



Vida McKenzie Community Center

Fall 2008

Vol. 7 No. 3

NEW HIGHWAY SIGN PRESENTED TO THE VIDA-McKENZIE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Watch member Walter Wilson turned his hat around and as President of the Vida McKenzie Community Center presented the new highway sign to Neighborhood Watch President Elsamae Whitney and Vice President Vern Blumhagen. The new sign will soon be replacing the old one at the Greenwood Drive and McKenzie Highway. A frame



and backing board needs to be made to hold it on the post.

Walt said, "The Center is always looking at ways to help out in the McKenzie Valley community."

HOLIDAY BAZAAR

It could be bigger, but it would have to be moved to a bigger building. It could be better, but it's hard to improve on something as good as this Community Center fundraiser has been. Each year Walter Wilson, President of the Vida Community Center, says he is totally shocked at how good the Holiday Bazaar has been and how the McKenzie Valley community, as a whole, has become part of the event. Walter went on to say that this is the Center's main fundraiser each year. This event helps provide the funding for our support of the Meals on Wheels program in the Valley, the scholarship funds for McKenzie High School, funds to help with the Children's Program at the Leaburg Library and some support for the Vida-McKenzie Neighborhood Watch program.

Last year's event had over 30 vendors displaying their holiday crafts, jewelry, books, lotions, candles, a variety of food items, and some of the best homemade candy in the world, just to name a few. This year the list of vendor items gets even better: Oil paintings, Leaburg Library books, jewelry, dog trees, wooden decorative trees, beads, sewing, crocheted articles, knit articles, embroidery, ornaments, glassblowing, oils, Watkins, homemade candy and baked goods, homemade dog treats, lotions, soaps, crafts made from horse-shoes, Mary Kay, hair and nail shop retail items and the list goes on.

Linda Schaefers is handling the vendor tables assignments and says that vendors have been asking for table space for over the past month. She expects to sell out the table space again this year.

Walt said that it will be hard to beat last years raffle prize amount of over \$3,000 but he, (Cont. on page 2)





Walter Wilson

President, Vida McKenzie Community Center

Just when you think nothing is happening around our Valley area all sorts of things come up: High speed internet was the buzz word and keeps Vern and I busy. Lights on the bridge has its way of coming forth to take up ones time. The Center's annual Christmas time Bazaar will be held on December 8th. Each year this event becomes a little larger and draws vendors and people from places other than just within the McKenzie Valley. A special attraction comes to this years event, Lane County Public Works will kick off the sale of their Belknap Covered Bridge Numbered Commemorative Coins at a special auction starting shortly after 2:00 pm. The next day, December 7th will be the turning on the lights on Goodpasture Bridge by the Late Bloomers Garden Club. This is always a fun and festive time where friends and neighbors gather to meet for the holiday season, acknowledge someone from the Valley and enjoy some homemade cookies, sip a little hot coffee and cider.

The Deerhorn area Neighborhood Watch organization warns everyone to be careful. They have had a several homes broken into and are offering a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons.

LIGHTS ON GOODPASTURE BRIDGE

When the sun goes down the McKenzie Highway becomes one dark avenue of transportation. Over the years many of the residents in the Valley have expressed a need for some form of lighting of the bridge during the night time hours. Several suggestions have been pursued but for whatever reason nothing has transpired.

Vern Blumhagen approached Walter Wilson a few months ago with an idea about lighting the bridge and getting the community to help support the cost. It was apparent that Lane County would not be able to support such a cost. Sponsorship would be needed but first approval must be obtained from the State of Oregon section that regulates historic structures and from the Lane County Public Works.

Vern set about using telephone and internet e-mail to contact the local agencies to determine where to start. It might have been a little faster if he had HSI, but Vern said that the old dial up system got through this time. Many phone calls and e-mails over the past couple of months resulted in support from the State and the County to propose permanent lighting of the bridge. The County has agreed to meet and work with Vern and Walt. A County Facility Permit would be considered a public benefit with the advantage of no fee required for the permit.

