

Letters to the Editor

Former resident tells right-of-way history

To the Editor:

I lived in Vernonia during the depression years from 1932 until 1937 and I look forward to receiving each issue of *The Independent*.

I was attracted to your piece entitled "Bike Trip Saturday on Proposed Linear Trail." I thought there might be some interest in the history of the railroad featured in that article.

Fred and Simcoe Chapman envisioned a railroad extending from Scappoose into the Nehalem Valley. In 1906, they began construction of such a line from the Scappoose end. By 1910, they had laid tracks for 13.5 miles. Here, they encountered a ridge separating the Columbia River drainage from the Nehalem River Valley. Unable to finance the required tunnel, they sold their railroad and right-of-way to Henry Turrish, a Minnesota lumberman,

who began tunnel construction. However, in 1911, there was an economic downturn and construction was stopped. In 1913, excavation resumed. Porter Brothers were given a contract to complete the tunnel. The bore was lined with a million feet of fine grained Douglas Fir 12 x 12 timbers constructed in a Roman arch configuration. In 1920, the railroad from Scappoose to Nehalem Timber and Logging Company's camp, located five miles east of Vernonia, was completed.

In 1926, Clark and Wilson Lumber Company entered into negotiations with A.W. Keith from Washington State and Henry Turrish to merge their ownerships. To connect Clark and Wilson operations headquartered at Wilark, near Trenchholm, with the Vernonia camp, required construction of nineteen miles of railroad. Moving of their headquarters for the joint operations to the Vernonia camp, which was re-named

"Camp 8", was completed in 1930. (Many old timers referred to those facilities as "New Wilark")

During the height of Clark and Wilson's operation from Camp 8, they produced a million board feet of logs daily. This operation was serviced with 200 miles of railroad using four gear type locomotives, similar to the Shay on display in Vernonia. The woods fleet also included one saddle tank and one side tank locomotive. Two rod engines operating under the banner of the Portland and Southwestern Railroad Company were charged with pulling five twenty-car trains to the Scappoose log dump daily. Because the line used disconnected log trucks, pulling more than ten loads up hill posed the problem of jerking logs from the bunks. During tunnel excavation, a grade break developed in the middle of the tunnel which could cause load separation. To accommodate this

problem, sidings were built at each end of the tunnel and loads were transferred from the Camp 8 assembly yard to these sidings using the saddle and side tank locomotives. Each of the two mainline locomotives would leave Camp 8 with ten loads of their first trip to the dump, then switch ten more from the siding at the tunnel and proceed to Scappoose. On subsequent trips during the day, all twenty loads were collected at the tunnel sidings. One of these engines would make three round trips and the other made two each day.

Much of the success of this operation can be credited to Frank Baker, the Logging Superintendent, and Charles O. Marston, the Logging Engineer. Baker worked for Clark and Wilson until 1947, when they went out of business and sold their properties to Crown Zellerbach. Marston quit the company and went to work for Weyerhaeuser.

Crown Zellerbach converted the railroad mainline to a haul road. They also rehabilitated many old woods railroad grades into a road system to service the properties which Crown renamed the Stamm Tree Farm. Glen Hawkins followed Marston as engineer and stayed on with Crown as tree farm manager until his retirement.

Sincerely,

Larry M. Christiansen
Corvalli

Initiative could have devastating results

To the Editor:

Think twice before supporting "Parental Consent for Public Services" Initiative.

In last Sunday's *Oregonian*, a UN official called AIDS the most devastating epidemic the world has ever known, surpassing the plague of the medieval world.

This disease is decimating the population of many nations, primarily because their young, sexually active, citizens are uninformed about the cause of the disease and ways to protect themselves from contracting it. Reading this, I thought about the Constitution Party here in Columbia County, and the Parental Consent initiative they're asking us to vote for in November.

The Constitution Party

claims that a vote for this initiative is a vote for protection of our children. I believe this initiative, and others like it, sponsored by the Constitution Party in rural counties around Oregon, could have just the opposite effect. This initiative could be responsible for denying information and guidance to our children at the very time in their lives when they are most in need of that kind of protection—and most reluctant to seek it from their parents. It could result in exposing our children not only to the dangers associated with youthful pregnancies and the dislocated lives that result from unwanted births—but also to the horror of incurable disease.

The UN official quoted in the *Oregonian* said that "some strategies do seem to help—strategies aimed at young people, at providing some basic health care infrastructure..."

Given what we know about the behavior of young people, I can't imagine a more foolish or destructive action than disabling the very program that could keep the nightmare of this pandemic from the gates of our cities and the precious lives of our children.

Madelynn Sheehan
Scappoose

Opposition to ballot measure is wrong

To the Editor:

In recent weeks, we have seen an increase in misinformation by those opposed to our right of choice, the right of Columbia County Citizens to Vote.

The intent of the family integrity initiative is not to shut down free medical services like public health, which are so important to all of Columbia County, or to stop adults from receiving services of any kind. It won't. And it certainly won't stop a child from receiving emergency services. The initiative itself says so.

It will give parents back the right to parent, and isn't that what we all want? The anti-drug, drug is parental involvement, according to the Partnership for a Drug Free America. Every American President has endorsed parental consent, to date.

Most north Columbia County citizens don't even know about Columbia County public health's

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Between the Bookends

By Ann Krutsinger, Library Assistant
Banks Public Library

Cure the mid-summer doldrums with a good book!

The library will begin accepting completed reading records for the summer reading program, "Don't Bug Me I'm Reading," starting August 1. Also on the first, at 2:00 p.m., Omar Vargas will perform a program in pantomime. The following week, on August 8th, OMSI is bringing a program titled "Six-Legged Science" to the Banks Library. The library has scheduled two separate sessions of thirty participants each. "Bug Me" will be held from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. and is geared for children from kindergarten through third grade. "Inside Insects," to be held from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m., is a program for children in 4th-6th grades. Please call the library to pre-register! Each week, readers also have the opportunity to enter a drawing for a gift certificate to one of our local booksellers. Ask us how you can join the fun.

The Friends of the Banks Public Library keep our library stocked with "hot" new titles monthly.

One of the newest arrivals is *Courting Trouble*, by Lisa Scottoline. This is a fast-paced thriller about a young female attorney trying to find out who is trying to kill her after she sees a photo of herself in a Philadelphia newspaper under a headline reading "Lawyer Murdered." The main character, Anne Murphy, sets out to find her killer by playing dead in order to stay alive.

Recycle Saturday, sponsored by the Friends of the Banks Library, is held from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month at the solid waste transfer station on Sellers Road.

Library patrons with Internet access can browse the library's resources by clicking on www.WILInet.wccls.lib.or.us. Materials may also be reserved electronically.

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.WILInet.wccls.lib.or.us.

Ike Says...

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parking lot and boat launch. Montana, in its great wisdom, declared all of its streams that are navigable, and secured them for the public to use forever. The second thing was that access points to the National Forests were also pointed out by signs. It was evident that many of these access points crossed over private land. This is an area where Oregon is very remiss. In fact, in Oregon, there are many National Forest access roads that are either hidden away or blocked by private landowners. We need to follow Montana's lead on both of these issues.

Back here at home, the last time I looked at the stream levels, they were near the historic mean for this time of year. This is good news, an indication that ground water output, in the form of springs, is back to normal. Maybe the wet winter last year really did some good.

Izaak Walton League
Nehalem Valley Chapter meetings are on
the third Thursday of each month at 7:00
p.m. The public is welcome.
For meeting location, call (503) 429-7193.