

Between the Bookends

By Nancy Burch, Librarian
Vernonia Public Library

This past year has to have been the most rewarding year in history for those associated with Vernonia's library. The fulfillment of a dream was realized with the completion of the new building in September, 1999, and the first anniversary of its inhabitation has just been celebrated. It has been an exciting year of "firsts", of accomplishments, and of successes.

For the first time in Vernonia, the library has its very own space in a completely separate building. This has enabled artists to display their artwork and to conduct demonstrations of their work. Organizations have been able to hold their meetings in the library's meeting room. Computers have been utilized by patrons and computer classes have been taught.

For the first time Summer Reading and other youth related activities have had adequate space for large turnouts. Students have found a suitable place to study and to do homework. Library hours have been increased to 35 a week, including two evenings, to better serve library patrons. Discarded or duplicate books may be purchased for a minimal price with the proceeds used to supplement the book budget. Copies may now be made or items laminated in the library. The library's new automated search system now allows patrons to find titles and authors with the click of a mouse. Most importantly, the library's materials may now be displayed attractively for patrons to access easily.

Accomplishments of this past year include *the move* (undertaken almost entirely by volunteers), purchasing and installing furnishings for the building (using money obtained from the Margaret Thiele Petti Foundation and volunteers), and purchasing and activating the new automated library program (again, money derived from MTP Foundation with work being done by volunteers).

Some of the successes may be expressed in numbers. For example, circulation has increased by 41-percent in the past year and 4850 items have been entered in the computer to be electronically accessed. One-hundred twenty-nine new library patrons have been added since

September 1, 2000. There are currently 65 families residing outside the city limits of Vernonia registered as library patrons.

Other successes can only be measured in comments one hears about the atmosphere in the library or convenience of its materials or about the appropriateness of the tile mural in the entryway or about the ease and attractiveness of the automated search. A patron recently said, "I just can't get over how wonderful the new library is...the heat came on while I was looking for books and it reminded me of how it was in the old building." Coming to work every day in the new building is a pure joy, but the greatest success, in my estimation, is the number of volunteers who have shown an interest in helping in the library, who have worked and continue to work to make the library even better.

Speaking of volunteering, a pre-organizational meeting will be held Thursday, November 2, at 7:00 p.m., for individuals interested in forming a Friends of the Library group. People who want to assist in advancing the library's usefulness to the community are invited to attend this meeting.

Our present library board members, Judy Thiringer, Barbara Sturdevant, Mary Tolonen, and Larry Doppke, have been joined by Myron Lane to assist in developing policies, setting goals and objectives and seeing that the library is properly managed. These board members are invaluable, helping in many, many aspects of library operation.

New books for cold winter evenings include *Shattered* by Dick Francis, *The Rescue* by Nicholas Sparks, *Buried Evidence* by Nancy Taylor Rosenberg, and *The Bear and the Dragon* by Tom Clancy.

Keep reading and let the City Council members, library board members, staff and others in the community know how much you appreciate the new library and its services.

Vernonia Library 701 Weed Avenue
Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Tues., Thur. 2 p.m.-7 p.m.
Sat. 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Preschool Story Time, Mondays, 10:30 a.m.
Phone: (503) 429-1818

Letters to the Editor:

Questions Pulliam's fiscal responsibility Pulliam's response

To the Editor:

Mr. Paul A. Pulliam, one of the candidates for Columbia County Commissioner, states on his campaign Web site:

"County government is not a business, but should be run in a business-like manner. Budget must be formed realistically and carefully thought out. The county's biggest taxpayers are its industries."

Wise words to post as a campaign slogan; however, let's take a look at Mr. Pulliam's own business track record.

Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Columbia

Case Number 00-2343; July 3, 2000

Plaintiff: Bank One, N.A.
Defendant: Paul A. Pulliam
Complaint: Breach of Contract

Defendant has allegedly failed and refused in the obligation under the terms of the contract to make the monthly payments on the credit card and Defendant is indebted to Plaintiff in the sum of \$8578.48 from May 4, 2000, plus interest at the rate of 13.75% until paid.

The case is pending.

Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Columbia

Case Number 00-2337; June 30, 2000

Plaintiff: Keyboard Acceptance Corporation, an Ohio Corporation

Defendant: Paul A. Pulliam, an individual

Complaint: Breach of Contract; Claim and Delivery

The plaintiff has judgement against the defendant for the sum of \$7144.86; plus plaintiff's costs and disbursements in the sum of \$230.98, and plaintiff's reasonable attorney fees in the sum of \$1476.98.

Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Columbia

Case Number 99-2352; August 2, 1999

Plaintiff: First Select Corporation, a corporation

Defendant: Paul A. Pulliam

Complaint: Contract

Principal amount of judgement against the defendant \$8183.54; interest owed to date \$1144.87; attorney fees \$450.00, and costs awarded \$350.00.

