

The INDEPENDENT

Serving the upper Nehalem River valley. Published monthly on the last Thursday of each month, by Public Opinion Laboratory Ltd., 1206 State Avenue, Vernonia, OR 97064, as a free newspaper. All material protected under U.S. Copyright laws. Editors and Publishers, Dirk and Noni Andersen, (503) 429-9410.

Opinion

Time to plan growth is rare opportunity

Development is going to come to Vernonia because of its location and its natural beauty. Though we are situated in a secluded valley along the Nehalem River, we're only an hour's drive to jobs throughout the metropolitan area, and that means growth is inevitable. If you doubt it, take a second look at all of the business and residential complexes that have sprouted on what used to be farm land along the Sunset Highway.

We can waste our time and energy fighting growth or we can plan for it. We're really fortunate because we have the time and opportunity for intelligent planning.

The Vernonia Area Chamber of Commerce now has an active economic development committee, and their approach is to work with other entities that have the same goal, i.e., a diversified economy and a healthy community.

Though there is a shortage of industrial land in Vernonia, this committee of business people, in cooperation with a hard working city council and a supportive county government can make a difference.

The linear park will be developed by the state, but the help and cooperation of local people will enhance the development so a "Friends of the Park" group needs to be organized.

The town's commercial area needs more than a clean up, it needs a major face lift, but it would be possible to enlist the aid of graduate students in architecture or urban planning to create a coordinated plan. Again, this takes the cooperation of local people.

The abundance of parks in and around Vernonia make the location ideal for planned recreation of many kinds. The city needs to develop a master plan for parks and, again, cooperation is the key.

The airport is a major asset that is both underdeveloped and under-utilized, but that, too can be overcome with good planning.

Vernonia is at the crossroads and there are arrows pointing in all directions. It's rare that people have an opportunity such as we have here, the opportunity to decide which way we want to go and even how to get there.

If your SAIF insurance has been canceled, please call, 429-9410, and let us know.

Between the Bookends

By Nancy Burch
Vernonia City Librarian

This is a good time to be reading and using your library for materials. The weather is conducive to enjoying the warmth indoors before spring arrives to lure us out again and we have some interesting new books for you.

For fans of Stephen King, "The Dark Half", is available. We have Danielle Steel's, "Daddy", the story of a man trying to be mother and father to three children, while building a new personal life for himself after his wife leaves to capture the life she feels she has missed. If Larry McMurtry's characters are your cup of tea, his newest book, "Some Can Whistle", provides the usual off-beat, not always admirable, but generally likeable group of individuals.

Tony Hillerman's, "A Thief of Time", is a

new paperback about intrigue and murder in the Southwest as Indian artifacts are uncovered and stolen.

One of my favorite acquisitions, "Collected Poems of Walter Mathews", was a recent donation by Mr. Mathews. Born on The Burn, Mist, Oregon in 1911, Mr. Mathews has spent his entire life in that area. His poems, on logging, sawmilling, his family's early years, his various adventures, friends, and miscellaneous remembrances, have been printed in this entertaining little book. I especially like the poem about the problems he had with his '64 Cadillac. Thank you, Mr. Mathews, for making this available to us.

Library Hours: Monday and Friday 1-5 p.m., Wednesday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Preschool Story Time is every Wednesday from 10:30-11 a.m.

Letters to the Editor

Ever so slowly...

To the Editor:

The snitch, the tattletale of the woods, almost invisible, moving ever so slowly and quietly, this master of disguise stalks his prey. You might get a glimpse of him as he passes through a salal patch but most times you will catch him driving around, or parked on a high viewpoint with binoculars in hand looking for the hunter that has no idea he's being watched, until it happens.

You've made a mistake or bent the rules ever so slightly, but enough for him to go to the authorities with his information.

The snitch does this in the name of "conservation." His idea of saving the game animals is to get rid of hunters, whether by luring them into a trap or by harassing them enough until they say "It's not worth hunting anymore." He also encourages others to do the same and proposes more state game officers to patrol the hunters.

As an avid hunter, I propose a different way to conserve our big game animals such as deer and elk.

1. Eliminate the doe season. It has no purpose, and the deer population in our area is not so great that nature can't handle it on its own.

2. The biggest problem lies in the split elk season. If we were to make it just one season, nine days long, we would take pressure off the elk herds by eliminating five days of hunting while the number of hunters remained the same.

3. Bow hunting is another issue. Why should the bow hunter be entitled to so much time to bag his game, especially when he's hunting during the "rut", the easiest time of year to get one? Shortening the bow hunting season would also help conserve our game.

4. More State game officers would just cost more money that could be better used for food or other assistance the deer and elk may need during bad winter months.

These are ways I feel would help conserve our big game. Now is the time for all concerned sportsmen and women to express their views and let the game commission know that the future of our hunting will be supported by concerned and dedicated sportsmen and women. We have no need for a snitch.

Dean Bernardi
Vernonia

Nelson not cynical

To the Editor:

I am writing in response to Annette Naron's letter that

appeared in the December issue of The INDEPENDENT. I am a 1989 graduate from Vernonia High School and am currently attending Oregon State University. My intended major is English Education, and I plan to teach at the high school level.

One of the main reasons I've chosen teaching as a profession is because of the caring and dedicated attitude held by the VHS staff. I think it is very unfair for Ms. Naron to say that Mr. Nelson is "cynical and negative." Mr. Nelson is very dedicated to his students and to his responsibilities as a teacher, among which is doing what he can to insure students get a descent (sic) education. With the rate of drug use during school hours growing dramatically over the last few years, this primary responsibility became increasingly difficult.

Mr. Nelson was not being cynical when he said that teachers were "tired of trying to teach and coach kids who are under the influence of drugs." Instead, he was simply expressing the frustration he, as well as the rest of the staff, felt towards the empty efforts of teaching students who were unable to comprehend material because they were high. I would like to challenge anyone to try and communicate on a learning-teaching level with a student

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