

Between the Bookends

by Nancy Burch, Librarian
Vernonia Public Library



Notification has been received that the Columbia County Cultural Coalition has approved a grant application made by the Friends of the Library. This matching grant will allow an expanded program of "Community Reads for 2012", by providing funding for activities for youngsters, young adults and adults relevant to the books chosen for each of these age ranges. Addie Boswell's book, *The Rain Stomper*, has been chosen for young

readers, but suggestions are being requested for the young adult and adult books/authors—preferably Oregon authors. The plan is to encourage the community, as a whole, to read these books, with the related activities to take place during National Library Week in April. If you have a favorite Oregon author that you think others would enjoy reading and meeting, let the library staff know; all suggestions will be considered.

For an updated list of activities taking place in the library, go to the city's web page, www.vernonia-or.gov, and choose library under city services. Currently listed are dates, times, and themes for preschool and after school programs, as well as information about the movie of the month (*The Perfect Game* will screen on Thursday, Sept. 22, at 6:30 p.m.), and the book to be discussed in September (*The Help* will be discussed on Monday, Sept. 26, at 5:30 p.m.)

The quarterly meeting of the Friends of the Library will take place on Tuesday, October 4th at 6:30 p.m. in the library. If you would like to join this group, whose sole purpose is supplement-

ing library services and materials, plan on attending this meeting. (Membership forms are also on the city website.)

Banned Books Week is an annual event held the last week in September in celebration of the freedom to read and the importance of the First Amendment. Information concerning books that have been banned or challenged, along with reasons for these challenges, will be available in the library during this week. Included in this list are *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, and *The Call of the Wild*. More recent challenges have been to the *Harry Potter* series, *The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold, *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson, *Friday Night Lights* by H. G. Bissinger, *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeline L'Engle, and *Tiger Eyes* by Judy Blume. These books and others on the list will also be readily available for patrons who might wish to refresh themselves on the types of literature that might not be available if America's First Amendment did not assure citizens freedom.

New acquisitions include *Protect and Defend* by Richard North Patterson, *The Omen Machine* by Terry Goodkind, *New York to Dallas* by J.D. Robb, *Shelter* by Harlan Coben, *We the Animals* by Justin Torres, and *Northwest Angle* by William Kent Krueger. Even if, sometime in the future, you should happen to find any of these books on a challenged list, be assured that you will not be denied the opportunity to read them.

Vernonia Public Library: 701 Weed Avenue
Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri. 10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Tues., Thu. 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Sat. 10 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Preschool Story Time: Mondays, 10:30 a.m.
when school is in session.
Phone: 503-429-1818

4-H results from the 2011 Fairs

Following are the results from the 4-H competition at the 2011 Columbia County Fair and the Oregon State Fair. Results listed are from the county fair unless noted. Due to space limitations, only results within *The Independent's* circulation area are included.

Beef Showmanship: Champion – Lauren Glass.

Beef Showmanship: Reserve Champion – Nicole Glass.

Cake Decorating: Champion – Meghan Sullivan.

Food Preservation: Reserve Champion – Kaitlyn Eyrrick.

Meat Goat Showmanship: Champion – Jessica Stringfield.

Posters: Reserve Champion – Crystal-Ann Carreon.

Poultry Market: Champion – Ely Bradley.

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Child safety seat law changes in 2012

Motor vehicle traffic crashes remain the leading cause of death nationwide for children ages three and older. National Child Passenger Safety Week, September 18 – 24, is the perfect time for Oregonians to learn more about preventing child passenger fatalities and injuries by properly buckling

them into the car.

"Putting children into adult belt systems before they are tall enough is a major contributor to this problem," said Carla Levinski, ODOT's Occupant Protection Program manager. In Oregon, crash data for 2010 shows that 49 percent of booster-age children injured in crashes were using adult belts instead of boosters, and half of those killed were riding with no safety restraint at all.

Securing children properly — in the back seat of the vehicle — is the most effective action parents and caregivers can take to protect them from injury in the event of a crash. Even an unexpected defensive stop or swerve in traffic can throw an unrestrained passenger against the vehicle interior or other passengers, resulting in potentially serious injuries.

Free safety seat checks by certified technicians are available throughout the year, and a calendar showing times and locations of local events is available at www.childsafetyseat.org. ODOT's primary partners in promoting child passenger safety include the Child Safety

Seat Resource Center (Alliance for Community Traffic Safety Oregon), Safe Kids Oregon, American Medical Response, Oregon Medical Association, law enforcement agencies, and over 500 volunteer Certified CPS Technicians working throughout Oregon.

Oregon law requires the following:

- A child weighing less than 40 pounds must be restrained in a child safety seat.

- A child under one year of age or weighing less than twenty pounds must be restrained in a child seat, rear facing.

- A child over forty pounds but under age eight or less than 4' 9" tall must be restrained in a booster seat that elevates them so the lap/shoulder belts fit correctly.

Beginning January 1, 2012, Oregon law will change to allow continued use of child seats up to the highest weight limit allowed by the manufacturer for the seat in use — as an alternative to boosters — for children over forty pounds but under age eight or less than 4'9" tall.

Child advocates sought in Columbia County for children in foster care

Last year in Columbia County, 182 children spent time in foster care. Fewer than one in five had an advocate to give them a voice in court.

"The system is full of compassionate lawyers, judges, social workers and foster families, but this intense need can strain the system to the point where they are simply unable to protect the rights of each child," said CASA executive director Kathryn Bourn. "This isn't just a problem. It is nothing short of a violation of their basic human rights, in a country where we aren't supposed to fear such things."

CASA for Kids, which serves foster children in Columbia County, is recruiting new volunteer advocates. A new training class for CASA advocates starts October 20 in St. Helens. Volunteers receive 30 hours of training before being assigned the child or siblings for whom they will advocate.

Volunteers come from all walks of life: teachers, business people, retirees, stay-at-home parents, millworkers, grandparents, college students, nurses, and other ex-

traordinary men and women.

Columbia County currently has 15 volunteer court appointed special advocates (CASAs) who work with 31 children. They make sure that the abuse and neglect that the children originally suffered at home does not continue as abuse and neglect at the hands of the system. Low caseloads for CASA volunteers mean the courts can make better decisions for children. They handle just one or two cases at a time so that they can give each child's case the sustained, personal attention he or she deserves.

"Our current CASA volunteers are doing a great job of serving the 20% of children with a CASA, but our community is failing the other 80% still waiting for an advocate," Bourn said. Bourn believes that serving every child in the foster care system is possible within the next three years with enough community support.

The National CASA Association recently awarded CASA for Kids a \$41,000 new program development grant to support

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