

Letters

Local companies aid VHS sports teams

To the Editor:

Sometimes it's very difficult living in a small town. Businesses are always getting hit up for money for this or that. But, when the chips are down, they come to the rescue.

When Joe Curl heard [there was] no transportation for spring sports, he and Pihl Logging, Holce Logging, Gwin Logging and Dass Logging all pitched in so our kids can have their sports.

It also helps the bus drivers, who spend their money in town.

Thanks to all who help out our kids.

**JoAnn Beamish
Curls Transportation**

Thanks for thought-provoking editorials

To the Editor:

It is with gratitude that I write this letter. Gratitude for the intelligent, succinct and thought-provoking editorials that have been appearing in our free newspaper, *The Independent*. How fortunate that we, as readers and citizens, have the opportunity to "see it as it is". These editorials are based on facts and statistics, even quotations, that explain where we are in our U.S. government presently and how we got there. I thank God I was able to appreciate the differences in the past letters to the Editor. It is healthy that there are reactions that include intelligent considerations as well as the ignorantly reactive ones. Thank you for clarifying and asking us the questions. Economically we are in trouble. Who pays for it? I think, sadly, our children, grandchildren and all of us today.

**Isabelle McDaniel
Vernonia**

Do state legislators really represent us?

To the Editor:

I think it is time to review the function of our state legislators in light of the current discussion related to their taxpayer funded retirement plan and the proposal that they should meet annu-

Library column moved
"Between the Bookends"
may be found on page
12.

ally. We should ask whether we have elected them to represent us or to provide them with life-time employment.

I personally feel that they can get their work done under the current system with biannual sessions and an Emergency Board to take care of important things that come up between sessions. It seems that the more they are in session the more time they have to create mischief and increase taxes.

If we decide that the legislature should meet every year we will also be saying that we want to give our representatives an increase in pay and benefits. I am not sure we want to increase this governmental expense at the same time that we are reducing various services provided by state government.

Some of our representatives have finally admitted that they should not be covered by the PERS program. I applaud that idea. However, the suggestion is only a half-measure since they would replace their PERS benefits with a 401(k)-type retirement plan. So, they still would be treated as career state employees with taxpayers at least partially funding their retirement plan.

So, back to my initial question. Should our representatives be considered to be ordinary people such as you and I who meet occasionally to do the business of government, or should they be considered to be career employees of the state. If we would like them to be career employees then, by all means, let's have them meet more often, pay them more, and give them the best benefits government can provide. On the other hand, if we feel that they can perform their essential legislative duties as citizen-representatives, we need neither annual sessions or a retirement plan for them.

**Don McDaniel
Astoria**

Christians should oppose Satan's wars

To the Editor:

The United States waged war against Iraq because of the claim that Saddam Hussein was producing weapons of mass destruction. The U.S. has now taken over the country and not found any mass destruction weapons produced by Iraq. The few they did find were from our friends in Japan. If our intelli-

gence is that poor, we're in bad shape. If not, Bush lied. Of course, lying seems to go along with politics, after all. I guess Clinton lied and so have other Presidents.

As far as I can see it, there is no reason for war. Our money says "In God We Trust." Is this the God that made the heaven and earth or is that God some human?

The first war was fought in heaven. It was not started by God, but by an angel who wanted to overthrow God. Satan (who is the God of this world) is the author of all wars.

Since Satan is the one behind all wars, I think it a conflict of interest for Christians to be in favor of any war. Christ himself said you cannot serve God and money. Money is the reason behind all wars and Satan (if he is the God of this world) controls money, as far as God allows him to.

**Emil Rode
Vernonia**

P.S. I think Marcia Denison's letter was a little extreme, but good.

Thanks for another great Easter Cantata

To the Editor:

This is on behalf of all those in the Easter Cantata audience who are thinking they should have written this, but didn't (like I thought I should've last year, but didn't).

May I say what a great performance by all those who worked in or on the Cantata under Linda Cahill's direction; the singing, drama, props and magnificently done backdrop paintings. Every year it's always a wonderful and truthful reminder of the reason for our Easter Sunday celebration with our friends and loved ones. Thanks again, and

**God Bless America
Karen Miller
Vernonia**

Freedom of Speech (but only for some?)

To the Editor:

In the past few issues of *The Independent* there have been some very passionate letters regarding the war and also the editor's opinion about the war and the economy. Whether you agree or disagree, this paper and its editor have seen fit to publish your letter, even at the risk of being slandered by a let-

ter writer who might disagree. I have seen this as an open debate in an accepted forum in which we are allowed to draw our own conclusions. Maybe I am wrong but I believe that is what the press is supposed to do.

Now I have heard that there are certain individuals among us who disagree with this paper and its editor's opinion of the current administration's policies. But these individuals are not willing to directly address their objections to the editor nor through a letter to the editor. Instead they are trying to undermine the paper's very ability to do business by using whatever leverage they might possess to alienate the advertisers who make it possible for this paper to be offered at no charge to the people who read it.

I would ask these individuals, "Who chose you to decide what we should read or not read?"

Do you feel that you are a better American than I if I do not agree with you about the current administration's policies, or any subject for that matter, and voice my disapproval via a forum that I am afforded by the constitution, to wit:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

For those who do not know the above, it is the first amendment of the United States Constitution. Obviously our forefathers felt this to be of the greatest importance to our new country as they made it the first building block on the foundation of our constitution.

To those individuals who mistakenly think the above is for their benefit and beliefs ONLY, I remind you and those like you, that you are wrong.

If this country operated on your closed-minded, "toe the company line" mentality, we would not even be a sovereign nation. Instead, we would be having afternoon tea and crumpets, driving on the "wrong" side of the road, and singing "God Save the Queen".

Also, if you are one of these individuals, and you happen to be a business owner, does your way of thinking also mean that

if I disagree with your political views I am not welcome to spend my money in your business establishment and support your way of life? If that is the case, please put a list of your beliefs at the front door so that I may choose whether I want to patronize your business. And what of any employees you have...must they pass a "Political Correctness" quiz before they are hired?

Consider yourself warned. Your sleazy, back room, good old boy efforts reek of censorship. Come out in the light and debate your peers in an open forum and help make this country even greater. If you lack the courage to do that, then find another hobby or purpose. Because every time you try to control the public's access to information and opinions, I and many others will be there to expose you and your self-righteous, self-indulgent views that reward no one and leave a black mark on everything our forefathers fought and died for.

One of the reasons this country is so great is because it allows people to choose. If you don't like what you are reading, listening to on the radio, or watching on television then don't read it or change the station. But please don't allow your bloated ego or narrow minded view of what information or opinions should or shouldn't be written or reported, to presume for me what information or opinions I should or shouldn't have access to.

"WE THE PEOPLE" means that every American citizen has the same rights as you. It is what makes our country great. Your subterranean efforts at censorship reflect all that is bad.

**Glen Purvee
Vernonia**

P.S. Because I am a city counselor, I want to state that the above is my view and is not intended to reflect the views of my fellow councilors, the mayor, or the City of Vernonia.

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.**