

Ford Institute Leadership Program

Charles Ruff

The Ford Institute for Community Building runs a leadership program trains community leaders in rural areas in leadership and communication. The class began in the fall of 2007. It will be offered again for the next four years. Participants in this year's class came from Veneta and the surrounding communities. At the end of the formal training, the class works on a community project and putting their skills into practice. This year's class hopes to collaborate with the City of Veneta on a new welcome sign with a reader board. Each class is given a \$5,000 grant from the Ford Family Foundation and must raise \$5,000 in matching funds.

Rotary Club

Helen Lucas

The Rotary Club is new in Veneta and its surrounding communities. The Rotary club works on a range of projects and is currently working to keep the senior center open. Volunteers work on everything from carpentry to fundraising. The group meets at 7:00 AM Tuesday mornings at Our Daily Bread.

Fern Ridge Public Library

Colin Rea

Colin Rea is the new director at the Fern Ridge Public Library. The library has a new book club. The library is working hard to extend their stacks to make more usable space and increase public access to computers. They currently have 9 public-access internet stations and hope to increase that to 15-20.

Many people don't realize that the library has been funded through a combination of public and private funds. The construction of the library was initially funded through a capital campaign, while the operations budget is paid for with public funds. There will be a five-year option levy on the public ballot fall which will cover operating expenses including staff hours, materials and computer maintenance and upgrade. They are also running the Renovate '08 Capital campaign to raise private money to pay for changes to the building including extended stack space and changes to the public access computer location.

S.A.N.T.A. Project

Lydia Schauer

S.A.N.T.A. stands for Sharing Among Neighbors Toy Appeal. The program was begun by Spalding and Brooker to ensure that people in need at the holiday season are able to have presents for their children. They help families in emergency situations as well other families in need. In 2006, S.A.N.T.A. served 268 children and approximately 175-200 families. As of December 7, 2007, S.A.N.T.A. had served 496 children.

City of Veneta

Ric Ingham, 935-2191

The City of Veneta depends on volunteers. City Council, the Budget committee, the Parks Board and the Planning Commission are entirely run by volunteers. City Council has a five-year term. The newest committee is the Pool Construction Committee. For further information on volunteering for the City of the Veneta, please contact city hall at 935-2191. The application to volunteer for the City of Veneta commissions may also be downloaded from the volunteer section of the jobs page on the city website: <http://www.ci.veneta.or.us/jobs.html>.

Kiwanis of Fern Ridge

Scott Sanders

The awarding of the Distinguished Service Award will take place on March 6th at Elmira High School. Every fall they run the Holiday Food Drive, which uses the collective might of local volunteers to raise donations of food and necessities for families in need. Approximately 250 area families applied for assistance and will receive 600 food boxes this past December.

Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce

Tami Sakany

The Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce is working to develop a business information clearinghouse, initiate a targeted business recruitment team and create a volunteer service corps mentoring program. Ongoing projects include an effort to categorize and inventory local businesses.

The Chamber works with all aspects of the community from general local community involvement to work at the state level. At the local level they frequently partner with other organizations. This past holiday season they sponsored the annual light parade for the third year running and collected a large toy donation for the S.A.N.T.A. project. Members also made substantial donations to the Love Project and supported the ART Inc. fundraiser. In cooperation with Kiwanis, they will host the Distinguished Service Awards again on March 8th at Elmira High School. The chamber is also moving ahead with the Fern Ridge Brand 'Inspired by Nature'. Recently the Chamber completed a survey to 6,000 homes in the Fern Ridge Area as part of a project to bring more workshops to the Fern Ridge area from the Small Business Development Center.

Their work with local businesses includes several round table meetings.

The Chamber worked closely with Lane county to develop an entrepreneur program and recently awarded prizes to Goaty Girlz, Oregon Sewn and MWH Fabrication in a contest for local entrepreneurs. They are also working with the Eugene Yacht Club on a promotion for a Regatta during the Olympic Trials and are working with the Lane County Historical Museum and Forests Today and Forever on possible tours during the Olympic Trials.

At the state level the Chamber is working on an increase in regional Investment Board funding during the special legislative session. They also work closely with other rural chambers, the Oregon State Chamber and with the Eugene Chamber to stay apprised of other issues affecting the business community.

Finally, the Chamber is working on updating their website and creating their brochure. Their boardroom is being used on a weekly basis for various meetings.

City of Veneta Parks Board

Gail Wilkie

Fern Ridgeopoly is now available for sale as a fundraiser for the Parks Board.

