

Readers Lend Their Voices...

To the Editor,

I am somewhat dismayed that the discourteous discourse that we see in our national politics has seeped into our little community of Columbia County in letters that have recently appeared in your paper.

It saddens me to see so many angry women coming out against Tony Hyde with such vitriol. I don't understand where it comes from. I have lived in this community for almost 27 years and I can attest to the fact that things have gotten much better than they were 20 years ago – dramatically so. Despite two major devastating floods in our town, there are more jobs than ever, incredible bike paths that bring countless riders to our towns, restaurants and stores. You couldn't even imagine these businesses being here 20 years ago. I thank Tony Hyde for his help in making our community a better place. I believe he works tirelessly to make all of Columbia County a better place to live and work.

These negative letters are about there being no jobs here. Every time I go to St. Helens and Scappoose, I see a new business that wasn't there before. I plead ignorance when it comes to the jail and port that never materialized, but I am sure it had more to do with the Great Recession that plagued the entire country not just Columbia County. If you are going to criticize the current County Commission on all of our County's problems, you must realize his successes as well. Of which there are many.

I worry when I read this new candidate Alex Tardif will change everything for the better. That is what angry people in the Tea Party said. And we all know what happened there. We have a lot of inexperienced members of Congress who came in to change things for the better and we have ended up with the most ineffective Congress since the Truman Administration.

I don't want to go down the negative road, but this young man, who is going to transform Columbia County into greatness, with five years of tax preparation experience and a term on the Scappoose School Board's Budget Committee, sounds like he is around 28, maybe 29. There is no person I have ever met at that age that could ever do the job of meeting with Governors, Mayors, U.S. and State Senators with the finesse, intelligence, leadership qualities, and

the ability to bring both sides together as Tony Hyde.

Please don't let our beautiful and vibrant community be turned over to an amateur and join me in voting for Tony Hyde for County Commissioner this May.

Rosemary Curtis
Vernonia

To the Editor,

I would like to encourage people to think about the many services provided to the community by our fire department. They extinguish house fires, rescuing occupants. They attend auto accidents to save lives and prevent further damage. They protect our open spaces from wildfire. They help reduce our homeowners insurance bill. Yup, the presence of a staffed fire hall is one of the tools that insurance companies use to set our rates.

We currently spend a little less than one dollar per thousand dollars of assessed value for the services of the fire department. This buys us a building, a chief, an office manager, equipment maintenance, and training for a group of dedicated volunteers. The problem right now is that volunteerism is dropping and there have been occasions when the only person able to respond to a 911 call has been the fire chief. Aside from the safety issue, this means the chief has been unable to spend much time on training, recruitment, grant writing, and the myriad other tasks to which he must attend.

Last year he came to the taxpayers with two levies. The first, for a replacement fire apparatus, was thankfully funded, but the second, for a second paid firefighter was not funded. Chief Smith is coming to us again for help on this matter. I urge everyone to consider a few things before deciding Yes or No. Failing to pass the levy will mean you keep \$32 per \$100,000 assessed value in your pocket, but you might see your insurance bill go up. Mine did recently by \$100. Not sure why, but some out of state company is a little wealthier now.

A passed levy means the fire department will have a staff person who is dedicated to recruiting and training volunteers. A firefighter, obviously, but also someone that creates new firefighters. This firefighter will live

here, in Vernonia, and will be the recipient of the funds raised by the levy. That firefighter will buy power, water, groceries, beer, food, and gas right here in Vernonia.

We benefit twice from passing this levy. First, and most obviously, we double our paid staff of firefighters and increase our capacity to recruit and train volunteers. Second, the money stays in Vernonia, helping to boost the economy, creating more jobs. I urge everyone to vote yes on the VRFPD levy this May. It's the right thing to do.

Bill Langmaid
Vernonia

To the Editor,

My name is Jim Kinkead and I have had the pleasure of hosting the Vernonia boys team at the 2A state tourney a couple weeks ago. This was my 3rd year hosting this school at Pendleton. I am on the steering committee for the organization of the tournament in Pendleton. I wanted to write a short note about a few things about your coaching staff, students, fans.

