

Readers lend their voices...

To Our Vernonia Residents-

Thank you, Vernonians, for donating food during the National Association of Letter Carriers "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive. Thanks to you, there was 990# of food added to Vernonia Cares Food Bank's shelves. Wonderful! Thanks, also, to the letter carriers for picking up the food and special thanks to Peter O'Leary who organized this event. We appreciate Peter and Scott Laird helping unload the canned goods into the food bank, too. Thanks, also, to Dave Howard, Jeff Brewington, and Rosie McCoy who helped weigh in the food.

Vernonia Cares Food Bank appreciates the generosity of spirit within Vernonia. We truly are your hands extended to those who need grocery assistance. In April, we helped 130 households that contain 345 people (One third of whom are children or seniors). Thanks, again, to all who made this food drive such a successful event.

-- Sandy Welch, Executive Director
Vernonia Cares Food Bank

To the Editor,

I'm a cat person, but I have to say P.J. O'Leary rules. Thanks for the laughs!

-- Brett Costley, Vernonia

Last Thursday, May 8, I arrived in Vernonia to attend the "Meet the Candidates" event - I'm running for County Commissioner. As I approached the Scout Cabin, I saw about 12 picketers with professionally made signs making it very clear that I was not welcome in Vernonia. They screamed insults at my husband and me; tried to block the drive so I couldn't turn in; pounded on our car; chased us into the parking lot; and insulted us as we walked to the cabin. When I spoke during the event, they waved their signs from the back of the room and outside the windows. They also insulted and harassed another woman as she walked to the cabin. Their

threats were such that the event organizers arranged to have a police officer escort us to our cars to make sure all were safe afterwards.

Who are these people and what is their problem?

Their leader is Tim Bero, who lives and owns a gun manufacturing business out on Timber Road. He wants to put an industrial park at the end of the Vernonia airport runway. Neighbors of the airport are opposing the location of his development and contacted me a few weeks ago for help with the complicated land use process. The other woman who was hassled and I both testified against his application at a county Planning Commission hearing earlier in the week. This harassment was apparently Bero's attempt at retaliation.

I strongly support the development of a new industrial park in Vernonia. The city and the county need all the jobs we can get. I oppose its proposed location in a residential area, miles from town, with no water or sewer service, 10 foot wide gravel private roads and inadequate electrical and telephone/internet service. The site has wetlands, is a major big game habitat and is on forest zoned land. There are vacant industrial sites around Vernonia which have all the services this site lacks and will not ruin a residential neighborhood. Bero has submitted no information about what he wants to do there, but insists that it has to be on the airport.

I know that most Vernonia citizens do not support the kind of harassment that Bero organized at the candidate's event. Such behavior will only strengthen my and the neighbor's and perhaps other Vernonia citizen's opposition.

On the other hand, if Mr. Bero wants to have a professional and courteous discussion about this issue in a public forum, I'm more than willing to make myself available.

-- Pat Zimmerman,

Candidate for Columbia County Commissioner

An Open Letter to City Officials

This letter is a request for enforcement of the leash law in Vernonia, especially Vernonia Lake. Besides the dog attacks mentioned in The Independent, I am aware of several more incidents where leashed dogs have been attacked by other unleashed dogs.

Last week I witnessed a female jogger having to pass three unleashed dogs on the Vernonia Lake park trail. The dog owner leashed one dog before she passed by, obviously thinking the dog may exceed his "control." The unleashed dogs not only raise the stress level of park patrons, but they alarm and jeopardize the rabbits, ducks and other wildlife surrounding the lake.

Bill Yeo, in his motorized cart, had just passed these unleashed dogs prior to the jogger coming around the lake. Since I understand he is to enforce the park rules, had this jogger been attacked or bitten, Bill or the City may have been legally liable for "failing to protect" people who expect rules to be consistently enforced for their peace-of-mind and protection. I discussed this with Bill and told him I would write a letter to the newspaper. He gave me the "thumbs up" sign. Chief Workman suggested I also write to the City Council, which I am doing now.

[City Council] would you please indicate in a statement in both newspapers what position and actions you will take in this matter?

I suggested to Chief Workman a possible compromise of allowing dogs to be off-leash on the straightaway from the Anderson Park turnoff to the High School area, with the exception of leashing animals upon seeing anyone coming from either direction on foot, bike, horse, etc. The problem of course is hearing or seeing people approach soon enough and being able to leash an animal back up in time. He indicated park rules include leashing dogs.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

-- Pamela Cohen, Vernonia

HOW TO SEND LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Vernonia'sVoice welcomes and requests your thoughts, opinions, and ideas. Please include your name, address, and phone number; limit your letters to 300 words or less. Vernonia'sVoice reserves the right to edit, omit, respond, or ask for a response to letters submitted. We will print letters, space permitting. Deadline is the 15th of the month. **Email to: news@vernoniasvoice.com or mail to: Letters, PO Box 55, Vernonia 97064.**

Sporty wishes all of you Dads a Happy Fathers Day!



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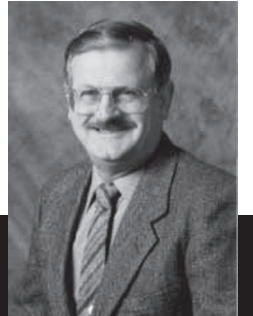
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1136 Birch, Vernonia... \$134,500
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