

Letters

Thanks to participants in the QuakeEx drill

To the Editor:

I would like to thank everyone that participated in our QuakeEx drill.

Thanks to Terri Nelson and Christine Purvee for writing some great incident scenarios. Terri created the broken water and gas lines, animals running loose, buildings collapsing and landslides, while Christine provided our victims and medical emergencies. Lisa Orth, the Vernonia Red Cross Coordinator, worked to organize hospital sites and keep track of the wounded. Christine Purvee and Chad Saunders, both of MetroWest, worked at the High School with the Health class creating a life like disaster triage scene.

A huge thank you to all the participants from the Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters Association, the Vernonia Volunteer Ambulance Association and the Metro West staff. Without your participation we would have had a quiet afternoon of paper shuffling instead of the dynamic event we experienced. Working as incident response and triage at the High School no doubt made a positive impression on the student you worked with. (My apologies for not listing your names; there were so many of you coming and going throughout the day that if I tried to name names I know I would miss some of you. You know who you were, THANK YOU!)

Norm Roberts, Vernonia Amateur Radio Klub (VARK), sat at the radio for the entire drill, tirelessly sending requests, alerts and updates between the city and the county Incident Command centers.

Robyn Bassett, Vernonia Public Works Director, rotated her staff throughout the day; thanks to Scott Rethwill, Jeff Burch and Jim Gido for working on solutions to the Public Works problems.

Our new Police Chief, Mike Cahill worked with Pat Dean of the Columbia County Sheriff's

Library column moved
"Between the Bookends" may be found on page 6. It has been temporarily moved in order to allow more letters on this page.

office providing law enforcement support. We have firmly established that it is Firefighters who like donuts!

Paul Epler, Vernonia Fire District Chief kept the volunteers on track by offering training information. Chief Epler also worked with his Fire Science Class from Vernonia High School. I would especially like to thank the students for their participation. They are: Justin Campbell, Torie Clement, Chris Driver, Robbie Fetherston, Travis Gwin, Marcus Kintz, Nathan Riley, Jeremy Ruby, Bo Rumbolz and Jessica Sook. These students are now a part of the response team. They know what goes on and how important their help will be.

My personal thanks to all the participants for adding action to what was to be a paperwork exercise. When I was City Councilor, my primary response to an emergency would have been to ensure the safety of my family and wait for evacuation orders. As the Mayor, my responsibilities are much more involved. Without all of you there to make this a realistic drill, I would not have learned nearly as much. Your participation was invaluable to me! Thank you, everyone!

Sincerely,
Cindy Ball, Mayor
City of Vernonia

Impressed with work of Vernonia Cares

To the Editor:

Recently I visited the local food bank (Vernonia Cares) and was really impressed with the hard work and dedication of the volunteers staffing the facility.

Something that I did not know was that cash donations can be so much more effective in providing food for distribution. They can purchase food from the Oregon Food Bank at a fraction of the cost at a retail store.

Of course, any time is a good time for a donation, but when the next food drive happens, why not include a check with the items you are donating. They can do so much with the funds. The address is Vernonia Cares, P.O. Box 126, Vernonia, OR 97064.

Many thanks,
Judy Riley
Vernonia

April is time to Make Vernonia Shine

To the Editor:

It's that time of year again. Vernonia Clean Up Day will be Saturday, April 26. Registration will be at 9:00 a.m. at Providence Health Center. All volunteers welcome. Please join us for good eats afterward at the Scout Cabin.

Katie Poetter, for
Vernonia Pride

Editorial was right; Bush is frightening

To the Editor:

I thought your March 20 Editorial was outstanding. You really nailed it. President Bush is far more frightening than any world figure of our time. He is more frightening than Saddam Hussein and Bin Laden put together and then some.

Our service people are murdering innocent civilians by the gross and an occasional "Home Land Defender" as any of us might be when under attack. There is no honor in mass murder. Using the world's most advanced equipment to slaughter third world people who can't even buy shoes is not heroic. Bush is taking over Iraq's oil for Texaco, not for what happened 15-35 years ago.

I believe 9-11 was spurred by George Sr.'s attack that killed thousands of innocent bystanders to save his stocks in Texaco Oil. It was not the people of Iraq or Hussein either, but militant Arabs who hate us for good reason, striking back for those who had perished and the embargo since [the first Gulf war]. It happened right after Jr. took office. What will be the retribution for the murderous crimes of our President now? Killing the Iraqi people will not destroy our enemies. Our enemy is we militant Americans—or can we not see beyond our over-blown attitudes.

"An eye for an eye makes a world full of blind people."

What frightens me nearly as much as George Jr. is that the people around me are very much like the people in pre-war Nazi Germany with their narrow, bigoted, supremacist, aggressive, hateful, thoughtless herd instincts and lynch-mob mentality.

Bush Jr. is the Adolph Hitler of the new millennium and we

are well on our way into World War III with Iran, Lebanon, N. Korea, Russia, Pakistan and Syria next to be conquered. There is no satiating a mass murderer once he has tasted blood.

I am very proud of *The Independent* for being a free press newspaper and for speaking out on important issues even when the majority of the public is dead wrong or too afraid to use their free speech.

Thank you, Noni, for your excellent editorial. When we get shipped off to George's prison camps it will be an honor to share the same cattle car.

Marcia Denison
Vernonia

Thanks for help to American Legion

To the Editor:

Thank you for the nice ad for the American Legion Post #119 promoting our Bingo games. You did a great job with it and we appreciate your contribution to your community and the American Legion. I will be obtaining the dates and times of our future games and plan on running an ad at our expense, but I wanted you to know that the ad you folks wrote and so graciously donated to us is very much appreciated.

I'm sure the exposure will draw a bigger crowd so that we can help our children of Vernonia better their education, their sports and all the other things that are so greatly needed due to lack of funding. After all, the children of today are our future and should not be denied the things that are fun and the right to become someone who feels good about themselves and contributes to their community.

Again, thank you on behalf of all the Veterans of the American Legion.

Paul Meyer
Post Service Officer
American Legion Post #119
Vernonia

Most media feeding "slop" instead of news

To the Editor:

I missed your earlier issue with the editorial re: Bush's War and its very real "domestic consequences." Must have been quite powerful and well written, considering the letters and per-

sonal attacks!

From now on, consider me an *Independent* reader and supporter! It's about time we Americans begin to think for ourselves again. We are currently being fed such media "slop" (from a few controlled sources) that we're acting like the "hogs" who deserve it!

Wake up, freedom lovers, you're seeing the beginning of the end of what our forefathers and founders fought and died for — legitimate revolution and individual freedom.

Sincerely,
John Hiestand
Banks

Other countries act in own self-interest

To the Editor:

Your March 20 editorial on President Bush ("President Bush is far more than a bully") contains a number of myths and misconceptions that must be corrected.

You wrote that the United States - under President Bush's leadership - has frittered away the sympathetic coalition that supported the U.S. after September 11, 2001, and has fabricated links between Al Qaeda and Iraq. Admittedly France and Germany had sympathy for the U.S. after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. However, that sympathy was superficial at best, and could not survive when the socialist governments of those two nations acted in their own self-interest in opposing the war to try and cover up their shady, lucrative business dealings with Saddam Hussein. That's why they oppose the Iraq policy of the U.S. But, even while their socialist, anti-American citizens demonstrate against the United States, these countries' governments still continue to fully cooperate in the war on terrorism.

Please see page 14

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.**