

Upcoming Events

Vernonia Friendship Jamboree & Logging Show – Friday, August 2 – Sunday, August 4

Bear Creek Run – Saturday, August 17, Anderson Park, registration starts at 7:45 am, races start at 9:00. 5K/10K walk and run. Benefits Vernonia Cares Food Bank. For more info go to: <https://runsignup.com/Race/OR/Vernonia/BearCreek>

West Oregon Electric Co-op Annual Meeting – Saturday, August 17, 11:00 am at the Vernonia Schools Commons

Old Timer's Picnic - Sunday, August 18, registration starts at 10:00 am at Anderson Park

Community Wide Garage Sale – Saturday, August 24

Summer Meals Program – now through August 30, Mon-Fri, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm, FREE lunch for kids 0-18 at Grace Family Fellowship, 957 State Avenue

TOPS Group (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) meet Fridays at the Mist-Birkenfeld Fire Dept. 8:30 am weigh in, 9:00 am meeting. Men and women invited to join. (503) 429-7503

Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

City Council Meetings are scheduled for 7:00 pm:

Monday, August 5, 2019
Monday, August 19, 2019

City Closures are scheduled for:
Noon - Friday, August 2, 2019
Jamboree Weekend

Dates and times subject to change

Readers Lend Their Voices...

To the Editor,

I read the article last month that was in response to concerns over several posts on Facebook regarding the activities of a local militia. I am delighted to see a group of citizens wanting to support this community through volunteer efforts. We know all too well when disaster strikes it takes all of us to step up to the plate. Most all of this community's forward momentum is at the hands of volunteers, including our mayor, council and first responders, and the load is easiest when shared. Nice to see that there are folks wanting to plan ahead!

That being said, our emergency preparedness plan operates on a NIMS platform that is recognized by our city, neighboring cities, county, state, and federal agencies. This allows our community to make account for need and escalate access to aide from neighboring agencies as the situation dictates. Within the NIMS platform there are opportunities for civilians to be called to participate. After the last flood our fire department applied for and received a grant that provided training for CERT (Civilian Emergency Response Teams or Community Emergency Response Teams depending on what part of the country you are in). This was months of training and exercises to certify the participants in NIMS protocol, Record keeping, First aid, Triage, Utilities shut off, Search and Rescue, and a special section for HAM radio operation. All of the three cohorts passed background checks and were registered for call out. We have been called out for two Search and Rescue locally

and a door to door welfare check the year following the flood during the next high water incident.

The reasons for the intensive training of civilians, as it was explained to us, are threefold:

1. Public Safety. To assure that the people being utilized by officials in time of disaster are certified in basic tasks – that they understand and are committed to “do no harm.” Well intentioned people without proper training to recognize and operate within the chain of command are at risk of losing vital data imperative for timely and informed decisions by officials resulting in potential escalation and/or adverse impact to other residents.

2. To minimize the city's liability. While there is a Good Samaritan law in Oregon, when people report to have an official capacity and there is an adverse outcome, the city (all of us taxpayers) are on the hook for any law suit or settlement not covered by city insurance.

3. To ensure that proper record keeping is in order. This allows for reimbursement, when available, of public employees's time. In some circumstances we get credit for volunteer hours and expenses if properly recorded. This can be applied to the city's portion of “in kind” contributions during a FEMA level disaster. If there is an official need for conscription of inventory or supplies from private businesses this also must be properly documented with proper authorization through the chain of command for any reimbursement to be considered.

All the red tape can be frustrating and it would seem that reasonable people should be able to step in when they choose. A good example of when that goes wrong is the Harney County incident. Regardless of the politics of it or where you stand on the issue, you can see that it quickly escalated leaving one death, and fourteen found guilty with two sentences pardoned for time served. The residents of Harney County are still healing the breach.

This community is tight and filled with generous, kind, and hard working folk. I encourage any who have the time and inclination to become certified in: CERT, as a HAM operator, as an EMT or driver, as a firefighter, or in SAR. Most training is free or grants are available! Keep your contact info and certification up to date so that you can be used in an official capacity when the community needs you!

Heather Lewis
CERT Class of 2005

Dear Fellow WOEC Member/Owners,
If you know me, you know my proven commitment to the community of not only Vernonia, but the Upper Nehalem Valley. From health care to the Planning Commission to the arts, I've dedicated myself to helping all of us grow and thrive.

I am running for the District 5 Board of Directors seat, but all members vote for all directors. My goals and values are: continuing the ongoing upgrade of service; my commitment to really hearing all members; fiscal responsibility and accountability; sustainability of the co-op to benefit all members.

Long power outages are dangers to our health, livelihoods, and quality of life. The Board of Directors' priorities and policies are crucial aspects of how this is managed.

My promise: to meet members directly at least three times a year in different locations in the district (all members welcome), bringing managers along. If we can't answer your concerns immediately, we'll take your contact information and get back to you with solid answers.

No unrealistic promises to magically drop the rates. Rates are mostly based on indispensable personnel and equipment—both maintenance and replacement. We are still paying for long deferred maintenance as well as massive storm and flood damage in the recent past. FEMA payouts only cover up to 75% of expense and only for locations declared Disaster Areas. Basically, the only source of income for the co-op is what we members pay.

I've been attending board meetings for the past year, as well as learning about America's electrical grid system, studying our own co-op's history, and reviewing cooperative law. I won't attend the directors' education classes at full price at the expense of my fellow members.

Please review my candidate statement that comes with the ballot mailed July 27th to see how I've contributed to my community on an ongoing basis since 2004 and consider voting for me. I'll hit the ground running and do my best to help us all thrive.

Kind Regards,

Erika Paleck
Vernonia

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HOW TO SEND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Vernonia's Voice welcomes and requests your thoughts, opinions and ideas. Please include your name, address and phone number, limit your letters to 300 words or less. Vernonia's Voice reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted. We will print letters space permitting. Deadline is the first and third Monday of each month. Email: scott@vernoniasvoice.com or mail to: Letters, PO Box 55, Vernonia, OR 97064.



Columbia Humane Society



Purr-fect Pals



Kittens, Kittens, Kittens! We are not *kitten* you, we are busting at the seams with them right now! Currently being held at the shelter, we have 31 cats that have come in from one situation or another, with only two of those being adults. If you are wanting kittens please give us a call. These guys are awesome! They are well socialized, vaccinated, altered, and treated for fleas and worms. They will make wonderful additions to any family. If you are interested in meeting them please don't hesitate to email animalwelfare@columbi humane.org or call (503) 397-4353.

Featured Dog

Tracker came to CHS after his owner had to go into hospice and could no longer care for him. This guy is about 3 years old, does well with other dogs, and loves to run and play. He is a Jack Russell Terrier mix and weighs around 10 lbs. He has not had much exposure to cats so that will be something the new family will have to work on with him if they want him to be with kitties. He is a very fast runner, so having a fenced yard will be a benefit for him. If you think you can give this guy a good home please don't hesitate to email animalwelfare@columbi humane.org or please give us a call at (503) 397-4353.

