

Letters to the Editor

Thrill seekers would love driving Hwy. 47

To the Editor,

While the city is formulating appropriate signage on Highway 26 to lure people into Vernonia, perhaps we should consider appealing to their sense of adventure and the need for an adrenaline rush. Driving Highway 47 gives me a rush every time I take it.

Is there anyone living out here without a horror story about a car or truck coming to-

ward them across the center line? Tell me, is there really any purpose to the center line if no one respects it?

A 15-mile drive averaging 60 mph (65 on the straights, 55 on the curves) takes 15 minutes. The same drive at a more reasonable average speed of 50 (45 on the curves, slow enough to stay in your own lane) would take 12.5 minutes. Is the two and one-half minutes you save by speeding worth risking the lives and psyches of everyone else on the Highway?

And, of course, adding to the

excitement is the obvious fact that several drivers are drinking beers, as evidenced all along the road by the empties. Now, that's adding stimulation.

Yes, I can see that people who would otherwise not come this way would truly be enthralled by the thrill of the drive and the beauty of the trash. I'm sure they'll want to come back, aren't you?

Love it here, love the drive, don't want to share the center line.

Susan Foster
Vernonia

Renters pay share of property taxes

To the Editor,

I have been a homeowner in Vernonia for a little over a year. I support the school measure, but I must respond to Darrell Hamblet's letter in the October 17th issue.

Mr. Hamblet believes that he and his parents did not pay property taxes, as they did not always own a home. Unless rental units and rental homes are exempt, (just ask your landlord about that one) you can be assured that a portion of your rent check is applied to the property taxes. Indeed, you could even see rents increase due to the tax liability increases on the owners of these properties.

So be assured Mr. Hamblet, you and your parents have paid your fair share of property taxes, as do all renters of apartments and homes. There are many good reasons to approve the school measure, but paying too few taxes is not one of them.

Steven A. Loders
Vernonia

Vandalism is also self-destructive

Open Letter to Cathy Ward, via the Editor:

There are two types of people: Those who are honorable and those who are not. Both types live among us. Thieves and vandals are similar to terrorists in that they strike without warning at a time and place of their own choosing. If you and I catch them in the act and punish them, we go to jail but they do not. This is part of an upside-down system in which a police officer aims his gun at schoolchildren riding a motorbike, an entertainment reported earlier in *The Independent*.

There are consequences for everything we do. The person who stole Cathy's flag gave away a small part of himself as he did so. The person who pulled my gate apart with a truck and chain sacrificed part of himself on the altar of vandalism.

It takes a long time to regain the portion of their innermost selves that they lose while committing dishonorable acts. Some never recover, blaming other people for their problems.

They all suffer from an absence of respect for themselves, brought about by their lack of integrity. They know this in their own hearts, and they dislike themselves because of it, never knowing that the path to their recovery is just a step away.

Why don't they catch on? I'm unable to answer that. All I can tell you is that a continuous ritual of self-destruction is dependably noted on the Police Report page in every issue of this newspaper.

Walt Ferguson
Mist

WGS is a good place for kids and parents

To the Editor:

As a father of a wonderful 6th Grade girl, I would like to take a moment and thank Washington Grade School for giving my daughter a great place to go to school. I have watched her grow scholastically, socially and as a young lady. I would also like to thank the faculty for treating me as a parent, citizen and Father; respecting me every time I have dealt with them.

Great Job!

Ron Wright
Vernonia

Can't afford to vote for new schools

To the Editor:

Just finished reading the latest *Independent* from front to back. Very impressed by all the letters and paid advertisements in support of the School Bond Issue. Not a dissenting word, in fact.

Well, here it comes, folks!

Yes, I believe they are right when they say the Grade Schools need to be replaced. Even though I'd hate to see the buildings go, I know it's time. I think all fairminded people want a safe, nurturing environment to raise and educate our children.

And yes, I'm willing to make financial sacrifices to see this happen.

Oh, but the stickler!

Have you sat down and figured out just how much the proposal is going to cost you at tax time? \$3.00 per \$1,000 assessed value for 21 years. Assessed value that goes up every year? To some of you

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Between the Bookends

By Cindy Stanley, Library Assistant
Banks Public Library

Many thanks to the Friends of the Banks Public Library for on-going contribution of new books. Our most recent donation from the Friends includes *Black House* by Stephen King and Peter Straub, *Mercy* by Julie Garwood, *The Wild Blue: the Men Who Flew the B-24's Over Germany* by Stephen Ambrose, and *Envy* by Sandra Brown.

Also among our new books is a new title by Nicholas Evans, author of *The Horse Whisperer*. His latest book, *The Smoke Jumper* tells the story of three people's quest for happiness and self-fulfillment, played out against the heroism of fire fighting in the wilderness. This mesmerizing adventure for the spirit is told in the grandest tradition.

Don't miss the next Saturday for recycling on November 10th from 9:00 am to 3:00 at the solid waste transfer station on Sellars Road. This is a great time to clear out the garage before the holidays. The Friends of the Banks Public Library continue to need support for the monthly recycling Saturday. Volunteers are needed to work two-hour shifts once or twice a year. Inter-

ested persons please contact the library!

Fall is a great time to take advantage of the Cultural Pass to Adventure program. This program, sponsored by Banks Pharmacy, Banks Chamber of Commerce, Bighorn Logging, Brown Derby Restaurant, City of Banks Tree Board, Gookin Plumbing, the Linus Hermens family, and the North Plains Chamber of Commerce, allows library patrons to reserve free admittance passes to cultural institutions. Passes are available for the Children's Museum, the Portland Art Museum, the Japanese Garden, the World Forestry Center, the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center and the Washington County Museum, the Portland Chinese Garden and the Oregon Historical Society. Registration forms and program guidelines are available at the library. Please note that this program is available only to Washington County library card holders.

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.WILnet.wccs.lib.or.us.

Ike Says...

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at Vernonia. The only fishery would be in the north fork of the Nehalem and the estuary. What would happen if a natural event, disease or hazardous chemical release wiped out the only fish at the hatchery? At the least, a whole year class would be gone forever.

There is one aspect of this debate that has been ignored: Who is paying for these artificially propagated fisheries? Sportsmen almost totally support the hatchery fish programs that were initially created to produce supplemental fish. We have ignored the fact that wild, natural hatcheries have been decimated and that the people who are responsible, and have profited from this destruction, have not been held fiscally responsible. The only real solution to this problem is to get the natural hatcheries functioning again, which will cause fiscal pain to the people who were responsible in the first place. Isn't this fair? Oregon sportsmen should not have to bear total responsibility for ensuring the continued existence of Coho salmon in Oregon, by supporting hatcheries.

Hunting season is in full swing and there have been a few problems and controversies so far this year. Like many of you, I was surprised to find the vast tract of land to the west and south of Vernonia locked up behind gates, even when the surrounding lands were open. I talked to Tom Budge of Longview Fibre Company, who explained that this tract was closed to vehicular traffic because the State of Oregon had a logging sale off the Eastside Grade road and they feared trouble from timber activists, so Longview Fibre closed vehicular access to the back side of the sale. Tom made it clear, though, that the land was open to walk-in hunting, with the exception of the mainline on weekdays and active logging sites like the one in the bottom of Clear Creek. I also asked Tom about the mainline blockage to large tracts of land beyond them. He explained that walking directly across the mainline is okay. What is not permitted is walking along the mainline, which would put a walker in danger of being hit by tree length-carrying trucks. I took Tom up on this walk-in access and enjoyed almost exclu-

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