

Between the Bookends

by Nancy Burch, Librarian
Vernonia Public Library



With tentative approval of its proposed 2012-2013 budget, library staff should be able to provide a level of service to the community comparable to previous years. There is always a feeling of relief and gratefulness when budget figures show the likelihood that the quality and quantity of services will be available to the community. A comparison of library services including programs offered to the community, staffing, circulation, funding, etc., may be found on the Oregon State Library home page, under Library Development Services and public library statistics. I encourage

you to look at these figures and see how our library compares to others serving approximately the same number of patrons.

Saturday's conversation project, "Life After War", presented by photojournalist Jim Lommasson, was amazingly informational and poignant. His interviews with returning 'soldiers' allowed those of us who have not seen war first-hand to have a better understanding of the tribulations faced by these men and women.

Plans for this year's Summer Reading program are taking shape. The theme, "Dream Big, READ!" presents the opportunity for a myriad of exciting activities. Jennifer Moloney is currently requesting donations to provide incentives for youngsters meeting their reading goals. Sign-up sheets will soon be available in the library for youngsters who will be taking part in this summer's activities, which will include tie-dying, learning about owls, and a puppet presentation.

The microfilm of Vernonia's newspapers has all been converted to digital format and may be searched on the library's computers. We are very pleased with the quality of these reproductions which can be searched by keywords and dates. The public is encouraged to utilize this resource, which was made possible by a grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust.

New acquisitions are varied in setting and time frame. *Hard Country*, by Michael McGarrity, takes place from just after the Civil War until the early 1900s in the wild New Mexico territory. This is an historical western family saga that has been compared to *Lonesome Dove*. The title of Madeleine Albright's *Prague Winter: A Personal Story of Remembrance and War, 1937-1948*, is a remarkable story of adventure and passion, tragedy and courage set against the backdrop of occupied

Czechoslovakia and World War II. James Patterson's latest in the Women's Murder Club series, *11th Hour*, and Charlaine Harris' latest Sookie Stackhouse novel *Deadlocked*, (even though it involves vampires) take place in the present. Many of the newest books for young readers are futuristic; including *Insurgent* by Veronica Roth, *Bitterblue* by Kristin Cashore, and Book Three of the Kane Chronicles by Rick Riordan entitled *The Serpent's Shadow*. These are just some examples of the range of reading materials one might find in our library.

The novels of local author Heather Sharfeddin have become some of my latest favorites. These include *The Windless Summer*, *Damaged Goods*, and *Sweetwater Burning*. *The Windless Summer* takes place on the Washington side of the Columbia River in the fictional town of Rocket, a summer playground for windsurfers and tourists. When a windless summer ignites fear as businesses and residents move away, patrons of one room in Tom Jemmet's Rocket Motel seem to suffer extremely good or extremely bad luck. Is this coincidence, fate, or something supernatural caused by Tom's autistic daughter?

In *Damaged Goods*, set in Oregon's Willamette Valley, auctioneer Hershel Swift suffers memory lapses following a car accident. When he rescues drifter Silvie Thorne from a roadside breakdown, the two confront their troubled pasts and mistakes and Swift discovers how the values a man gives something can potentially lead to murder. In *Sweetwater Burning*, Chas McPherson tends his blackbelly sheep in the small Idaho town of Sweetwater. As Chas tries to make room for home-care nurse Mattie Holden and his terminally ill father, in a house haunted by the past, Sweetwater is set on edge by an act of arson—and Chas is the suspect. The hardscrabble ranch becomes the setting for both love and violence as this novel builds toward a shattering conclusion. Sharfeddin's novels are not all sweetness and light, nor are her characters perfect, but she captures the essence of humanity—people and their motivations and decisions.

Hillary Jordan's *When She Woke* will be the topic for Book Discussion on Tuesday, May 29 at 5:30 p.m.

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

There's still time to get your space in Vernonia's community garden

by Bill Langmaid

Amidst the chaos of this summer's school deconstruction project, Vernonia's community garden will be growing like crazy thanks to a generous donation from Bamboo Gardens of North Plains. Following the completion of the new downtown park, the community garden will move just east of the new school's parking lot at the end of Missouri Ave.

Thanks go to both the city and the school district for their cooperation in making the community garden a priority in both this year and the future.

Penny Costley and Allison McLeod are leading the organization this summer, and are ready to accept reservations for space in the garden. This year's garden will be based in containers, rather than in-ground planting. The maximum size plot available is 3' by 21', or 27 containers, and smaller sizes are available. Full sized plots are \$20 this season, and are pro-rated based on the size of the plot and ability to pay. Please call Penny (429-0196) or stop by the Vernonia Pharmacy and speak with Phil Darrah to pick up an application.

The garden will be open for members starting on June 1. New members can show up with their own seeds or vegetable starts and tools, or can obtain starts and seeds from the Master Gardeners on hand for the grand opening. Everyone, no matter their skill level, is encouraged to participate if

they want to garden. Costley added, "We're setting up classes and workshops to meet the needs of our members." The volunteer staff will also be demonstrating a rain barrel with a solar powered pump, and helping people set up their new garden plots.

According to Costley, "The main advantage to the community is the Master Gardener knowledge base. We have over 20 Master Gardeners in Vernonia, and all are ready to help the community learn about gardening. We want to teach the practical skills, as well as the benefits. There is nothing tastier than a fresh ripe tomato eaten warm right off the plant."

The garden is projected to hold 400 lineal feet of growing space, which will all be planted. Any food produced in excess of that claimed by participants will be distributed to Vernonia Cares and other organizations that provide nutritious food to those in need. The garden is a collaboration between the Ford Family Foundation, City of Vernonia, Vernonia School District,

Vernonia Health Board, Vernonia Cares, and Kiwanis International.

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 503-901-1705
 16720 Noakes Rd Vernonia, OR

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Mental Health	Hotline
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Suicide Hotline	866-397-6161
1-800-784-2433	-----
or	Military Helpline
1-800-273-TALK(8255)	888-HLP-4-VET
	(888-457-4838)