Walt said, "Cost is a factor. Engineering must be done to meet County and State standards. There will be equipment and installation cost and then the ongoing cost of paying the monthly electrical bill and maintenance. Vern and I will be meeting this week with an engineer to determine what is needed so we can start working on the cost factor."

Want to help? Give Vern or Walt a call.

HOLIDAY BAZAAR

(cont from page 1)

Faith Bokros and Dawn Neilsen have been working to try and exceed that amount of raffle prize donations this year. Some of the lucky winners will remember the overnight stays and dinner at the Chinook Winds, Wildhorse, the Mill and Seven Feathers Resort and Casino's, Marine Discovery Tours, Jerry's Rouge River Jet boat trips and the many eateries up and down the river that provided gift certificates.

The snack bar will again feature lots of homemade cakes, cookies and pies from some of the best kitchens along the river. Also featured will be the standard staples of soup, chili, hotdogs, sodas and the ole standby, coffee.

Santa will probably be arriving around 11:00am to the delight of the young and the young at heart.

HIGH SPEED INTERNET IN THE VALLEY

Vern Blumhagen and Walter Wilson have had this project in their sights for over two years. At times the avenues to success only led to a brick wall, one that they could only knock their heads against. But enough noise was made and finally they were able to put a crack in that wall and some progress was made.

A couple months ago they began a campaign to collect names of residents in the McKenzie Valley who do not have high speed connection (HSI) because our local television cable company or the local telephone service did not provide the service. Flyers were created, signup sheets were placed in local business's, word of mouth, telephone calls were made, e-mail notices were sent out and many, many residents responded to Vern and Walt with their request to be included in the quest for HSI.

Prior to the Public Utilities Board Commission meeting in Salem, Vern set them a letter indicating that we had over 190 residents in our local area that were interested in HSI and that number has now grown. A few weeks ago news came from Salem that the PUB Commission had voted to direct the Qwest Corporation to move ahead on ten projects in Oregon that would bring HSI service to remote areas where it cannot be accessed by Qwest customers. The Vida area was included in this list, but the exact Vida area was not defined.

A giant step forward has been made. There are many details still to be worked out and this will take some time. Walt said that this is probably not a blanket coverage of the McKenzie Valley with HSI. Specialized equipment will need to be installed. In a city where homes are grouped together, it is easy to provide HSI to many homes. Several thousand homes could be provided HSI from a single location of the specialized equipment. In the McKenzie Valley the homes are not clustered together but usually run in a line following a road or highway. If the distance from the location of the specialized equipment to homes in the Valley is, say three miles, then those receiving the HSI service in the Valley may be reduced to mere hundreds or less. Walt said, as progress is made about HSI, he will keep the community aware.



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Join Marge on November 22 at the Vida Community Center (1-4pm) as she celebrates her 90th birthday with family and friends...

Marge Extension has been a part of the Vida community for over 60 years. Her involvement with the garden club, bridge club, bunco, pinochle club and Neighborhood Watch, all of which meet at least once a month, keep her an active participant in community activities. Marge is one of those rare finds – she is actually a native Oregonian – but beyond that she has a wealth of information about the area we live in and has seen many changes over the years. She not only knows about much of the history but knows many of the people in the valley and most people know her. Marge has two nieces; one lives in Bend and the other lives in Redmond. Marge also has two nephews who live out of state.

Marge did not start out in Vida; she grew up in Scottsmills, Oregon. She came to Vida in 1941, as a new bride. She was married to Roy for 42 years and they lived on Goodpasture Road when they first came to the area. Goodpasture Road was just a logging road back then and not the paved highway it is today. After a few years Roy and Marge bought the old dance hall, tore it down and built the house she has lived in for over 60 years.



Marge lived in Scottsmills until she left for college at Oregon State University after high school. Following one year at Oregon State she transferred to Oregon College of Education, now known as Western Oregon University in Monmouth, where she obtained her teaching credentials. Marge was able to teach while fulfilling her goal to continue her education. She completed her BS and Master degrees at the University of Oregon by attending night classes and summer school and teaching during the day. In 1943 Marge began teaching at the McKenzie Elementary School. She taught third grade for 20 years and was the elementary principal for 17 years. In 1980 Marge retired after spending 40 years in the educational field.

