

Cracking the Case: Community and Deputies Unite to Solve Veneta Burglary Spree

In mid to late 2024 the City of Veneta experienced a string of burglaries and thefts. Commercial properties were seemingly targeted and suffered the greatest losses. The lack of a known suspect or additional information led to suspended cases. However, with the help of local community members' watchful eyes and communication with the Sheriff's Office, leads developed in late 2024. A search warrant was issued based



on our Veneta deputies' hard work. Stolen property was recovered, and additional probable cause was developed for other cases after the service of this warrant.

Austin Blaylock was arrested for his part in multiple burglaries/theft. Information gleaned from this part of the investigation led to the service of another search warrant. Additional stolen property was

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What is Code Enforcement?

Code Enforcement addresses a wide range of property issues that affect our environment, health, safety, and property values. It enhances the quality and livability of life for our residents. Any resident within the Veneta city limits can file a code violation complaint. A complaint form can be picked up at City Hall or printed from the City of Veneta website at www.venetaoregon.gov under the Code Compliance department page.

Once a complaint form is received, the City's

policy is to investigate those complaints and attempt to resolve any determined code violations. The most serious violations will be addressed before the less serious violations, regardless of the order in which the complaints are received. Complaints alleging both priority and non-priority violations may be processed together to maximize efficiency.

It is often a difficult task to maintain the balance between the rights of individual prop-

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Sanipac Rate Increase

In 2020, Veneta City Council granted Sanipac a 10-year exclusive contract, requiring approval for annual rate adjustments. This year, Sanipac requested a 2.6% increase to align with inflation, which the Council approved through Resolution No. 1436.

The new rates will take effect on March 1, 2025. This decision ensures continued waste collection services while maintaining the agreed-upon adjustment process, allowing Sanipac to keep pace with rising operational costs.

Sanipac has been a dedicated supporter of the Veneta community, sponsoring events such as the Light Parade, Tree Lighting, and Earth Day. Their generosity includes donating over 40 bikes to S.A.N.T.A. and providing funds for the



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CIVIC CALENDAR March 2025		
All meetings held at City of Veneta, 88184 8th St, unless otherwise noted		
4	Planning Commission Meeting	6:30 p.m.
5	Park Board Meeting	4:30 p.m.
9	Daylight Savings Begins - Spring Forward	
10	City Council Meeting	6:30 p.m.
12	Economic Development Committee	2:00 p.m.
17	Happy St. Patrick's Day	
20	Municipal Court	8:30 a.m.
	FRAUG Meeting	3:30 p.m.
24	City Council Work Session - Council Goals	6:00 p.m.
28	Business Assistance Committee Meeting	9:00 a.m.

Department Updates

ADMINISTRATION

- On January 28th, the League of Oregon Cities hosted a “City Day” at the Oregon Legislature in Salem. Mayor McCoy, Councilor Benson, and City Administrator Michel visited Veneta’s state elected officials, House Speaker Julie Fahey and Senate President Pro Tempore James Manning, Jr. They told legislators about the City’s need for state money to build an emergency and utility access road onto the City’s Lot 400 as one piece of the larger puzzle for managing Veneta’s transient and unhoused community. They also shared concerns about a high regulatory cost affecting the City’s wastewater treatment plant expansion. The City had budgeted for \$800,000 in wetland mitigation credits to put a lagoon back into service, but got hit with the Department of State Lands’ wetlands determination that resulted in the mitigation cost more than doubling to \$1.8+ million! This is a decommissioned, man-made wastewater lagoon that had a liner removed, but otherwise remained within the treatment plant perimeter fencing and available for future wastewater treatment use. Hopefully common sense will prevail.
- The date for the **Veneta Celebration Run** has moved one week back to Saturday, August 9th. The Scandia Run apparently decided to run the same day as our original choice so we’ll adjust.
- The **Veneta Celebration Run Committee** will hold their first organizing meeting March 12th at 5:00 PM at City Hall. If you want to be a part of this year’s event, contact City Hall at 541-935-2191 and we’ll pass your name to the event co-chairs.
- The City Council interviewed eight applicants for a **city council vacancy** and selected three residents for a second round of interviews: Jim Eagle Eye, Ric Ingham, and David Voltz. The Council voted to appoint current Veneta Planning Commissioner David Voltz to the remaining two years of Mayor McCoy’s



former council position. Congratulations, David! He'll be sworn in at the City Council's March 10th regular meeting. Thank you to Jim and Ric for volunteering to serve your community.