Your coaching staff and team were a pleasure to work with. The team was fun to be around and well mannered. Your school should be proud of the way everyone conducted themselves. They are, in my opinion, a class act.

David and Matt are great guys and when I showed up at the gym in Vernonia earlier this year to watch the Knappa game David and Matt made it a point to visit with me and my daughter and grandson.

I did make an observation after the first game against Burns. When the game was over several players and students went up into the bleachers and were helping the staff of the convention center clean up all the garbage left behind not only in their seating section but the whole gym. Again after the Championship game several players were up in the bleachers again picking up trash left behind.

I've been working at the tournament for 20 years and I've never seen this before, even after the

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Upcoming Events

Harlem Crowns Basketball - Saturday, April 9, 6:00 pm at the VHS gym. \$10 at the door. Fundraiser for VHS Girls Basketball program.

Meet Alex Tardif, Candidate for Columbia County Commissioner Position #3 - Saturday, April 9, 10:00 am at Blue House Café.

Writing to Create Ourselves - Sunday, April 10 at the Vernonia Library. Workshop and reading with Oregon Poet Laureate Emerita Paulann Petersen. Workshop 12:30-4:30 pm. Reading 6:00-7:30 pm.

VHS Alumni Basketball Games - Saturday, April 16, 6:00 pm at the VHS gym. No admission, donations accepted.

Meet Margaret Magruder, Candidate for Columbia County Commissioner Position #1 - Saturday, April 23, 10:00 am at the Black Iron Grill.

Meet the Candidates - Monday, April 25, 7:00 pm at the Cabin in Vernonia. A political forum with candidates for Columbia County Commissioner Positions #1 and #3. Hosted by *Vernonia's Voice*.

Spring Fair and Plant Sale - May 7, 9:00 am-3:00 pm at the Vernonia Schools. Vendor booths and 800+ certified organic tomato plants. Presented by the Vernonia Community Garden.

Second annual Spring Tea Party - Saturday, May 14, 1:00 pm at the Cabin in Vernonia, 901 Park Dr. Hosted by P.E.O.

Pet Fair - Saturday, May 21, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm at Creatures Pet Shop parking lot, 998 Bridge St. This is a fundraiser for Bailey's Pantry. More information to follow.

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.

Upcoming Election Info

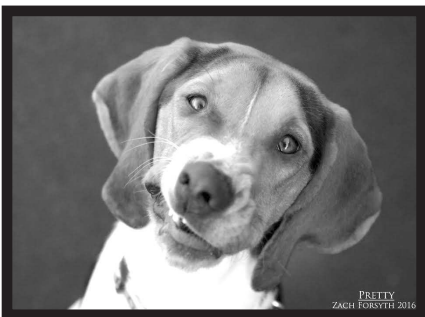
Oregon's Presidential Primary: May 17 (including local and County elections)

Last day to register by mail: April 26

To register to vote online or to update your voter registration go to: <http://sos.oregon.gov/voting/Pages/voteinor.aspx>

You can find a voter registration card at Vernonia City Hall, Vernonia Library or county elections office. You can also ask the Columbia County elections office to mail you a card: 230 Strand St., St. Helens, OR 97051 (503) 397-7214, (503) 397-7266 fax, Office Hours: 8:30am - 5:00pm (M-Th)

Columbia Humane Society Featured Pet



Hi! My name is Pretty Penny, and I was a transfer from another shelter. I am a black, white and brown spayed female and weigh about 35 lbs. I am a really sweet girl. I love to go out in the play groups and make new friends. I'm a never ending bundle of energy and need a family that is going to be very active

with me. I am crate trained and I need to be left in my crate when no one is home or I have a tendency to get into trouble. Stop in and meet me today. I will be sure to make you smile.

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

Phone: 503-397-4353

Email: animalwelfare@columbiahumane.org

Non-discrimination Statement

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