

From the Sheriff's Desk . . .

From page 19
performed admirably in the adverse conditions and no security or safety breaches were detected. We also got to see how our employees could improvise and overcome sudden, unexpected changes to their work environment, and they came away with an A+ performance.

The event also provides an opportunity for us to assess our readiness for disasters that could affect more than 200 staff (corrections, civil and patrol, along with parole and probation officers), inmates and contractors who are in our facility at any one time. We have been assessing the mechanical weaknesses and vulnerabilities to which such an event can expose us, and the lessons learned thus far have been quite valuable.

Our facility was built in 2000 and opened in 2001. There are many interdependent mechanical and electrical systems in place to help a small cadre of corrections staffers maintain the safety and security for up to 200 inmates and the general public. The initial investment of around \$15 million that taxpayers made back then produced a state-of-the-art justice facility that houses the three divisions of the sheriff's office, as well as the county's community corrections department. And though we house, feed, provide commissary services, medical and dental services, transportation services and corrections and security services to an average of about 150 inmates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the cost for these services is in addition to the cost of paying down the debt on our 10-year old facility.

And that facility is getting older. Like with any building, time has a way of wearing down the intricate mechanisms and systems that keep it operating at optimum efficiency. Some of the costs to keep the building running right can get quite high.

If you haven't guessed by now, my point is that running the jail is an expensive proposition. Most of the money that goes to the Sheriff's office, goes to run the jail.

Back when it was built, nobody wanted to add the cost of actually running the facility into the cost of building it. Hence, a larger and larger share of general fund dollars now and in the future will be going to the running of the jail. This leaves the other mandated functions for the sheriff suffering.

We do everything we can to keep the costs of the jail down so that there is money left for sheriff's patrols, search and rescue services, marine patrols, and civil process services mandated for the sheriff to perform, but our numbers continue to shrink over time.

A committee has been formed by the County Board of Commissioners to look into the future funding issues facing public safety in our county, and your sheriff's office is at the center of the discussion. We meet on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at the Columbia 911 office in St. Helens and the public is welcome to attend.

The committee has received recommendations from the "needs" and "options" sub-committees that look at two different ways to bolster county-wide public safety resources, and the most popular appears to be putting the operation of the jail on the ballot: getting citizens across the county who voted to build the facility, now to fund its operation, so that the future is based on stable funding that will provide a well-run, safe and secure jail at full capacity. This option would free up money taxpayers are already paying to the county for enhanced public safety services county wide, particularly in the rural areas where the sheriff's office has been limited by resources in the past.

Everyone has an interest in a strong, fully utilized jail, and this seems to be the thinking of the committee as well.

If you want to know more about where we are headed in this effort to maintain the investment in our county jail, you can contact my office at 503-366-4611.

Funds allocated

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County: \$431.00 for administrative costs associated with EFSP Board support.

The local EFSP Board is composed of volunteers representing the American Red Cross, Native Americans, VFW, Community Action Team, Homeless, Columbia County, Community Churches, Catholic Church, and Retired Individuals

The money will be distributed directly from the national board to each agency in 2010.

Vernonia Justice Court

From page 19
Jonathan M. Hartman, 24, Vernonia, pleaded guilty to Disorderly Conduct II; \$656 FF&A.

Caitrin E. Kohlmeyer, 19, Hillsboro, pleaded guilty to MIP-Alcohol; D&A treatment, 1 yr ODL suspension, FF&A to be determined at a later date.

Traffic..... 4





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Obituary

CORA M. "MICKEY" JOHNSON

Cora M. "Mickey" Johnson, 79, Forest Grove, died March 8, 2010. A celebration of life service was held March 12.

Mrs. Johnson was born August 27, 1930, in Vernonia, to Boy and Geneva Annie (Elliott) Hall. She graduated from Vernonia High School in 1949.

In 1957, she married James Chris "Jim" Johnson. After her husband retired from the U.S. Navy, in 1965, they made their home in Vernonia. They moved to Forest Grove in 1996. She was a homemaker.

She was preceded in death by her husband; two brothers, Glen Hall and William "Bill" Hall; and a sister, Jo B. Carrick.

Survivors include a son, James C. "Chris" Jr. of Vancouver, Washington; a daughter, Anna M. "Ann" Lilley of Hillsboro;

three grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; nieces and nephews.

Remembrances are suggested to the Vernonia Senior Center, 446 Bridge St., Vernonia OR 97064.

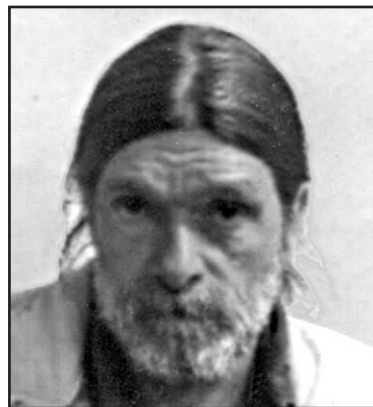
Fuiten, Rose & Hoyt Funeral Home in Forest Grove was in charge of arrangements.

RANDALL A. MCLAUGHLIN

Randall Allen McLaughlin, 54, Vernonia, died March 10, 2010. At his request, no services will be held.

Mr. McLaughlin was born December 15, 1955, in Hillsboro, to Clarence A. and Alethea Hinckley McLaughlin. He served in the U. S. Army. He loved music and animals.

He was preceded in death by his parents and two brothers, Douglas L. and Rodger A.



Randall Allen McLaughlin

McLaughlin.

Survivors include his brother, Gordon L. of Vernonia; nephews; a great-niece and a great-nephew; aunts; uncles; cousins; and friends.

RICCI RATHKA

Ricci Rathka, 68, Banks, died

March 1, 2010. Funeral services were held March 6 at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Forest Grove. A private family service was held at Hayward Cemetery in Banks.

Mrs. Rathka was born July 26, 1941, in Bell, California, to Richard and Nellie (Litinsky) Rawlins. She was raised in Bell.

In 1978, she married Kerry Rathka. Later they were sealed in the Seattle Temple. They made their home in Banks. In the 1990s, she earned a Bachelor's Degree in Art at Pacific University. She was an independent salesperson in the ATM industry.

Survivors include her husband; a son, Sean of Hillsboro; a daughter, Trisha Jennings of Banks; and four grandchildren.

Remembrances are suggested to the American Cancer Society or to Hopewell House Hos-

pice Program.

Duyck & VanDeHey Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

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