

Wyden Holds Town Hall *continued from front page*

with and advocate for three things: a background check system that works; a system that monitors firearm transfers very closely; and a system that requires storage of firearms. Wyden said there are fundamental questions about what qualifies as an "assault weapon" and also that the possibility of limiting the size of ammunition magazines needs to be debated and those will be the more challenging issues. Wyden later commented on school safety, noted that he is against arming teachers in schools. He also stated that he does not think there is just one reason that school shootings take place and that in a free society the reality is, we would need to have a debate about whether we should restrict people's freedoms. "I don't think that is what the country wants, but we could have that debate," said Wyden.

Student Makayla Roach stated that research shows that art helps students in all areas of education and asked how more money could be devoted to art education programs. Wyden responded that he is a big supporter of all elective class programs. He noted that in Oregon, education is funded by timber funds harvested from federal lands. Wyden said he would be writing a new law which will bring together all states that have federal land and federal water and rework the payouts to states to support stable education. "The federal government needs to be a better partner," said Wyden, "because what worked a hundred years ago isn't working very well now."

Student Will Parks asked about why the government doesn't return to the old form of timber taxes to fund edu-

cation. Wyden said that in the past there was irresponsible cutting done and damage to the environment. "That of course was one extreme and now some people want to go to the other extreme and not cut anything," said Wyden. "What I think what we need is a sensible, bal-



Ron Wyden with a group of Vernonia High School students following his Town Hall on January 14, 2013. Photo courtesy of Randy Larson.

anced, multiple use approach and that is what I will be working for."

West Oregon Electric Cooperative General Manager Marc Farmer asked Wyden's position on the federal government declaring hydro-electric power as a renewable resource and also asked if Wyden supported the privatization of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). Wyden responded by stating that he would not allow anyone to privatize the BPA "...on my watch. We will pull out all the stops to keep that from happening." He also noted that he didn't expect the Obama Administration to attempt to do that. He also stated that he considers hydro to be a renewable

resource and would be central in the attempts to build a low carbon economy. "Every program that I have a chance to put it in print, it will be so designated," said Wyden.

Exchange student Hanna Hofer asked about the development of alter-

be able to marry who you want." Wyden received a round of applause from the crowd after his response.

Wyden spoke about controlling the costs of Medicare. "The reason I bring this up with students is because if the country doesn't contain Medicare expenses, Medicare is going to gobble up everything in sight," said Wyden. "It's going to take the money for schools and for arts, and for roads and parks and a lot of stuff that all you young people are going to want." Wyden stressed that containing health care costs is an important issue for the younger generation.

When asked about the recently passed Farm Bill and the lack of help for small farmers, Wyden noted that the bill that was passed was not very comprehensive and needs to be rewritten. Wyden says he is working to include provisions that would make it easier for schools to buy food directly from local farmers and to allow gleaning so food would not be wasted. He also raised concerns about the effectiveness of the food stamp program. "The food stamp program needs to become something beyond a conveyor belt for calories," said Wyden. He went on to say that the federal government should be doing more to promote healthy eating practices, especially under the food stamp program.

Wyden concluded the meeting by addressing the students in the audience. "The reason I am having these Town Hall Meetings in high schools is because, when you serve in the Congress you ought to think about what is ahead. What I want to do is make sure that the decisions that we make today are going to be good for your generation."

In Memory of... *continued from page 14*

afternoon, January 8, 2013 in Vernonia, OR.

A Memorial Service was held on Tuesday, January 15, 2013 at 2:00 PM at the Fuiten, Rose & Hoyt Funeral Home, 2308 Pacific Avenue, in Forest Grove, with Reverend Richard E. Osburn, retired United Church of Christ minister, officiating.

Family and friends were invited to attend a reception immediately following the service held in the fellowship room of the funeral home.

WALTER LAWRENCE THURNHEER was born on December 16, 1958 in McMinnville, OR, the son of Fred and Doris (Heaton) Thurnheer. He was raised and received his education in

the Hillsboro community, having been a graduate with Hillsboro High School Class of 1977.

He was employed as a pilot car driver. Among his special interests he enjoyed gardening, cooking and was an avid fisherman.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Fred and Doris Thurnheer. Survivors include his sister, Bonnie Hill, of Goodyear, AZ. Also surviving are his two nieces, Jana Hill, of Happy Valley, OR and Jessica Hill, of Goodyear, AZ and his nephew, Justin Hill, of Sherwood, OR.

Fuiten, Rose & Hoyt Funeral Home in Vernonia is in charge of the arrangements. 503-429-6611.

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