

Letters to the Editor

Business benefit for Vernonia Cares

To the Editor:

Vernonia Cares Food Bank is putting together a fund-raiser that will include Vernonia business owners and benefit Vernonia Cares Food Bank. Businesses will have the opportunity to advertise your business at a one day event. The day chosen is Saturday, June 2nd. The times will be from 10 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. at Washington Grade School.

The event will include table space to represent your business, club or organization with brochures, business cards, flyers, products, services, and of

course your smiling self. We would like the community to know what groups and businesses are available in Vernonia that many are not aware of. This will be an awesome opportunity to meet people, sign up perspective customers, and just get the word out you exist. All of this is for a tax deductible charge of \$25.00 to benefit Vernonia Cares.

For complete information, see page 4 of The Independent.

We look forward to hearing from you all!!!

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Says support levy for Historical Society

To the Editor:

Please help Columbia County preserve its heritage by voting, and voting "yes" on Measure 5-90.

Funding is desperately needed to maintain the existing museums and their artifacts so they may be available to succeeding generations. As we study and preserve our past, we will be helped in preserving the future of this still quite pristine area.

We have documented knowledge of how pioneers developed agriculture and industries while building schools, churches, roads and raising their families. These pioneers laid the foundation for life here as we know it.

Let's keep the museums alive and well so we may enjoy them and learn from them.

**Mary Peterson
St. Helens**

Great volunteers made Vernonia Shine

To the Editor:

We Made Vernonia Shine! Wow, what a great day. The weather was superb and many volunteers worked very hard to beautify Vernonia. Look around! Check out the Welcome sign on Rose Avenue. This project will still have some planting and barkdust spread around it, but what an excavation job. There will also be a gravel trail from Hwy. 47 to the Linear Trail.

Spencer Park really got

spruced up with lots of volunteers that day. Hopefully, we will have two ball fields real soon.

The lake looks gorgeous. Take note of the new signs and bags for dogs and, please, remember to keep your dog on a leash and use the bags to pick up after your dog. There will also be two new garbage cans at the top of the docks, and the primitive campground is coming along fine.

Volunteers also worked at Shay Park, Hawkins Park, Ora Bolmeier Park, Anderson Park, Bear Creek, Museum, cemetery, the schools, and the linear trail. Trash cans were painted, flowers put out, excavation done, streets swept, senior citizens helped, yard debris taken care of, garbage picked up, pictures taken and much, much more. I'd better stop, or Noni won't print this for me.

We also had some people sign up for the Adopt-A-Block program. This is an ongoing effort and if you missed signing up, you can still do so by contacting Vernonia Pride at 503-429-5201.

**Donna Gehrke
Vernonia Pride**

Local television shut down is temporary

To the Editor:

Hi everyone, me again. I hope you all have been enjoying what is being put on our local access channel, Channel 7 in Vernonia. I have to apologize now for the quality of the show. Our deck up here in Vernonia needs servicing, which means

it will be down for a while and will cost money to fix.

This is all a volunteer effort and, as you know, with volunteer efforts, there is usually no money. I am working on it, though. I want to take this opportunity to let someone who called me about getting a copy of a tape of a basketball game, know that I did get your message, but when I tried calling the number back, it was not in service. Sorry.

Anyone who wishes to have a copy of something seen on the air can purchase a copy at a cost of \$10 each. Channel 9 in St. Helens is providing this service. Call me and I will make the arrangements.

Daylight savings time has caused some slight changes in our schedule. It is as follows:

Sunday	2 - 6 p.m.
Monday	5 - 9 p.m.
Tuesday	1 - 5 p.m.
Wednesday	6 - 10 p.m.
Thursday	6 - 10 a.m.
Friday	11 - 3 p.m.
Saturday	10 - 2 a.m.

Because of transportation and such, events that are filmed are generally shown about two weeks later on Channel 7. I hope you are enjoying this service and remember that anyone interested in getting involved by filming events or donating money can call for more information or to sign up. It would be nice to have someone that I could call on when I cannot make it to an event. Thank you.

For more information, call 503-429-5201 or email me at blueshoes88@aol.com

**Donna Gehrke
Vernonia**

Salem Scene

By Rep. Elaine M. Hopson
Second District

I voted for term limits and Oregon has the strictest term limits in the country. I don't feel the twelve-year limitation harms the legislative process. However, the internal limitations of six years in the House and eight years in the Senate have proven counter to good government policy.

Six years equals 18 months of actual legislative activities. (I joked about needing the first term to find the bathrooms, then found a new one this session.) In the business world, how many employers would want a turnover of all employees in six years, or one third every two years? Would the cost of training and loss of experience be beneficial?

The legislative process is extremely complicated. Learning how to initiate a bill, how to have it drafted, how to garner support and identify the opposition, how to compromise and amend, how to shepherd it through the process, what the timelines are and who to contact to help with the process, all require experience and knowledge. This cannot be learned in a short period of time if it is to be done effectively.

