

**More Letters**

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pair and maintain the fairgrounds plus allow the Fair Board to complete a comprehensive study. The purpose of this study is to determine the best utilization of the grounds and to create economic opportunities for the goal of self-sufficiency and less dependency on our local taxpayers. I am urging the voters of Columbia County to vote Yes on Measure 5-66.

**Donald W. Noldge  
St. Helens**

**County parks will close without funds**

To the Editor:

I know that it sounds like a scare tactic, but please believe me. What I am saying is, to the best of my knowledge, true. If Ballot measure 5-67 does not pass, we will have to start closing Columbia County Parks.

It took us a number of years

to build up a County Parks System. Hudson Park, Big Eddy, Scappoose Airport, Laurel Beach, Camp Wilkerson, JJ Collins Marine Park, Beaver Board Ramp, Prescott Beach and Scaponia are all part of our County System.

No County General Funds support our parks. In the past, money has been generated by user fees and by revenues from timber thinned from our Carkus Creek property. No timber will be harvested from Carkus Creek for at least seven more years. There is no money in our County General Fund for Parks.

Our parks are maintained by youth corps, summer part time help and other volunteers. Park staff consists of a host. These "Hosts" are not paid a salary, only provided with a place to live and utilities.

Ballot Measure 5-67 will give Columbia County Residents an opportunity to help save our parks. It is a "bare-

bones" measure, and the money will only be used to maintain what we now have. Parks provide us all with a multitude of benefits, social, economic, educational, environmental and personal. They make our county a much more livable place and provide us with activities for youth and families.

Please don't let them close our parks. Vote yes on Ballot Measure 5-67.

**Bill Eagle  
St. Helens**

**Hyde, Pulliam work for health care needs**

To the Editor:

Lack of health care in Columbia County is a complicated issue that involves large health systems, health insurance options, transportation and, to some small extent, Public Health.

I have been involved in encouraging physicians and oth-

er health care providers to come to Columbia County since the hospital closed in 1990. I don't pretend to have solutions to our county's health care needs, but I applaud Paul Pulliam and Tony Hyde, two candidates for county commissioner, for helping win approval for study of health care options.

The Critical Access Hospital grant was approved by the Northwest Oregon Economic Alliance, and will allow the Columbia Health District and Oregon's Office of Rural Health to combine efforts to look for solutions, possibly a hospital, but maybe other recommendations. It is a long-term project, but that is the only way to make real changes.

I urge you to vote for Paul and Tony for Columbia County Commissioner, Position 1 and 3.

**Gary Heide  
St. Helens**

**Burge provides real leadership**

To the Editor:

As a member of the Scappoose City Council, Scott Burge made building roads a priority and this past summer they took the first step towards rebuilding the city's roads, thanks to Scott's leadership on the issue.

Scott recognized that Scappoose had no real city parks to speak of and he provided the leadership to change that on the city council, pushing for the city's first community park, which is being built this year.

He has been a person who

asked important questions on spending issues to make sure the city is getting the best bang for it's buck. His leadership was instrumental in bringing together a bitterly divided council and focusing on the core issues that faced Scappoose.

This is exactly the kind of leadership we need for our county. Scott Burge is the obvious choice for County Commissioner, a strong leader that gets results. I'm voting for him and urge all citizens of Columbia County to do the same.

**Mike Powell  
Rainier**

**Challenges veracity of police officers**

To the Editor:

A few months ago, I presented myself before the citizens of this community in a public forum. During the course of this forum, I made charges and/or accusations directed at those who are responsible to maintain law and order in this community. At the time, I had been accused of wrongdoing and was extremely upset at the way the situation was handled. My trial was concluded in July of this year, and I was convicted based upon my "no contest" plea. A no contest plea is not an admission of guilt. It states that the evidence presented outweighs the evidence I can produce to prove my innocence. I still believe I am innocent and hope to prove this during the

**Please see page 14**

**Vernonia School Board picks O'Leary for vacancy**

The October 6 death of Vernonia School District Director Debbie Johnston, who had been battling breast cancer, left the remaining board members both saddened and sobered. When they convened for their October 12 meeting, the quibbling and lack of cooperative effort that had marked the prior meeting was nowhere in evidence.

In September, there were two vacancies on the board, but the board could not reach agreement on replacements. Last week, they unanimously selected Leslie O'Leary for the seat vacated by Susann Ragsdale. Now, because of John-

ston's death, there are again two vacancies (the other seat was held by April Whitworth).

The board agreed to select two people at the November meeting, which will be on Thursday, Nov. 2. Applicants who have already filed papers need not do so again, but there is time for additional applicants. Anyone interested may pick up a form at the school district office and return it no later than Friday, Oct. 27.

On behalf of the Vernonia Education Association, teacher Marguerite Nice reported that large classes are a concern in three grades. There are 54 kindergarten students at Lin-

coln Grade School, with 27 students in each of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Additionally, two fifth grade and two sixth grade classrooms at Washington Grade School each have more than 30 students. The fifth grade level is a particular concern, Nice explained, because the fifth grade is the second CIM benchmark and this is the second year that this particular group of students has been in large classes.

The VEA asked for consideration of a third kindergarten class and, if nothing else is possible, classroom aides on the 5-6 level.

**M-B Fall Festival guarantees fun**

Saturday, Oct. 21, is the date, 6:00 p.m. is the time, and the Mist School gym is the place for the annual Fall Festival sponsored by the Mist-Birkenfeld Helping Circle.

The festive evening will include local entertainment, raffles of a quilt and a hand-crocheted afghan, plus an auction that ranges from the simplicity of home-grown vegetables to the complexity of a "Valentine Feast for Four," prepared and served by Barbara Way.

There will also be sandwiches and pies for sale. This is the annual fundraiser for the M-B Helping Circle, which provides assistance to many people throughout the year, and also funds scholarships for college

bound students from the Mist-Birkenfeld area.

**M-B volunteers combine groups**

There are no longer two separate volunteer organizations in the Mist-Birkenfeld emergency response services. The M-BRFPD Firefighters Association and the M-B Ambulance Association combined this past summer to form a single entity - the Mist-Birkenfeld Volunteers Association.

Elected to lead the organization were Chairman Tim Rombach, Vice-chairman Gerald Kenyon, Treasurer Bill DeJager, Secretary Dee Bailey and Historian Michael Duce. The organization is open to all residents of the area.

**You Can Save The Fairgrounds**

**Yes on 5-66**

**Columbia County Fairgrounds is in Trouble**

**By voting YES on Measure 5-66, you can help save the Fairgrounds. Measure 5-66 would provide funding for needed improvements and repairs.**

**By voting Yes, the Fair Board will be able to make the fairgrounds become self-sufficient with greater usability for the citizens of Columbia County.**

**Last year's Fair was rated Best Fair in Oregon for being cleanest and friendliest.**

**Approval of 5-66 will insure the continuation of the Fairgrounds' community activities for citizens and the youth of Columbia County.**

**Paid for by Friends for the Fair**

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