

Candidates agree: City's biggest challenge is wastewater system

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Andy Nebergall

Andy Nebergall, 69, and his wife, came to Vernonia from Portland two years ago. He graduated from high school in Olympia, Wash., and has a bachelor's degree in community service from the University of Oregon. He has both paid and volunteer experience as a vocational rehab and employment counselor, for state and non-profit organizations. He also owned and operated a video store in the Portland area.

He is a member of Friends of the Library, and the local CERT organization. Though he hasn't yet been involved in any city projects, Nebergall is running for council because he feels that nobody should run unopposed, also because Vernonia is a very livable city and there are too many empty houses. That livability is the reason he and his wife moved here, he said, and is Vernonia's greatest asset. The wastewater system and the lack of local jobs are the city's greatest challenges.

More publicity is needed in

the future to attract interest in the community, Nebergall said. He would utilize publicity and advertising in other areas to get more people involved.



Michael Seager

Michael Seager, 54, has lived in Vernonia for 26 years and has operated the local cable company all of that time. After graduating from high school in Stevenson, Wash., he spent eight years in the U.S. Air Force. In addition to the cable company, he has been a professional flight instructor for 28 years. After coming to Vernonia he worked for two years on the Jamboree committee and was on the planning commission for six years. He is also a volunteer flight advisor for experimental airplanes.

Seager said he is running for council because he feels the council lacks direction and that his experience can help address future problems. Because his cable business operates with a city franchise, Seager said he would not vote on topics if he thought there would be a conflict of interest. Vernonia's greatest assets, he said, are being a small community

with parks and opportunities for outdoor recreation. In addition to the wastewater system, Seager said, challenges include city committees that he feels are in a "state of unrest," and the council needs to get them functioning properly.

In the future, he wants to see major airport improvements, including a paved runway, new hangars, campsites, a clubhouse, and a courtesy car for visiting pilots. He feels these can be accomplished through grants from the state

department of aeronautics, and with private investment.

Editor's note: Though rumor has it that Seager is suing the City of Vernonia, the lawsuit he filed is actually against a former contract employee of the City of Vernonia.

Council hears Youth suggestions

The October 2 Vernonia City Council meeting started with a PowerPoint presentation by Youth Advisory Council member Emily Mitchell on "Improving Vernonia." Mitchell, a Vernonia High School student, had three suggestions on improving Vernonia:

1. Build a skate park or arcade;
2. Have a bus that goes to town every day;
3. Restore the bowling alley and/or theater, maybe by raising money through having bands play.

After thanking Mitchell for her presentation, Mayor Sally Harrison told her that the Vernonia Lions Club is working on a skate park plan, and that she,

Harrison, is now on the County's Transportation group. She also explained that both the old bowling alley and the theater are privately owned and are not available for restoration by the city.

City Administrator Dick Kline told council about the change in the city's phone system: The phone is no longer answered, instead a message gives the extension to call for each person. Once the extension is dialed, either the person answers or the call goes to their voice-mail. Kline said that this change saves the city from having what amounted to a full-time receptionist, freeing staff to handle other duties.

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