- In partnership with Oregon State University Extension Service, Oregon Department of Forestry, and Oregon Country Fair, the City hosted a training on the invasive and destructive Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Over the course of 3 hours attendees learned about the EAB. If you want to know more, search “Oregon State Extension EAB” on the internet. You can also stop by City Hall to pick up materials produced by OSU Extension Service.



PUBLIC WORKS

- ODOT provided the City a roundabout concept design for Huston Road to help understand how that could work with a railroad crossing nearby. You can view the concept design on ODOT's website by searching the internet for “Veneta Huston Road Roundabout.” The general federal funding pause is impacting the project, but there's optimism that this construction project will continue being funded by the new federal fiscal year that starts October 1st.
- The City won a \$5,000 grant to use towards a cleaning contract of the City's sewer mains! This is part of the City insurer's Risk Management Grant Program to keep the City utilities running smoothly.
- You probably received a postcard a few weeks back for a survey about the City's downtown block. We hope you took a few minutes to provide your input. A University of Oregon “Real World: Lane County” undergraduate team put the survey together to gather community feedback on what residents would like to see for the downtown block's development. They received over 250 responses! Wow!



SAVE THE DATE! APRIL 10, 2025

The City of Veneta will be hosting the 2nd Annual Open House in April! We look forward to seeing you. City Council and City staff will be on-site for a meet and greet and to answer your questions.

Look for our direct mail postcard coming next month. We will also be posting the information and any updates on our Facebook and Instagram pages.



Cracking the Case cont...

recovered, even for cases outside of Veneta. This eventually led to the arrest of Charles Younkin-Stec. Blaylock and Younkin-Stec were arrested and lodged at the Lane County Jail on multiple counts of Burglary/Theft and additional charges.

Property crime cases often lack a good witness. Even with all the advanced security these days, developing potential suspects is difficult. These cases are usually very labor intensive and require great attention to detail. Spearhead-

ing most of our investigative efforts was Deputy Patrick Flanders. He was relentless in his efforts and poured a significant amount of his time into these various cases.

Our community is obviously not exempt from such acts. While these incidents can cause an array of emotions, support for the Sheriff's Office never wavered. We would like to thank everyone for their patience and efforts to help.

Code Enforcement cont...

erty owners and the welfare of the general public when enforcing code violations. Our goal is voluntary compliance before pursuing further action when property owners are noncompliant with City codes.

Veneta City Council has established complaint priorities as follows:

1. Violations that present an imminent threat to public health and safety or the environment
2. Violations affecting storm drainage, wetlands and/or adjacent areas;
3. Building Code violations

4. Building, Planning, Engineering and Environmental Health
5. Land Use and Zoning violations
6. Common Code Violations: derelict/inoperable and improperly or illegally parked vehicles, boats and RV's, open storage, high grass & vegetation, junk, trash & debris, sign placement and fence height.

For additional information on Code Enforcement Action, contact City of Veneta 541-935-2191 or visit the City website at www.venetaoregon.gov

Sanipac cont...

Easter Egg Hunt and National Night Out. They also collaborate with our Public Works department each May for the Annual City-Wide Clean-up.

Beyond sponsorship, Sanipac's commitment to Veneta runs deep. Many of their employees live in the community and actively volunteer for

events, attend quarterly Chamber of Commerce luncheons and serve on the Chamber of Commerce board.

The complete rate schedule can be found on the City website at www.venetaoregon.gov/221/Garbage-Recycling.

