

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

personally battling the alligators when the goal is to drain the swamp. Empowering citizens would overcome his limitations. Perhaps the other commissioners and the people they represent will step up to fill this void.

Fleenor pushed for a fiscal analyst to look at Lane County to identify fraud, correct mismanagement and suggest operational cost savings. There is now a position, but as we all know from our experience, it will likely never be filled or be filled by a political hack.

There are many very capable and interested citizens who could do this function for free if the raw accounting records were only made freely available. The accounting raw data is in computerized form and very easy to reformat, removing privacy fields to be placed on the Lane County website. There are even computer-competent citizens who have offered for the past year to do this for free. What is Lane County afraid of — aren't these "public records"?

Is Lane County of the people, by the people, and for the people? Commissioner Fleenor stated, "I have 100 percent allegiance to Lane County as it is currently structured." What we need is someone with allegiance to those they represent. We need the accounting raw data available on the Internet for all to see how well Lane County is doing fiscal management!

Keith Stanton
Florence

GETTING OFF GRASS

Willamette Valley farmers are facing a huge glut of grass seed. The market price is less than half of what farmers need to make a profit. Many of these farmers lease

their land. If grass seed growers don't find a profitable crop it could mean the end to family farms in the Willamette Valley.

A grass seed farm in Tangent is experimenting with growing wheat, oats and beans. Last year Stalford Farms grew a few acres of wheat and beans. This year they've expanded, with several hundred acres planted in these staple food crops — some organic, the rest transitional. They've already harvested the wheat and oats, and are about to harvest the beans.

This spring the farm, as part of the Willamette Valley Bean and Grain Project, held several meetings to encourage other farms to switch to growing food. Although a number of farmers attended, none took the plunge. Demonstrating a strong local market could convince more farmers to try growing food.

The farm prefers to sell directly to consumers. Folks in Corvallis might find it feasible to purchase at the farm. It's not quite so simple for people in Eugene to support this project, but Stalford Farms will deliver orders of 1,000 pounds or more to Eugene.

Last October I put together a group order of more than 2,000 pounds. It was easy: I announced on the Internet my willingness to coordinate a group order, and less than a week later more than 40 people had placed orders.

I am willing to do this again this year, without any markup. Hopefully others will also. I'd like to see Eugene order 10,000 pounds this year.

Additional info at www.mudcitypress.com/beanandgrain.html or email me at jflan@efn.org

John Flanery
Eugene



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