

# The INDEPENDENT

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## Opinion

### Need for volunteers is greater than ever

When *The INDEPENDENT* started, more than ten years ago, one of the first articles published was about the role filled by volunteers in a small town. Some things have changed in the last decade, but not the need for volunteers in a small town.

Local governments – city, county, fire district, school – all have a constant need for volunteers because they can't hire enough people to take of everything that needs to be done.

At the city level only, volunteers compose the city council, planning commission, cemetery committee, library commission, airport commission, etc. Volunteers fill additional needs by serving on special projects that are more limited...or sometimes broader...in scope. Good examples of special projects are the budget committee, charter review committee, municipal building committee and the 30-40 people who show up regularly for the strategic planning process.

At the school level, volunteers toil on the curriculum committee, budget committee, facilities committee, site councils, as classroom aides, chaperones, chauffeurs and advisors, to name just a few.

Fire districts in this area couldn't function without volunteer firefighters and medics, who often work long hours without any thought of compensation.

County government uses even more volunteers: budget committee, solid waste advisory board, planning commission, parks committee, surface mining advisory committee, etc., etc., etc.

That sounds like a lot of work, and it is. But it doesn't even touch the volunteer workers who keep the community feeling, well, like a community.

In Vernonia, a special event for more than 40 years is the Friendship Jamboree. It started as a way to renew friendships that were being torn apart by the closure of the big mill, which forced many people to move elsewhere.

Jamboree has grown since that time, but many favorite events continue: the logging show and parade, especially. Both have always been part of the community celebration.

Planning for the 1997 Jamboree has gotten off to a slow start this year, but for a very good reason—the pre-planning was well done.

Now, as Jamboree draws closer, it's time for all those who thought last year's event was lacking in some ways to show up. The only thing it lacked was enough people to carry the workload.

Last year, so many people were still working on flood recovery that they couldn't add much else to their schedules. That isn't the case this year.

There will be a dozen or more events at Jamboree this year, and a dozen or more people will be needed for each of them. But don't forget the committee that does the overall organizing, the publicity, orders and cares for the portable privies, runs the parade, assigns vendor locations and just generally works hard before, during and after Jamboree.

Call 429-4380 or 429-4006 and volunteer your services, or ask how you can help. You'll enjoy it.



How Do You Create Community?

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## The Josi Report

By Rep. Tim Josi  
Oregon Representative, District 2

Two weeks ago, legislative leadership conducted a press conference offering their plan for salvaging our State Park system. The plan offered a proposal that would give away the state's most profitable parks to private contractors and close as many as 190 parks that do not pay their way, if no local government or private contractor stepped in to run them. The financing plan consisted of selling bonds which were to be backed by lottery revenues, coupled with income from the sale of new license plates.

What a surprise this was to me and several other legislators! At the beginning of the legislative session, the House and Senate both created special park committees chaired by freshmen. Not much happened in those committees and when asked what their plans were for saving our state park system the answer always amounted to, "Trust us, we're developing a plan that everybody will support." I also received somewhat the same answer from the Speaker of the House when asking him the same question.

It was easy for me to trust Speaker [Lynn] Lundquist for two reasons. First, when we were confronted with the closure of 62 state parks last fall, legislators including myself heard a very clear message from our constituents: "Don't close our parks. They are all precious to us and help define us as Oregonians." The public outcry at closing some of our parks resulted in the expenditure of \$1.8 million in Emergency Fund dollars to keep them open until the end of this biennium, which is June 30. At that time, legislative leadership also told the public that when the legislature convenes, lawmakers will provide the money to maintain state parks and keep them open.

The second reason for trusting the speaker was his history of working in a bipartisan effort to develop a plan to save our coho salmon. He was true to his word. And when he said, "Trust me," when we asked him about a funding package, he delivered in a spectacular

way. He talked the timber industry into paying for almost half of the cost for restoring our coho salmon.

So how could it be that a half-baked plan was unveiled in a press conference with both the Speaker of the House and the Senate President taking part in the conference? It started with the two freshman chairs of the parks committees. They had been working privately on a plan and thought it was time to unveil what they had done so far, while emphasizing that more work was needed. The House Majority Leader was notified of the pending press release and thought it would be prudent to inform the Speaker of the House and ask that he be present. Of course the Senate President, when he heard that the Speaker would be at the press conference, decided to also attend.

At the somewhat impromptu press conference, Speaker Lundquist spoke of the parks proposal as being a bi-partisan effort. He then asked the Democrats watching the conference to join him. When they declined he realized, for the first time, that things were not quite right. When the news media started asking questions it became evident that neither the Speaker nor the Senate President had read the House Bill which detailed the plan for saving our state parks. The next day legislative leadership went to the press and distanced themselves from the park bill.

Unfortunately, what happened amounted to a comedy of errors. My faith in Speaker Lundquist's ability to find solutions to difficult problems remains high. He has been very busy working on the state and school budgets and has yet to focus on the State Parks funding problem. When he does, I feel confident he will include the Democrats in a bipartisan effort.

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