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Meet the candidates running for Mayor of Vernonia

From page 1

Harrison – The budget, stability of staff. What I see is a lot of people coming forward to be involved in the community and I love to see that. Safety (the police department) is a high issue right now as they are understaffed and it is up in the air as to how the police department will be staffed and organized.

Mitchell – The wastewater system and old infrastructure and how we deal with updating given our fiscal situation. We need to use systems, like GIS, to start mapping and figuring out what needs replacement and in what order so the city can maintain services for the community.

Peters – Economic development, quality of life issues, and preservation of our history, environment, culture and the logging industry. For more information, see my website at www.vernonialive.com.

Rode – The need for better transportation services and bringing industry to Vernonia.

4. What do you believe the role of mayor should be?



Sally Harrison

Harrison – I think the role has changed, used to be just attending meetings because we had an administrator who knew what was going on. Now the mayor is more involved. Also attending banquets and meetings to forge relationships with other politicians.

Mitchell – A liaison to Columbia County and the state. The mayor should run efficient business meetings (like council) and should work on behalf of the most good for the citizens.

Peters – It's important to look at the whole experience of people in town and what's happening in the surrounding area. There needs to be a good, high level view. There should be no decisions that have a negative ef-

fect without citizens being involved in them.

Rode – Just guidance and encouraging the people to work together as a community. The mayor should be a catalyst.

5. How do you think the city's tight financial situation could be handled?

Harrison – What we have to decide is what level of service we need, not necessarily what we want, what we need. Council and staff will have to decide where the limited dollars will be spent so the most people benefit.



Josette Mitchell

Mitchell – We have to be realistic. We won't be able to do everything we've done in the past. As citizens, we need to be able to step up and do some of the things that are important to us that the city can no longer afford. I think city staff has an understanding of what their budgets are and have started to spend within their limits (as may not have happened in the past).

Peters – One thing I do as a Production Manager is budget management. Need to look at the budget for items of value and try to use other people's money more, such as grants and state help.

Rode – By using more volunteer help. Perhaps some logging companies could help with big equipment needs if they are given a tax break. I'm not sure that's legal but if it is, it might help.

6. What improvements or changes would you like to see in city government?

Harrison – I think they are being made; like the Ad Hoc Budget Committee keeping a tight, tight rein on spending. Having the right people in the right jobs that you can trust – that's imperative. Bob Young didn't let

me see the Chief of Police contract when I asked. I have insisted on staff evaluations and not one has been done in four years. I also insist on a list of assets, an inventory, down to each lawn mower and what maintenance needs to be done. Mitchell – I'd like to see us get the city back to business, so to speak, and focus on what is truly the city's responsibility as far as providing services.



Victoria "Vici" Peters

Peters – I would like there to be a more collaborative culture.

Rode – I'd like to see more transparency and more community involvement.

7. Anything else you'd like to tell our readers (plans, directions, etc.)?

Harrison – I would really appreciate the next two years to get the schools started and continue to work on getting the green bridge replaced. There are a bunch of loose ends that I'd like to see cleared up. I love this town. Most of the time, it's been a real joy to serve the people.

Mitchell – I think that the city council is supposed to be representative of the citizens and I believe I will be a good representative for them.

Peters – We need to return to an emphasis on having kids have more productive things to do and be involved in the community more. I feel I'm well prepared for the leadership role of mayor.

Rode – I'm working 50 hours a week, but I do see the need for change in our city government.

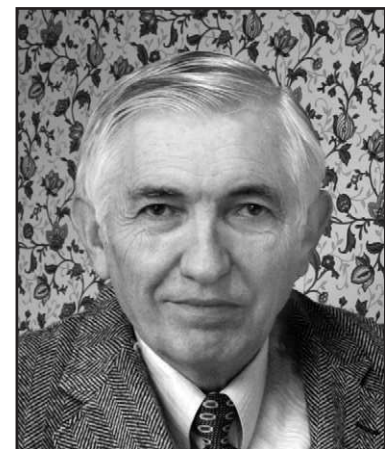
From the Candidates:

Sally Harrison has lived in Vernonia all but 3-4 years of her life. Before retiring, she worked as Jail Food Service Administrator and Cook for Clatsop County Corrections in Astoria. She has been the May-

or for the past six years. She and her husband, Del, have been married for over 44 years and have two grown children.

Josette Mitchell has a master's degree in education and was an elementary teacher at Lincoln Grade School and Mist for four years before becoming a homemaker. She and her husband, Casey, have a daughter in first grade. She has been on the Salmon Festival committee for eight years, serves on the Vernonia Community Learning Center committee, was chairman of the city's Budget committee this year and now serves on the continuing Ad Hoc Budget committee.

Vici Peters has lived in Vernonia for 4-1/2 years, but has been visiting the town since childhood. She has worked at Leupold & Stevens, Inc. for 22 years and is now a Senior Production Line Manager. She raised, trains and participates in field trial with her beagles. She and her husband, Brian McKernan, married earlier this year.



Emil Rode

Emil Rode has worked for a metal shop for 19 years and is now the Assistant Manager. He also works 10 hours a week as a caregiver. He has a bachelor's degree from PSU in science and geography. He and his wife have lived in Vernonia for 25 years and raised three children.

NOTICE

The INDEPENDENT publishes on the first and third Thursday of each month. Because September has five Thursdays, there will be three weeks before the next issue, on October 7, 2010.

The deadline for the Oct. 7 issue is Friday, Oct. 1, 2010.