

Local businesses form Downtown Association

A meeting of downtown business owners and Paul Koch, a downtown revitalization consultant, was held by the City of Vernonia on March 9. The Vernonia City Council has asked the State of Oregon to make Vernonia a Main Street Program city.

At the meeting, business owners were asked to decide whether the Main Street Program or another model would work best for the city. Those attending requested time to review the documentation presented and another meeting was set for March 28.

Thirteen downtown business owners or downtown property owners decided at the March 28 meeting to form a Downtown Association to work as a subcommittee of the city's Economic Development Committee. The Association decided to wait until the city complete's the vision process they have be-

gun, before deciding on further direction.

The city held a work session, March 22, with members of the Planning Commission and City Council to work on the wording of their 20 year Vision statement, Mission statement and Strategic Plan. The city then held a community meeting on March 29 to get citizen input into the process. With 22 people in attendance at the March 29 meeting, drafts of the Vision and Mission statements, and a list of Strategic Initiatives and Proposed Values was reviewed. A final draft will be presented and discussed at the April 5 Vernonia City Council meeting, with approval of the final draft expected at their April 19 meeting.

In the meantime, the newly formed Downtown Association chairman, Marilyn Nicks, met last week with a representative of the Main Street Program to

gather information for the Association. The next meeting of the Association has not yet been scheduled and may not be set until the council finishes their Vision statement.

County jobless rate shows improvement

Columbia County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 11.3 percent in February, a significant decrease from the previous month (12.0%) and lower than the year before (12.0%). The rate was above the statewide rate (10.5%) and the national rate (9.7%). Total employment climbed by 155 to 21,254 and the number of unemployed people fell by 83 to 3,189. Total employment this February was 388 fewer than one year before but there were 265 fewer people unemployed this year.

Wauna FCU has positive growth

CEO Robert Blumberg announced Wauna Federal Credit Union 2009 financials at the 43rd Annual Meeting, held on March 6, at the Columbia County Fair Grounds in St. Helens. Blumberg reported Wauna grew by \$13.8 million in total assets, \$8.9 million in net loans

Biomass available from area growers

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other idea linked to the project is the possible exchange of carbon sequestration on family-owned tree farms for health insurance credits. Other components are being investigated as the ideas are put forward.

On April 9, the Pinchot Institute president and others will spend the day in Vernonia looking at the potential for a community wide project in sustainability. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

and \$11.7 million in shares. This growth is a result of members utilizing the Credit Union to satisfy more of their financial needs. Wauna recorded a net loss for 2009 of \$9,624. This was a result of expensing \$784,008 to support the credit union industry, instead of the industry using taxpayer money. All credit unions participated in supporting its industry rather than using taxpayer's money. Without this expense, which did not arise from Wauna's activity, the Credit Union would have shown a net income of \$774,384 compared to \$660,167 for 2008.

Member shares at our credit union are insured by the NCUA (National Credit Union Association) for up to \$250,000 as part of the Economic Stabilization Statute. According to the NCUA website, not one penny of insured savings has been lost by

See Wauna on page 10

Community Calendar

VERNONIA

Alcoholics Anonymous	Mondays	6:30 p.m., 410 North Street
Alcoholics Anonymous	Thursdays (Big Book Study)	7:00 p.m., 410 North Street
American Legion Post #119	2nd Thursday	7:00 p.m., 627 Adams Avenue
Booster Club	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., VHS Library
Boy Scout Troop 201	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., Scout Cabin
Boy Scout Troop 860	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., LDS Church
Cemetery Beautification Comm.	2nd Thursday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
CERT	4th Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-3018
Chamber of Commerce	2nd Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-6081
Community Coalition	2nd Monday	12:30 p.m. School District Ofc.
Cub Scout Pack 201	Scout Cabin	For Info Call 503-429-4250
Friends of the Library	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Vernonia Library
Girl Scouts, Neighborhood 4-2		For Info Call 503-819-0143
Hands On Art Committee	1st & 3rd Thursdays	4:00 p.m., City Hall
Izaak Walton League	3rd Thursday	For location call 503-429-7193
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., Buckhorn Restaurant
Municipal Airport Committee	4th Thursday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Pioneer Museum		For Info Call 503-429-3713
Public Works Committee	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Cares Directors		For Info call 503-429-1414
Vernonia City Council	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Community PTA	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., WGS Library
Vernonia Garden Club	2nd Tuesday	1:30 p.m., Vernonia Library
Vernonia Grange	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., Grange Hall
Vernonia Health Center	2nd Monday	6:00 p.m., 510 Bridge St.
Vernonia Learning Center	1st Wednesday	6:00 p.m., VLC
Vernonia Parks Committee	3rd Wednesday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Planning Comm.	1st & 3rd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Pride	2nd Thursday	1:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Ridge Riders	Last Thursday	7:00 p.m., Senior Center
Vernonia RFPD Board	2nd Tuesday	6:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia School Board	2nd Thursday	6:00 p.m., District Office
Vernonia Sr. Center Board	2nd Friday	10:00 a.m., Senior Center
Vernonia Transfer Station	2nd & 4th Saturdays, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.	Behind VHS
Vern. Volunteer Ambulance Assoc.	1st, 3rd & 4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
WOEC Directors	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., WOEC

MIST-BIRKENFELD

M-BRFPD Board Business Mtg.	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-BRFPD Board Workshop	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Ambulance Drill	1st & 2nd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Fire Drill	1st & 2nd Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Helping Circle	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B SAR Drill	3rd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Volunteer Assoc.	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
Natal Grange	2nd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Natal Grange Hall
T.O.P.S.	Mondays	9:00 a.m., Main Fire Station
Upr Nehalem Watershed Council	For date call 429-0869	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station

BANKS

Alcoholics Anonymous	Friday	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
Alcoholics Anonymous	Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
American Legion Post #90	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., Main Street Post
Banks City Council	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., City Hall
Banks Fire District #13	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Station 13
Banks Library Commission	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Banks Planning Commission	Last Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Banks School Board	2nd Monday	7:30 p.m., Jr. High Library
Banks Youth Group	Sunday, Wednesday	7:00 p.m., UMC Youth Bldg.
Chamber of Commerce	1st Thursday	12:30 p.m., Fire District Office
CPO 14	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Everybody's Hometown Band	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., BHS Music Room
Friends of the Library	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., Brown Derby
Sunset Park Assoc.	3rd Wednesday	8:00 p.m., Gun Club
T.O.P.S.	Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Administration Bldg.

COLUMBIA COUNTY (All meet in St. Helens unless otherwise noted.)

Board of Commissioners	Wednesday	10:00 a.m., Courthouse
Citizens for Senior Justice	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Sunset Park Church
Columbia Comm Mental Health	1st Tuesday	5:30 p.m., 58646 McNulty Way
Columbia Soil & Water District	3rd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., NRCS, 2514 Sykes
County Fair Board	2nd Monday	6:00 p.m., Fairgrounds 4-H Bldg.
County Parks Commission	3rd Tuesday	Times vary, 1054 Oregon St.
Mental Health Advisory Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211
Comm. on Children & Families	3rd Thursday	5:30 p.m. OSU Ext., 505 N. Hwy. 30
Local Alcohol & Drug Plann. Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211