Over the years Marge has enjoyed a variety of hobbies including hiking, fishing and hunting and she settled in a terrific area to indulge these hobbies. When Marge was teaching she was active in Girl Scouts and 4H. Although her community involvement no longer includes Girl Scouts and 4H activities and her hobbies are not pursued as they once were her dedication to community service has not lessened with the years. Marge has also traveled extensively. She has been in most of the states and has taken a Clipper Cruise ship on many rivers including the Mississippi, St. Lawrence, Chesapeake Bay and the Hudson River to name a few. She has been to Costa Rica, Panama Canal, Sea of Cortez and the Florida keys. She has been to Alaska four times and the first time she and her husband traveled to Alaska it was on the Alaska-Canadian Highway before it was paved. Driving the unpaved road in a pickup with a camper was an experience. Another trip was by bus from Eugene to Alaska but at least the ride was easier since the highway was paved by then. Marge has been to 14 European countries on various tours and to three countries in Africa. Her favorite trip was an African Wildlife Safari but a trip to Turkey for the Filbert growers' tour was also an interesting journey. She also went to Morocco for another agricultural tour that took in Spain and Portugal. She has been to New Zealand and Australia and also to Korea and Japan. When she traveled to Japan she went to visit Eugene's sister city and on that trip was the Mayor of Eugene, Oregon at the time, Jeff Miller. There were a total of 15 people on the tour and they stayed with families in Japan. Although Marge has not traveled to exotic locations recently she has fond memories of her many trips and has many interesting stories to tell about her travels.

Marge is a charter member of the Neighborhood Watch group in Vida which started in 1979. The Vida group originally attended Neighborhood Watch meetings at Blue River but when enough members from the Vida area became available the Vida unit broke off from the Blue River group and meetings were held at the Baptist Church. Eventually the meetings moved to the McKenzie River Club house, now known as the Vida-McKenzie Community Center, the building where the Neighborhood Watch currently holds meetings. This is a facility Marge is very familiar with since she was part of the groundbreaking of the building and was there during the construction in 1949. Marge and her dear friend Buck Carter were instrumental in convincing members of the community that they should incorporate the "Club" house in 2000 and turn it into the Community Center it is today.



Once the Vida Neighborhood Watch moved to the new meeting site and became a unit separate from Blue River. Marge was involved in all aspects of making the transition. Over the years she has been the scheduler, newsletter editor, base, observer, driver and all-around devoted member. Marge was recognized by the Lane County Sheriff's Department in January 2002 for her outstanding contributions to the Neighborhood Watch organization over the years. In May of 2003 Marge had to undergo heart bypass and valve replacement surgery but she made a speedy recovery and was back to her active schedule within weeks. Marge continues to be a constant source of community support and for Neighborhood Watch she is scheduled for no less than three base patrols a month.

Want to rent the Center? Give Linda Schaefers a call at 822-3947

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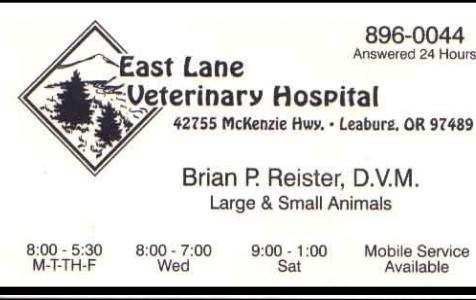
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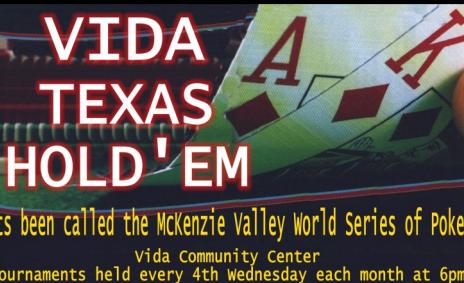


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