

City Utility Customers to See Decrease

Water rates will increase slightly starting July 1, but sewer rates will decrease more

Water and sewer customers of the City of Vernonia will see another reduction in their overall rates beginning in August after Council voted to accept rate changes at their June 21 meeting, which were recommended by the Rate Review Committee.

Council adopted Resolution 2021-13, which updates the City's Master Fee Schedule, increasing City water rates but also lowering sewer rates, with an average net reduction of about \$4-\$5 per month for residential customers.

The Rate Review Committee examines the water and sewer funds annually to ensure the City is charging the correct amounts for their base rate and consumption, along with loan repayments, and has often recommended adjustments to those rates.

The Rate Review Committee is made up of two City Council members, two members of the Public Works Committee, and three City staff members.

The new rates will see the base water rate increase from \$29.50 to \$31.70, the water loan repayment fee remain the same at \$7.15, and the water consumption rate increase from \$1.80 to \$1.95 per 1,000 gallons of water used. The reductions come in the sewer rate, with the base rate decreasing from \$26.90 to \$22.25, the sewer loan repayment lowered from \$19.50 to \$18.35, and the sewer consumption rate (based on the winter average water usage) reduced from \$2.60 to \$2.35.

The new rates take effect July 1, with customers seeing the reduction in August.

In 2019 City utility customers saw a reduction of \$22.66 on their monthly bill after a loan was repaid in full and the Rate Review Committee made several other slight adjustments to base and consumption rates.

They're Back!

Jamboree and Logging Show are scheduled to return August 6-8 after a year hiatus; new Kids Logging Show added on Saturday

Plans are underway to bring back the Vernonia Friendship Jamboree and Logging Show this year after COVID cancelled last year's annual event.

Attendees will enjoy many of their favorite events during the weekend of August 6-8, along with at least one major change.

That change is the addition of an extra day to the Logging Show schedule, with kids only events held on Saturday, presented by Wood's Logging Supply in Longview and Pacific Tractor in Hillsboro, followed by the regular Logging Show events for adults on Sunday. Kids aged 2-17 are invited to participate and registration is free.

"There hasn't been a lot of events for kids to attend, so I came up with the idea of having a kids event after the parade on Saturday, that way there is something the kids can participate in," said Jenn Rau, an employee at Mike Pihl Logging and the organizer of the Logging Show this year. "It will give the kids the opportunity to be in the spotlight."

In the past there have been several kids events during the Logging Show on Sunday. This year's Saturday event will include an expanded list of events for kids. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place finishers, and all participants will receive a gift bag.

Having a kids only show has another advantage says Rau – it shortens the day on Sunday, which often runs for 5-6 hours.

Registration for the Kids Logging Show is between 1:00 - 2:00 pm, with the show starting at 3:00 pm. Participants will need a parent or guardian to sign a waiver.

Scheduled events include: Axe Throw, Choker Setting, Hard Hat Toss, Dress Like a Logger, Tug of War, Relay Race, and Firewood Stacking.

Registration for the regular Logging Show on Sunday is from 8:00-10:45 am, with the show starting at 11:00 am. There is a \$10 flat fee to register. Participants who want to compete in the Pole Fall event must participate in at least two other events.



In addition to the two-day Logging Show, plans for the rest of the Jamboree appear to be on schedule. Confirmed events include the Friends of the Vernonia Library Book Sale, Softball Tournament, and food and merchandise vendors all weekend; the Heritage Engine Festival, and Parade on Saturday, and Ridge Riders Play Day on Sunday.

Watch for an insert flyer with all the details for the Logging Shows in the July 15 issue of Vernonia's Voice. The Jamboree Committee has made the decision to not publish a printed program this year.

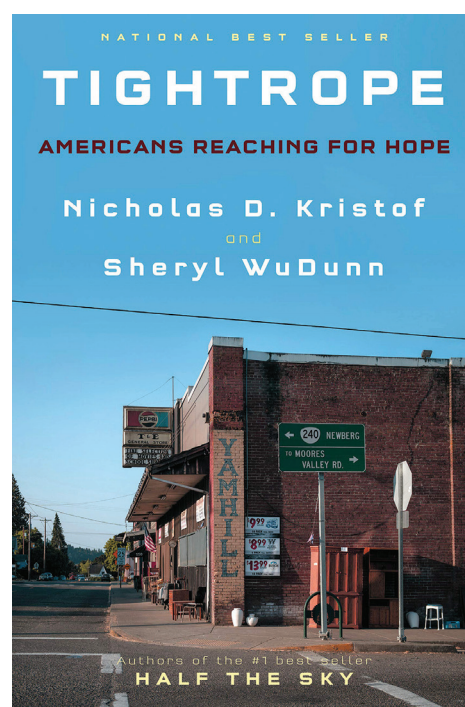
Walking the Tightrope of Poverty

By Scott Laird

I recently picked up a copy and read *Tightrope, Americans Reaching for Hope*, which chronicles the plight of American communities trying to overcome poverty.

Published in 2020, and co-written by Nicholas D. Kristof and his wife Sheryl WuDunn, a major focus of the book is people Kristof knew growing up in rural Yamhill County, Oregon and attending Yamhill Grade School and Yamhill Carlton High School in the 1970s. The book documents the plight of many of Kristof's school mates during the ensuing years, as many of them battled alcoholism, drug addiction, poor health, and unemployment, which Kristof shows often become generational issues, passed down from one family member to another.

Kristof managed to escape his tiny hometown of Cove Orchard, population 50, and attended Harvard Uni-



versity, before going on to a successful career in journalism. He and WuDunn were the first husband and wife team to share a Pulitzer Prize for their cover-

age of China in 1990, and Kristof won it again in 2006 for his work as a *New York Times* op-ed columnist covering Darfur.

In *Tightrope*, Kristof opens the book with a look back at his childhood friends he rode the #6 bus with to school each day and how the country has allowed, not just Kristof's friends, but tens of millions of other Americans to flounder through economic downturns and job losses, leading to hopelessness and a loss of dignity.

They found that about one quarter of the kids Kristof rode with on that bus are dead – from drugs, suicide, alcohol, obesity, and accidents. They document a laundry list of problems – homelessness, complications from diabetes, motor cycle and car crashes, depression, and prison terms. In one family, the Knapps who lived

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