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THE INDEPENDENT

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The Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley for Over 25 years

August 17, 2011



Todd Cutright was dead-on the full can of beer when he dropped this log, during the pole falling portion of the 2011 Jamboree Logging Show competition. Full results from the show are expected to be available by the September 7 issue. Photo by Garry Kinney.

Burch and Nicks recalled from Vernonia City Council

The recall election for Vernonia City Councilors Willow Burch and Marilyn Nicks was held August 4 and was certified by the Columbia County Elections Department on August 5.

Burch and Nicks were both recalled by more than 73 percent of the votes cast. Total voter turnout was 53.32 percent. They were notified of the results, in writing, on August 5 and were removed from office as of that day.

Chief Petitioner of the recall was Sharon Bernal, who had already run a successful recall, in June, of city councilor Kevin Hudson. The recalls began after Hudson, Nicks and Burch voted to end the contract of Interim City Administrator Bill

Haack early.

These recalls leave the city council with only two members, Mayor Josette Mitchell and Councilor Randy Parrow. Council held interviews in June to replace Hudson but deadlocked with Burch and Nicks voting for one applicant and Mitchell and Parrow voting for another. The same deadlock vote occurred in June after interviews with two applicants for City Administrator. One of those applicants was Haack.

Mitchell and Parrow announced at a special city council meeting, held August 8, the process that would be used to fill the three open council positions. (See related article on page 1.)

Wu resigns, election set

Governor Kitzhaber set a special election to replace Congressman David Wu after receiving a letter of resignation from the representative of Oregon's First Congressional District. A special primary election will be held on November 8, 2011, and a special general election will be held on January

31, 2012. The Secretary of State's Office will be releasing details of the special election process.

"I have received a letter of resignation from Congressman David Wu and am working with the Secretary of State's office on a special election process," said Governor Kitzhaber. "Holding both a primary and

See Wu on page 5

Vernonia Council outlines the plan to fill open seats

At a special Vernonia City Council meeting, on August 8, Mayor Josette Mitchell and Councilor Randy Parrow accepted the results of the Special Recall Election held August 4 that resulted in the recall of councilors Willow Burch and Marilyn Nicks.

Mitchell and Parrow went on to outline the process and timeline that will be used to fill the three open council positions. Fifteen citizens will be chosen, from those applying between now and August 22, to fill three five-person interview panels. At a special meeting on August 22, those 15 panelists will be drawn by lottery from those

who apply. Panel members must be registered voters, living inside the Vernonia city limits, not be employed by the city nor served the City of Vernonia in an official position in the last 18 months, and must be available for interviews in the evenings of the week of August 23 to 27. Citizens interested in being on the panel can sign up at City Hall, 1001 Bridge St., or email cityhall@vernonia-or.gov with name, address and phone number, expressing your interest in serving as a panelist. Deadline for panelist applications is 4:00 p.m. on August 22.

The city is also accepting applications for the three va-

cant council positions. Applications are online at www.vernonia-or.gov or available at city hall. These applications must also be turned in by 4:00 p.m. on August 22. The term of office for one council position will be through December 2012; the other two will run through December 2014. All three positions will be filled by a regular election process when the terms expire.

Mitchell and Parrow will attend the interviews, but will not hold separate interviews. They will make their choices based on the panels' interviews.

The three new councilors will be selected, appointed and

sworn into office at a special meeting set for August 29.

"Old Grads" meet, Aug. 21

The annual Vernonia Society, VHS "Old Grads" and Oregon American alumni picnic will be this Sunday, August 21, at Anderson Park in Vernonia. Bring a lunch or buy a hot dog there. Coffee provided.

Registration begins at 10:00 a.m. All former and current Vernonians are welcome to attend.

**The 66th annual
Banks BBQ
August 19-21.
Full schedule
on page 14.**

— CORRECTION —

The Keasey Tree Farm was named as the Columbia County Tree Farm of the year and is in the running to be named Oregon Tree Farm but has not been selected for that honor.

The Independent regrets any confusion caused by this error.