

from the editor....

With this issue, Vernonia's Voice begins our third year-- or in publication terms, Volume 3. If we were Battlestar Galactica, we could call this Season 3.0. If we were Rome, we could just call it III. And if we were a summer blockbuster movie, we might call it VV3. But we're not, we're just Vernonia's Voice, and we're still here. However you look at it, we've survived two full years, and are still around to tell the tale. We've weathered the Flood of December 2007, the winter storms of 2008, major changes in personnel, and a few of the other roadblocks that new small businesses encounter. It's been fun and challenging, but most of all, it's been rewarding telling the positive stories about what is happening here.

I was recently in Portland and picked up a new free publication called Portland Upside. Their tag line is "Positive People, Positive Stories, Positively Affecting Portland!" Looks like an idea that is catching on.

As we enter year three, covering the events and happening here in Vernonia and the surrounding areas, I can't help but think about what an exciting time this is in our community. Things are happening, changes may be coming quickly, and new possibilities are emerging every day. Big decisions are being made, and the landscape of this community is being reshaped. It's an exciting time to be in Vernonia.

With all the daily responsibilities each of us face each and everyday, sometimes it's difficult to pay attention and stay involved in what is happening outside of our own families' lives, our jobs, and our homes. Everyday life is often an uphill struggle to keep up, running from one chore to the next. Maybe, every once in awhile, we are able to sneak in a little time for something fun for ourselves that we enjoy-- a walk or bike ride on the linear trail, an afternoon of fishing, coffee or a beer and conversation with a friend. But for the most part, we are all very busy. But it's also important to remember that this is a critical time for this community, a crucial time when major decisions are being made about our future and about this place we call home. I encourage all of us to stay involved in some way, to pay attention to what is happening, to participate in the decisions that are being made. On December 3, 2007, everything changed. We all have a chance to help shape and mold this community into what we want it to be for ourselves and for our children and future generations. Right now is an important time to pay attention and to get engaged in what's happening.

Vernonia's Voice continues to add new contributors month after month. It seems every month someone new from the community steps forward with an idea, or I see someone and think, "They should be writing a monthly column." Over this past year, we have added many new names to our roster of regular contributors. Seth Lenaerts, living here in Vernonia for a year on an internship with the city, asked if he could write a monthly column about planning issues he's working on, or things he's interested in. Ben Fousek, who is developing a GIS system for the city, asked if he could write something monthly about that new system. Sonia Spackman asked if she could share her knowledge of parenting issues through our pages. Heather Lewis has provided insights into health and wellness. Burt Tschache has been informing us about computer security. Brandy Fosdick has been giving us a look at life in Vernonia from a student's point of view. Erica Paleck has been writing regularly about art, beauty, knowledge and understanding. And Necia Dewitt has been visiting with some of our favorite senior citizens and sharing their life stories with us. I also don't want to forget some local writers and citizens who every so often have something to say and go ahead and send it our way, including Miles Wickstrom, who likes to look at the world from outside the box and Jill Hult, who covers just about anything that sounds interesting to her-- both of whom are featured in this month's edition. All are people in our community, with specialized knowledge or a unique point of view, who have taken time to share their thoughts with Vernonia's Voice and with you.

This month, we welcome Mackenzie Carr, as she saddles up and reports on her travels on the NPRA Rodeo circuit. We also welcome news from the Vernonia Grange from Andy Nebergall. Look for their columns in this, and future editions.

Two years and counting. It definitely is an exciting time to be in Vernonia!

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Publisher and Editor

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