

Library Event for Local Poet's Publication *continued from front page*

name to "Rewind" which is also fitting. This has been an exciting and educational trip into the world of publishing. Even though my little poem is a very small part of the book, it's still been fun!

I sent in my poem in October and in January I received an e-mail that my poem had made it to the final selection round! I was very excited! It still wasn't "in" the book, but I was close! A few days later they informed me that it had been selected and then began the flurry of e-mails for editing, release information, and a short biography.

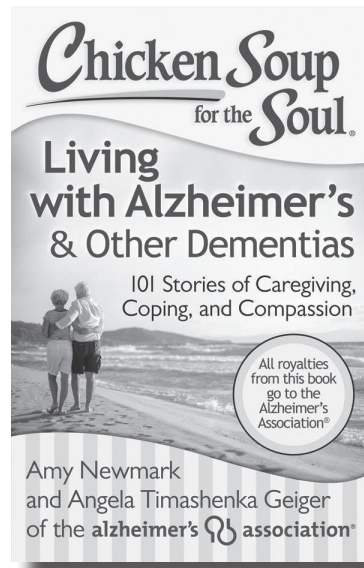
Because this book is a fundraiser for Alzheimer's I think it was on the fast track for publishing, it usually takes much longer for one of their books to be ready for publication. It will be in the stores April 22, but one of the wonderful things about being a contributor is that they allow you to use the book as a fundraiser for a non-profit organization of your choosing. I have chosen the Vernonia Library.

I'm so pleased to be able to honor my mom in this way. We did not choose this journey she is on, but we will be by her side every step of the way. This disease has not been her whole life, just a small part of it and I want to celebrate the wonderful mom, sister, grandma, and friend that she has always been. Alzheimer's is a thief that robs family and friends of their loved ones. I'm grateful to be even a small part of funding the effort to find a cure for this horrible disease. I also find comfort when I read about someone else's Alzheimer's journey and can make a connection with them, that I have felt the same way or it's okay to feel that way. I hope my small

contribution might touch someone else and give them comfort and let them know that they are not alone.

I hope to see everyone at the library! It will be a fun event to honor my mom and the lifetime of wonderful memories she has given our family and still continues to make with us on this journey through life. I have learned I am blessed beyond words by the family and friends who support and encourage me every day. I know for sure, that every journey is better when shared.

If you would like to pre-order a copy of the book (this will ensure they have enough) you can stop by the library, call 503-429-1818, or send an e-mail library@vernonia-or.gov.



Meet Bob Perry New General Manager at WOEC *continued from page 8*

be stabilized. Perry says by working together as a community to attract business and new residents to Vernonia and developing new industry, costs could be spread across a larger and broader customer base. According to Perry costs for things like poles, metal, costs associated with implementing green energy requirements and costs from Bonneville Power are all going up, at about 3% per year. "Those higher costs are going to be passed on to members," says Perry. "It's a tough balance."

Perry went on to say that the WOEC infrastructure has been ignored for years and the co-op is having to play catch-up to maintain and replace aging poles, lines, meters and substations.

Perry said electric co-ops on a state level are currently working together to convince the state that hydro power should be considered "renewable," which could lower the burden on utilities to meet "green energy" mandated requirements. "I think this is a battle our members are facing, and most of us don't care about those things," says Perry.

When asked about adjusting the rate structure to capture more of the operational costs to deliver power in the base charge, Perry was cautious. "How much are you willing to subsidize somebody else's bill?" he asked. "That's

what it boils down to." Perry went on to explain that WOEC's base rate is within the national average; Perry said he thought most co-ops charge between \$25 and \$40 as a base rate. WOEC just raised theirs to \$37. Perry said that WOEC's reports have concluded that the base rate should be \$66 to cover all fixed costs. Perry said that electric utilities have traditionally had low base charges and subsidize those fixed costs through charges for energy use, which Perry says is actually a bad business model. What ends up happening is this model encourages rate payers to find ways to use less energy, which in turn leaves the utility unable to pay for their fixed costs. Perry says the idea of raising the base charge and lowering the distribution charge would work out better for the co-op. The problem is that rate payers don't want to see the base charge raised. Perry went on to say that people on fixed incomes and those in lower income brackets who live in homes which are inefficient for energy savings would benefit most from a higher base rate. "It's just a mindset," says Perry. "We're so used to a low access fee to the grid that any bump in that base rate causes people to go crazy. You have to give something to get something."

