person for 10 hours per week. Check *The INDEPENDENT* Help Wanted ads for more information.

Connie's great breakfasts are served to all on Fridays, from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m., for \$3.50. Treat yourself to breakfast, you'll enjoy it.

Twice each month, foot care is available at the Center for \$15.00. Call Marilyn Albrow, R.N. for an appointment or more information, 503-429-0406.

If you are at least 55 years old, you can help support activities at the Vernonia Senior Center with your \$15.00 annual membership fee. Come join in the fun. Many more activities are being planned, so continue to watch this column for information.

Vernonia Senior Center: 503-429-3912.

**Meyer's Auto Body, Inc**  
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