The Parks Board is collaborating with the Key Club and the Honor Society at Elmira High School as well as Scout Troop #54 for year's annual Easter Egg Hunt. The Key Club and Honor Society will stuff the eggs. All three groups will help with all aspects of the Easter Egg Hunt on the day

of the event. The Easter Egg Hunt takes place on Saturday March 22, 2008 at City Park. The Parks Board is also preparing for the 2nd annual Earth Day event and barbeque, which will be held on Saturday April 19, 2008.

Elmira High School Leadership Program

Gary Carpenter, 935-8200

One activity that that takes place annually at Elmira High School is the Mr. Falcon Pageant. For the first time in 14 years, all money raised will go to the Mid-Lane Community Chest. Mr. Falcon tickets will be sold at the door on the evening of the event, Friday March 14th.

On February 16th, Elmira High School is holding a Crab Feed and Talent Show from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM. Ticket sales stopped on February 9th. Following the Crab Feed and Talent Show is an auction that is free to attend. Both the Crab Feed and the Talent Show and the Auction will take place in the Elmira High School Cafeteria.

Territorial Sports Program

Sterling Pew

The Territorial Sports Program (TSP) is a youth sports program for kindergarten through 8th grades boys and girls. They recently acquired the TSP fields off Bolton Hill Road, which was made possible from grants from a variety of sources. The States Park system provided \$321,000. Ford Family Foundation provided \$47,000 and TSP raised another \$20,000 from individuals.

Love Project

Pat Coy, 935-5750

The Love Project is a food pantry that has operated for 25 years under the umbrella of the Mid-Lane Community Chest. They are run by volunteers and work with Food for Lane County. They collect approximately 100,000 lbs of food a year. In 2007, the Love Project fed 1712 people and 59 households or approximately 12% of the Fern Ridge Community. They operate out of the West Lane Shopping Center in an 827 square foot space M,W, F 10:00-11:30 and 12:30-2. Volunteers needed.

Oregon Country Trails Association

Danuta Pfeiffer, 998-2828

The Oregon Country Trails Association serves as a cooperative, collaborative publicity and advertising system for rural entrepreneurs using a trail-in-a-box system. Their current project is to put together a self-driving limo tour for the 2008 Olympic Track and Field Events. Their trails include the Lane County Valley Trail, Philomath-Walport Trail and the Long Tom Country Trail.

Long Tom Watershed Council

Speaker: Ric Ingham
Contact: Dana Erickson, 683-6578

The mission of the Long Tom Watershed Council is to improve water quality and watershed condition in the Long Tom River basin through education coordination, consultation, and cooperation among all interests, using the collective wisdom and voluntary action of their community members. Two recent projects were tree plantings on February 6th and February 16th.

Fern Ridge Middle School

Doug Kartub

Fern Ridge Middle School is a community of caring, ethical, healthy students and adults who embrace core values of academic achievement, safety, partnerships and technology. Fern Ridge School Middle School is working on their 2007-2008 School Improvement Program. The program's three major goals for the spring of 2008 are to 1. have all Fern Ridge Middle School students exceed the statewide percentile in reading, 2. ensure that 75% of students will state that they feel safe and respected at FRMS and that 3. 80% of parents/guardian will report they are informed on homework and grade issues.

Lane County Fire District #1 Heather Hill, 935-2226

In addition to fighting fires, the Fire Station provides emergency medical services and runs safety demonstrations. The Fire Department is made up of 8 paid staff and 80-90 volunteers. The Lane County Fire District covers 200 square miles and 11 stations. The Fire Station runs a firefighter academy that runs over five full weekends, after which a member is allowed to respond on calls. To maintain membership, a person must attend at least 2 drills per month, which are offered twice a week for approximately 2 hours each. The Fire Station also has a resident volunteer program, which allows a person to live at the station in exchange for working a 24-hour shift every third day, responding on calls and completing chores around the station.

Veneta Elementary School Olivia Johnson, 935-8225

Veneta Elementary has been rated as a "strong" on their report card from the Oregon Department of Education which looks at student performance on state assessments, teacher qualifications, attendance, etc. The school has a great art program. This year, tiles and fabric hangings will be displayed in the library. The Parent Action (PAC) is the parent organization composed of parent and community volunteers. PAC meets monthly and among other things helps to coordinate classroom volunteers, organize fundraisers, assist with special activities and support field trips. Veneta Elementary is holding an auction on April 5th. The auction will start at 5:30 PM with a silent auction from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM and an oral auction from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Olivia. Money raised will fund outdoor field trips and an outdoor school.

