

First printing of Jan. 3 The Independent was stolen

A standard objective of newspapers is to report the news and, at the same time, keep from being part of the news. The INDEPENDENT was highly unsuccessful in attaining that objective this week.

Early on Thursday morning, Jan. 4, while delivering papers in Banks, the car containing approximately 2800 copies of the Jan. 3, 2001, issue was stolen.

Following the usual route, the paper was being delivered

first to Banks, then it would go to Manning and on into Vernonia. That plan was disrupted, however, at The Brown Derby

**Sorry we're late,
but theft of car
delivering
The INDEPENDENT
disrupted normal
delivery schedule.**

restaurant in Banks, when the car was stolen during the 30-60 seconds that were required in the restaurant.

Dirk Andersen, who was handling circulation, heard the car start as he left the restaurant, ran to it, opened the door and told the man who was behind the wheel to get out. Instead, the thief backed up quickly and drove away heading north on Hwy. 47.

Law enforcement agencies have a suspect.

In the meantime, if any of you readers sees a red, 1995 Ford Escort station wagon with a luggage rack and a personalized license plate that reads POETIK, call 9-1-1. Do not try to apprehend the driver.

Anyway, that is why this issue is late and why this is a second printing. We'll work very hard to return to the standard objective of newspapers as mentioned in the first paragraph. We really don't want to be part of the news.

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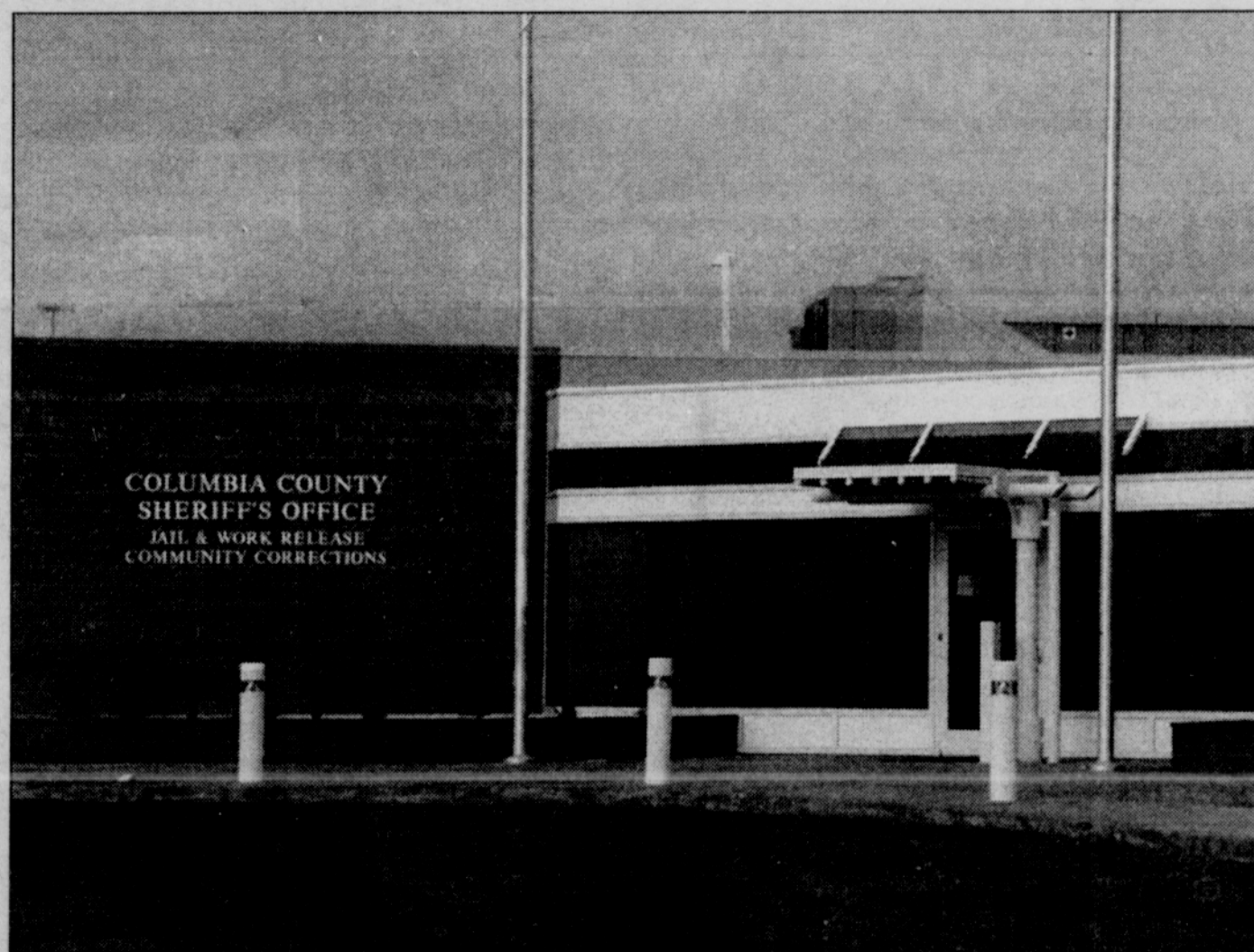
The INDEPENDENT

