

# Haack tells city council that FEMA says lagoons are okay as is

The Vernonia City Council held meetings on August 20 and September 4, both with short agendas.

Mayor Josette Mitchell was not in attendance at the August 20 meeting, as she was in the hospital delivering her new son, Jasper. She returned to her place on the podium for the September 4 meeting.

The only item of business on the August 20 agenda was to authorize City Administrator Bill Haack to contract with American Leak Detection to test the city's water system for leaks. The contract is not to exceed \$4,000, and it is anticipated that any leaks found and fixed will save the city that amount or more.

Council gave consensus to the Airport Committee to pursue the placement of a Vernonia Muni Sign at the Airport.

Haack reported to council that FEMA is now indicating that, with other changes anticipated, such as the removal of the old schools, the city sewer lagoons will not need to be

modified to keep them safe in the event of future flooding. Unfortunately, this does not mean that work on the sewer system will not be needed, as there is still the problem of releasing water from the lagoons into the river during times of low flow, such as summer. The water from the lagoons is too warm and can adversely affect the river during those low flow periods.

Council went into executive session (closed to the public), on August 20, to "consult with their attorney regarding...current litigation or litigation that is more likely than not to be filed." Council took no action after the session.

At the September 4 meeting, council heard a proposal, from The Building Department, LLC, to raise building permit fees. For example, the current rate for a new single family dwelling building permit is \$1,028.00 and the proposal is to raise that fee to \$1,105.00. The list presented stated that the current fee charged by Columbia

County is \$1,212.13 for the same permit. Council took no action on the proposal.

The council approved a request from Archers Afield for a building permit for a mobile archery store to be in Vernonia just before and during Salmon Festival this year and then to be here for three days at a time, twice a year, starting in April 2013.

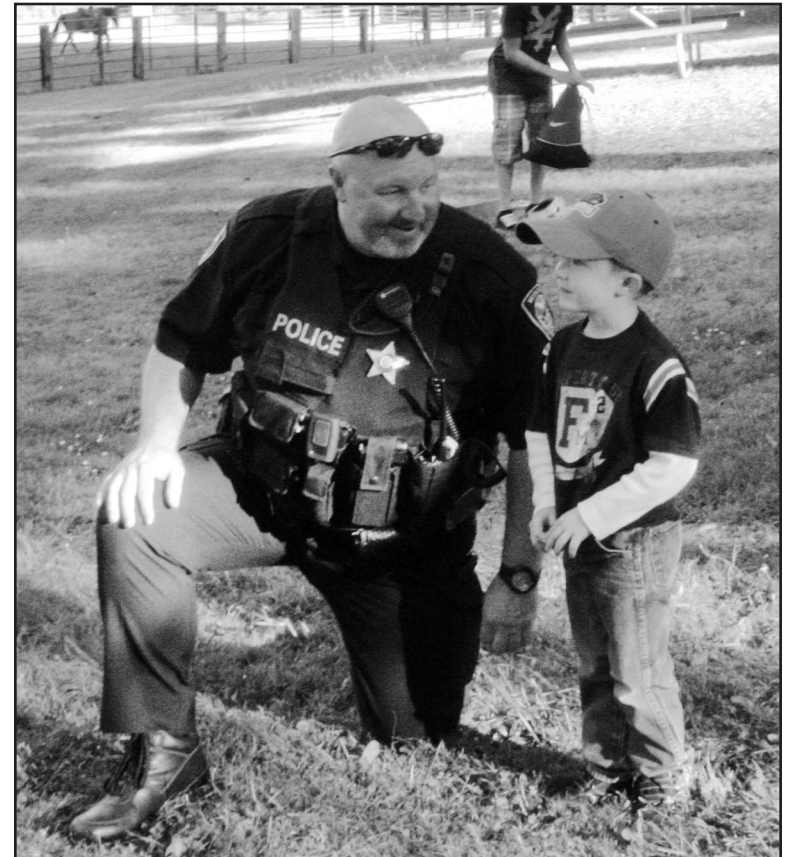
The Vernonia Police Department received council approval of police #387 "Drug Collection/Disposal Program." The police department will have a secure Collection Box at city hall where citizens can dispose of old or unused medications anonymously.

Haack told council that Librarian Nancy Burch has retired as of September 1 but will continue in a part-time capacity as Assistant Librarian for a while. Jennifer Moloney has taken on the role of Interim City Librarian.

The council's final piece of business, on September 4, was to approve the FEMA buyout of

the property at 1328 Heather Lane.

will be held September 17, starting at 7:00 p.m., at city hall.



Above, Vernonia Police Officer Matt Brady listens to a young man during Vernonia's Night Out activities on August 22.

# Vernonia's new school is now open and classes have begun

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million project. The fundraising continues for another year to raise the final \$3-4 million that the school district borrowed to keep the project from being delayed and allow it to open for the 2012-13 school year.

As was the case with Washington Grade School when it was built, the new school still needs some finishing touches, including completion of the large gymnasium and bleachers. The district will, for the time being, continue to use the ball fields at the old schools site for athletics, while working towards developing fields at the

new school site.

The old schools, on Bridge Street, are now in the process of being torn down. The doors and windows are gone from Washington Grade School, the shop and weight room building is rubble on a concrete pad, and work is ongoing to tear down the old high school. The Middle School building has yet to be touched. The playshed will remain and the entire old school site will become a large city park.

Many students have spent the last five years in modular classrooms and were looking forward to being able to change

classrooms, or walk to bathrooms and the cafeteria without going out in the rain or snow.

On September 4, the first day of the new school year, excited students entered the new school for an assembly including speeches before starting classes. The assembly included the welcome news that Fred Meyer has donated \$10,000 to the school project. Those starting Kindergarten have never studied in the old buildings, but in future years, will remember being the first class to start and finish their Vernonia education in the new school building.

The wall in the entryway

contains plaques with the names of many of the people who made the new school possible. The list is extensive, though not exhaustive, and al-

lows the community to remember the efforts that went into the four-and-a-half year process of what one speaker termed, "the Oregon barnraising."

# BOLI seeks business award nominations

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) and state Labor and Industries Commissioner Brad Avakian are reminding Oregonians that nominations for the 4th Annual BOLI Business Leadership Awards remain open through October 1. Nominations are easy to submit: just email BOLI\_BizAwards@state.or.us with:

- The nominator's name and contact information;

- The nominated employer, including their website and a contact person and reliable contact information; and

- How the nominee has demonstrated leadership in its commitment to fair workplaces, protecting civil rights in the community and/or developing a stronger workforce.

BOLI Business Leadership Awards are considered in three categories: Civil Rights Champion, Fair Workplace Champi-

on, and Workforce Development Champion. Nominees must be businesses or non-profit employers currently operating primarily within Oregon, or with headquarters in Oregon. While business owners may not nominate their own company, they and any other Oregonian are encouraged to nominate an outstanding employer for one, or more than one, category of award.

See BOLI on page 17

*Meyer's Auto Body, Inc*

*"Give us a crack at it"*

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