Volunteers Needed



The City of Veneta has a volunteer opportunity!
The Economic Development Committee has one opening.

If you are interested in this volunteer position, please contact 541-935-2191 for more information or visit the City of Veneta website for the Committee/Commissions Application. www.venetaoregon.gov

Volunteers Needed for Senior Meals Program: There is an immediate need for volun-

teers at its Café 60 dining room at the Fern Ridge Service Center in Veneta. They need six people on Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays to help in the kitchen and dining room, deliver Meals on Wheels, as well as provide back-up support. This program helps promote socialization and nutrition for older adults in Lane County. Contacts: Melisa Andrion, S&DS Community Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator, mandrion@lcoq.org, 541-682-1366 or Laura Campbell, LCOG Public Information Officer, lcampbell@lcoq.org, 541-682-4006.

Visions of Veneta winner!

Congratulations to Cody Gress for his picture from the Veneta Light Parade!

Cody will get to have his winning photo printed on a Mug, T-shirt or Canvas Print.

Our next Visions of Veneta contest will begin May 1st. Keep an eye on our Facebook and Instagram pages for updates and reminders.



Public Safety Report - January 2025

Incident Type	Calls			Cases		
	Calls	Prior Year	5-Year Average	Cases	Prior Year	5-Year Average
Property (Thefts, Criminal Mischief, Trespass, Fraud)	20	23	25.8	5	10	8.6
Person (Assaults, Menacing, Harassments)	23	29	23.8	7	2	3.6
Public Order (Disorderly Subject, Citizen Contact)	60	103	71.4	1	0	0.8
Individual Welfare (Welfare Checks/OD, Missing Persons)	15	21	20.2	1	5	3.4
Vehicle (DUII, DWS, Illegal Parking, Traffic Hazard)	14	26	22.2	1	3	2
Offense Against State (Drug, Warrants, Local City Ord)	5	5	5.8	3	0	14
Civil (Civil Service, Eviction Process)	5	15	8.6	0	0	0
Neighborhood Watch	0	0	.6	0	3	1.2
Traffic Stops	22	0	0	1	0	0
Total	164	222	178.4	18	23	21

HOP ON OVER FOR THE 39TH ANNUAL
VENETA EASTER
EGG HUNT

VENETA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

APRIL 19, 2025
11:00 AM

STORYTIME
10:00-11:00 AM



AGES 1 - 10 YEARS

BRING A BASKET

ADA ACCESSIBLE * RAIN OR SHINE

2025 Sponsors of the Veneta Easter Egg Hunt



**SIERRA
PACIFIC
INDUSTRIES**



 **Veneta
Chiropractic**



BI-MART
Employee Owned. Real Value. Every Day.

 **Sanipac**



 **City of Veneta
PARK BOARD**

**FERN
RIDGE**  **LIBRARY
FOUNDATION**

**ANYLABTEST
NOW!**



READY? SET? RECYCLE!

What?

This spring, our school is participating in an electronics recycling competition. The Lane County schools that recycle the most pounds of “e-waste” win! • *E-waste examples include microwaves, TVs, printers, old cords and cables, cell phones, computers, and audio/visual equipment. Please, NO PLASTIC, non-electronic items such as toys or vacuums.*

- If an item is mostly metal, has a plug, or takes batteries, it counts

Why?

Help divert electronics from our landfill and keep reusable electronics available in our community. Plus, our school could win a valuable gift certificate for the NextStep Reuse computer store. Last year we took first place in our size group

Who?

Students, families and community members in the Fern Ridge area.

Where?

Drop off electronics at our school in the West Lane Shopping Center next to Ixtapa, Monday to Thursday 8:30 am – 2pm **OR** drop off directly at Next Step Recycling 245 Jackson St. Eugene, Monday – Friday 8:30 am – 2 pm

When?

February 3, 2025 – March 7, 2025 Call West Lane Charter School if you any questions: 541-935-2101