

It's a Busy Time in Salem *continued from front page*

to reduce Oregon's carbon output." A Cap and Trade program would encourage businesses to become more efficient by reducing emissions, or pay someone else to reduce emissions by purchasing carbon allowances. Initially allowances would be sold by the state, creating funding for state programs to reduce emissions, and then businesses could buy, sell, or trade allowances with each other. The program is based on California's model, enacted in 2012, which has raised \$12.5 billion, used to offset electric car purchases, solar installations, and public transit. How much California's program has reduced carbon emissions is unclear.

Witt said he thinks there has been a "rush to judgement" by Democrats in both the House and Senate, and expressed concerns that the legislation is being moved through committees without proper hearings. "I think the process stinks," said Witt candidly, "and the legislation is the wrong model. There are much simpler, faster, and less bureaucratic ways to reduce carbon in this state."

Witt says he has proposed amendments to the legislation, which, because of the rush to bring it to a vote, have not been properly drafted or considered. He said he believes if Cap and Trade legislation fails this session then there may be an opportunity to get legislators to consider alternatives. "It's felt like the hearings have been perfunctory and there has been no tolerance for a different model. Maybe it's going to require a political disaster for folks to be willing to consider alternatives. If that were to happen I'll be prepared to offer up true carbon reduction, that is focused on carbon reduction and not a securities and exchange endeavor."

"Let there be no doubt that leadership has had one single model in mind and it has been almost impossible to get past that," said Witt, noting that he believes there are a handful of other Democrats who feel the same way he does. "Right now I don't think they have the critical mass to pass Cap and Trade."

One thing is sure – there will be plenty of tension in Salem during the coming weeks.

Meanwhile, on February 10, Oregon Governor Kate Brown announced an historic agreement between representatives from the state's forest industry and major environmental groups to chart a collaborative course toward meaningful,

science-based forest management in Oregon. The agreement might signify a step toward a new era of cooperation, leaving behind the conflicts of the past.

"This pact proves that when we work together with a willingness to compromise, we can create a better future in Oregon," said Governor Brown. "Oregonians want healthy forests and fish, a vibrant forest sector, and prosperous rural communities. These are not mutually exclusive goals."

I asked Representative Witt his thoughts on the agreement. "It's always good when people sit down and try to negotiate away their differences in the interest of solving problems, so this was exceedingly encouraging," he said.

The signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) addresses three key issues. It will:

- Drive a process for Oregon to update its timber practices that are protective of threatened and endangered species, including Oregon's iconic salmon, while allowing Oregonians to continue their long tradition of working in the woods.
- Support passage of new legislation for the 2020 session on aerial spraying of pesticides so forest neighbors can receive real-time notification that aerial spraying will occur, and expand protected spray buffers around drinking water, homes, and schools.
- Expand forest stream buffers in the Rogue-Siskiyou region, aligning forest practices in the area with those of the rest of western Oregon.

With this MOU, both sides have agreed that all forestry-related initiative petitions and related litigation will be dropped after the passage of the legislation this session. Environmental organizations were poised to place three citizen initiative ballot measures before voters this fall, including the Oregon Forest Waters Protection Act, which, if enacted, would have increased logging stream buffers and limited logging in high landslide areas, while minimizing the impact on small tract landowners. It would have also eliminated conflicts of interest by members of the state Board of Forestry and addressed aerial spraying, which the agreement will attempt to address through legislation.

"This MOU is shared recognition of the diverse benefits Oregon's forests provide, and the need for more meaningful dialogue around forest issues across the state,"

said Greg Miller, long-time timber industry executive and representative of the coalition of forest companies. "Now as we move forward into a new era of cooperation and transparency, forest policy should continue to rely on the best available science."

"It's taken several decades of both sides bloodying each other into submission, but that submission is better than the continued war," said Witt. Witt worked in the forestry industry as a union rep before he became a legislator, and has served on the

Oregon Board of Forestry, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), and the Oregon Forest Resources Institute. "Forestry is an arena that is very important in this state and very important to me personally, and water issues are probably where my focus is when I look at what needs to change around forestry practices. I think we need to be focused on science and how to transmit that science to sound and sustainable public policy."

Bridge Street Bits

By Karen Miller

VALENTINE'S DAY and President's Day have come and gone in this month of February 2020. This means all the closer to mid summer when our new Senior Building/Food Bank is slated to open. I hear the buzzing of excitement around town.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT for news when Rick and Linda Hobart's new shuttle van will be making its maiden run. Nehalem Valley Shuttle, LLC! More and more our town will be on the map with senior happenings. Hope you are a part of it and thank you to all who are making this a reality.

THERESA'S THRIFT STORE NEWS: Come in and check out weekly specials. Some are ongoing, others are daily surprises... check it out on our facebook page, Bargains on Bridge Street.

"Frequent Flyers" Come in and fill out a frequent flyer

customer card and start working toward extra savings.

"Birthday Club" Fill out our birthday card and receive a ONE time 50% discount on your entire purchase during the month of your birthday. Questions call (503) 429-3912

CABIN in VERNONIA rentals may be made by calling (503) 300-9006 (formerly the Scout Cabin)

A WONDERFUL GROUP OF LADIES representing past and present Columbia County My Fair Lady Court enjoyed a luncheon put on by our Senior Center Board at the Cabin in Vernonia, including Vernonia's own: Necia Dewitt, Tobie Finzel, MaryAnn Shaw and Deloris Bellingham, pictured. Some other beloved Vernonia ladies were unable to attend but will be spotlighted in a future article.

Till next time. See ya' around town.



Vernonia Senior Center
939 Bridge Street • (503) 429-3912

Church Directory

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

Sunday Schedule:
Sacrament Meeting: 10:00 am
Sunday School & Primary: 11:20 am
Relief Society, Priesthood and Young Women: 12:10 pm
Roger Cook, Branch President
1350 E. Knott Street
503-429-7151

Grace Family Fellowship

Sunday School: 9:00 am
Worship Service: 10:30 am
Thursday Prayer: 6:00 pm

Greg "Mac" McCallum, Pastor
957 State Avenue
503-429-6790

Nehalem Valley Bible Church

Sunday School: 9:45 am
Worship Service: 10:45 am
Tues. Ladies Bible Study: 9:30 am
Wednesday Service: 7:00 pm
Sat. Men's Prayer Meeting: 6:30 am
Gary Taylor, Pastor
500 North Street
503-429-5378

Open Door Gathering Place

Service: Sunday 6:00 pm

Grant Williams, Pastor
375 North Street
503-702-3553
Bible Study:
Sunday 9:00 am at Mariolino's

St. Mary's Catholic Church

Sunday Mass: 12:00 pm
Fr. Josh Clifton, Administrator
960 Missouri Avenue
503-429-8841

Vernonia Christian Church

Sunday School: 9:45 am
Worship Service in Youth & Family Center: 10:00 am

www.VernoniaChristianChurch.org
Sam Hough, Pastor
410 North Street
503-429-6522

Vernonia Seventh-day Adventist Church

Sabbath (Saturday) Services
Sabbath School: 9:30 am
Worship Service: 11:00 am
www.VernoniaSDAC.org
Larry Gibson, Pastor
2nd Avenue and Nehalem Street
503-429-8301