

Vernonia Lions Club celebrates members

by Randal Harvey

On Tuesday, March 6, the Vernonia Lions Club gave their first ever Melvin Jones Fellowship and Helen Keller Benefactor Awards in their 65 year history. The ceremony took place at the New Hong Kong Restaurant in Vernonia. President Grant Williams served as Master of Ceremonies. Lions Club District Governor Sandy Woolverton, and David Rich with Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation, came from Portland to be presenters.

District Governor Woolverton awarded the Melvin Jones

Fellowship to Robert F. "RED" Curl for his many years of outstanding service to the community. Curl joined the Vernonia Lions Club in September of 1962, making this his 50th anniversary as a Vernonia Lions Club member.

The Helen Keller award was presented by David Rich to Pat Styles. This was a complete surprise to Pat, whose family and fellow club members had kept the secret from her, for months, until the night of the awards ceremony. Pat was busy serving cake during Mr. Rich's speech on the subject of Helen Keller. When Rich start-

ed talking about Pat, he didn't say her name, but when he said, "the recipient had transferred from the West Linn Lions Club," the look of shock and surprise on Pat's face was priceless!

Congratulations to both Lion Red Curl and Lion Pat Styles.

The Vernonia Lions Club also wants to say "Thank You" to District Governor Sandy Woolverton and Lion David Rich, for braving the cold winter's night to come to Vernonia, and for making our awards ceremony so special.

Medical Reserve Corps has saved lives

When a nurse and member of the Columbia County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteered to take free blood pressure readings at the Vernonia Senior Center, she didn't know that she would save a neighbor's life.

What she found was that one senior citizen's blood pressure was dangerously high. She advised him to see his physician without delay. As a result, said Anne Parrott, MRC unit leader, his medications were changed and his blood pressure soon lowered to an acceptable range.

This experience is more dramatic than usual, but Columbia County's 22 MRCs are making a difference even as they prepare for their roles in large scale disasters such as a mass casualty incident, mass dispensing of shots or medications, or handling a surge of ill or infected people into the county.

The Federal government created the national system of MRC units shortly after 9/11 to

improve national preparation for a large scale public health crisis. This year, the federal program is celebrating its 10th anniversary. Oregon began recruiting volunteers after a federal mandate in 2003, and the State Emergency Registry of Volunteers in Oregon was set up for on-line registration. Columbia County's MRC unit was established in December 2006, and today is one of 15 units in Oregon.

Parrott, who is Preparedness Coordinator for The Public Health Foundation of Columbia County, said that during a Public Health emergency the 22 members of the MRC would be deployed wherever they are needed most.

In 2011, MRCs assisted with influenza vaccinations, helped school district nurses with general health screenings for grades K-6, staffed Health Fair booths and First Aid booths, and conducted blood pressure and blood sugar screenings at senior centers. During the Public Health H1N1 vaccination

campaign, the MRCs were a mobile unit that traveled to adult foster homes and assisted living facilities to provide vaccinations.

They have been trained in the incident command system structure, First Aid that includes a psychological evaluation component, and basic and advanced disaster training, "all provided under the auspices of the U.S. Surgeon General," said Parrott. They also received training in how to promote Public Health initiatives.

"This year the training for MRCs will be focused on medical surge and the MRC role in mass casualties," Parrott said, explaining that a mass casualty, such as a large freeway pile-up, earthquake or explosion, requires specific training for MRCs, who again would be called on to perform specific tasks.

All of the training and practice are in preparation for a major incident, when local emergency systems are over-

See MRC on page 9

Senior Center News

Okay, card sharks, you'll have a chance to hold 'em or fold 'em at poker games in the Vernonia Senior Center every Thursday. There's no money involved, it's chips only, and the first hand will be dealt right after lunch. Enjoy lunch here and don't miss any of the fun. Poker isn't replacing pinochle; that will still be on Fridays.

You don't want to miss the special Easter lunch coming up on Wednesday, April 4. It's a great time to wear your Easter bonnet, too!

The center's annual plant sale is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, June 1-2. Watch this column for more information, and start thinking about any plants, bulbs, yard art, etc. that you may be able to donate.

The retirement of Duke Gortler and Ellie Thompson from the Golden Oldies has left a hole, and we want area musicians to know that, if you are interested in playing with the band, we will welcome you with open arms.

The regular schedule of center activities and services includes:

- Lunch on Monday through Friday at noon. A \$4.00 donation is suggested for those 60 and older, and \$5.00 for those under 60. Lunch to go is \$5.00; call ahead and place your order. Free bingo with lunch each Monday starting at 11:45 a.m.; Wauna Federal Credit Union provides diners with free ice cream on the last Wednesday of each month; members' birthdays during the month are noted on the last Friday.

The Five Area Lunch, on the last Monday of each month, will be at St. Helens Senior Center on March 26th.

- Breakfast for all ages on Fridays from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m., at \$3.50 per person. Maple bars made fresh daily are \$1.00 each.
- Free blood pressure checks on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 11 a.m. to noon.
- Foot care on the second and fourth Fridays of each month. Call Marilyn Albro, R.N., at 503-429-0406 for an appointment. Foot care is \$15.00.
- Quilters and other needle workers gather on Tuesdays, any time from 10:30 to closing.

The Senior Center Thrift Shop is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Always half price during the first week of each month.

Wheelchairs are available, call Pauline Coffman for information; unused canes are needed.

Vernonia Senior Citizens Center: 446 Bridge Street
Hours: Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Thrift Shop Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Phone: 503-429-3912

In The Service



John "Levi" Timmerman

John "Levi" Timmerman has graduated from basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. Next, he will receive technical training at Lackland AFB through mid-May.

Timmerman is a 2010 graduate of Vernonia High School and the son of Rick Timmerman and Carey Jones-Timmerman of Vernonia.

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