

Letters to the Editor

Fog lights too often used dangerously

To the Editor:

Why do people use their fog lights when there is no fog???

I live in Vernonia and commute every day to the valley. I leave in the dark and return home in the dark, as most of us do.

Not often do I see fog, but I do see, or should I say I am always being blinded by vehicles with fog lights shooting around the mountain corners and for a second I have been blinded to my own driving. I, along with most other drivers, dim my high beam lights to oncoming traffic, but fog light drivers don't seem to care. Worst yet is the big four wheel truck following you all the way home on a beautiful, clear night with his fog lights beaming through your back window lighting up the inside of your car enough for you to read a book! You blink for a second to try to refocus your eyes, but this doesn't help. Then you say to yourself, this driver behind me doesn't get it. He has a truck that is already four feet off the ground. Then, he has added these cool looking fog lights, so by gosh he is going to make use of them! Full moon, stars, clear, what the heck, they're cool. So, I choose to pull over and let him by, but guess what? My car is lit up so much inside I have a hard time seeing the road, let alone trying to pull off.

So, I, along with many others are forced to add one more danger to commuting our mountain.

I would like our police department to respond to the laws of running fog lights. I know fog lights are to be installed at a certain height and the beam has to be pointing some direction...down on the road would be good! I talked to some officers in the valley about this to see if there was a problem like this down there, like here. I was told yes, but I was also informed there is very little tolerance for running lights unless there is a need.

Thank you,
Kathy Wolfe
Vernonia

Museum operations going downhill fast

To the Editor:

Have you been wondering what is going on at our local museum?

First, a little history. The old mill office became city property and was then leased to Columbia County for museum use. The county has an agreement with the Columbia County Historical Society for museum operations.

For many years, we had a live-in curator who handled the day-to-day operations. For lack of funding from the county, the position was eliminated. Since that time, the museum has

been open two or three days a week and staffed by local volunteers.

For the last two or three months, the museum has been closed for lack of heat. The furnace problem has now been fixed. We have been told by the President of the Society that the locks may be changed again and the museum will be open from one to four on Sunday, only, and staffed by someone from St. Helens.

Local volunteers have already been locked out of the basement storage area and one room at the museum, and accused of "things" disappearing. I do not believe any of our volunteers would take anything. We feel that the decisions of the County Society Board are both arbitrary and demeaning and certainly not conducive to the successful operation of the museum. We are told we should come to a board meeting, but the last I knew, we had to call for time and location.

Perhaps it is time to consider some changes in the museum arrangements and operation.

What would you like to see happening at the museum? At the present, we are waiting to hear if the museum (old mill office) will be placed on the National Register of Historical Places. The application (by the city, not the historical society) has been approved in Salem and forwarded to Washington, D.C.

Enid Parrow
Museum Volunteer
Vernonia

Companies are big help to Fairgrounds

To the Editor:

Columbia County Fair Board would like to thank Morse Bros. Inc. and Double Tee Promotions, Inc. for their donations to the Columbia County Fairgrounds.

Evelyn Hudson
Administrator
Columbia County
Fairgrounds

Community requires support from local

To the Editor:

Recently, a man came to my place of business to look around, and as we got to talking, he asked me if I might be interested in joining a local group. I, in turn, asked him to tell me what the group's benefit to the community were. Well, I was a bit frustrated when he listed a few things that they had made monetary donations to, but how some were not Vernonia based. As many know, I was director of Vernonia Cares Food Bank for a few years and, along with a few volunteers, know how hard it is to go out and solicit money for food. We were constantly asking, with some response, but not enough, from the Vernonia community. Many excuses were that Vernonia Cares was "the place all the druggies and lowlives come for freebies." Well, I would have to say there may be a small percentage of these people, but I do not consider myself one of them, and I was along with the larger percentage who went to the food bank to feed my family after the flood of '96. This is how I found out about the job. Vernonia Cares needs help, as the num-

bers of families have almost doubled in the past year.

Community support is so important to Vernonia that, without it, we will not survive. Shopping at the local supermarket is a bit more spendy at times, but even I, whose husband has worked for Safeway for 16 years, support the local market. I hear about the many fund raisers and how the downtown businesses are always picked on. Well, I am now the owner of one and help every time I can with student fund raising. I would be more able to help if the community would support my business instead of going out of town and purchasing from other communities. I have heard people say that we are sure glad to have this or that store available to us in town, yet they will go to a competitor and spend their money and then wonder why the business does not last in Vernonia. Have you even looked into the pricing here? I, for one, have. Recently, I purchased two major appliances through Mary and Arnie at Western Auto. After I made the purchase, I realized that I saved over \$100 on my items through them, and they were able to take a Sears Charge card for my purchases. Wow, what a convenience to have them in Vernonia.

The churches are the same. Many complain that this church or that do not have the youth groups or exciting music that draws community members. So they go out of town and give to other churches, not only monetarily, but of their time. How are the local churches supposed to ever get these types of draws without community support?

Why do you live in Vernonia if you do not want to support your community? I am in awe with lack of understanding this.

Only been here 8 years, but a proud Vernonian.

Sincerely,
Lisa Edgar
Vernonia

Between the Bookends

By Cindy Stanley, Library Assistant
Banks Public Library

Do you like to sew? Have you ever wanted to know more about quick applique methods? Well, take your scissors for a walk! On Saturday April 6th, textile artist Suzanne Lee will provide participants with the opportunity to learn fused applique techniques and participate in a community project. A wall hanging will be created by the group for display in the library. For more information and to register for the workshop, contact the library. This project is sponsored by the Arts in Libraries Program in Washington County and is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and administered by the Regional Arts & Culture Council, in partnership with the Washington County Cooperative Library Services.

The Friends of the Banks Public Library will be holding their annual Plant & Book Sale on Saturday, April 27 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This is a great time to purchase perennials, shrubs, trees, annuals, etc. for your spring gardening! There will also be some garden-related items such as trellises or plant ladders, and step-

ping-stones. There will be a raffle with an assortment of prizes. This is always a fun event, with balloons for the kids, lots of beautiful plants to choose from, plenty of good used books, and some new books donated by Timber Press.

Saturday, April 13th is recycling day sponsored by the Friends of the Banks Library at the Swatco Service Yard between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. If you miss this date, you'll be looking for the mixed paper recycle bins that were near to Main Street in the parking lot of Dayspring Christian Fellowship. They have been moved away from the street onto the City of Banks' gravel parking lot, next to the paved library parking lot. **Proceeds from the bins now benefit the library.** The hauler accepts mixed paper (including old paperback books, magazines and newspapers) but not cardboard.

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: Wednesdays, 10:15
a.m., when school is in session.
Phone: (503) 324-1382
Internet: www.WILnet.wccclib.or.us.

NOTICE SOME CHANGES AT THE INDEPENDENT

The Independent will now be published on the first and third Thursday of each month, instead of the first and third Wednesday.

We appreciate your patience while we have been making necessary modifications.