

Child identification kits available

New equipment purchased to improve the efficiency of fingerprinting services is enabling the Columbia County Sheriff's Office to provide free Child Identification Kits to parents wishing to fingerprint and photograph their children as a safety measure.

"We don't keep the files, so the fingerprints are used only if the parents choose to use them," said Sheriff Jeff Dickerson. "The equipment we now have takes the fingerprints without ink and transfers them digitally onto a fingerprint card. It also takes a photograph of the child, and places the photo

on the card," he added.

A special feature of the program is that it automatically produces two detachable business-card sized ID cards with the child's photograph and thumb print on each card.

The department also offered the free ID kits on October 2 at the Clatskanie Health & Safety Fair. Future opportunities for child fingerprinting are planned for the Children's Fair at St. Helens High School, October 30, as well as ongoing services offered at the sheriff's office, by appointment.

24 Years Ago This Month

The October 30, 1986, issue of *The Independent* included the following news story on the front page:

Jessica Jensen, 13 year old daughter of Norman and Patricia Jensen of Vernonia, was honored at the annual meeting of the West Oregon Electric Cooperative when she was awarded the American Red Cross, Oregon Trail Chapter, Lifesaving Medal for saving the life of her friend and neighbor Teresa Young.

The order of business at the meeting was suspended by WOEC Chairman Rod McLean so Elmer Jensen (no relation), a Red Cross volunteer from St. Helens, could present the award. Jensen related the events that led up to the presentation:

"The two girls and Jessica's sister Rebecca, were playing together last May in a treehouse that overhangs the Nehalem River near their home on Long Pine Road, when a tree limb broke and plunged Teresa into the river. Teresa was knocked unconscious by the fall into the rocky river, and was being dragged downstream by the current, with her face under water.

"Jessica jumped into the river and pulled Teresa to the surface, held her out of the water, and pulled her to safety on the bank while Rebecca ran for help. When help arrived, it was determined that the quick action by Jessica saved Teresa from drowning."

Jensen presented the medal

and a certificate "for extraordinary personal action in saving another person's life," while Teresa, who shared the podium with Jessica, smiled shyly at the public recognition for her friend.

At the end of the ceremony, WOEC members gave Jessica a standing ovation for her heroic action.

Free movie on harassment

On Saturday, November 6, at 10 a.m. at the Scappoose Cinema 7 complex, 33520 SW Edward Lane, the Columbia County Citizens for Human Dignity are presenting the film and a panel discussion afterward. Director Joe Wilson will be on hand to discuss the film, *Out in the Silence*, and talk about the experiences that brought him to development of the film.

Out in the Silence captures the remarkable chain of events that unfold when the announcement of filmmaker Joe Wilson's wedding to another man ignites a firestorm of controversy in his small Pennsylvania hometown.

Everyone is encouraged to attend this important movie and discussion. Admission is free, thanks to the generosity of local businesses and individuals.

Elect Ed Johnson to Vernonia City Council

I guess I didn't quite answer a couple of Scott Laird's questions. Therefore, I'll take the unfair advantage of answering them now. I listened carefully to the answers the other candidates gave at Scott's "meet the candidates forum." I feel that most of their answers were meaningless...political blather. Here is my answer:

Which City projects are important? As a City Councilor how would I implement them? Answer: Whether it's the school project, public works, airport, etc., they're all important! They are all on their way to being implemented by the current city council. As a new city councilor I'm certainly not going to recommend scrapping these projects. We need to finish them and move on. Though, some of these projects may need to be revisited for economic reasons.

However, we can't allow these projects to overshadow other issues. Real issues! Issues such as the way the current city council views the public...their lack of transparency and refusal to allow the public access to certain public documents. Do we want a city council that rejects negative input from the public but accepts the positive, apparently so a specific publication will give them a good review? Do we want a city council that approves outside contractors, for flood buyout demolitions, who bring in their own labor without considering our labor that's already available...and who need the jobs? A council who favors "green" businesses over businesses that will actually employ someone local? The council was questioned about hiring outside contractors before local labor. The Mayor responded with, "How is this our problem?" meaning

Bits & Bites

By Jacqueline Ramsay



I know they are real.

Ice Cream Day was wonderful at the Vernonia Senior Center. A full house with many friends I hadn't seen for quite a while. Sorry for those I missed because you were ill. Most of you will never know what getting together just one day a week can mean to some of us.

The other side of God's wonders – were you awake or asleep when it started to pour that Friday night? My house plants that were out on the patio for a little sun and fresh air almost floated away. The shamrock I poured at least two cups of water out of the pot and I may still have to replant it in dry soil. And, now Fall has fallen – 45°, sunny and a stiff cold wind – brrr. It's time to dig out my winter jammies and fluffy robe and slippers.

Oh, if you could see me now. I have my new wheels, a Rollator, four wheels, two handbrakes, and a lifting seat, cherry red metallic and black. Now Shadow and I can "tool" right along at a strolling pace. Walk three blocks and sit. Walk three blocks and sit, and so on. Now we can take our "long" walks again. The fresh air does us both a wonder of good.

Nothing Earth shaking going on at this moment, so – ta, ta. Oh, yes – Have a spooky Halloween.

the city council. Do we need a mayor with this attitude?

How about a city council that absolutely refuses to communicate with the public? We could end up with a city council where the majority are business owners who rarely employ anyone or very few at the most? A council that enforces the city code for some and not others...depending on how much clout they have with the city? I don't think, as a community, we want a city council like this.

The role of the city council is to hire a city administrator, watch over the city budget, vote on resolutions, approve funding, etc. The current city council has not been successful in any of these tasks. We've had six city administrators in the past five years. The council has approved funding for very expensive items the community really doesn't need or want. They've passed resolutions that have cost the public but benefitted a few in the business community. I have nothing against the business community but there are only a couple of independent businesses, on Bridge Street, that really employ anyone.

The way I see it...if you want change you have to change the city council. This doesn't mean replacing the current councilors with their friends! We need to be very careful about who we elect to the city council so we don't wind up with the same people, different faces. Remember...the community elects the mayor and the city council so they can work for us!

Vote Ed Johnson for City Council!