

Living On a Lake: Have You Made Your List for Your Dream House?

By Gayle Rich-Boxman

I was perusing one of my old journals and came upon a list that I wrote on February 10, 2001. At the top I wrote "Our Dream House" and I had a list of **46 ITEMS!** I have to say that after reviewing this list, almost exactly 13 years later, it is AMAZING how close we came to absolutely *nailing* everything I had on that list! I found my dream home in 2010.

I am a HUGE believer in writing down your goals, your wishes, your Bucket List, whatever you want to call it. I even made a list of what I wanted in a husband. After I met my husband-to-be, I shared that list with him, because even though my list was long, he matched almost everything on it.

I am telling you that if you write something down, re-read it and BELIEVE that it can come to pass...**it will.**

Let me go back to that list of my dream home for a moment. I even wrote something that was *quite specific* that you don't find in many homes, usually.

#31. Heated floor tiles

Honestly, I don't recall that in 2001 that was important to me, or why. But, guess what? We have heated stone in our master bathroom and it's

WONDERFUL in the winter months, while padding around in bare feet!

#23. Big kitchen, have it open to see into living room

That's *exactly what I have* in our dream home and it is PERFECT for entertaining guests who sit around on the barstools while I am creating, or making



cocktails or simply when my husband's home watching football on TV and I'm making dinner--so I don't miss ANYTHING. I'm a part of it! I've even had friends make dinner right alongside me and it's not crowded at all-- it's delightful!

#28. Fireplace in the bedroom with a deck off bedroom.

When we made the offer on this home, I have to say that while we waited for it all to come together, my biggest wish was to wake up in our master bedroom, looking out at the lake with the stone fireplace, the huge gorgeous deck outside and the total package of romance that this master bedroom created, no matter what time of day or what type of season. And the best one of all:

#2. Water--preferably creek, pond, something in front of house--good feng shui

We live right on Fishhawk Lake, which is TRULY my version of heaven on earth and I couldn't be happier. The wildlife, the towering trees, the QUIET. Oh my...even more than my list entailed has come true.

So, my message to you is this: **Write down your dreams. Know that they will come true. Believe. Reread them. Believe. They DO come true. They may not in the time that you think they will, but they WILL. I have proven that over and over to myself.**

I would love to help you find your dream house. Please call: Gayle Rich-Boxman, Realtor® Vernonia Realty (503)755-2905.

Amateur Radio Can Assist in Emergencies

Members of the Vernonia Emergency Radio Association and the Vernonia Amateur Radio Klub (VERA/VARK) held an open house at the Vernonia Fire Station on Sunday January 26th.

"We just want to get the word out that amateur radio exists in our area," said Dawn Moss, who is the Secretary for VERA/VARK and the Public Information Officer for the West Columbia County Amateur Radio Emergency Service. "Amateur radio is still working, it does work, we still use it and it is evolving all the time."

VERA/VARK is a small group of local amateur radio operators who volunteer their time and expertise to help prepare a communications network in the event of a local disaster. They were very active during the 2007 Flood in Vernonia when electrical power and phone lines were shut down.

Amateur radio, also known as "ham radio" is a reliable source for communications which does not need complex systems of infrastructure to operate. Even when systems are functioning in an emergency, lines could be overwhelmed by the volume of calls. Amateur radio operators can bypass the usual systems and talk directly to each other, either across town or anywhere in the world.

According to Moss, VERA/VARK currently has six active members, although there are approximately fifty licensed amateur radio operators in the Vernonia community. "We would like to get a few more people involved," says Moss, whose radio call letters are KE7HII.

Amateur radio operators have assisted in numerous types of emergencies worldwide, including during earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, hurricanes, wildfires and even during the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks in 2001.

VERA/VARK has installed new equipment at the Vernonia Fire Station

which was established as the Incident Command Center during the 2007 Flood. VERA/VARK also recently established a second base center at the West Oregon Electric Cooperative headquarters, giving the community the ability to communicate from both



Jim Buxton manning the radios at the Vernonia Fire Station.

sides of Rock Creek, should the town be divided in two by flood waters as it was in 2007.

Jim Buxton, whose radio call letters are W7BUX, is a radio operator and volunteer with VERA/VARK. Buxton is the group's first responder, who is hopefully available to arrive at the station as soon as possible. Buxton briefly explained the role of amateur radio in the event of an emergency.

"First of all, someone would come down and open up the station. A county wide network would be set up immediately as well as a local network. Some sort of structure will form with someone in charge. Then we could be in communication and carry messages if the 9-1-1 system was down or the power is out or the phone lines are down."

Radio equipment comes in all shapes and sizes. The Vernonia Fire Station has two mobile VHF (Very High Frequency) radios which can operate from a battery pack or car battery. They also have a High Frequency radio at the

station, giving them extra band width and communication options. VERA/VARK also has a portable station complete with radio, power supply, extension cord, and antenna that can easily be moved to an alternate location.

Operating a ham radio is different than a Citizens Band (CB) radio. Operators must be licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Many amateur radio operators have their license just so they can help their family in an emergency. According to Buxton, the self-test to become licensed is not especially difficult and personal equipment can be purchased for just a few hundred dollars.

Moss says VERA/VARK will be offering a class to help people get their license in March for anyone who would prefer a structured teaching environment. It will be on Sunday afternoons. Study guides can be found at HRO in Tigard or practice tests can be found at multiple sites on line. Contact Dawn Moss at KE7HII@gmail.com for more information.

When there is not an emergency, amateur radio operators chat with people

all over the world and make new friends. "I turn my radio on while I'm doing the dishes at home and listen to them chat," says Buxton. "It's fun. Sometimes I hear Africa, I hear Japan, Australia, Europe."

According to Buxton, who is also a member of the Vernonia Emergency Preparedness Committee, there is strong interest in re-establishing the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). Buxton says he knows there are former CERT members who have already been trained within the community who could be a great resource in the event of any type of disaster or emergency situation.

Moss says you do not have to be a licensed radio operator to join VERA; you do need to be licensed to join VARK. "There is a role to play for anyone who wants to help in an emergency," says Moss. Meetings are held monthly on the second Tuesday at Mariolino's at 7:00 PM. The group does not meet during the summer.

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