

Vernonia Police Officer Assists in Fire Rescue

In the very early morning hours of January 10, 2017 local first responders and the Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District (VRFPD) responded to a structure fire on Lone Pine Road.

According to a report posted by VRFPD Public Information Officer Robert Schattscheider, "The first fire engine to arrive reported seeing smoke and flames coming from the front door. The resident was able to get out with some assistance from an officer from the Vernonia Police Department. Firefighters were able to knock down the fire rather quickly... but the home was a complete loss."

Vernonia Police Chief Michael Conner told *Vernonia's Voice* that Officer Cody Pesio was the initial first responder to arrive at the scene and found an elderly female calling for help from the doorway. Conner said there were flames visible and smoke coming from the doorway. When the occupant of the home tried to



Photo courtesy of VRFPD PIO Robert Schattscheider



re-enter the structure in an attempt to save her dogs, officer Pesio restrained her and brought her outside the home. Moments later the structure fire flashed and blew out the windows of the home.

Officer Pesio was treated for smoke inhalation and was released and is recovering from his injuries. The occupant of the home was also treated and released. The dogs were unable to be saved.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Church Invites Community to Breakfast

Volunteers cook breakfast on Sunday mornings for everyone, with no expectations.

The Grace Family Fellowship Church has been hosting Sunday morning breakfasts for the past several months as a way of reaching out and trying to help the community at-large.

Mark Brown is the Associate Pastor and Music Director at Grace Family Fellowship and is coordinating the weekly get-togethers that are prepared by volunteers each week. The breakfast provides an opportunity for anyone in the community to receive a hot meal and also provides church members with a chance to meet casually. The meals are served with no expectations for those attending, contains no religious overtones, and are free to anyone wishing to partake. Of course, everyone is invited to attend the church service immediately following the breakfast.

"We certainly believe that there is a need," says Brown. "If you look at, not just the mission of the church, but what is in the heart of anyone who wants to serve their community, that



is the underlying root, to meet people where they are at, with no expectations. If I have the ability to do that, or the church has the ability to do that, then we should be doing it."

Brown says the church used to offer Sunday morning breakfasts but got away from doing it the last couple of years. He said when he started thinking about re-starting the weekly breakfasts he had three goals. "We wanted to see some people that we haven't seen before and provide a meal for some

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Love Rocks: Making Someone's Day a Little Bit Better

By Scott Laird

Maybe you've heard about the Love Rocks that people are finding around Vernonia, or read about it on Facebook. Maybe you've actually been lucky enough to find one yourself while eating or shopping, or visiting a local park, or wandering around town. Maybe someone handed one to you as you watched the 4th of July or Jamboree parade in Vernonia this past summer. Or maybe you've never heard of Love Rocks and don't know what I'm talking about.

Love Rocks have been shared around



Mason Hummel handed out Love Rocks during last year's Jamboree parade.

Vernonia this past year by Wendi Livengood, her daughter Mason Hummel, and Mason's friend Hayden Rau. The rocks are meant to be found by folks around town as a way to help brighten their day and spread some love to everyone.

"We like leaving them around town and see people smile and maybe make someone's day who is having a bad day," says Livengood.

"I like to see how people respond to them and it's nice to see how it brightens up their day," adds Mason. "It's fun to see if they set it back down for someone else to find, or keep it."

Born in a moment of tragedy and unparalleled grief nearby in Forest Grove, Love Rocks have become a small way of sharing love and joy

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Plans for Salmonberry Trail Move Ahead Slowly

The highly ambitious new trail would connect the coast to the Metro area, and Vernonia, but will likely take decades to fully complete.

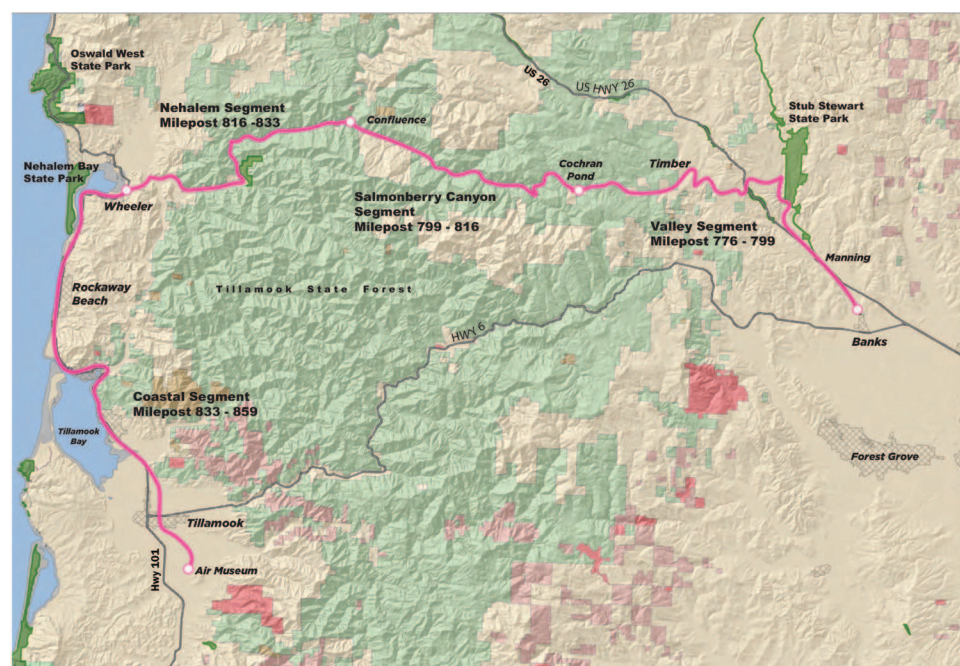
By Scott Laird

The heavy rains that brought flooding to the town of Vernonia in December of 2007 did damage to much more of the region than just the town itself. The historic Southern Pacific Railroad line that connected the Oregon Coast with the Willamette Valley was severely damaged during that winter storm which dumped rain and washed out significant sections of the rail bed.

While Vernonians pushed forward with recovery efforts following the flood, the cost to repair the damage to the rail line, now owned by the Port of Tillamook Bay (POTB), was deemed too high, and a large portion of the rail line has sat unused for the past decade.

The rail line had previously been heavily damaged during the 1996 flood and was repaired at great expense. When FEMA officials balked at the idea of repairing the rail line again following the 2007 flood, rail-to-trails enthusiasts and advocates got active almost immediately and began a push to turn the damaged rail line into a multi-use trail open to hikers, bikers, and equestrian riders. This ambitious

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