As a small-business owner in St. Helens, I am deeply concerned that a fellow business owner, who has little regard for fiscal responsibility, should be entrusted with County funds. I'm wary of a political candidate who wants to run the County government "in a business-like manner," yet cannot keep his personal finances and business solvent and viable. Be very careful to whom you entrust your public funds when casting your vote this November.

Robert Habas
St. Helens

Dear Mr. Habas:

Actually, I'm glad you have asked that question publicly. I had heard there was a letter to the editor and xeroxes circulating, but no one had asked me for an explanation.

When I buy businesses that have prior debt, sometimes I have to go to court to settle disputes. The records of those are public, and that's what you are referring to with the three cases mentioned.

Both Bank One and First Select were credit card debts that were sold and resold over time. That made it difficult to find who to negotiate disputed charges with, and they both have ended up in court. First Select and I have agreed to terms that will be binding until the satisfaction of the debt.

I expect Bank One and I will end up finding a place to agree also.

With Keyboard Acceptance, I had paid ahead, and our records on the amount differed. When the rubber hit the road, we agreed on a settlement that is binding on us both.

In each instance, I feel it was good business practice and to my advantage to obtain legal representation and go to court to obtain settlements that were compatible to all. Who better to represent the county than someone will not just accept bills as presented but will pursue remedies to questionable charges.

Too often people in government are willing to accept questionable practices, but I am not one of those persons, even if it seems to subject me to some embarrassment. As a former bank officer, and now as a debt collector and a businessman I have been on both sides of lawsuits. My experience gives me considerable expertise in the area of your concern. As Gov. Kitzhaber's appointee to the Oregon Workforce Investment Board, my background was thoroughly checked, and the committee confirmed the appointment.

Thanks for your interest, and let me know if you have more questions.

Paul Pulliam
St. Helens

Fair levy is small, benefits are large

To the Editor:

A Yes vote on Measure 5-66 will guarantee the continuation of the fairgrounds facility. The Columbia County Fairgrounds is in trouble and needs the financial support of Columbia County. This measure is for a five-year tax levy of \$.10/\$1000. Based on a \$100,000 home, your total tax would be \$50.00. A small amount to pay for the economic and social benefit to the citizens of our County.

If this measure is passed, it will give the Fair Board a five-year operational funding to re-

Please see page 11

Letters to the Editor

Hyde listened, then delivered help

To the Editor:

Last year, I built a new house near Vernonia. I was required to post a \$500.00 bond with the County Road Department so that I could wait until after construction of the home before paving the driveway approach.

I paved the driveway approach when construction was completed. The road department inspected and approved the work. I asked them to send my \$500.00. "We don't do things that way. You have to come in, sign a paper, take it to the County Clerk, get it stamped and take it to the cashier to get reimbursed."

I had posted the bond, did the work to their satisfaction and then they wanted me to spend half a day running around getting my money back. That did not make any sense to me and I told them as much and asked why? Their response, "That is just the way we do it." I said, "If you had a good reason, I would come in, but since you do not, I will call someone and see what can be done about it." The discourteous response, "Suit yourself."

I called our Commissioner, Mr. Tony Hyde. He listened

carefully, asked questions and said, "It doesn't seem to make sense to me either, but there may be a reason why they do it that way. I will look into it and call you back." About 20 minutes later, Mr. Hyde called back and said, "Some changes need to be made." I asked, "What do I do now?" Tony said, "Nothing. Your check is in the mail." I received it a couple of days later.

After a few days, Tony called. "Have you received the refund?" Yes, thanks to you. He proceeded to let me know he had met with the Road Department and the County Clerk. The policy has been changed. Now taxpayers no longer have to go through the hassle to get their money back.

One of Tony Hyde's campaign promises is to improve the delivery of county services and to make them more effective and efficient. I say, Tony Hyde delivers!

M.E. "Mac" Stewart
Vernonia

Pulliam has skills needed by County

To the Editor:

I am writing this letter to support Paul Pulliam for County Commissioner, Position 1. I be-

lieve that Paul is the best candidate for the job because he is a strong leader and he has the skills to help Columbia County solve the financial problems we will face in the upcoming years.

Paul has a degree in Economics and worked as a bank manager for over 20 years. He understands how financing works, he knows how to do financial planning for the future and how to budget. Because his banking experience was mostly in rural Oregon, he knows the special problems that we face in the rural communities. Paul is also the owner of small businesses that he takes over and works to make profitable. I know that he has struggled, and he has learned how to stretch a dollar. We need someone working for Columbia County citizens who has his skills.

I own my own business in Rainier, and have enjoyed working with Paul on Columbia Pacific Economic Development Council. Paul has integrity, is honest, hard working and working hard for the people of Columbia County. I urge you to join me in voting for him on November 7.

Tim Navarro
Rainier

If you don't vote, don't complain about the results!