'Green energy' is a current hot topic and buzz word, especially in the

power utility industry. When asked about the reality of more energy being created for Vernonia through clean technologies, Perry was realistic. "You can't get much cleaner than hydro," he said. He went on to state that he thinks the next form of green energy that the country will transition to in the future is nuclear, though in smaller sized plants. Perry shared a personal experience he had of seeing a scenic hillside in upstate New York that was changed by the installation of thirty-five wind turbines. "It really had a visual impact on the area." Perry said some people call wind power a 'medieval technology' and noted it is a low density form of power that takes up a lot of space for not a lot of return. "Is green energy part of the mix?" asked Perry. "Yes, it's a part. Can it stand on its own without government subsidies? Maybe, maybe not." Perry noted that he has added a link on the WOEC webpage under 'News' for the 'BPA Balancing Authority' which shows hydro, thermal and wind power being produced. "It might be kind of fun for people to click on it and take a look," said Perry.

Perry was extremely complimentary when asked about the Board of Directors at WOEC. "They are probably one of the best Boards I have worked with," said Perry. "The reason

I say that is because of the diversity you have here on this Board. You don't have a homogenous Board; they don't represent one particular group, like ranchers or dairy farmers. To get the quality of people you have here on WOEC's Board of Directors is phenomenal. I'm glad to be working with these people. They are all smart, they all have different opinions and aren't afraid to voice them. They are very active and very engaged. It's a pleasure to work with them."

Perry turned to current customer dissatisfaction to close our interview. "The Board was very frank during the interview process. They told me they had some issues with 'member unrest', if that's what you want to call it. You could change the whole Board tomorrow to try to do something different. But the reality of the economics is going to hit anybody in the face. It is what it is."

Vernonia's Voice is published on the 1st and 3rd Thursday. Our next issue will be out April 17th.

Bridge Street Bits

Hope everyone is enjoying this great spring break weather today as this is being typed. Must be some new fish in the lake as I see lots of cars over there! Speaking of fishing, come in the center and fish for some good deals. With the new look around here I think a new thrift store name is in order! Whatcha think?

AN OPEN LETTER from Audeen Wagner, member of Vernonia Library Board of Directors: "Dear Senior Citizens:

The Vernonia Public Library Board is planning a new program focused on delivery of books and other library materials to seniors who are not able to visit the library regularly. This service would include checking out of books and other items such as E-readers, books on tape, movies, magazines, etc.

This program might appeal to

seniors who are "home-bound" or "shut-ins" or just not able to visit the library for any reason. We are working with the Senior Center and Meals-on-Wheels to work out the details. New programs are available to the library that might be beneficial to ALL seniors in the future, so we are excited to be part of this effort.

The first step is for you to let us know of your interest. With your permission, we would contact you with more details and to find out your individual interests.

We will also want to know if you would be in need of electronic devices such as DVD or CD players or electronic readers.

These and other questions can be addressed by phone, email or in person; the first step is for you to call and give us permission to continue: Please call or email: Audeen Wagner at 503-429-9700 or

dizzdeen@yahoo.com

SENIOR SIGN OFF: Medical costs are so high that it seems the first thing germs attack is your wallet.

LUNCH MENU

- 4/3 Ham & Egg Biscuit Benedict
- 4/4 Chicken Salad Sandwich
- 4/7 Chicken Parmesan
- 4/8 Burrito Casserole
- 4/9 Swedish Meatballs
- 4/10 Flatbread Pizza
- 4/11 Quiche & Salad
- 4/14 Roast Chicken
- 4/15 Sloppy Joes
- 4/16 Pork Chops & Stuffing
- 4/17 Chef's Choice
- 4/18 Clam Chowder & Biscuits

Vernonia Senior Center

446 Bridge Street

503-429-3912