

# Readers Lend Their Voices...

To the Editor,

My phone "service" is thru Verizon. In the last 6 months or so, I have noticed a distinct decrease in the quality of the "service." Most of the time I only hear a very garbled voice and can only make out every 4<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> word. Also, the calls are dropped on a very regular basis. All this despite having a network extender which gives me a solid 5 bars of signal strength at all times, but still the phones rarely work.

On the rare occasion when I can actually get thru to a real person, it has been my experience that Verizon evidently has a very strict "no usable help allowed" definition for "tech support."

From my conversations with some of the folks in the area, it seems I am not the only one with this ongoing problem. Given this, I contacted the

Oregon Consumer Complaints department. The lady I spoke with said she had not had any complaints that she knew of in this area.

Therefore, I would like to encourage everyone using Verizon and having similar problems to contact the Oregon Consumer Complaints department. You can either fill out the lengthy complaint found at the address below or just call.

Oregon Consumer Services: 503-378-6600 or toll free within Oregon 1-800-522-2404. <https://apps.puc.state.or.us/consumer/complaint.asp>

Wolfgang Rotbart  
Vernonia

Fellow WOEC Members,

Think your rates are high now? Think again.

For the past 75 years Oregon's electric cooperatives like WOEC have provided our members affordable, reliable electricity. Sometimes that's not easy.

WOEC has experienced four FEMA events in the last six years leaving thousands of consumers without power, causing millions of dollars in damages. FEMA funds bring the lights back on after these major events. However, due to an unintended consequence of federal tax law changes in 2017, electric co-ops that receive

FEMA funds are now at risk of losing their tax-exempt status, forcing them to raise rates to pay taxes.

Currently WOEC pays property tax in all five counties we service as well as a franchise tax to the City of Vernonia. Electric cooperatives remain income tax-exempt as long as they receive 85% of their income from their member-owners. But with tax law changes, government grants now count as non-member income, threatening this 85% threshold. Other cooperatives in the state are already wondering whether they should accept FEMA monies or just raise rates to pay for damages.

Thankfully, common-sense legislation in Congress - the RURAL Act: Revitalizing Underdeveloped Rural Areas and Lands Act - ensures that co-ops do not jeopardize their tax-exempt status when they accept government grants. Passage of this bipartisan legislation means that Oregon's electric co-ops do not have to choose between their tax status or rebuilding infrastructure. But time is running out.

The bill's ultimate fate may rest with U.S. Senator Ron Wyden, who has a unique opportunity to help keep rural Oregon in the light in more ways than one. By passing the RURAL Act, Senator Wyden will also demonstrate a shining example of bipartisan cooperation that Oregonians expect from their elected leaders. Please write to Senator Wyden asking him to support the Rural Act: <https://www.wyden.senate.gov/>

contact/email-ron.

Also, please note that our District 1 House Representative Suzanne Bonamici has not signed on to endorse the House version of the Rural Act: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2147/all-info>. Please write to her as well asking for her support: <https://bonamici.house.gov/contact>.

This is a nationwide problem, but let's do our bit here in Oregon. Use your voice to make a difference for yourself, as well as your friends and neighbors.

Erika Paleck  
WOEC Director District 5  
Vernonia, Buxton, Timber

## Events

Yoga at the Grange – Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:00 am, Saturdays 8:30 am, 425 North Street. All levels welcome. Yoga at the Vernonia Grange Facebook page.

Yoga at the YogaFarm – Wednesdays 3:00 - 4:15 pm, 11669 Keasey Rd. All levels welcome. <https://www.facebook.com/simmeryoga/>

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 Weather November 2019

DATE	HIGH	LOW	PRECIP
1	62	24	0
2	64	30	0
3	61	30	0
4	60	30	T
5	53	34	0
6	63	26	0
7	63	25	0
8	62	25	T
9	49	38	.14
10	55	43	T
11	62	38	T
12	52	41	.09
13	55	36	0
14	53	36	.06
15	55	39	.18
16	51	38	.06
17	54	45	.02
18	53	41	.55
19	51	30	.03
20	52	27	0
21	54	24	0
22	50	25	0
23	49	37	.03
24	51	34	.20
25	45	32	.11
26	38	29	.07
27	43	22	0
28	41	17	0
29	40	15	0
30	42	15	.08

Ave/Tot 52.8 30.9 1.62

Weather data is collected at the U.S. Weather station at the Vernonia Water Plant



## Thank You for Your Continued Support!

Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District has been answering your calls for help in Columbia County for 30 years. As we celebrate our anniversary, we would like to recognize:

- Our Communications staff who are there 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to answer your calls.
- Our Administrative team for providing important technical and operational support.
- Our Board members for their dedication and providing direction to ensure we are meeting the needs of our user agencies and citizens.
- Our Law, Fire and EMS partners for their continued commitment to responding to those in need.

It's also time to celebrate **our citizens!** Your continued support is essential to this critical service. Together, we are making our communities a better, safer place to live.

**Columbia 9-1-1**  
When seconds count



P.O. Box 998 St. Helens, OR 97051  
Administrative Office: (503) 397-7255 Non-emergency Dispatch: (503) 397-1521 / 1-800-696-7795  
[www.columbia911.com](http://www.columbia911.com)



# Columbia Humane Society



## Purr-fect Pals

Apple is full of holiday cheer and ready to start the New Year in a new home with a new family. This little lady is around 6 years old and was adopted from the shelter a little over 6 years ago. She was found as a stray, and due to her microchip she was able to be tracked back to CHS when her family could not be found. We assume she was abandoned. We gladly accepted her back into the CHS family as we believe in our animals and providing care for them regardless of how long ago they were adopted from the shelter. She is very friendly and loving. She does not seem to mind the other cats in the cattery, however, we would recommend slow introductions to both cats and dogs in a potential home. We would also recommend you have a place you can keep her separate until she gets the lay of the land. Apple's

adoption fee is \$125, that includes current vaccines, microchip, and flea and worm treatment. If you have any questions about her please don't hesitate to call or email.

## Featured Dog

Boaz was adopted out for the first time in 2017 and recently returned to us. We are now looking for a new forever home for him. He is going to be a very loyal companion and will be a very good protector. Boaz is kind of complicated, and lacks trust in new people. He will need a home without cats, other dogs, or kids under 16. He has a tendency to want to guard objects from other dogs. He deserves a life of being the most important animal in the home. Boaz is going to need a place he can stretch his legs and get the daily exercise he needs. He is very big and goofy and sometimes has no idea that he is so large. Being a Canean mix we would ask that prior to meeting him you please do your research on the breed to fully understand what you're getting into. These guys are known to be protectors of their people, and they will be very vocal. For those reasons they are not great at living in the city; there tends to be too much going on and they become overly protective of their property. If you are interested in meeting this kid we ask that you please email [animalwelfare@columbiahumane.org](mailto:animalwelfare@columbiahumane.org) and we will send you an adoption application. His adoption fee is \$250 which includes his neuter and all vaccinations.

