

# The INDEPENDENT

Serving the upper Nehalem River valley. Published twice monthly, on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, by Public Opinion Laboratory Ltd., 725 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR 97064, as a free newspaper. Editors and Publishers, Dirk & Noni Andersen. Phone/Fax: (503) 429-9410, e-mail: noni@vernonia.com

## Opinion

### Decision by only one should not prevail

Vernonia school board rules allow decision-making to be determined by only one person, as described on page one. To say that this defeats the intent of rule by the majority...the foundation of our democratic form of government...is a mountainous understatement.

The Vernonia school board should undertake a review of their rules and determine whether any others also undermine that principle or, in some other way, create a situation that allows negative unanticipated consequences.

It may behoove them to return to a more standard set of rules, including requiring a second before a motion is accepted for voting purposes. If nothing else, this requirement allows quicker resolution when only one member wants to grandstand. This statement, incidentally, does not refer to any present board member. It's a good board, but it has some bad rules.

### School board members needed; apply today

Two vacancies on the school board mean there is an opportunity to seek appointment to fill those positions. The pay is lousy but the rewards are great. Call the district office for an application or more information.

### City councils need more people to seek election

Two council seats in Vernonia, three in Banks and mayoral positions in both towns will be on the ballot in November. At this time, not enough people have filed to fill all of those vacancies. It is a healthy situation when voters have a choice, so you can help keep your community healthy by filing for election. The deadline in Banks is August 25; in Vernonia it is August 29. Like the school board, the pay is lousy but the rewards are great.

### You won't want to miss this developer's meeting

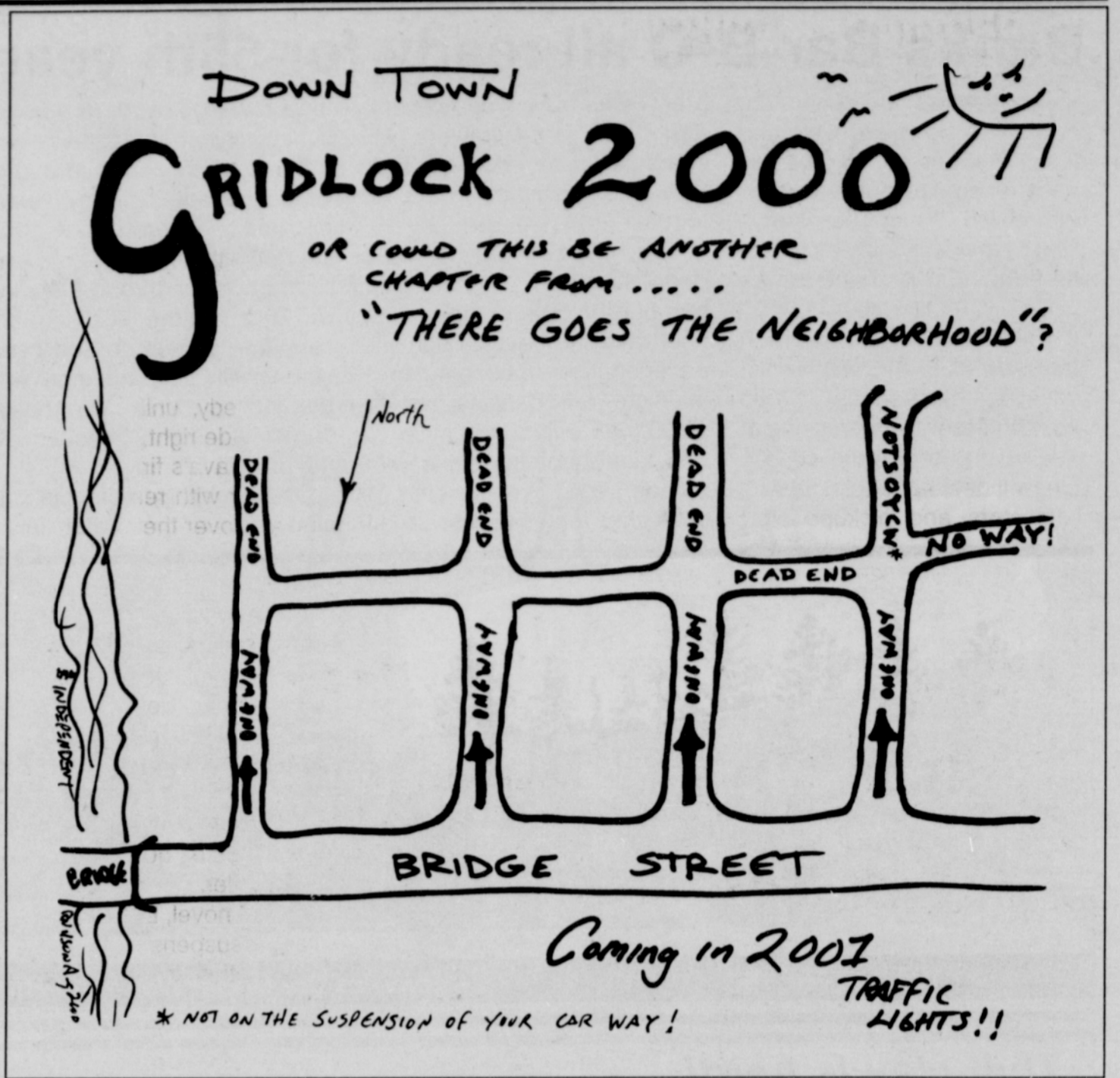
Chris Liu of EBS Trust invites citizens to an informational meeting Thursday, Aug. 17 at 6:30 p.m., to discuss his plans for manufactured homes on small lots. This is one of those rare opportunities to ask the horse's mouth what his intentions are. Instead of relying on rumor and misinformation, attend the meeting at City Hall and ask your own questions.

