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THE INDEPENDENT

Vol. 27, No. 18

The Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley for Over 27 years

September 19, 2012



Left to right; Vernonia School Superintendent Dr. Ken Cox, Wall & Ceiling foreman for Cascade Acoustics Dewayne Cowles, Beylee Provost, helper extraordinaire, Chris Provost of Chiefbuilt CNC, and Gary Meyer of Meyer's Auto Body, all of Vernonia. Photo courtesy of Rachel Cowles.

Local men make artwork for Vernonia school

On Tuesday, September 4, Dr. Ken Cox, Vernonia Schools Superintendent, was presented with an beautiful piece of artwork for the halls of the new school. Local businessmen and the local carpenter foreman for the Vernonia school project put their skills together and built a sawblade with the Vernonia school logo and presented it to the school.

A wall in the lobby of the new school includes a mountain landscape, trees cut from the school grounds, and a donor board with honors to those contributing to the Ver-

nonia school project. Dewayne Cowles of Cascade Acoustics felt that the four foot diameter, round steel sawblade with Vernonia logo would go perfectly with the design of that wall.

Cowles contacted two local men, Chris Provost of Chiefbuilt CNC to help design and manufacture the blade, and Gary Meyer of Meyer's Auto Body for painting. In addition to the blade, Provost, with the help of Meyer, presented Vernonia with a gift of CNC artwork worth in excess of a thousand dollars to help with project funding.

One in serious condition, one jailed after Hwy. 47 crash



Julie Ann Maria Johnson, shown in her booking photo from Columbia County Jail.

Julie Ann Maria Johnson, 26, Vernonia, was arrested September 17 after a motor vehicle accident on Hwy. 47 in which a passenger in the vehi-

cle she was driving was injured.

According to Oregon State Police Sergeant Luke Schwartz, at approximately 4:37 p.m., a single vehicle crash was reported on Highway 47 about two miles north of L. L. "Stub" Stewart Start Park. Upon arrival, police and fire personnel found the passenger, Sarah E. Leloff, 32, Vernonia, seriously injured and learned the female driver fled the scene on foot. LifeFlight responded to the scene and transported Leloff to Oregon Health & Science University.

Preliminary investigation indicated the vehicle Johnson was driving was southbound when it traveled onto the shoulder. The driver lost control and the vehicle rolled before coming to rest. Neither occupant was using safety restraints.

Johnson was in custody after she was found two hours later. She was taken to the Columbia County Jail, charged with Hit and Run Property, Criminal Mischief 2nd Degree, Assault 4th Degree, Reckless Driving, Reckless Endangering and Driving Under Influence of Intoxicants.

BOLI announces 2013 minimum wage

Brad Avakian, Commissioner of the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI), on September 17, announced the minimum wage rate that will take effect on January 1, 2013 will be \$8.95 per hour.

The 15-cent increase tracks a 1.7% increase in the Consumer Price Index from August 2011. Speaking at a press conference in Springfield, Avakian called the increase necessary to help Oregon families make ends meet in tough times.

"Oregonians recognize the rising cost of living facing every one of us, and our strong minimum wage law is essential insurance that Oregon workers and their families can maintain their purchasing power and continue to contribute to our local economies," said Avakian.

State law, enacted by Oregon voters in 2002, directs the BOLI Commissioner to adjust the minimum wage for inflation

every September, rounded to the nearest five cents. The adjustment accounts for inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a statistic published by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics measuring the average change in prices over time for a fixed "market basket" of goods and services, such as food, shelter, medical care, transportation fares and other goods and services people purchase for day-to-day living.

"Especially in a tough economy, it's critical that we not let working families, who are already struggling to tread water, drift into even deeper water," said Bob Baldwin, president of Lane Central Labor Council. "Increasing the minimum wage is fundamentally necessary to preserve the purchasing power of low-wage Oregonians, who would otherwise see the same paycheck no longer covering

the same expenses."

Oregon is one of ten states that makes annual adjustments to its minimum wage based on inflation and the CPI. Revised minimum wage posters reflecting the new rate will be available for free download from BOLI's website. That site, which includes additional information about all of BOLI's activities, is <http://www.oregon.gov/BOLI>.