Process aside, the complexity of issues is overwhelming. I am knowledgeable in the field of education, having lived in it for over 35 years. However, water and land issues, medical concerns, senior and disabled needs, energy regulation, telecommunications, transportation, formularies, tax codes, city/county regulations, and many others, are complicated. It takes time, education and dedication to learn enough to make decisions.

There are a number of possible resolutions to this dilemma. I support the twelve-year limit but will support sending something to the voters to decide as to how the twelve years can be served. I do believe there are folks, like me, who voted for term limits and now question whether it actually provides the best environment for developing good public policy for our state.

As legislators (and staff) look toward getting us out of

here and back to our homes, tempers escalate and shenanigans begin to occur. The main issue is MONEY. Budgets are waiting for passage on the mid-May revenue forecast.

HB3953, a bill that would preempt smoking restrictions and limit local governments' ability to pass laws regarding smoking, was approved by the House and sent to the Senate in spite of some strong opposition. Proponents argued that it would be difficult for people to know what the restrictions were in differing establishments. I voted against it because folks are already used to reading "NO SMOKING" and seem to understand exactly what it means. Hopefully, this won't leave the building.

Again, in spite of my opposition, bills supporting the killing of swans and wolf-hybrids both passed out of Committee and have gone to the floor of the House. I cannot imagine killing swans as predators and the argument for killing wolf-hybrids is very weak. The bill did allow killing both wolves and wolf-hybrids but was amended to include only wolf-hybrids, even after biologists stated clearly that it was difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between wolves and wolf-hybrids without DNA type testing.

In Education Ways and Means we are carefully reviewing budgets prepared by the Dept. of Education. There is a great deal of support for \$5.2 billion for K-12 education as long as there isn't a sharp decline in revenue forecasts. Included within the allocation at this point, is funding for a total review of special education services throughout the state, increased funding for teacher training and support, and for early reading emphasis. The complexity of the funding mechanism always seems to divvy up the money with "winners" and "losers." As part of the process, many compromises are made in order to appease the 198 districts.

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Between the Bookends

By Cindy Stanley, Library Assistant
Banks Public Library

The Banks Library Plant and Book Sale was a tremendous success again this year. Thanks to everyone who attended and those who donated materials and volunteered their time.

One of our new selections for April is Nora Robert's *The Villa*. The backdrop for this drama of a family business is the lush vineyards of the Napa Valley. Sophia Giambelli questions her grandmother Tereza's judgement when she, as undisputed head of Villa Giambelli's world famous wineries, decides to merge with the MacMillan family vintners. Sophia is told to become involved with none other than Tyler, the MacMillan heir apparent! While Tyler and Sophia are trading barbs and trying to pretend their growing attraction to one another is just a passing fancy, trouble is brewing on another front as several deaths appear to be linked to their wines.

Another best-selling author's work available this month is Maeve Binchy's latest release *Scarlet Feather*. Cathy Scarlet and Tom Feather, two friends who have long shared an incredible passion for food, start a catering business in Dublin. Their efforts to cook up a grand New Year's Eve feast turn into a series of constant disruptions by their spouses and relatives, adding grief to their lives. What keeps Cathy and Tom going is their dedication to the business and the unexpected arrival of two troubled children who need love. As they spend more time together, these longtime friends discover some very unexpected feelings for one another.

J.A. Jance fans can look forward to another suspense-filled novel featuring former Seattle homicide detective J. P. Beaumont. In Jance's *Bird of Prey* semi-retired Beau has agreed to

chaperon his newlywed grandmother on her honeymoon cruise to the Gulf of Alaska. His time aboard the Starfire Breeze is meant to be an enjoyable diversion, but Beau's leisure is abruptly shattered when one of his new admirers mysteriously disappears.

There are lots of ways to enjoy the benefits offered by the Banks Library. Books on tape, popular videos, large print books, and current magazines are all available. The whole family can catch the infectious spirit that is generated by reading.

Recycle Saturday, is coming May 12 this month, just in time for spring cleaning. Now that the weather is nice you can clean out that shed or garage, get rid of old newspapers, eliminate the accumulation of cans and bottles, and help your library at the same time. Bring all those unwanted materials to the SWATCO Service Yard on Sellers Road between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Friendly library volunteers wearing new bright-orange vests will be there to assist you.

It's not too early to think about summer! Lots of reading fun is in store for all kids who participate in the 2001 Summer Reading Program at the Banks Public Library. "Read a Wild Tale" will launch readers on a journey of adventure. Children of all ages are invited to participate in the activities and entertainment programs. Even pre-readers may join the Read-to-Me program with a parent or older brother or sister. Flyers with more information will be available in May. Watch for them!

**Banks Public Library: 111 Market Street.
Hours: Tues., Wed., Thurs., 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.;
Fri. and Sat. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Preschool Story Time, Weds., 10:15 a.m.
Phone: (503) 324-1382
Internet: www.WILLnet.wccs.lib.or.us.**