

November 3 Election Results

The following are preliminary results from the November 3, 2020 election; these tallies were collected on Wednesday morning and might not reflect the final results of the elections:

- Challengers Lorna Poetter and Grant Williams both won election to the Vernonia City Council, receiving 578 and 546 votes respectively. Incumbents Susan Wagner and Bruce McNair received 464 and 413 votes in defeat. Mayor Rick Hobart won re-election with 1,027 votes after running unopposed.
- Incumbent Columbia County Commissioner Margaret Magruder defeated challenger Brandee Dudzic in the race for Position 1; Magruder received 56.2% of the vote while Dudzic received 43%.
- Challenger Casey Garrett won election to Columbia County Commissioner Position 3 receiving 51.69% of the vote to incumbent Alex Tardif's 47.82%.
- Columbia County voters approved Ballot Measure 5-278, "Gun Sanctuary Ordinance Limiting Firearm Regulation." The ballot measure re-

ceived 15,285 YES votes compared to 14,818 NO votes.

- Democratic incumbent State Representative Brad Witt defeated challenger Brian Stout in the race for District 31 in the Oregon House. Witt received 20,574 or 50.5% of the vote to Stout's 20,109 votes.
- Michael Clarke defeated Jenefer Grant for Circuit Court Judge, Position 3 in the 19th District. Clarke received 13,820 votes to Grant's 13,130.
- Democratic U.S. Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici won re-election to her 1st District seat after receiving 64.92% of the vote and defeating Republican Christopher Christensen.
- Democratic U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley won re-election after defeating three challengers while receiving 57.67% of the vote.
- Democratic Presidential candidate Joe Biden won the vote in Oregon, receiving 57.19% of the vote and defeating President Donald Trump. Columbia County voters favored Trump in the election, supporting him with 16,779 votes to Biden's 13,555.

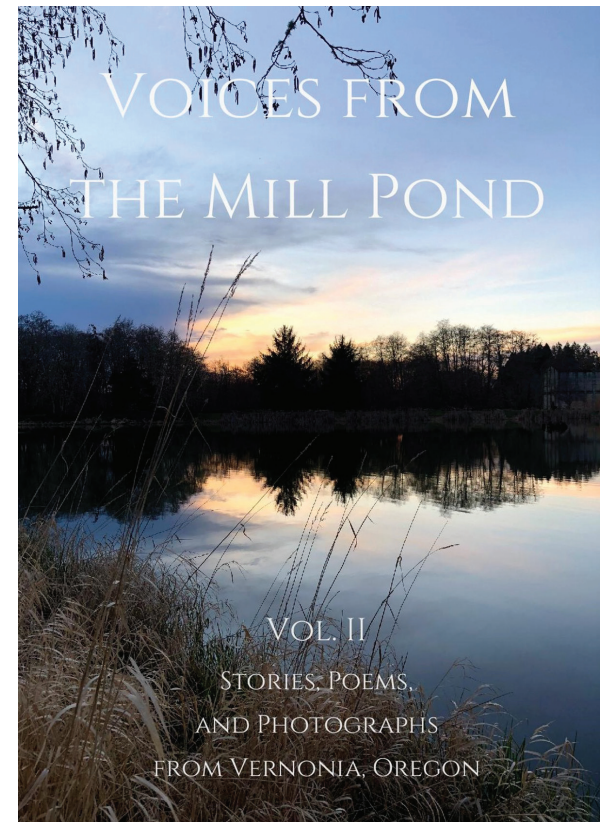
Voices From the Mill Pond Cover Photo Winner: Michael Pym

Beginning in March, photographers responded to our call and submitted pictures for the coming book about Vernonia, *Voices from the Mill Pond, Volume II*. One photo would land on the book's cover.

Nearly a hundred wonderful images poured in, and when the submission period ended, Hands on Art was tasked with choosing a cover. Important elements were the pond, of course, but also the photo's composition. Orientation and size mattered. Would the title and subtitle be clear against the colors? Was the visual activity in the photo subdued enough to complement the text? And was it an absolutely gorgeous photo in its own right?

