

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Hunger in a nation of obscene wealth

America is the wealthiest nation in the world, as the president keeps reminding us, but more Americans are hungry, more Americans are homeless and more Americans lack medical care than at any time since the great depression of the 1930s.

In Vernonia, a town small enough to see the faces of the needy, Vernonia Cares, the emergency food cupboard, served 248 people during October—more than 10 percent of the city's population, or about five percent of the population within the school district.

The town looks good because of tremendous efforts by city government and volunteers to capitalize on grant funds whenever possible, but that doesn't help people whose unemployment benefits have ended or senior citizens whose Social Security will increase about 1.4 percent while prescription medicines increase another 12 percent (or more). The help they need will have to come from the rest of us, because the focus of both federal and state governments is protection of the greedy, not help for the needy.

Fortunately, the small population that allows us to see who is in need, also allows us to help in ways that don't require huge amounts of money.

Food donations will help Vernonia Cares get through the holiday season, except for cash needed to buy fresh meats and produce. Even small cash donations go a long way because of the links between city, county and state food banks that provide food purchases at greatly reduced rates.

If you are concerned about "undeserving" people abusing the services of Vernonia Cares, consider this: An individual can be provided with a three-day supply of food only twice a month and the people mentioned above are 248 individuals of all ages, not 124 free-loaders.

You don't have to be wealthy to give five dollars to Vernonia Cares. If you can give more, please do, but all donations will be carefully used and greatly appreciated. If you live in another community, please make a donation to the food bank in your area.

As individuals, we may not be able to do much about homelessness, but we can help feed the hungry. To do nothing, would mean turning our backs on our neighbors. We need more kindness, not less.

FEED A HOMELESS
PERSON FOR THANKSGIVING
FOR ONLY ONE DOLLAR
AND THREE QUARTERS!



THANK YOU, AND YOU DO KNOW, THOUGH, THAT
MYSELF AND THOUSANDS OF OTHERS WHO ARE IN
A LIKE SITUATION, INCLUDING THEIR CHILDREN
WOULD LIKE TO EAT AT LEAST ONCE A DAY TOO?
EVERY DAY!

Letters to the Editor

Libertarian thankful for the experience

To the Editor:

Now that the election is over and I have had several days to calm down from all the excitement, I have a chance to reflect. I have gained some valuable experiences, learned to appreciate just how much work and effort goes into a campaign, met a lot of wonderful people, and enjoyed it all. If I have one regret it is that I should have started much earlier! I would have liked to talk to a lot more folks and make them acquainted with the Libertarian approach to government.

Those I did manage to speak with seemed to like what I had to say. In fact, enough people liked my message to give me a five percent share of the votes cast. I consider that quite a win for a third party, unknown candidate, and I would like to thank all those who helped me to get the five percent: THANK YOU VERY MUCH! Of course, my heartfelt thanks go to all of those who encouraged me to run and cheered me along the way. They all share in my five percent.

There is more than one way to win, and I won by having been part of a new movement in the political arena, and by having been able to show that there is more than the "business-as-usual" way of looking at a problem. There is also more than one way of looking for solutions. The Libertarians will be part of the process from here on.

Thank you all again for voting for me, for your confidence, and for your belief in me.

Helen McDaniel
Astoria

A great visitor, and a fireworks bake sale

To the Editor:

I would like to share a wonderful story with you. I got a call a couple of weeks ago from a man who was in City Hall here in Vernonia. He asked if this was the number to contact Vernonia Pride and I said that it was. He proceeded to ask if he could help Vernonia Pride. He was just bored and wanted to help the town because he has noticed over the years how much nicer our town has

looked. Apparently he is what I call a "snow bird," you know, one of those motor home travelers. He and his wife come to Vernonia every year for a couple of months before heading down to Arizona. He was just waiting for the Thanksgiving holiday so he could spend time with his daughter before going to Arizona.

Well, needless to say, Vernonia Pride put him to work. I must say he made my day when he called me. I was so excited that someone like him thought to help us when he does not even live here. He is probably gone by now, but I want to extend a big "thank you" to John Tye. It takes people like John to make this town a better place to live. Thanks to all who help Vernonia Pride and all who volunteer their time, materials and money to make this a better town.

Just a reminder, too, of the bake sale Vernonia Pride will be having on Saturday, Nov. 23, at Sentry Market from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This is to support our fireworks fund which was short by \$400 this last year.

Donna Webb
Vernonia Pride