

### Passing the Flood Test

The kids used to call it VerNowhere, and outside the Nehalem River valley, most people said "Where's Vernonia?" So if we weren't all aware of the propensity of national press (by public demand) to cluster around open wounds, it might be a surprise that twice within the last year Vernonia has been in the national news.

Both times have been, from my point of view, disasters. The first disaster was when good people from my town, people who love children and are my friends and neighbors, decided that the only way to allay their fear for their children over drugs was to mount a fight to remove Fourth Amendment protection from those same children through drug-testing of athletes. At least that's how I saw it. I was in the minority -- most people took the view that it was a way to keep their children safe. Unfortunately, among the kids I saw every day, the athletes are not the ones with the most trouble in their lives, and the greatest impact of the whole disaster was to divide the community.

Then came the next disaster, the flood of February, 1996. This flood was the worst ever recorded. We call it a 500 year flood, but no one has been taking notes for that long, not in Vernonia. It came rolling, surprisingly, through town and every road into and out of town in places it had never been before, like the main street through town, Bridge Street, 5 feet deep.

Besides the roads, it drowned the telephone exchange, and somewhere, it tore up the long distance connection into town. In its wake it left tones of sewage-filled mud, a damaged grade school, a ruined high school and health center. All of a sudden, there was no one else but us. A hundred years ago, maybe less, people only had themselves and their neighbors. Then there were telephones and fast transportation, and 40 or 50 miles didn't mean much anymore. But last February, Vernonia and the area around it learned what a community really is.

And, all of a sudden, there were no suspicions or accusations, just helping hands. Men, women, teenagers, children. And all of them were my neighbors, and I was the neighbor of them all. No one asked to test anyone -- people gave help, in many cases, before it was asked. There were so many people who lost everything, that it has been common to hear, "Oh, we didn't have it so bad. We only had 30 inches. Help someone else first."

It came down to basics. There was no need for fear and suspicion, no need for testing. We were all tested, and most of us passed. Our kids passed -- they were part of it. There is no constitutional right to protection against nature. There was no assumed wrongdoing -- we just asked people how they were. And if it hurt, the answer was a hug, some hot food and trying to figure out how to get help. When kids have drug problems, the same answers work, and have been working well in Vernonia for several years through an active drug and alcohol counseling program.

One of the pieces of flotsam discovered after the flood was a little plastic urine collection cup with a little flag taped to it that said "Yea! We won!" Maybe, this time, we really did.



The Future's So Bright,  
You Gotta Wear Shades!



### What Is Going By Is Everything

At the edge of a clear stream,  
a fair breeze moving west on the current,  
generations of alder and fir  
from the beginning of water.  
In deep pools and facing upstream  
Rainbow Trout the size of my forearm.  
This morning I awoke  
clear-headed  
as the tops of pines.

Last night  
as if for the first time  
I saw the stars spread out across the  
heavens  
and I thought how much better  
to admit the spirit starves  
than this holding on, this holding fast,  
as if the sky is not where it is  
but strapped upon my back.  
I knelt to rinse my mouth,  
to beg the rising constellations.  
Above me, high in a tree  
at the stream's edge,  
I heard an owl's call  
dividing the darkness into light.

John Buckley



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### Haystack Rock Awareness Program Needs Volunteers

The Haystack Rock Awareness Program, whose principle sponsor is the City of Cannon Beach through its Parks & Community Services Committee, is operated by a corps of volunteers known as the Puffin Club. The Club is beginning to plan for its twelfth year of on-the-beach interpretive activities for visitors to the Rock during 1996. Volunteers are urgently needed for both off-beach and on-beach activities.

Off Beach volunteers work with the Brochure, Hospitality or the Membership and Mailing Committees.

Beach Volunteer will be moving equipment to and from the beach, counting visitors and talking to visitors about the fragile tide pools and fascinating birds and how best to enjoy them without doing harm. No scientific background or special information of any kind is necessary and volunteers can select their own hours.

For more information and to sign up, call Miriam Webber (503)436-1580 or leave your name and address and phone number with Michell McConnell at Cannon Beach City Hall (503)436-1581.