Vernonia's Voice and Hands on Art are delighted to present this year's cover of *Voices from the Mill Pond, Volume II*. Michael Pym sent in this lovely photo that met every condition. It was the perfect choice for the book.

Our 180-page book of photos, sto-



ries, and poems from Vernonia residents will be available locally and on Amazon in early December. The perfect gift for the holidays.

Is COVID Creating a Mental Health Crisis?

Professionals say people are struggling as the pandemic drags on

By Scott Laird

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is impacting all of us in different ways. It's causing stress and anxiety. It's leading to depression and loneliness. And it's prompting some people to act out.

In order to try and understand how COVID is influencing people's behavior I reached out to several professionals who deal with behavioral issues.

"COVID is exposing a lot of need that didn't exist before and it's making us a little more creative in how we respond and engage with the needs of our communities," says Todd Jacobson, the Executive Director of Columbia Community Mental Health (CCMH).

According to Jacobson, his organization initially saw a dip in the number of people reaching out for mental health services (first time assessments, screenings, and inquiries about care) in the first half of 2020 during the early stages of COVID, as compared to the same time frame in 2019. "Since then, starting in June our numbers starting increasing, to

the point where we've actually surpassed the number of people seeking services now than we had overall last year," says Jacobson. "So, what we're seeing are not dramatic increases but increases above what we saw in 2019."

CCMH, founded in 1975, is the behavioral health provider for Columbia County. The agency employs 220 people, and runs four residential programs, provides outpatient services at the their main campus in St. Helens, and family and youth services at a separate facility in St. Helens.

Jacobson says he is still analyzing the data to confirm the cause for the

increase, but he says he believes COVID and the corresponding impacts are most likely responsible. "I think during this time there is an increased need for mental health care and treatment. People are getting strained with social distancing, the lack of access to their usual activities and events, and being confined and isolated. We are seeing more need for crisis services. Our data shows we're seeing an increase in substance abuse."

One major change in how mental health services are being delivered has had a huge impact, says Jacobson. In early March 2020 the

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COVID Impacts Jack's Hobo Bakery

Business forced to close retail operations due to pandemic

By Scott Laird

Many Vernonians were saddened to hear the news last week that Jack's Hobo Bakery was temporarily closing the retail portion of their business due to the impact of COVID. They will continue baking to fill online orders and hopefully reopen in the future.

"I really feel like I'm letting down the community," said Jack Kauppila, the namesake and owner of the bakery. "Our lobby is closed, but the bakery is still open. It's not over. I'm still gong to bake what I can and we're going to try and keep going."

Kauppila says sales have been down about 33%. He says they had

reduced what they were offering, cut days they were open to just Saturday and Sunday, and tightened up payroll as much as possible in an effort to reduce costs. He says costs for raw materials and supplies have increased, and availability has been limited at times for things like eggs and boxes. "It's just come down to numbers," he says. "Sales are not covering the cost of supplies and labor."

As a new business in their third year, Kauppila says he's never been in the business to make a big profit. "But I want the bakery to pay for itself." He says they've exhausted any COVID relief they were eligible for and have been dipping into savings to keep the doors open. "There's nothing I like more than being able to employ a few people in the community," he says. "I want the people working here to make a living. Katie - we've

loved her and the finishing work she does, and Chance has been learning to bake. It just breaks my heart that I had to lay them off."

Kauppila says he is not giving up completely. Instead of keeping the lobby and retail portion of the business open, he will continue to try and produce products he can make himself, like his breads which are available at the Helvetia Farm Market on NW West Union Road, at R&S Market in Vernonia, and through their online Hobo Bread Club. He says he's still creating a production schedule so people can order and pick up bread all week, and trying figure out if he can still offer poundcakes, (which are delicious, by the way!) and maybe a few other customer favorites. Watch for updates for other places around Vernonia that might start carrying Hobo products,

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