

Candidates Interviews (continued from page 18)

we won't need new schools, then that's going to cost us \$40-50 million of our own money. With no help from anyone else. So it's just not an option.

Amy Cieloha: I think there is a difference between what is my plan for the schools and what is my plan as a parent. I asked the same question at a school board meeting recently and the answer I got was, 'Then we'll be putting your kids on a school bus to Scappoose or Banks.' So for me, that's not an option. I won't put my kids on a bus and send them over the mountain every day. If we don't have schools out here, we have no town. Our local businesses will not be thriving. It's going to be hard-pressed for anyone to sell their house. I don't want to leave, that's not my choice-- to go somewhere else. Would I go somewhere else? Absolutely, for my kids' sake. But I don't know if we could sell our home. I think you would see the homeschooling rate increase. We have to have schools out here for this community. Do we have to have the best of the best, greenest of the greenest, most excellent campus you've ever seen? I don't think so. We need a safe place for our kids to go to school. We need a dry place for our kids to go to school. And we need to update some of the technology things. Beyond that, I don't think we need to exceed these standards. I want a bond to pass. I want to be able to get the help we need and get new schools for our kids.

Cari Levenseller: If we can't raise the funds, what I think will happen is we will lose our school district. Our enrollment is dropping. People don't want to move here, because the first thing families look at is '...tell me about your schools'. We can't keep paying for the modulars that we're using. Our current buildings are not good enough to educate our kids in. And the cost of bringing them up to that standard-- we would probably have to go for a bond for that as well. So, I think a bond is the only option. If we have to stay here, it will mean more cuts. We have to get something permanent. I don't see any other options.

Angie Rhodes: What we're being told is if we don't pass a bond, basically our school system will no longer be here. And I don't think that threat is going to pass a bond any easier. I have high concerns if the bond doesn't pass what will happen to this community and what will happen to the schools. I think people will be put in such a hard position as far as, where do we send our kids? And I honestly don't know.

Vernonia's Voice: Vernonia schools are facing a budget shortfall this year of around \$1.2 million dollars. How would you address this and what cuts would you propose?

Jim Krahn: I'm heavily involved in that right now. The issue with this present \$1.2 million cut that we have to make is different than cuts that would have been made in the past. We're getting hit two ways. One, we're having a reduction in students. That costs us \$6,000 per student. And we lost ten percent of our students after the flood, so that was \$600,000 or so. Eighty-five percent of our budget is teacher salaries, so there's not much we can do about that. About seven percent is transportation, insurance, electricity. Not a lot we can do about that. When you're looking at a cut of \$1.2 million, you're talking about cutting everything. Whether we cut music or don't cut music or do pay-to-play for middle school sports-- you have to make a whole lot of those kinds of cuts to come up with \$1.2 million. This is just simply a situation where education will suffer from these cuts. This is a decision made by the state legislature. We're

going to cut every conceivable thing we can. There will be nothing extra left when this is done. It will be the basics and that's it. What we've looked at so far is a wide variety of cuts from teachers to administrators to programs. But \$1.2 million is a lot of those. If I had my choice, we would be adding educational programs, but there is no money. The cuts will be deep.

Amy Cieloha: It's hard. You have to look at what is necessary. Look at those core subjects that you can't do away with, and the teachers who teach those subjects. I think you have to look at class size. That's one reason people come to this community-- our small class sizes. I think it's important to have small class sizes. Something I wouldn't want to do is cut out art and PE, but at the same time I would always look at saving those core teachers and subjects. Are art and PE important? Absolutely. But realistically I would have to look at cutting some of those other things before I would look at cutting a kindergarten teacher or a fifth-grade teacher. It's not something I would look forward to, but that is the route I would go. I think another place we could hugely save is not having so many administrators. I would look last at making cuts of the people who work directly with the kids every day. For me, it always goes back to the kids. I would start with the people who are most distant from the kids. Throughout the school year, budget issues come up all the time, so we need to be smart and look at the things we say yes to. To really make smart decisions along the way and be able to say no to something. I think that in itself would help our budget a lot.

Cari Levenseller: The way we address this as a board is we have a budget assistance team that meets with the teachers and staff. The staff makes suggestions about things they think we can eliminate. But with this amount of money all you can cut is positions. There are several teachers and administrators who won't have a job next year. And that's just the way it is. And that's all we can do. People are losing their jobs and that's the way it's going to be. It's horrible and it shouldn't be. And we're going to be providing less services for our students next year. It's not pretty and we know that. When we see what the numbers are, I know we are all going to be sick, but it's going to have to be done. Nobody is going to be happy with the cuts that are being made. I have five kids in this district and I'm not happy about it. There aren't really any choices. I think with new schools it will improve our situation and bring our numbers up.

