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Youngsters had fun carving pumpkins at the annual Vernonia Salmon Festival, October 2nd.

WOEC rate increased 4%

West Oregon Electric Cooperative (WOEC) held a Rate Change Member Meeting on September 28 to announce that rates would go up 4 percent effective October 1 of this year and that they expect to raise rates another 5 percent in October 2011 (see Power of the People on page 15 for more specific information). After a presentation by General Manager Marc Farmer and a question and answer period with the audience, the Board of Directors voted for the rate increase.

The reasons given for the increase this year were labor costs, benefit costs, tree trimming costs, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) increases, principal and interest for the new building, and a potential lawsuit that will increase legal

expenses. The 2011 increase is expected to be driven by increased BPA costs passed through to WOEC.

The meeting was well attended and questions from the audience included one requesting additional information about WOEC's choice of the Rose Ave. site for the new building. Farmer responded that they looked at a number of sites and the Rose Ave. site best met the selection criteria and total costs are anticipated to be \$2.2 million less on that site than the next best site.

The increased rate is expected to bring in additional revenue of about \$329,000 over the next 12 months, to cover the increased cost of supplying electricity.

Salmon Poisoning disease can kill dogs

Dogs that eat even a small amount of uncooked Salmon, Trout, or Steelhead are at risk of getting potentially fatal Salmon Poisoning disease.

The cause is a microscopic organism that sometimes lives in a parasite that can infect the Salmon family. The germ is killed by cooking, freezing or hot smoking fish.

If a dog eats infected fish, symptoms start from a few days to five days later. Symptoms include decreased energy level, increased temperature, loss of appetite, swollen lymph glands, vomiting, and diarrhea (turning bloody within a day or two)

If untreated, 90 percent of dogs with symptoms will die within 7-14 days from dehydration and blood loss.

If caught early enough, Salmon Poisoning is treatable with antibiotics. In severe cases, intravenous fluids may be needed. Get the dog to a veterinarian as soon as Salmon Poisoning is suspected. The longer before treatment starts, the

harder and more expensive the treatment will be, and the greater the chances that treatment will not be successful.

If your dog is seen eating fish, talk to your veterinarian about a preventive shot of antibiotics to avoid Salmon Poisoning.

Most dogs are immune to future Salmon Poisoning, once they have had and survived it. Special emphasis on MOST, not all dogs develop immunity.

Preventive measures include disposing of raw fish waste in a can with a tight fitting lid, leaving dogs home when fishing, or leashing dogs when near water.

Fire Season is ended, but permits are still required

Fire Season officially ended on September 22, so forest operators are no longer required to have fire suppression equipment and fire watch services as part of their forest operations. Public fire restrictions have also been lifted. Private forest owners can still have restrictions

Eight candidates seeking two Vernonia Council positions

Vernonia voters will have the opportunity to choose two Vernonia city councilors in the November 2 general election. The incumbents are Cindy Ball, who previously served as mayor and currently as councilor, and Catherine Helmer, who was appointed as councilor in July of this year. All council positions are non-partisan. Eight community members have filed as candidates.

All of the candidates were interviewed by *The Independent*, asking the same questions of each one. Here are the questions and the candidates' responses. Responses are in alphabetical order by surname.

that apply year round.

The Columbia County Fire Defense Board has lifted the ban on open burning with the end of fire season, but burning will be regulated on a day-to-day basis by local fire districts and the Oregon Department of Forestry. Permits are required

The candidates are Cynthia (Cindy) Ball, Willow Burch, Catherine Helmer, Edward Johnson, Steven Johnson, Marilyn Nicks, Ernest (Ernie) Smith, and Burton (Burt) Tschache. Additional information about each candidate follows the questions and answers.

From the Candidates:

1. Why are you running for this office?

Ball – I have found the past 13 plus years to be rewarding, aggravating, educational, fun and sometimes downright scary, but I have always felt personal satisfaction at doing my best. I

for any open burning within Columbia County. The burning of domestic waste and yard debris requires a valid permit from your local fire district. Outside a rural fire district, the Department of Forestry issues permits.

It's still necessary to apply
See Burn on page 5

have learned a great deal in the past several years and would like to put that knowledge and experience to work, once again, for the city.

Burch – I think city council needs change; to find a positive way to communicate with people, in both directions. Then the city and citizens can support each other better.

Helmer – Because I feel like the city is going to go through significant changes – it's already started – and I would like to be part of it. I have heard that if you don't like the way things are going in a situation you can sit around and gripe about it or you can try to change it for the better and be part of the change.

Johnson, E. – I believe some of the folks have been there too long, changes need to be made and I don't believe that will happen unless new people get in there.

Johnson, S. – 10 months ago, a friend suggested I run and that

See Candidates on page 8