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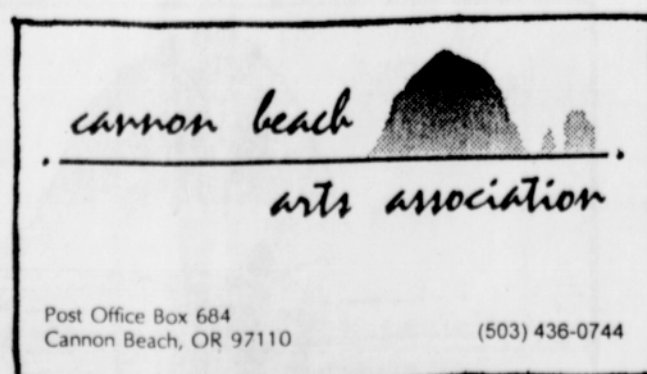
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The Cannon Beach Arts Association is sponsoring a tour to the Portland Art Museum's Imperial Tombs of China Exhibit June 19th. The tour will pick up folks in Seaside and Cannon Beach in the morning and return them in the afternoon. This is the best exhibit of Chinese art that has ever been sent to the United States. Please contact Mary Ann Owen at (503) 436-1005 for more information, as soon as possible, as there are only a limited number of tickets available.



Post Office Box 684  
Cannon Beach, OR 97110

(503) 436-0744



### BOTTLE BILL AMENDMENT

In 1971 Oregon passed the Bottle Bill, which covered carbonated beverages. It imposed a 5¢ deposit on all cans or bottles which held carbonated beverages such as sodas and beer. If these containers were returned you received your nickel back. The bottle bill worked! 93% of all containers that require a deposit are recycled. OSPIRG is now proposing an amendment to the bottle bill that would cover non-carbonated beverages. In 1994 more than 100 million of these containers were thrown in landfills and the rate of sales of these products is increasing by 30% each year. Only 28% of non-deposit glass bottles are recycled. 95% of all plastic bottles that are recycled in the US come from the 10 states that have bottle bills.

So what is the expanded bottle bill, and why is it so controversial? Well, this column is not about the pros and cons surrounding the proposed expansion bill, but is rather a piece of information to help you figure out what the new bill will cover. To place the bill on the ballot OSPIRG and Mrs. Tom McCall, the chief petitioners, will need 73,000 signatures on their petition for the November 1996 election. The bill will cover all single-serving beverage containers, except liquor, wine and dairy products, to require a deposit.

The following quiz was put together by the Association of Oregon Recyclers to help clarify the current bottle bill and the proposed expansion. Don't be surprised if you don't know all the answers.

1. Which of the following products' bottles or cans are not returnable for a deposit?

Mystic Kiwi-Strawberry Juice  
Beer  
Strawberry Pub Soda  
Crystal Geyser Juice Squeezer  
Pepsi  
Select Cola  
Schweppes Seltzer Water  
Evian Water

2. When was Oregon's beverage container redemption law passed?

1961; 1971; 1955; 1981

3. Were glass bottles returnable in Oregon before passage of the Bottle Bill?

4. Are retailers who sell beverages required to accept all returnable bottles and cans?

5. Is there a limit to the number of bottles and cans a person can redeem at one retailer a day?

6. If yes, what is that limit?  
288 144 75 244

7. Can a retailer refuse to accept a container if it has ants in it?

8. Can a retailer refuse to accept a returnable container if the retailer doesn't sell that brand or size of container?

9. Do retailers who accept returnable bottles and cans receive a handling fee for the service?

10. Who may apply for permission to operate a redemption center for returnable bottles and cans in Oregon?

Fred Meyer Inc. Costco  
Jerry Powell Montgomery Ward  
Joe's Chevron City of Cannon Beach

11. What is the main criteria for approval of a redemption center?

Accepts 10 or more brands  
Provides convenient service  
Is open at least 12 hours  
All of the above

12. Will the expanded Bottle Bill include milk and infant formula containers?

13. Will the expanded Bottle Bill include half gallon distilled water containers?

### ANSWERS

- Mystic Kiwi-Strawberry Juice & Evian Water
- 1971
- Yes
- No
- Yes
- 144
- Yes
- Yes
- No
- All of these
- Provides convenient service
- No
- Yes



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He had been kicked in the head by a mule when young, and believed everything he read in the Sunday papers. George Ade, 1866-1944