

Meet Hope and Inspiration

By Scott Laird

Jack Lindsley and Richard Meyer are counting on prayer. They believe they have been called by God to help Vernonia and its citizens. They are going about their work, passing along hope and inspiration, one person at a time.

Richard and Jack began taking it to the streets of Vernonia in 2006, speaking to folks they came across and asking if they had any prayer requests. But it didn't start out that way exactly. "Richard felt like he was called to pray over the city of Vernonia," explained Lindsley. "He called me and asked for my help and support. So we headed up to the foothills over town, up by the cemetery, and spent some time praying. Well, Richard's idea was to literally pray 'over' the city. And that was not what I had in mind," Lindsley says with a chuckle. "I told him, 'Richard, we need to go down there and actually meet with people face to face.'"

"I am usually pretty reserved, and I was pretty intimidated by the idea at first. But that's what we started to do," said Meyer. "We began talking with people and finding out what they needed prayers for. What we found is that people would just stop and pour their hearts out to us."

Meyer said the response was ninety-eight percent positive. They were able to sense when people weren't interested in talking with them, and they honored that. "We don't carry a Bible. This is about building a relationship first, and then, only if people are comfortable, do we talk about prayer," said Meyer. "We are not denominational, and we are not recruiting," added Lindsley. "That's not what we're about." What it is about is fellowship and giving to their community. "We want to encourage, support and give comfort in times of trouble," said Lindsley. "And we rejoice when something good happens. We have made many great friends through this work."

Lindsley and Meyer spend from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. walking the streets of downtown, visiting with business owners and other residents. "We ask people, 'What can we pray about?'" said Lindsley. Sometimes the help

people request is financial. Other times it's personal, or about friends, family or loved ones. We have been asked for very specific things. And now people watch for us and tell us, 'We're really glad to see you today.'"

Following the flooding in Vernonia, Lindsley and Meyer have continued their walks through town. "What I've been most struck by has been people's concerns for others," said Lindsley. "Even if they were directly affected by the flood, they are not asking for prayers for themselves. They are asking that we pray for the town overall. They are not making personal requests but requests for everyone."

Lindsley and Meyer believe they are having an impact. "People tell us that they get results, that they see good things happen. We believe it is God's hand extended," said Lindsley. "We want to be very clear, this is the Lord doing this work in Vernonia, not us." Meyer agreed, "Without God we are nothing."

Lindsley and Meyer are also part of a group that is working on a "teen lounge" for Vernonia youth. That project has been put on hold while the community recovers from the recent floods but is still a priority. "We had hoped to have something after school," said Lindsley. "There would be adult supervision and activities. We were also working to host some evening activities like dances or concerts. We want to give the kids a place to go."

While the concept of a teen lounge is not new in Vernonia, this effort is being driven by a large group of organizations, including the PTA, the Vernonia Rural Fire Association, the Anti-Drug Coalition and the Police Department. These groups are all working together this time. "We have received some great donations already," said Lindsley. "And we have potential commitments from the Portland Trailblazers and professional DJ's to come out for some of our events. We are pretty excited about the possibilities."

Whatever your beliefs, you can't question the commitment of Jack Lindsley and Richard Meyer. These two gentlemen are working to make this community a better place in their own way and are bringing hope and inspiration everyday to those they come in contact with.



Richard Meyer and Jack Lindsley

"Green Shirts" Going Door-To-Door

Columbia County Flood Relief has requested the services of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) to conduct door-to-door needs assessment surveys of flood affected residents. Known as "Green Shirts" because they will all be wearing green shirts with their logo as part of their identification. These volunteers from CRWRC are scheduled to begin surveying on Monday March 3, for the purpose of continuing relief and rebuilding efforts, and will have additional proper identification. The Columbia County flood Relief appreciates the community's co-operation during these efforts.

Annual Vernonia Firefighters Dinner

The Vernonia Volunteer Fire Fighters Association held its Annual Awards Dinner on February 8 at Pumpkin Ridge. Dean Smith was named both Officer and Volunteer of the Year. Luke Ellis was named Firefighter of the Year. Rookie of the Year was Bethany Martinez.

All Volunteers received a Certificate of Appreciation and all Board Members received a Letter of Appreciation. The Vernonia Firefighters wished to thank the Mist -Birkenfeld Department, who covered the Vernonia area while they enjoyed their banquet.

Volunteer Columbia is Here

"Volunteer Columbia" is a campaign to make Columbia County the number one county in the State of Oregon for volunteering. Volunteers do make a difference! As financial resources diminish, the needs in our communities continue to grow. While we cannot control the financial resources, we do have an abundance of human resources.

"Volunteer Columbia" is a collaborative effort of partners in Columbia County to establish a no wrong door approach to volunteering. Our website, www.volunteercolumbia.com is for partners to list volunteer opportunities and members of the community to search for ways to serve. Our volunteer center is located at 500 N. Highway 30, Suite 210 in St. Helens and is open to the public for more information about volunteering.

Columbia County Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Commission on Children and Families (CCF), Department of Human Services (DHS) and United Way of Columbia County have partnered to start this project. We hope many more community partners will join the effort.

Imagine the possibilities for Columbia County if everyone volunteered just one or two hours a month. Volunteer opportunities may include; friendly visitors, mentors, transportation, school tutors... the possibilities for volunteer activities are endless. Be assured, if you have a skill to share someone has a need for you.

Build Community Partnerships: We are continuing to build our community partnerships and invite any community partner that has an interest or need for volunteers to contact us.

Volunteer Columbia Website: Our website has been launched and is being updated on a regular basis. We have attempted to make www.volunteercolumbia.com very user friendly.

Volunteer Columbia Center: The center is equipped with a computer and other materials to assist those interested in volunteering. Please contact us for hours of operation.

No Wrong Door Approach to Volunteering: Our goal is to create a volunteer network throughout Columbia County where volunteers can contact any one of our partners to get information about all the opportunities available in the county.

Contact us today to learn how you can help build a better Columbia County:
Volunteer Columbia Center - 500 N Highway 30, Suite 210 - St Helens, OR 97051
(503) 366-8388 Email: Ken.R.Corliss@state.or.us -or- Gregory.R.Russo@state.or.us

**SATURDAY
APRIL 12TH**



**TEXAS HOLD 'EM
TOURNAMENT**

AT THE BUCKHORN RESTAURANT

Registration at **5:30pm**, Tournamant play starts at **6pm**
50% of fees go to Local Charities.
Cash Card Prize Payouts!
 To **register** or for more **information** contact:
 George Tice **429-3751** or Aaron Miller **429-6049**.

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