

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**WOU should spend money in classes**

I'm a professor at Western Oregon University. For many years I have been very proud of our school. I was recently hopeful for Western when I learned about the new state funding model and when I learned that we would gain our independence from OUS and hire a new president and new board of trustees.

Now, however, when it comes time for that new president and board to provide faculty raises in salary, the least well-paid faculty in the state of Oregon, that new president instead digs in his heels and refuses to budge in negotiations with the faculty union.

He would rather spend the school's money, our money, on new administrative positions and new "administrative projects," rather than pay its faculty.

At a time when students are graduating with thousands of dollars in debt, they should be outraged at the way this administration is spending their money. And their parents should be outraged. And the taxpayers of this state ought to be outraged, too.

Somebody needs to tell Western's new president (and its new board of trustees) to spend that money on teachers' salaries and classroom instruction, where it belongs.

Ryan Hickerson  
Woodburn

**Issues at Central are not a crisis**

According to social media, there is a "crisis" at Central High School. As chairman of the Central School District Board of Directors, and having extensive insight and knowledge of the situation, let me assure you there is no crisis.

Our students remain focused on their studies; our athletes continue to compete well at the 5A level; our student leadership opportunities through POWER Peers, ASBEC and FFA are growing; and our performing arts have never been better, as exemplified by the recent performances of "Bang, Bang, You're Dead."

However, there is an increasing frustration and di-



vision between the administration and the licensed teaching staff at the high school — so much so that a "vote of no confidence" was taken regarding the principal. The board carefully investigated this situation by reviewing teacher complaints, listening to staff representatives, and analyzing the facts — unanimously concluding the issues brought forward do not warrant the dramatic removal of an employee. We agree the environment and communication processes at the high school are not acceptable and need to be improved, which will require a commitment by all parties involved.

Therefore, we are supporting a plan designed by our superintendent to improve the situation.

For more information on our district's improvement objectives, to read the board's response to the "vote of no confidence," or to contact a board member, visit our website at [www.central.k12.or.us](http://www.central.k12.or.us).

Steve Love  
CSD13 Board Chair  
Monmouth

**Thanks for making Connect a success**

On behalf of the Polk Community Connect Planning Committee, we would like to thank the many agencies, organizations, businesses, volunteers and community members who supported the fifth annual Polk Community Connect event.

More than 300 women, men and children were served at the event with dental care, health screenings, clothing giveaway, pet care, bike repair, haircuts, and meals served all day. More than 30 resource organizations were present with information for guests.

We are grateful to Valley Life Center Church for again serving as the host site facility.

Thank you to the Dallas Ministerial Association and local churches for their donations and support. The Salvation Army provided a great breakfast and James2 Community Kitchen served a wonderful lunch to the guests. We would also like to thank the United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley and Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency for their support, as well as Cherriots Salem Keizer Transit for providing free bus rides to and from the event.

Jacks World Pet Grooming and Supplies coordinated and provided the pet care. The Northwest HUB was available to assist guests with bike repairs and tune ups.

Thank you to everyone who assisted with the planning or served in a volunteer role the day of the event. We are grateful for the generosity of the communities of Polk County.

Michelle Bornfleth  
Polk County Family and Community Outreach,  
Service Integration,  
Heather Wright - Living

Hope City Church;  
Herm Boes - Salem  
Leadership Foundation

**Recreational pot new 'drug market'**

Open Letter to the Independence city councilors: There are a growing number of local citizens who are concerned about the proliferation of Independence's new "drug market" in our community.

Specific ordinances must already be in place which do not allow these cartels to set up shop in the proximity of schools, churches, day care centers and public parks.

So, what are they? How many feet, yards, blocks or miles must separate these dispensaries from a public playground or park? What is the minimum allowable distance from a library, a school, the YMCA, the dog park or even the air park?

Notice the absence of an objection to these money-making operations.

Personally, I am all for it. As well as your right to tax the heck out of the industry. Just keep this process in the shadows away from our children. Unlike the propagation of liquor within the city limits; there are those of us who equate the pot store existence to more inline of that of a porno shop. I don't care who goes there. However, keep it away from my grandchild.

Perhaps your staff can submit an article to this publication and educate the rest of the citizenry as to the boundaries you have estab-

lished for this profession.

Ron Smith  
Independence

**Bird cannons cause disruptions**

My husband and I live at the city limits of Dallas, facing Ellendale Road West, for 26 years. For the past six years plus, we have been tolerating the bird cannons firing off across the way. As the crow flies, over one mile.

Our back porch, which faces Ellendale, is now unusable due to the constant booming. There are no trees or structures between us and the cannons that would disrupt the percussion; we're on a hill.

I understand the farmer's dilemma to protect his crop. What to use: Poison? Cannons? Glitter flags? Netting? Some farmers are placing elevated platforms to encourage raptor nesting and habitation. Others are using falconers to combat the birds. I don't have the answer, and for that, I'm sorry.

