

## 50 Years Ago This Month

The September 27, 1962, issue of the *Vernonia Eagle* included the following news story on page 4:

The Vernonia Evangelical United Brethren church, which observed its 75th anniversary September 16, is the outgrowth of the desire of the first settlers here for spiritual nurture and growth.

The first settlers in this part of the valley were Mr. and Mrs. Clark Parker and family who came in the early spring of 1874. They settled about a mile below the present site of Vernonia on the place known in later years as the Andy Parker place. Later that same year, the Van Blaricom families came to the valley. This group included John Van Blaricom, a widower, and his sons, Henry, Phillip, Joseph, Hiram and John Jr., part of whom were married and had families, and daughters, Sarah Ann Sheeley and her husband Sol and Drusilla Baker and her husband Frank. They homesteaded in various parts of the valley, with Henry taking up land where the Guy Thomas place is now and Joseph taking up what is now a major part of the city of Vernonia. Hiram took land up Rock Creek and Phillip homesteaded up the Nehalem toward Kist. His daughter Anna was a small girl when the group came to the valley. After she was grown she became the bride of Hans Christensen and when she passed away this year at the age of 93, that took from this earth the last one of the original group to come to the valley. Many of their descendents (sic) still live here, however.

Other families that soon followed the Parker and Van Blaricom families were the Adams, Tuckers, Campbells, Spencers, Wilsons, Pecks, Hesses and others.

The earliest families came by way of Mountindale, over trails down Pebble Creek with their few possessions on horses and the family members walking. Pebble Creek was forded 13 times by the early trail.

In 1874, soon after the first families arrived, they began getting together for prayer meetings in the homes of Clark Parker and Henry Van Blaricom as leaders in the activity.

In 1876, A. C. N. Plowman, a United Brethren minister, came into the valley and homesteaded and he organized a class and held regular services, first in the vicinity of Vernonia and then at other

points in the valley.

Rev. Plowman was followed by a Mr. Parmer who lived on a homestead a mile south of town. He continued the work here. He was followed by a Rev. Black. A United Brethren elder, Rev. A. Bennett, frequently visited this area.

One preaching point of interest was the Harding house which was located two miles south of Vernonia on the place now owned by the Ed Crawfords. Sunday school was conducted there regularly.

In the middle eighties, the work of the United Brethren church deteriorated due to trouble in the general conference. In 1887, Mr. Plowman and Holford Jackson attended the conference of the Evangelical church with the purpose of persuading them to take over the work of the church here. The conference responded favorably and established a mission in Vernonia in 1887 and assigned as the first minister, Holford Jackson.

In 1888, James W. Ray was named as pastor and in 1890, the church was supplied by A. Marcham.

It was during the pastorate of Mr. Marcham that the building of a church was undertaken. Land was donated by Joseph Van Blaricom and subscriptions were solicited. A pledge of \$10 was large for those who pledged it had little idea where it would come from but before the building was completed, most of them had given many times that. Labor was donated and the building constructed served as the only church here until in the 1920s. It was used until 1924 when the new church on State avenue was built and the old church building was sold and converted into what is now the Cherry Tree apartments. The old parsonage, remodeled but still much the same, is now the home of the apartment manager.

At the anniversary observance, some of those who attended the old church recalled the long shed to the north of the church in which horses were stabled while their owners attended services. Oral

Spencer Faulkner, sister of Bob Spencer, recalled the first little organ which she began playing for services when she was 11 years old.

In 1891 a Rev. M. Burlingame was assigned here. Some of his descendants still live in the St. Helens area. During that summer, a camp meeting was held on the banks of Rock Creek with Rev. L. S. Fisher as evangelist. At this meeting, many were converted and 28 joined the church.

This represented the permanent establishment of the church.

In 1892 another camp meeting was held at the same spot. Joseph Van Blaricom donated land for a camp grounds which was used each summer for many years. It was at the point where the James Caywoods now live, but the creek made a big bend there at that time so the contour of the land was entirely different. It was covered with maple and alder and some fir trees to make a beautiful grove. A tabernacle was built and some families erected cabins to live in during the camp meeting. Others used tents on the grounds. The meetings were held each summer until about 1920.

The grounds were also used for community affairs, such as Fourth of July picnics.

There was a nice gravel bar at the bend of the creek and baptismal services for the church were held there in connection with the meetings.

As the years passed many others came into the valley who were associated with the church and active in keeping the work going. Included were the Malmstens, the Keaseys, the Dallases, the Norths, and others whose efforts were untiring.

The "little church on the hill" served the community and congregation well until the coming of the "big mill" brought a great influx of population. About that same time, other denominations began to seek a foothold here and some who had worked in the Pioneer church but had been raised in oth-

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## Bits & Bites

By Jacqueline Ramsay



Hello, are you there? I'm here. Home from my vacation, ho, ho. How do I feel? Being a smarty with my fingers, of course. But honestly, I feel lousy most of the time. My friend MRSA has returned and caused all kinds of fun with me and my well being. This time the boil showed up on my left cheek (and I do not mean on my face). I put myself in the hospital this time. I didn't need anyone to tell me I needed a doctor.

Thank goodness I got the same doctor for the surgery, but there was an extra hitch this time, a Baker's Cyst in the right knee. I hope none of you ever have a reason to enjoy the excruciating pain I did when it showed up during my surgery. That is a chapter to be forgotten. I'm week, tired, pooped, not hungry, and really have no desire to work on my several knitting projects. I must be sick. I can say for a fact that "Murphy's Law" followed me into and out of the hospital and home because if it can screw up it sure does. And has.

I did catch the cutting of the blue tape at the new school complex. I just had it proved again that we live in a very small world. I lived in Vernonia for 23 years. Met lots of people, knew lots more by running into them at different events in and about town, churches, food bank, senior center, grocery store, and different meetings and gatherings one just gets involved in, but this just takes the cake. One of my Home Health Care ladies lives in Vernonia (she worked on me last January but we never exchanged small talk then). But, this time I mentioned it because the phone rang, I said I'd get it later because it was probably a call from a friend in Vernonia. "Oh," said she and we had quite a jolly reminiscing party. We probably crossed paths many times in all those years in the grocery store.

The nights seem to be getting sort of chilly, guess I'll have to dig out my heavy jammies pretty soon.

Got to run now and get my lunch – Blah. Get to go see the Doc' this afternoon.

## Artists sought for Salmon Fest

Vernonia Hands on Art is looking for artists and crafters interested in sharing their talents during this year's Salmon Fest. The event takes place on the first weekend of October.

Indoor and outdoor space is available at the Scout Cabin at

Hawkins Park. Join the crowds in celebrating the season.

Please let us know your interest by September 14. For details contact: Erika Paleck 503-704-5970 or epaleck@gmail.com.

*Open Daily*  
11 a.m.

# All In

## Pub & Eatery

*Biker Friendly*

**Sept 8<sup>th</sup> Texas Hold'em**  
**Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> Third Member**  
**Sept 29<sup>th</sup> Step Child**  
**All Bands & Karaoke start at 9 P.M.**

**Ladies Night: Wed. 5 pm - Midnight**

**Happy Hour: Mon - Fri 4 pm - 7 pm**

*Open until midnight Sun-Thu & until 2:30 a.m. Fri, Sat.*  
**733 Bridge St., Vernonia 503-429-9999**

## Mariolino's

**\*Two Dollars Off**

### Extra Large Combo Pizza

\*Only valid with this coupon. Offer expires 9-19-12

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