

Vernonia Eagle

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Autos, Houses Draw Attention

Abandoned autos, "hazardous" dwellings, and "what to do with our Revenue Sharing funds," were among the items discussed by the Vernonia City Council Monday evening at their regular session.

Mayor Sherman Fisher presided over the meeting, with Councilmen Dave Banta, Derl Roberts, Lucille Tomlin and Ralph Keasey; Recorder Wm. Nelson and Attorney Robert Vagt, also present.

Opening with business from the floor, the council was given a run-down on plans for forming a county-wide sanitary authority by County Commissioner Jay Ahlborn.

After summarizing the situation, Ahlborn again requested council support for resubmitting an application to the Portland Metropolitan Area Boundary Commission to allow formation of such a service district.

If successful in its bid, the sanitary authority would be responsible for solid waste disposal, surface water drainage, etc.

The council voted to support the county in resubmitting the application, since they seemed to feel that it would aid in getting relief for local disposal problems created by closure of the city dump.

H.W. Weigand spoke next, again calling attention to the "health hazard" at a now-vacant dwelling adjacent to his home—846 State Avenue. It was reported that Dr. T.M. Hobart, city health officer, had inspected the dwelling and declared it "unfit for habitation." Also Police Chief Jack Cunningham stated he had investigated the complaint and found that the house lacked both water and toilet facilities.

Upon motion by Keasey, the council voted to institute condemnation proceedings on the house.

Another dwelling, located at the south half of Lots 2 and 3, Block 13, Eastside Addition, also came under council scrutiny. It also has been declared a "health hazard," and Vagt was instructed to check ownership so condemnation proceedings could be started on it.

Another abandoned dwelling is to be burned by the fire department, if owner permission is obtained. The house, located across Bridge Street from Lincoln School, and owned by Marie Frazee, has been vacant for several years.

Next a request by Ed Balla, who operates the Sears Catalog store,

for a loading zone on Jefferson Avenue was approved. It was noted that a loading zone already existed there and the signs would be replaced.

Cleve Robertson next submitted a request for purchase of two white coats to be worn by ambulance drivers and attendants. This request also was approved.

Committee reports included one by Keasey that, after receiving three price quotes, a new booster line nozzle had been purchased for the fire department. Low bidder was Western States Fire Apparatus of Cornelius, at \$128.

Keasey also reported that specifications for a new fire truck had been updated and that it was hoped that bids could be called for in January.

Roberts reported that the county sanitarian had made an inspection of the city's dump site earlier in the day. He added that the sanitarian was to contact the Department of Environmental Quality in an attempt to get limited use of the facility approved by the state.

Mrs. Tomlin told the other council members that the police department survey had discovered 39 abandoned autos on private property which are to be dealt with under the city's recently enacted ordinance. The next step is for the police to contact, by letter, the auto's owners, then to follow through on confiscation proceedings if no action is taken by the owners.

The police commissioner also noted that specifications were being drawn for a new patrol car.

Police Chief Cunningham reported on a discussion he had with District Attorney Robert Lucas regarding the central dispatch system now in operation in the county. The problem, which has kept Vernonia from participating in the program, apparently stems from a disagreement between the two telephone

companies involved. It was suggested the city write letters to both Pacific Northwest Bell and General Telephone, and to the Public Utilities Commissioner requesting that Vernonia be hooked into the system.

Pre-assessments for the East Vernonia Sewer District were discussed with Vagt indicating that he hoped they would be ready to publish and call for a hearing on them February 5.

The recorder was directed to prepare a proclamation and resolution adopting the new city charter. The charter—after passing 304-300 in a recount—will become effective January 1.

Banta reported that a committee meeting had produced some priorities for expenditure of the city's Federal Revenue Sharing receipts. The priorities as given, are: 1. Cemetery drainage, \$500; 2. fire truck, \$13,000 (to be added to sinking fund); 3. equipment and storage shed, \$10,000; 4. employee life insurance, \$400; 5. water plant automation, \$5,000; 6. ambulance, \$500; 7. backhoe, \$20,000.

The city expects to receive up to \$30,000 in the next two years from this source. The first check of \$9,871 was received last week, and will be deposited until a decision is made for expenditure. Also, a supplemental budget will have to be drawn up for these funds. Nelson was named as the city's budget officer to prepare the supplemental document.

County Receives First Revenue Sharing Check

A total of slightly more than \$120,000 has been received by Columbia County in the first distribution of so-called "revenue sharing" funds by the federal government.

An equal payment will be made early in January, bringing to approximately \$241,000 the amount to be paid the county for calendar 1972.

Members of the Board of Commissioners have ordered the money deposited in a special trust fund, as required by law, and anticipate spending little of it before next July 1, opening of the new fiscal year.

In the interim, priorities will be developed to spend the money on the basis of guidelines prescribed by Congress. Spending will be limited to such programs as law enforcement, sewage and sanitation, pollution control, roads, health and social services programs and capital purchases.

County officials say that revenue sharing will permit the continuation, and in some instances expansion, of services without increasing local tax burdens.