Vol. 16, No 1

"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

January 3, 2001

Invitation to go to Jail



The public is invited to an Open House and tours of the new Columbia County Sheriff's Office, Jail and Work Release Center, and Community Corrections offices on Friday and Saturday, January 5-6. More photos may be found on page 8.

New jail open to the public this weekend

By Noni Andersen

Columbia County Sheriff Phil Derby and the county Board of Commissioners have invited the community to visit the new county jail during grand opening ceremonies on Friday and Saturday, January 5-6.

"Help mark the opening of this impressive facility that benefits all Columbia County residents," said Sheriff Derby and Commissioner Tony Hyde. "We hope the public will come see what its tax dollars bought."

And what the taxpayers have bought is, indeed, impressive, for it isn't often that a fairly large public project is completed on time, under budget and with everything that had been hoped for.

None of this happened accidentally. Initially a committee of citizen volunteers studied what Columbia County might need in a jail and, the more they studied, the more they realized that a jail was only one element. Also needed was a "work release" center for people who had violated the law but had good jobs and were not a danger to the community. A work release sentence allows them to keep their jobs while reporting back to jail each day. They also pay for their jail time

based on a sliding scale.

The committee felt it would make good sense to have the Sheriff's office in the same building as the jail, if possible. The more they studied, the more they thought it would also be smart to include Community Corrections in the same facility, allowing probation officers and inmates to become acquainted before they were required to work together.

Once the committee put together the "wish list," they went to work selling the project to county taxpayers. A major persuader was the old jail—an overcrowded, worn-out facility in the basement of the courthouse. It had a kitchen that would be considered substandard by most families; it needed rewiring and replumbing; there were no proper visiting rooms; the lighting was terrible; there was no place to store inmates belongings; there was no medical room. Additionally, there was no proper booking area. All prisoners had to be brought through public spaces for booking and all inmates had to go through the same spaces on their way to and from court.

The committee did a good job of explaining the need and voters approved a bond measure for construction of a jail.

Including the work release center, the new jail will house 195 inmates (The county's average jail population is about 55.) in eight "pods," six for men and two for women. Doors throughout the building are operated from a central control, where one operator can see who is at each door.

Because work release inmates wear their own clothes, they have a washer and dryer. They also have a refrigerator and microwave to use if their

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School, fire district election set

March 13 is the date of the Oregon Special District Election which, in this area, applies only to Fire Districts and School Districts. Balloting will be held by mail, as are all elections now in Oregon.

The last day to file nomination papers for special district directors is January 11.

Vernonia School District 47J

Five of the seven positions on the Vernonia School board will be on the March 13 ballot.

Position 1 is currently held by Schann Nelson.

Position 4 is held Leslie O'Leary.

Position 5, held by board chairman Jeff Blum.

Position 6 is held by Kim

Tierney.

Position 7 is held by Carl Lee Levenseller.

Positions 1, 4, 5 and 6 are four-year terms; Position 7 is a two-year term. There have been no filings to date, but all incumbents have indicated they will file for re-election except Tierney, who has not indicated her intent.

Banks School District

Three Banks School board positions will be up for election.

Position 1, held by Spencer Vandehey.

Position 2, held by Willis Meeuwsen.

Position 4, held by Joe Evers.

All positions are four-year terms. There have been no filings through Jan. 2.

Jewell School District

Three positions will be decided on the Jewell School board.

Position 1, presently held by Joseph Budai.

Position 2, held by Carolyn Eady.

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Sen. Wyden schedules Town Hall meeting in Vernonia on Sunday

U.S. Senator Ron Wyden will hold his annual Columbia County Town Hall meeting in Vernonia this year. The informal meeting will be held at the Scout Cabin in Hawkins Park, on Sunday, January 7, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

Sen. Wyden does not make speeches at the town hall

meetings he holds annually in every county of Oregon. Instead, he will answer questions and discuss topics presented by people who attend the meeting.

For more information, call Sen. Wyden's Portland office at 503 326-7525.