Angie Rhodes: It's never a fun thing when you have to go through and decide what positions or what people or class you have to cut. But the truth of the matter is that right now, we do have to cut things because we are not in a good situation. I agree with making administration cuts. I would probably look at the people that are basically shaping those kids everyday, even if it's just an aide, not a teacher, those positions to me are vital. When we start looking at cutting those, we start looking at taking away from our kids. I would have to look at areas like the sports departments. I know sports are vital here and I would want to keep them here, one hundred percent. But maybe there are some changes we can make in that area. Maybe look at the other positions we can do without and still run a successful school for our kids every day. I don't pretend to know everything about all the positions and what each person does, so I would have to educate myself to make informed decisions about what positions to cut.

Another Round: More Words of Wisdom About Beer

By Scott Laird

"You can't be a real country unless you have a beer and an airline-- it helps if you have some kind of a football team, or some nuclear weapons, but at the very least you need a beer." - Frank Zappa

What I found at the Spring Beer and Wine Festival -- Once again, this was an excellent event. But first of all, here's what I didn't find-- very many Porters and Stouts. This festival was full of Belgian-style beers and hoppy IPA's, but only a few of my favorites-- darker beers. One of the two highlights of the fest for me was a **Survival "7-Grain" Stout from Hopworks Urban Brewing**. This organic stout had a thick head, a strong coffee influence but was just a little thin for a stout. I loved the **Overcast Espresso Stout from Oakshire Brewing** in Eugene. This was a full and hearty stout with mellow espresso overtones and a thick dark head. I went back for seconds... and thirds... I think. A great beer! Also got to have some 1554 on tap from **New Belgium Brewing**, a rare treat indeed, and much appreciated! **Walking Man Brewing** was serving up a **Black IPA** that was too hoppy for me-- although if you like that style you might have enjoyed it, but no stouts in sight around there, a major disappointment. All in all, I had another good time, and as always, will look forward to next year.

Oregon Beer Tax -- Pour This Idea Down The Drain! -- There is currently a bill being proposed in the Oregon House that would increase taxes on Oregon-made malt beverages by almost 2000%! That's right, two thousand percent. Perhaps you've heard about this, or maybe you haven't. But I think we need to talk about it. House Bill 2461 is being sponsored by Representatives Cannon and Dembrow and Senators Dingfelder, Morrisette and Rosenbaum, and would raise funds for state drug and alcohol prevention, treatment and recovery services. OK, so far-- I'm all for supporting treatment and recovery programs. But this bill only targets beer, not wine or hard liquor sales, and would increase the current excise tax from \$2.60 a barrel to around \$50 a barrel. There's lots of reasons why this is not a good idea, and lots of bad effects that this tax will have on an important industry in this state. Suffice it to say that this tax seems unfair to Oregon Brewers, and an unreasonably harsh increase in one giant step. To learn more about the issue, go to the Oregon Brewers Guild's website at oregonbeer.org. And if you only do one thing today, besides reading this column, contact your state legislators and tell them not to support this unfair tax on Oregon Beer! And while your at it, contact those sponsors of the bill and let them know what you think as well.

A Spring Beer to Try -- I'm trying to expand my horizons and drink something other than Porters and Stouts every once in a while. So I picked up a bottle of **Pyramid Brewing Rollick Amber Lager**. This is a spring seasonal with pictures of mountain bikers on the label, and is billed as "...the perfect beer to celebrate your first rollicking spring adventure." Since we just started work again on the Vernonia Bicycle Skills Park, I thought I would give this a try. And I liked it! Malty, with a hint of caramel, this coppery brew was refreshing and not overly hoppy. Big and flavorful, it's a perfect Oregon spring beer-- robust, but thirst-quenching all at the same time.

The Blue House Brewery is Open! -- Well, some of us thought it might never happen, but we now have our very own brewery right in downtown Vernonia-- better yet, within walking distance of my house! Vernonia brewed porters, fruit flavored lagers, ambers and ryes, oh my! Good food to go with it! It's a dream come true, and I look forward to all the new creations and old standard recipes Brett Costley has in store for us. Bring on the Beer!

See you next time for Another Round!

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