

Vernonia Scout Cabin is a Real Gem (continued from page 1)

The construction was truly a community effort. Local contractors offered their services as donations or at discounts, provided materials for free or at discount rates, and worked almost every Saturday, similar to an old barn raising, and rebuilt the cabin. Roofing, hardwood flooring, the foundation, electrical, plumbing, fireplace, siding, and deck railings were all constructed and installed with the help of local craftsmen and community members. Even some school students got involved and used the work as an opportunity to learn about construction trades.

Daughtry and Webb mentioned numerous names of individuals who worked on the renovation. But like most thank you's for community efforts that involve large groups over time, they were afraid of leaving someone out. "That's why I always say this building was built by the community, for the community," said Daughtry.

When asked if she would have taken on the project if she had known how much work it ended up being, Daughtry replied, "No, but I was determined. I never gave up. You don't raise \$100,000 easily."

"It really brought the community together," said Daughtry. "It was a huge project,"

"We'd bring them lunches, hot soup and chili in the winter," said Dede Webb. "It was so cold in here in the winter."

The building has been used for all kinds of functions, and was especially valuable after the flood of 2007 when meeting space was at a premium throughout the community. They have about fifty rentals each year; youth and school groups use it for free. And, of course, the local Scouts and Cub Scouts also have use of the facility.

The ongoing upkeep of the building is a time-consuming job, which takes an enormous amount of dedication. The building, restrooms and kitchen need to be cleaned thoroughly after every rental, and readied for the next guests. The deck and log exterior needs to be treated and waterproofed regularly. The park setting includes huge spruce trees that drop needles and branches that need to be cleaned off. Vandalism has occasionally been an issue. Most of the work is being done by Daughtry, Webb and Webb's husband, Don, all in their sixties and seventies.

The place is always well-cared-for, and Daughtry is known for being a bit of a taskmaster when it comes to use and care of the building. "I've got a reputation for being fussy," said Daughtry. "We were worse in the beginning than we are now," said Webb. "At first, we'd come in and see a scratch on the floor and worry. But we just wanted it to stay nice."

But the lack of a larger group of volunteers to help with running the facility is a big concern. "We need to get some younger people," said Webb. "I'm not sure we can get people to do what we have done over the years. I'm not patting myself on the back, it's just the reality of it. We would welcome anyone else interested in helping,"

"It concerns me, too," said Daughtry. "I could see in the future the building deteriorating. Eventually, people start to take a place like this for granted."

This local community treasure shouldn't be taken for granted. It provides a quality meeting space and facility that is available year-round for family and community events. Hopefully, a few more community members will take an interest and see the value in helping the Vernonia Scout Cabin survive and thrive.



Shirlee Daughtry created a history of the Scout Cabin Renovation, that is framed in one of the old windows (above). Here is a look at the original building before local residents rebuilt the cabin.



The Scout Cabin features a river-rock fireplace inside (right) and a large wrap-around deck outside (below).



SUPPORTING VERNONIA & OUR VIBRANT COMMUNITY

FIRST FRIDAY

JUNE 5, 2009

FEATURING...

- 1 Vernonia artist Dave Anderson's Holocaust Exhibit at the VCLC (5pm to 8pm)
- 2 Music: Strings On Fire
- 3 Open Air Market Starts Produce, Crafts, Collectibles & more... (5pm to 7:30pm)
- 4 Tillamook Forestry Display
- 5 Bring a book/Take a book
- 6 Local Merchants' Specials



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Interested in being involved? Call Erika Paleck 429-0898  VernoniaFirstFriday.org