

The INDEPENDENT

Serving the upper Nehalem River valley. Published twice monthly, on the first and third Thursdays of each month, by Public Opinion Laboratory Ltd., 725 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR 97064, as a free newspaper. Editors and Publishers, Dirk & Noni Andersen. Phone/Fax: 503-429-9410, e-mail: noni@vernonia.com

Opinion

Success is result of planning, hard work

Congratulations are due the volunteers who served on this year's Jamboree committee. It takes a lot of time, a lot of planning and a lot of hard work to pull it all together. In addition to the committee members, there are literally hundreds of people who work on specific activities such as the Lions Barbecue, the horse gaming show, or the cruise in.

The activities were well run, the crowds were large, the vendors were professional and clean up was done daily – sometimes several times daily. Even the weather cooperated; the showers on Sunday morning weren't a problem.

There will, of course, be complaints, because it wasn't perfect and there are people who simply must concentrate on whatever goes wrong. Of course, you will never find those complainers among the hard-working volunteers.

So, congratulations to everyone who worked to make the Friendship Jamboree a success; you earned it.

Budget crisis is no joke

Gov. John Kitzhaber was right to veto legislation that relies on dishonest accounting and pushes today's budget crisis into the next biennium, and longer. Nevertheless, there is a crisis in public funding, especially in education.

Please read the adjacent article to get an idea of how Vernonia School District may have to deal with the shortfall. Now is the time for anyone who may have ideas that could stretch available funds. It's obvious that we can all do something to help, whether it's mowing the lawns, volunteering in the classroom or as a coach, making a cash donation, or something else.

Education is too important to leave to that bunch of whining babies in the legislature.

— NOTICE —

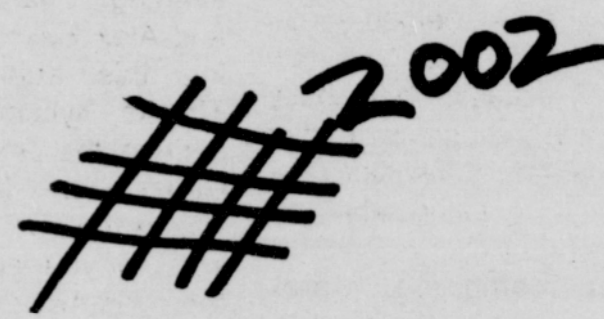
The INDEPENDENT is published on the first and third Thursday of each month. There are five Thursdays in August, so there will be three weeks between this issue and the first issue in September.

Deadline for the issue of September 5, 2002, will be August 30, 2002.

The office will be closed at times next week, but phone calls will be returned when messages are left. Contact us by phone: 503-429-9410, or e-mail: noni@vernonia.com

DOWN TOWN GRID

SURE IS A LOT OF
COMMERCE AND
ACTIVITY GOING
ON IN TOWN NOW!
IS IT JAMBOREE?



NO! - MORE STORES AND
BUSINESSES ARE OPERATING NOW,
THAN IN THE PAST 50 YEARS!
AND THE TRAFFIC IS INCREDIBLE!

IT'S ALMOST
WALL TO WALL
PEOPLE

© AUGUST 15, 2002 INDEPENDENT

47J faces potential loss of \$280,000

News of the governor's vetoes of \$317 million was received by the Vernonia School District while it was in the midst of developing plans for this eventuality. Though Vernonia Superintendent Mike Funderburg will not return from vacation until August 19, he held meetings with the administrative team prior to leaving.

If the vetoes stand, Vernonia School District will have to cut approximately \$280 thousand from the general fund in the budget approved for 2002-03, which was \$171,000 less than the 2001-2002 budget.

Vernonia is fortunate in one respect: The reduction in the state school fund represents only about five percent of the district's general fund budget, according to Deputy Clerk Dawn Plews. Some districts, which receive a greater portion of funding from the state school fund, may lose as much as 13 percent of their general fund.

The general fund is, by far, the largest fund within the district budget, and pays for most functions, including salaries. As a result of property tax reform, all monies received from other sources are used to offset the total dollars received from the

state school fund, so that all schools across the state get an amount of money determined by formula. The formula is based on student attendance and is adjusted for a variety of factors. The budget includes funds that may be used only for specific purposes – such as special education, technology or food service – that will not be affected by the reduction in the general fund.

At the last meeting of the district budget committee, which is composed of seven community members and seven school board members, former Superintendent Larry McClellan presented a series of budget cuts developed by the administrative team to be considered by the committee for recommendation to the board. Each series, or level, represents decreased spending, but priorities were not set within each level.

The levels as presented are:

Level One, \$45,000:

- Reduce ending fund balance
- Sell surplus equipment
- Eliminate one in-service day
- Eliminate funding for field trips

Level Two, \$135,000:

- Cut funds for junior high sports
- Reduce K-8 Media Center staff
- Eliminate leadership team position
- Further reduce the number of in-service days

Level Three, \$155,000:

- Eliminate a 1/2-time grant writing position
- Eliminate additional maintenance position
- Eliminate one teaching position
- Eliminate funds for high school wrestling

The budget committee recommended a district-wide inventory to identify surplus equipment, and that surplus equipment be sold, with the proceeds dedicated to the purchase of textbooks and future textbook adoptions.

The committee further recommended that the three reduction levels be used by the board as a starting point, if budget reductions became necessary, and that additional input be included at the time reductions need to take place.

Please see page 8