#### — NOTICE —

The INDEPENDENT is published on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Four months of each year, there are five Wednesdays, but the publishing schedule is not changed.

There are five Wednesdays this month, so there will be three weeks between this Aug. 16 issue and the issue of Sept. 6.

Deadlines for the Sept. 6 issue will be Sept. 1 for both news items and display advertising, and Sept. 4 for classified ads.



### Ike Says . . .

By Dale Webb, member  
 Izaak Walton League, Nehalem Valley Chapter

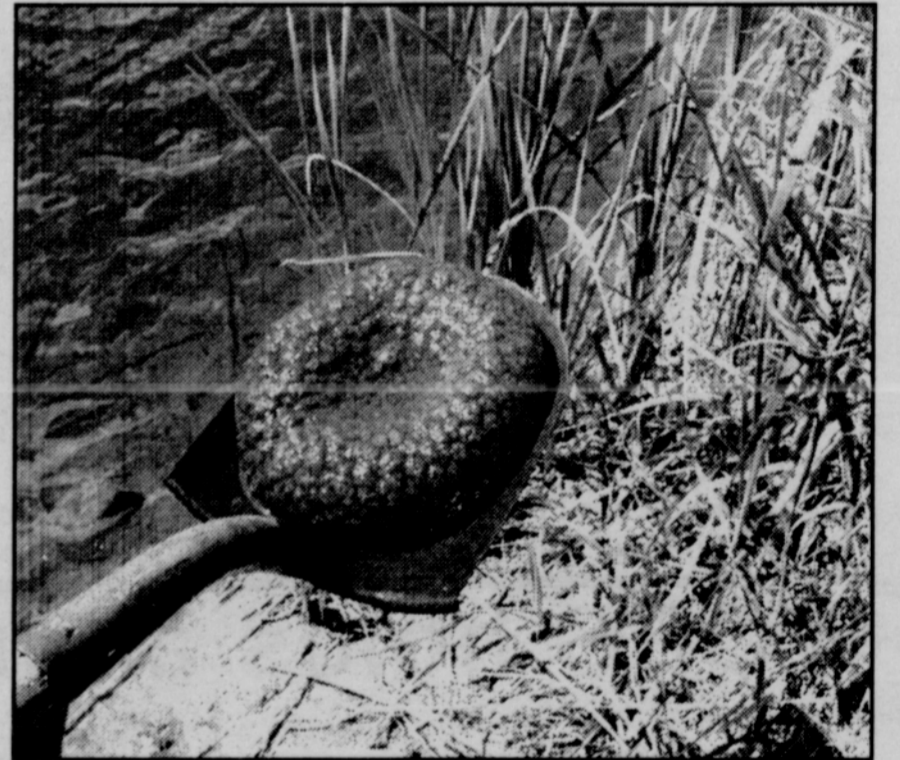
The creatures grew quickly, hidden from view by the heavy algae bloom in the lake. Silently their size doubled and doubled again till some were the size of beach balls, all the while they strained the algae from the water for food. Soon the water in the lake became clearer and the people on shore became aware of this new and foreign visitor. Many speculated that the large gelatinous masses were alien pods waiting to hatch their offspring and take over the world.