Neighbors 4 Responsible Growth Speaker: Joan Mariner
For further information, contact: Lee Taylor-Loewe,
Secretary: 935-8846

Neighbors 4 Responsible Growth (N4RG) is a Community Advocacy organization with a mission to respond to the environmental, infrastructure, and community issues impacting our community as a result of the surge of recent growth. N4RG responds regularly during the Public Comment periods of City meetings, and works closely with staff and elected officials as they advocate for issues not often a matter of concern for developers. The group holds monthly meetings on the fourth Thursday with a focus on a topic of interest to the larger community.

N4RG is sponsoring 'Earth Day' in Veneta on Thursday, April 24, 2008 in the Konnie Room of the Fern Ridge Public Library.

Kaleidoscope

Lu Kruger, 935-1060

After the end of last year's musical success "Wedding Bells and Lumberjacks" several cast members expressed a desire to keep on singing. And so Kaleidoscope was founded. The group takes its name from its ever changing landscape of musical performances. Recently they held auditions for the Wizard of Oz. Twenty children in grades 1-12 and 20 adults are participating as cast, crew and support. The show will be held the first weekend in May. Presently, Kaleidoscope is raising funds and looking for the support of friends and neighbors.

ART, Inc.

Luthie West

ART Inc. is a group dedicated to all forms of the arts. Currently, they are working to get their own venue. Past shows have included the Rocky Roll revue, the Christmas Memory Dinner, a wine-bottling event and a showcase of all types of performers. They run a Thursday night poetry group once a month. A possible upcoming event is a one-act play contest. ART Inc. has a weekly column in the West Lane News, Art Beats. Anyone who wishes to be showcased in Art Beats should submit a 200-250 word piece to ART Inc.

Moose Service Center

Stan Ritari, 517-6676

Moose International is sometimes referred to as the family fraternity. Their past projects have included funding a home for disadvantaged children. They serve as a news haven and help those with elderly in their family. The Moose Service Center nominates promising high school seniors to receive college scholarship money from the state organization. The Moose also select youth from their individual communities to represent them at the Youth Awareness Congress, which is held once a year at each state capitol. One representative from each state goes to Washington D.C. The local Moose Service Center meets on Mondays from 1-3PM at Yukon Jack's Restaurant on W. Broadway Ave.

Applegate Art Gallery and Guild

Corinne Womack

The Art Guild is made up of local area artists. Recently they painted the Kiosk at the West Lane Shopping Center. They are also providing an arts scholarship program for High School Children. The Art Guild can be funded through your taxes when you check the Oregon Trust.

Mid-Lane Community Chest

Mary Joe Wade, 935-0948

The Mid-Lane community Chest helps provide emergency assistance (e.g. money for power). They work with youth programs and act as a 501 (c) (3) organization for the Love Project, S.A.N.T.A. and Silver. They are working on changing their set up and how they can provide more services. They are also planning to create a part-time position.

Explorer's Club

Jenny Ramsey, 485-3521

The Explorer's Club is a 21st Century Learning Center for school children and the result of a partnership between Fern Ridge Library, Veneta Elementary and the Lane Arts Council. The Explorer's Club meets on Mondays. They have a home work club, an adventure club and a leadership program. They are funded through Oregon education learning grants. The grant is

ending soon and the Explorer's Club will be running a community visioning process on February 28, 2008 to talk about how it can grow and change as their source of funding changes.

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Tom Laing

The VFW was chartered in 1898 by Congress and has over 2.3 million members. Their motto is 'Honor the dead by helping the living.' Veneta no longer has a VFW, but its demise propelled one volunteer (Tom) to become a state commander.

Participating Organizations

Applegate Art Gallery and Guild * Applegate Pioneer Museum * ART, Inc. * City of Veneta *
City of Veneta Parks Board * Elmira High School Leadership Program * Fern Ridge Chamber of
Commerce * Fern Ridge Library * Fern Ridge Middle School * Ford Institute Leadership
Program * Kaleidoscope * Kiwanis of Fern Ridge * Lane County Fire District #1 * Lane Arts
Council Explorer's Club * Long Tom Watershed Council * Love Project * Mid-Lane Community
Chest * Moose Service Center * Neighbors 4 Responsible Growth * Oregon Country Trails *
Rotary Club * S.A.N.T.A. Project * Territorial Sports Program * Veneta Elementary School *
Veneta's Downtown Farmers' Market