

Readers Lend Their Voices...

To the Editor,

Over the last three decades, I have had a front row seat as most Americans have struggled and failed to stay even. Data show that all but a very small fraction of Americans (<1%) have lower real incomes over the last 30 years. This has left me personally concerned about the burden that skyrocketing utility rates place on our low income and fixed income neighbors.

Yet, conversations about rates and fairness seem to always dredge up feelings and opinions, as opposed to facts. I want to thank the Voice for the superb, readable article about West Oregon Co-op's high electric costs. WOEC's rates have been a consistent subject of complaint for the 35 years I have lived in Vernonia. "Highest rates west of the Mississippi," has been an article of faith in Vernonia. The Voice article showed that there was no small amount of truth in that belief. More importantly, the article clearly explained why rates are that high.

In addition, I am glad that the Voice gave WOEC credit for the stability of our delivery system. Longtime residents have observed a dramatic decrease in power outages, and the ones we have had seemed to have been repaired before refrigerators got warm. The Co-op and its staff deserve credit for this substantial improvement. The Voice article did a good job of showing that

there is a connection between that power stability and rates.

There is always room to improve any organization. WOEC is no exception. But, it helps to set a baseline understanding of the issues so participants can speak about facts, not fears. The Voice has done that. Thank you.

Jim Tierney
Vernonia

To the Editor,

I read with dismay the editorial in the Daily Astorian dated 9/28/15 entitled "Why Ruin our Rivers for China's Rulers?" and feel compelled to reply. It appears that the Daily Astorian did not fully research this issue and missed some important facts.

Why build a methanol plant on the Columbia River in Columbia County? I'll give you three reasons:

1. Jobs. This facility would be a \$1.8 billion investment in Columbia County. It would create 1,000 construction jobs and approximately 200 permanent, family-wage jobs. These jobs would be a tremendous benefit for many residents in our county, which has an unemployment rate of 7.5%.

2. Climate Change. Why is China converting its olefins manufacturing from an oil- and coal-based system to a natural gas-to-methanol system? Because it is

better for the environment, reducing greenhouse gases and toxic wastes significantly. Don't we want China, the world's leading manufacturing nation, to do more to protect the environment? And the idea that China will use the methanol just to make "dollar store junk" is not true. In reality, methanol is used to make many everyday products, from the carpet in your house to the windshield washer fluid in your car.

3. Value-Added Manufacturing. This isn't an energy project and it's not the exporting of raw materials that some claim it to be. Northwest Innovation Works will build a value-added manufacturing facility – the kind that the state of Oregon wants to encourage. Whether we create computer chips, wood products or methanol, manufacturing creates good paying jobs that we want in Oregon.

The Columbia River has always been an integral part of our economic growth and quality of life in Columbia County. Do we need to protect that asset? Of course, and that's why we have strict regulatory and permitting processes in place. The reality is, we have less commercial traffic on the river today than we did 20 years ago, and many jobs have disappeared from the region. We can have both economic development and good environmental stewardship – we don't have to choose one over the other.

The NWIW facility is good for our county and for northwest Oregon.

Chuck Daughtry
Executive Director
Columbia County Economic Team

To the Editor,

On behalf of the Vernonia High School Leadership class, we would like to thank the following people for helping us make another homecoming week successful.

Our amazing Principal Nate Underwood and Superintendent Aaron Miller.

The Vernonia School District staff members for being so cooperative and supporting, with special thanks to Teri Willard, George Spaulding, Matt Urban, Matt Blair, Thor Ware, and John Murray.

The class advisors for being calm, cool, and collected throughout

Upcoming Events

Christmas in the Country Bazaar - Saturday, December 5, 10:00 am - 5:00 pm, and Sunday, December 6, 11:00 am - 4:00 pm at the Vernonia Schools Commons.

The Spirit of Christmas in Vernonia - Saturday, December 12. See page 15 for more details.

Vernonia Ballet presents Frozen - Saturday, December 12, 7:00 pm at the Vernonia Schools Commons.

our homecoming experience: Glenda Delemos, Juliet Safer, Amanda Wolf, Stacy Adams, Kathy Fetch, and Karen Roberts.

Air jam's best judges yet: Sean Carnahan, Bud Normand, Michele Eagleson, and Rhonda Lennen.

This year's court: Jake Harbour, Jared Medearis, Kole Titus, Jocie Roberts, Cassidy Fetch, Kenzie Titus and crown bearers Koa and Momi Leininger.

Previous court, Megan Sullivan and Justin Wolfe for attending the coronation.

The sound, lighting, and tech support: Bill Langmaid and Mark Brown.

Julie Ramsey and Carol Senn for their help with clean up throughout the week.

Teresa Williams, Denise Way Hackett, and Brandi Everett for helping with various activities.

Larry and Kim O'Black, Kelly Baska, and Tim Titus for donating their trucks for court at half time.

The many donors of wood and yard debris for our bonfire.

Dan Hanson, Randy Carlton, Amanda Sicard and Metro West for their safety support during the bonfire and Homecoming football game.

Vernonia Christian Church for their delivery of the delicious pizza brought to the bonfire.

And who could forget the best supporters around, our community!

Sincerely,
Vernonia High School Leadership



FREEWHEELERS ANNUAL WOOD RAFFLE

\$1 a ticket or 6 tickets for \$5
Two tickets drawn this year -
so you have TWO chances to win!
Tickets will be drawn Nov. 29, 2015.
Tickets Available NOW
near Bridge Street Mini Mart.

**A special thanks for Cutright Cutting
(Todd Cutright) for all the help.**



Columbia Humane Society Featured Pet



Meet Kea!
Kea came to CHS from a Hawaii transport. He has currently been in our kennel for 7 weeks and would love to find that new forever home. He gets along well with other dogs and would be a wonderful addition to any family. He can be very food motivated! He is very quiet and would just like a

place to rest and relax. If you think you can give this guy a home please don't hesitate to call or email.

Web: www.columbiahumane.org
2084 Oregon Street
St. Helens, OR 97051

Phone: 503-397-4353
Email: animalwelfare@columbiahumane.org

HOW TO SEND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Vernonia's Voice 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's Voice reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted. We will print letters space permitting. Deadline is the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month. Email: scott@vernoniasvoice.com or mail to: Letters, PO Box 55, Vernonia, OR 97064.

Do You Need Help? Call for meeting times and locations

**Columbia Community
Mental Health**
Call 503-397-5211 -or-
1-800-294-5211

For after hours Crisis call:
1-866-866-1426
<http://ccmh1.com/crisis.html>

**Narcotics Anonymous
NW Region**
503-345-9839
<http://portlandna.com/>

**Alcohol Anonymous
NW Region**
503-366-0667
<http://www.pdxaa.com/>