If you have been to Lake Vernonia lately you, too, may have wondered what kind of creature has taken over the lake. Large gelatinous masses can be seen by the hundreds, anchored to the bottom and woody debris in the lake. Many have the appearance of a large brain with mottled lines dissecting the sphere. A closer inspection reveals that most of the creature's mass is made of a clear gelatinous material.

So, are these strange new creatures aliens from space? No, they're just Bryozoans. Bryozoans are a member of the animal phylum Ectoprocta which date back in geologic time 500,000,000 years. So, you see, we are actually the newcomers in this case. Bryozoans are microscopic animals that group together, not unlike coral. The large masses that can be seen in Lake Vernonia are made up of millions of Bryozoans and their secreted structure, called a statoblast, which is an over-wintering shelter for the Bryozoans. The statoblast

way by which colonies expand their size. Bryozoans are also hermaphroditic, which means they contain both male and female organs and thus can reproduce sexually.

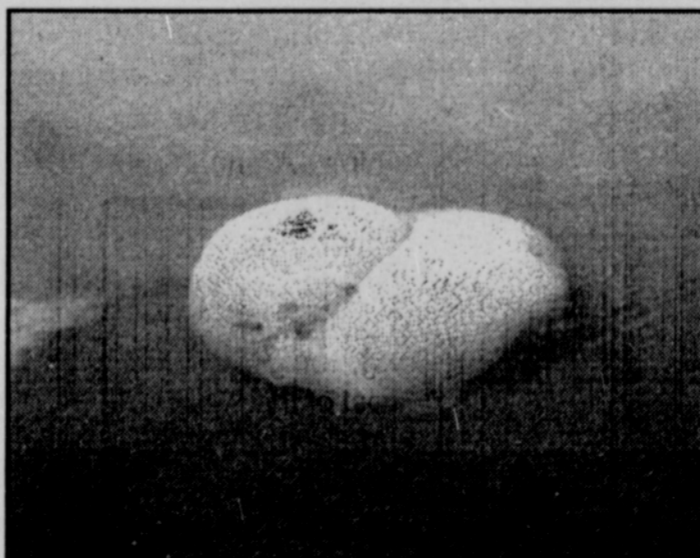
Most Bryozoans are marine dwellers except for the freshwater forms classified in the Phylactolaemata, which is the kind that are in Lake Vernonia. Marine Bryozoans are found to a depth of 8200 meters but most inhabit shallow waters. One remarkable species makes a living while floating in the Antarctic Ocean.



Bryozoans feed on small microorganisms, including diatoms and other unicellular algae. Fish sometimes feed on Bryozoans. I strongly suspect that the sudden clearing of Lake Vernonia's waters may be a direct result of this huge infestation of Bryozoans.

According to Kin Daily, a warm water fish biologist for ODF&W, Bryozoans are quite common in the Willamette valley and he was not too surprised that we are seeing them in Lake Vernonia. Kin added that the Bryozoans are not a concern so far as having any ill effects on the lake or fishery. No literature suggests any concerns regarding humans and, in fact, one marine species produces the drug bryostatin 1, which is currently under serious testing as an anti-cancer drug.

So, unless I am wrong in my diagnosis, there will not be aliens crawling out of Lake Vernonia, at least not in the near future.



is composed 99% of water. Bryozoans reproduce both sexually and asexually. Asexual reproduction occurs by budding and is the main

Izaak Walton League meetings are on the third Thursday of each month, 7:00 p.m. The public is welcome. For meeting location, call (503) 429-7193.