

## Letters to the Editor

### County GOP urges support of president

To the Editor:

The Executive Committee of Columbia County Republicans calls upon all Oregonians and especially those of Columbia County to join us in supporting President Bush in his efforts to fight terrorism and to disarm Saddam Hussein of all weapons of mass destruction—chemical, biological or nuclear.

We support our president's decision to act on this without further delay and we support our troops as they move to rid Iraq of this dangerous tyrant and free the people of Iraq.

We also call upon all Oregonians to join us in prayer for President Bush, his cabinet, and the leaders and members of the Armed Forces and all Americans who are in harms way in this struggle in defense of our nation and our freedom.

Sincerely,

**Mike Powell, Chairman  
Columbia County GOP**

### Editorial is forceful and courageous

To the Editor:

Bless you for your courageous editorial about Bush's war! It can't be a popular point of view in our little part of the world, and will be even less so since he predictably went ahead with this sordid war, but I hope your forceful arguments will lead some people to think about the shameful way this administration operates.

**Michael Fox  
Banks**

### Museum group seeks members, volunteers

To the Editor:

We have a group of volunteers who are working very hard to get everything working smoothly at the museum. We have chosen a new name, Vernonia Pioneer Museum Association, and are now accepting memberships to help with costs at the museum. Costs are: Sin-

gle \$12.00, Couple \$18.00, and Family \$24.00 per year. Our address is Vernonia Pioneer Museum, P.O. Box 26, Vernonia, OR 97064. Please give your time and support to our museum so we can all be proud of the achievements we are making.

We are interested in finding someone who will take care of the yard work. If you have a yard work business and would like the job, we would allow you to advertise with a sign at the museum, but do not have the money to pay anyone for the work. It would be on a volunteer basis.

We have work days, usually on a Saturday, so if you are interested in helping, call me at 503-429-8134. We are planning an open house this spring and later we will be having a yard sale. Stop in and see us.

**Enid Parrow, President  
Vernonia Pioneer Museum**

### Thankful for resolve of President Bush

To the Editor:

"Bush is No Bully"

As a family, we are thankful that President Bush has the backbone and determination to protect our nation from a repeat of the events that took place on September 11, 2001, and to hold those accountable who are responsible for the perpetration of these cowardly, unprovoked terrorist attacks against our citizens.

Men like Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden, who have no regard for human life, know that the United Nations is powerless to stop them, will continue their reign of terror, until someone like President Bush, who will not only say "Enough is Enough", but will also take action to stop them.

Historically, we see that timidity and appeasement have only resulted in increased aggression, as can be seen clearly with Adolph Hitler. He and his Nazi regime took full advantage of the nations that attempted to appease him. They were quickly trampled under foot as he marched over them to conquer the next country.

Aggression must be met with strength.

Where would we be if the early patriots had tried to appease the King of England instead of opposing him? More than likely, we would be British subjects under the rule of a

monarchy.

Apparently, you would prefer to see our citizens killed by ruthless, unmerciful terrorist attacks, to be fought with fire-fighters and law enforcement personnel, than to face this clear and present danger head on with those who are trained, prepared and equipped to meet those who have truly corrupted their power.

As a nation, we need to fully support our president and our troops, otherwise we could very likely face many more days like 9/11. God help us!

**Robert Huntington  
& Family  
Birkenfeld**

### Fire district needs to improve processes

To the Editor:

My family and I moved to Vernonia after the '96 flood. The first person we met was Fire Chief Paul Epler. When he found out that my wife and I had firefighting experience, he enlisted us as volunteers for the Vernonia Fire Department. During my six-month probation period I had some personal issues with some of the training the volunteers were receiving. Adjusting from a full time department with daily training to a volunteer department with training three times a month was difficult. Some volunteers saw me as a threat and soon I was so frustrated working with them that I foolishly decided to leave the Volunteer Association.

At the time of the next Fire District Board election I felt I could put my experience to work for the district, ran for a board position and was elected. I started to take classes and attend Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) conferences to become a better board member. At these classes I learned how the board and the district should be run. I have tried to bring some of that knowledge back to our Fire District Board. The SDAO Conferences are an invaluable source of training and information.

Over the past three months, there have been changes going on at the Fire House that some volunteers don't like. These changes are necessary for the continued good health of the district. This is a pivotal time for our Fire District Board and the community served by the Vernonia Fire Protection District.

There is a new election and three board positions are to be filled. Some of the people who are running have an axe to grind with Chief Epler. Over the past four years I have watched the way some of the volunteers have treated the Chief. Let me tell you, I would not put up with that. Even on the Board, we have not backed him on some issues as we should have.

We did not hire a Chief to sit up at the Fire Station and polish trucks. He should be out taking classes, attending county training meetings and conferences, writing grants for needed equipment and overseeing training in this department; not babysitting, sweeping floors or building a storage shed. This is a waste of Fire District funds. This is why we have volunteers.

At some of the latest meetings I have heard volunteers state that if these changes happen, they will quit. I say, "Good-bye." There will always be someone to take their place.

I'm certainly not criticizing all of the volunteers; just a few, and they know who they are. We have some really good people on this department who understand that change is necessary to move forward. I hope more district members will come to these meetings and express themselves.

We all need to work together—board, Chief and volunteers alike; set some goals and quit backstabbing each other. What we do now as volunteers and board members will reflect on this district in the future.

**Stephen Roberts  
Vernonia**

### Please present views calmly and clearly

To the Editor:

As an employee of *The Independent* for the past three years, and as an American citizen, I would like to remind everyone that we do still live in a country which allows us to speak (and write) our opinion, as we see fit.

My editor did just that in the last issue, as she does in every issue. She did it in a clear and concise manner for all to understand.

Whether I agree or disagree doesn't matter. What bothered me was the manner in which some with opposing views expressed those views. In one particular instance, I had to

leave the room as my coworker was screamed at about the editorial.

*The Independent* has always printed letters to the editor with opposing viewpoints. This is the rational way to express an opposing viewpoint. All that is required is a signature and a verifiable address.

*The Independent* welcomes your viewpoints. Please, collect your thoughts and be calm as you share them.

**Susi Holsey  
Vernonia**

### 9/11 used as excuse for abuse of power

To the Editor:

I appreciate your editorial very much. You are dead on target when you describe the underlying issue as power!! 9/11 became an excuse for all sorts of bullying tactics. Not only military budgets are blown out of proportion - the Homeland Security (new Sacred Cow) becomes the receptacle for absurd allocations - to say nothing of their new power to invade freedoms.

**Paul Nussle  
Sumner, Washington**

### Venomous comments unsupported by fact

To the Editor:

I would assume having read the editorial in your March 20 issue that you don't think much of our president. I don't have a problem with that but when you make such venomous comments about his policies you ought to back them up with some facts. I would appreciate some equal time to respond to some of your comments.

From your second paragraph 'while he orders the killing of innocent civilians'? You can't be serious. Having seen the first few days of the war it looks to me as if the president is doing everything possible.

**Please see page 14**

### Library column moved

"Between the Bookends" may be found on page 12. It has been temporarily moved in order to allow more letters on this page.

### POLICY ON LETTERS

*The INDEPENDENT* welcomes readers' letters and will publish as many as possible. All letters must be signed, including those sent by fax, and include a verifiable address and telephone number, which will not be printed except at the writer's request. **Unsigned letters will not be published.**