

# Natural Path to Health: Embracing Community

By Dr. Carol McIntyre

Two weeks ago I made an unsettling discovery; a person living alone who passed. No one had been to visit him in several weeks. My husband and I had been trying to make contact for two weeks without success. The day in question I took it upon myself to investigate further.

What I saw were certain things that were out of place for his routine that I had come to know. There was a package at the door which was there the last time we stopped by and knocked. The lawn had not been cleared of debris from the windstorm we had the week prior; all things that were out of place for his very normal routine.

I was able to look through the kitchen window and saw a burner on the stove turned on high with a Pyrex sauce

pan on top of it. Again, RED FLAG! No one answering the door and a fire danger noted. After visiting the local fire department I contacted 911. Officers were promptly sent (which I was very thankful for) and after talking with them and explaining what I knew about him, the officer got authorization to enter with force. His time of being alone ended at that moment.

This story could be of anyone, at any time. What is important is community. The officer told me that if I had not known the routine so well that the authorization to enter would not have been granted and more time would have passed. I was happy that I knew this man and his routine; and happy to be diligent in my investigation.

In sharing my story I spoke with a postal worker who brought up a very observant point. As our society grows

larger we become more disconnected. There was a time when the mail was delivered right to someone's door. The mail person knew the people on their route and would say hello, etc... Today people have PO Boxes or potentially a community mailbox at the end of the road; delivery to the door is dwindling.

People just don't connect with one another like they use to! According to statistics in 2013, 27% of people in America live alone. In the 1920s that was only 5%. The days of living with your extended family are being lost and people who are living alone are more vulnerable to many things. Being alone may be the choice of some but when you need help, it's nice to have support.

By knowing our neighbors and their basic routines we can be more aware as a community. If you know someone that is living alone make a

point to check in on them now and again. Saying "hello," "how's your day," can just let someone know they are thought of without feeling as though their privacy is being invaded. Those who have a change in their living situation (i.e. partner passes) may need additional support. Bring a bowl of homemade soup by and think to make extra so that you may do so.

We are lucky here to have a community who looks out for each other. No one can keep track of everyone. Befriend a neighbor and lend support. If we each take care to make the effort it will benefit our entire community. I was happy to befriend Gary Smith. In the short time I knew him we both taught each other a few things. In his memory~ Thanks for joining me. Be Well~

# Volunteer Positions Open on City Of Vernonia Committee and Commissions

Volunteers are needed to serve on various City Committees and Commissions. Participating on a City Committee or Commission is a rewarding experience, providing an opportunity to learn and share your skills and knowledge and an opportunity to become involved in local government.

We have openings and or terms expiring on the following Committees and Commission:

## AIRPORT COMMITTEE

Meeting Day and Time: 4th Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm. Location: City Hall Council Chambers

## CEMETERY BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

Meeting Day and Time: 2nd Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm. Location: City Hall Council

## Chambers

### LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Meeting Day and Time: 1st Tuesday every month at 10:30 am. Location: Vernonia Library

### PARKS COMMITTEE

Meeting Day and Time: 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6:30 pm. Location: City Hall Council Chambers

### PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Day and Time: 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month 6:00 pm. Location: City Hall Council Chambers

### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Meeting Day and Time: 4th Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm. Location of Meeting: City Hall

## Council Chambers

### VERNONIA BUDGET COMMITTEE

The Budget Committee consists of the members of the local governing body and an equal number of citizens at large. The citizens are appointed by the governing body and serve terms of three years. Questions please contact Angie Handegard, Finance Director 503-429-5291 ext. 107

### MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENT

### AND QUALIFICATIONS

General duties and responsibilities of committees include:

- Act in an advisory capacity to the City Council.
- Promote the general welfare and economic benefit of the city and its citizens.

- Participate in studies, and prepare reports and recommendations on their own or at the request of the City Council

### HOW TO APPLY

Please complete a Volunteer Application for Appointment and return it to City Hall, 1001 Bridge Street, Vernonia OR 97064 or Fax to 503-429-4232. The Volunteer Application is available on the cities web page at [www.vernonia-or.gov](http://www.vernonia-or.gov). City Info/ Forms and Documents or you may pick up an application at City Hall. A copy of the Ordinance for Committees is available on the web page, at City Hall or by calling the City Recorder 503-429-5291 ext. 105.

Thank you for taking time to volunteer. The City of Vernonia is an Equal Opportunity Provider

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