I suffer from PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and the booms torment me. My husband is mostly deaf; the booming doesn't bother him. Well, just move, you say. We can't. My husband is gravely ill and facing surgeries. We literally don't have the funds or health to move — we're stuck.

I also know that I'm not the only one suffering from PTSD. We have many veterans in the area that are also suffering. When the cannons were mainly used in September and October, it was somewhat tolerable. This year, they began in January.

According to the Oregon agriculture guidelines, the cannons may operate 30 minutes before sunrise and 30 minutes after sunset.

So far this year I have been startled awake at least 15 times between 10:30 p.m. and midnight by the window rattling, percussions triggering my dogs to bark as if there is an intruder.

I can sit in my living room in the evening after dark with the windows closed and hear the constant booms.

Please, can someone come up with a solution?

Tina Smith  
Dallas

**How to Contact Officials**

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**WRITE A LETTER?**

Letters to the editor are limited to 300 words. Longer letters will be edited.

Election-related letters of all types are limited to 100 words. Writers are limited to one election-related letter per election season. Election letters from writers outside of Polk County are not accepted. Each writer is restricted to one letter per 30-day period.

The *Itemizer-ObsERVER* does not guarantee the accuracy of facts presented by letter writers; dissenters are welcome to respond. Letter writers who disagree with other published letter writers should maintain a civil discourse and address the subject, not the author.

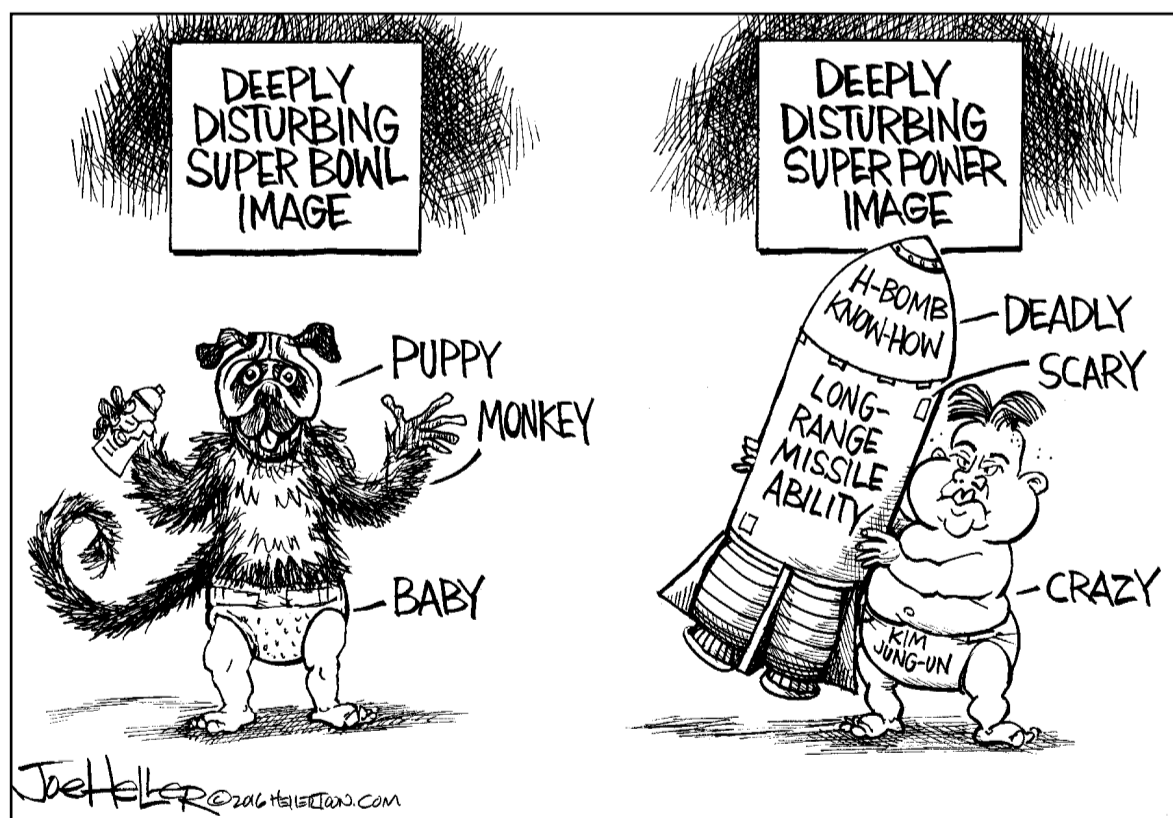
Letters must include the author's name, address and telephone number. This includes letters submitted via the *I-O's* website. Names and cities of residence are published; street addresses and telephone numbers are used for verification purposes only.

Letters must be submitted from individuals, not organizations, and must be original submissions to the *I-O*, not copies of letters sent to other media.

Letters of thanks to businesses, individuals and organizations are limited to 10 names.

The deadline for letters to the editor is 10 a.m. Monday. Letters submitted may not be retractable after this deadline.

Reach us at: **Email:** [ionews@polkio.com](mailto:ionews@polkio.com).



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