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What else do your Police Officers do? Investigate thefts and burglaries. Respond to domestic disputes and disturbances (which are sometimes violent), yet still responding alone most of the time. They also respond to motor vehicle crashes. Deal with fights in bars. Child abuse, animal abuse, underage drinking, criminal trespassing. It is my belief that most Vernonians appreciate having an officer to respond when they encounter these situations. What else? Vandalism, business and home alarms, patrolling for speed enforcement. This is how we spend our time each month.

These are the same officers that are willing to work for lower pay than they could receive in neighboring cities like Rainier and Clatskanie; departments in communities of smaller populations than Vernonia. Both of which, employ a total of

six including a records clerk/secretary. They also have the luxury of nearby community departments to assist them if needed.

I would also like to talk about my personal experience as a Vernonia Police officer. I'm one of those "Outsiders" mentioned in the letter to the editor. My family and I lived in Vernonia for a little over three years and have been proud to serve this community. I moved a short distance away about a year ago for several reasons.

During the time I lived here my family life has been disturbed, including fights on my front porch, my children being threatened while at the store and verbally abused at school. All because I am a police officer.

Frequently, while living here, I would find tires on my personal vehicle flat. Other officers would have all their tires slashed, vehicles damaged,

houses damaged or their retired police dog poisoned. A previous officer even had a substance put in his fuel tank that caused serious damage to his vehicle. Incidentally, I haven't had any problems since I moved. Officers that still live in this community still do.

For my family's safety and my peace of mind, I have chosen to relocate. The Vernonia Police Department is not the only agency that employs people that don't live in the city; I know of many examples where this is the case. As far as taking home a patrol vehicle, that rarely happens. On the rare occasions when it does, it is to allow an officer to be placed "On Call" so we can provide a 24-hour response instead of leaving the city with no one available to respond. The City has to provide them with a vehicle to respond in for liability reasons, also allowing the officer

to arrive much faster for that call for service.

Should citizens monitor their local police departments and expect professional service? Yes, by all means. Do they have the right to ask questions and raise concerns? You bet! But if they are going to publicly criticize us, at least have the facts straight and present a realistic argument.

The bottom line is, I have sat back and read all the recent attacks on the Police Department for doing what we were all hired and trained to do. Whether we live in town or not shouldn't have any bearing on our ability to do the job efficiently and effectively. It is my opinion that this community is under-served with the number of Police officers it has. Everyone should keep in mind that we are doing our best with what we have.

**Michael Conner, President
Vernonia Police Association**

Carr: Still adding to her achievements

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Students. She was named an All-League Athlete competing on the Varsity Volleyball, Equestrian, and Track Teams and earned the honor of Homecoming Queen. Carr has played on the Athena and Cowlitz club volleyball teams for three years.

As a nine year member of Horse 4-H, she competed at the local and state levels. She also served as 2007 Princess and 2008 Queen of the Columbia County Rodeo Court. Her rodeo partner is Pedro, a 15 year-old Paint gelding.

Carr now attends Oregon State University, where she majoring in Civil Engineering.

*Enjoy the Summer,
Don't mix alcohol
and gasoline!*

Community Calendar

VERNONIA

Alcoholics Anonymous	Mondays	6:30 p.m., 410 North Street
Alcoholics Anonymous	Thursdays (Big Book Study)	7:00 p.m., 410 North Street
American Legion Post #119	2nd Thursday	7:00 p.m., 627 Adams Avenue
Booster Club	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., VHS Library
Boy Scout Troop 201	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., Scout Cabin
Boy Scout Troop 860	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., LDS Church
Cemetery Beautification Comm.	2nd Thursday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
CERT	4th Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-3018
Chamber of Commerce	2nd Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-6081
Community Coalition	2nd Monday	12:30 p.m. School District Ofc.
Cub Scout Pack 201	Scout Cabin	For Info Call 503-429-4250
Friends of the Library	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Vernonia Library
Girl Scouts, Neighborhood 4-2		For Info Call 503-819-0143
Hands On Art Committee	1st & 3rd Thursdays	4:00 p.m., City Hall
Izaak Walton League	3rd Thursday	For location call 503-429-7193
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., Buckhorn Restaurant
Municipal Airport Committee	4th Thursday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Pioneer Museum		For Info Call 503-429-3713
Public Works Committee	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Cares Directors		For Info call 503-429-1414
Vernonia City Council	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Community PTA	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., WGS Library
Vernonia Grange	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., Grange Hall
Vernonia Health Center	2nd Monday	6:00 p.m., 510 Bridge St.
Vernonia Learning Center	1st Wednesday	6:00 p.m., VLC
Vernonia Parks Committee	3rd Wednesday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Planning Comm.	1st & 3rd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Pride	2nd Thursday	1:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Ridge Riders	Last Thursday	7:00 p.m., Senior Center
Vernonia RFPD Board	2nd Tuesday	6:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia School Board	2nd Thursday	6:00 p.m., District Office
Vernonia Sr. Center Board	2nd Friday	1:00 p.m., Senior Center
Vernonia Transfer Station	2nd & 4th Saturdays, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.	Behind VHS
Vern. Volunteer Ambulance Assoc.	1st, 3rd & 4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
WOEC Directors	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., WOEC

MIST-BIRKENFELD

M-BRFPD Board Business Mtg.	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-BRFPD Board Workshop	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Ambulance Drill	1st & 2nd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Fire Drill	1st & 2nd Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Helping Circle	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B SAR Drill	3rd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Volunteer Assoc.	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
Natal Grange	2nd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Natal Grange Hall
T.O.P.S.	Mondays	9:00 a.m., Main Fire Station
Upr Nehalem Watershed Council	For date call 429-0869	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station

BANKS

Alcoholics Anonymous	Fridays	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
Alcoholics Anonymous	Wednesdays	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
American Legion Post #90	2nd Tuesdays	7:30 p.m., Main Street Post
Banks City Council	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., City Hall
Banks Fire District #13	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Station 13
Banks Library Commission	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Banks Planning Commission	Last Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Banks School Board	2nd Monday	7:30 p.m., Jr. High Library
Banks Youth Group	Sundays, Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., UMC Youth Bldg.
Chamber of Commerce	1st Thursday	12:30 p.m., Fire District Office
CPO 14	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Friends of the Library	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., Brown Derby
Sunset Park Assoc.	3rd Wednesday	8:00 p.m., Gun Club
T.O.P.S.	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Administration Bldg.

COLUMBIA COUNTY (All meet in St. Helens unless otherwise noted.)

Board of Commissioners	Wednesdays	1:00 p.m., Courthouse
Citizens for Senior Justice	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Sunset Park Church
Columbia Soil & Water District	3rd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., NRCS , 2514 Sykes
County Fair Board	2nd Monday	6:00 p.m., Fairgrounds 4-H Bldg.
County Parks Commission	3rd Tuesday	Times vary, 1054 Oregon St.
Mental Health Advisory Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211
Comm. on Children & Families	3rd Thursday	5:30 p.m. OSU Ext., 505 N. Hwy. 30
Local Alcohol & Drug Plann. Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211

Organizations and meeting dates not listed may be included by calling 429-9410 or by mail to The INDEPENDENT, 725 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR 97064.