Revenue sharing payments initially were authorized for a five-year period on the basis of a complex formula dealing with population, local tax efforts, and so forth. However, the amounts actually paid local governments may vary as factors change.

County Sets Load Limits For Roads

A thaw following on the heels of unseasonable cold weather has forced the imposition of weight limits on all roads in Northern Columbia County.

Roadmaster Keith Thompson says the ban on loads of more than 10,000 pounds will remain in effect until at least December 26.

Affected are roads north of township 5 north, those north of an imaginary east-west line through Deer Island and serving the Rainier-Goble-Clatskanie and Mist areas. Additionally, Thompson says, it may be necessary to limit loads on the Rock Creek and Caanan Roads, at anytime.

Posted limits will be enforced by sheriff's officers. Thompson adds, that inquiries on special permits for overload should be made to the road department in St. Helens.

Similar freeze-thaw conditions last winter did considerable damage to a number of roads.



VERNONIA CHRISTMAS Special is the name given steam logging shay on display in lot at corner of Bridge and Adams. "Old 102" now adds Santa by bearing load of brightly wrapped gifts.

where it formerly was used to haul logs from the woods in Oregon-American operation. The locomotive was lighted and decorated by the Chamber of Commerce; and the tree by the Girl Scouts.

Charter Study Underway; Ben Coleman Named

A full investigation of alternatives has been pledged by members of the committee that could recommend fundamental changes in the form of Columbia County's government.

Representatives of the newly appointed charter study committee met for the first time Thursday to begin a task that could last as long as two years and culminate with the submission of a proposed charter to the voters.

Committee members indicate they intend to reach no decisions before looking into the strengths and weaknesses of the present form of government and surveying chartered governments in other Oregon counties and cities.

Heads of present county departments have been invited to meet with the committee on January 25 to describe their legal responsibilities and operational structures. Representatives of charter study committees from Clatsop, Washington, Benton and Cowlitz counties will be asked for their views during meetings to be held in February.

Retired St. Helens and Astoria businessman Ben Coleman has been selected as chairman pro-tem of the committee, whose next order of business will include the selection of a ninth member.

It was reported Thursday that several committee members have been urged to press for the appointment of a woman to the group, and considerable discussion was devoted to the desirability of selecting the ninth member, of whatever sex, from the Vernonia or Rainier areas.

The next meeting of the group has been set for 7:30 p.m. January 4 in the new courthouse wing. Committee members have emphasized that their meetings are public.

Present members include Coleman, Ted White of Scappoose, Pete Bartlett of Columbia City, Buford Hayes of Deer Island, M.B. (Jim) Morton of Clatskanie, E.T. (Boone) Johnston of Birkenfeld and David B. Williamson and Charles T. Brownlow, both of St. Helens.

Earl Wantland Slated to Speak at January Event

Earl Wantland, Vernonia High School graduate, now the president of Tektronix, Inc., in Beaverton, will be the guest speaker for the Distinguished Service Award-Citizen of the Year banquet sponsored jointly by the Vernonia Jaycees and Chamber of Commerce.

Wantland, who graduated from VHS in 1949, will speak on the subject, "Social Responsibilities of Business." While attending high school, he participated in several sports and also was employed part-time at Sam's Food Store. After high school he attended Portland State University then served in the navy for four years before going into the electronics field.

Married to a former VHS student, Edna Fuller, Wantland joined

"Tek" in 1953, and was named as the firm's president September 30, 1971.

The annual dinner will be held Saturday, January 20 in the Washington Grade School cafeteria, at 7 p.m. Nominations for the awards must be in by January 6. Those for the Citizen of the Year are to be sent to Chamber Secretary Mrs. Evelyn Heath, and DSA nominations to the Jaycees at P.O. Box 74.

There are also boxes placed at Brunson Hardware, Cliff's SENTRY Market and Sam's Food Store for letters of nomination for the awards.

County Shares In Utility Tax

The Department of Revenue has announced the transfer of \$484,137.44 to the treasurers of 31 counties. This money represents collections by the department of gross earnings taxes from electric cooperatives throughout the state.

Columbia County's share of the tax levy is \$7,170.65.

The proceeds from this tax are distributed 75 percent to the county school fund and 25 percent to the county general fund.

Santa's Phone Numbers Given



The telephone lines to the North Pole are up and will be in operation Friday, December 22, when all the boys and girls who wish, may speak to Santa Claus in person.

According to Project Chairman Jim Coulter, Santa will be in residence between the hours of 6-9 p.m. To reach Santa, dial 429-8854 or 429-8203.

The annual phone service to Santa Claus at the North Pole is sponsored by the Vernonia Jaycees.

Highway Funds Go to Museums

The State Highway Commission approved the distribution of \$27,500 to 17 counties to cover eligible costs of maintenance and operation of local museums during fiscal year 1971-72. It was announced December 12 by George M. Baldwin, administrator of highways.

The appropriation is authorized by statute and goes to the various counties as reimbursement for amounts spent in support of local museums. The amounts ranged from \$132.17 to \$2,643.47.

The counties participating and the amounts they received included the Columbia County Historical Society Museum, Vernonia, \$837.04.

Mystery Santa Contest Ending

For those who haven't yet entered the Chamber of Commerce-sponsored Mystery Santa Contest, just a reminder that 12 noon, Saturday, December 23, is the last chance to submit a guess as to the identity of "Old St. Nick."

The first six correct entries received will be awarded prizes of \$7.50, \$5, and four of S&H Green Stamps. Entries may be made on the blank provided below.

All the clues to the Mystery Santa will be found elsewhere in this issue of the Eagle, as well as in local businesses. Remember—the last date for entering the Mystery Santa Contest is Saturday, December 23, 12 noon.

(See clues page 6)

MYSTERY SANTA ENTRY

I think the Mystery Santa is _____

My Name is _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Bring or Mail to the Eagle Office

Alberto Allegre Enjoys Cold, Snowy Weather

by B. Wayne Rhoades

While many in Vernonia were moaning over all that flaky white stuff that covered the ground, as the first really cold weather arrived for its annual visit, there was one person in town who enjoyed it immensely. For Alberto Francisco Jose Antonio Allegre, it was a rare

treat. In his home town of Torreón, Coahuila, it has snowed only once in 23 years. In 1966 a small amount drifted down, but quickly disappeared.

Although Vernonia's newest foreign exchange student disclaims the fact that he speaks good English, it was discovered, after a rather halting exchange of Spanish

and fumbling for words, that his mastery of the language was much better than many American-born, with little accent and a grave politeness, when coaxed into talking.

Alberto, although from a much warmer climate, said with a quick shy smile, "I don't mind the cold," adding that he had gone skiing once, several years ago on a visit to New Mexico, but, it was only in Vernonia that he had ever had the opportunity to go sledding, one of Oregon's favorite winter activities.

Christmas won't be quite the same for Alberto, who is staying with foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Nelson. He will be celebrating the holidays far from home though he may get to enjoy his first "White Christmas," if the weather cooperates. While some things will be familiar to him—the Christmas tree, the presents, and the Christmas dinner—other things will be missing.

In Mexico, there is the traditional Nativity scene placed under the tree, an integral part of the festivities; and there are the posadas.

The posadas, ordinarily held for nine nights before Christmas, reenact the journey of Mary and Joseph looking for a place to stay. The people, carrying lighted candles, go from house-to-house, singing at each door, pleading for a room—and at each door the occupants answer their pleas by singing a Refusal. Finally, on Christmas Eve, they make their plea and are welcomed, symbolizing Mary and Joseph being invited to stay in the stable of the inn in Bethlehem.

The custom of the posadas was introduced in Mexico from Spain where it is believed the Wise Men—or Magi—pass through each year enroute to pay homage to the

Infant Jesus. Even today, in many areas of Mexico, it is the Three Kings—not Santa Claus—who bring presents to the children during the 12 days of Christmas.

Following the posadas on Christmas Eve, there is usually a grand celebration with the beef and pork tamales, familiar in the United States, and dulce (sweet) tamales, flavored with raisins and cinnamon, that are relatively unknown here. And for the young—in age and spirit—the pinatas; clay pots or paper mache forms of many shapes, decorated to resemble animals, angels, birds or other objects which are filled with candy and small gifts, then hung from the ceiling. One is chosen to try to break the pinata; blindfolded, turned three times, then handed a long stick, he tries to smash the container, releasing all the treats for the gathered crowd. For the very devout, the feast comes only after fasting and the Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve.

Alberto has been quite an asset to Vernonia High School, not just because he provides a new experience for the students in international relations, but he was also their ace extra-point kicker on the football team, helping them win their second-place standing in league this year, gaining his prowess from soccer, a popular sport in his own country.

The new year will also bring a change for Alberto. He will move from the Nelson home to the home of a new set of foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Deckebach. Deckebach is the new manager of Crown Zellerbach's E.P. Stamm Managed Forest, replacing Wesley Hicks, who was transferred last summer to Port Angeles.



OLE BERGERSON added seven points to the Loggers' total of 50, as the local cagers downed Clatskanie Saturday evening.

Logger Sports Reports

Sports fans are reminded that coverage of Vernonia High Logger winter sports activities—basketball and wrestling—is being done by the Timberline staff. Follow the Logger action by reading the Timberline each week.

Merchants to Extend Hours

With Christmas just days away, some of the local merchants in Vernonia will be extending their business hours for the convenience of shoppers who need those last minute gifts.

Several have indicated they will be open Thursday and Friday evening, and on Sunday afternoon. Check with the local merchants for their exact time for extended hours of service.

Best wishes from the staff & management of

Vernonia Eagle



ALBERTO ALLEGRE takes part in Vernonia Christmas customs—preparing sacks of candy for distribution by Santa Claus at annual Washington Grade School Christmas program. The foreign exchange student joined members of the VHS chapter National Honor Society in sacking the treats.