

Letters

From page 3

first was the Airport Park), looking for a fresh cup of coffee. The first person I make friendly eye contact with is working in produce. "No we don't, but I'd be happy to make you a cup if you like." What! Whoa! Holding back the excessive reaction of falling to my knees in sobs, I check the expression of his conversation companion and let go of a little NJ/NY suspicion, wondering if I unknowingly traversed to another country...world. Maybe I didn't hear him right...I may have slipped into my own world, hearing what I want to hear and seeing what I want to see. (No, he's wearing a produce apron, not institutional white). I decided on a safe "I am a weary traveling idiot" smile, and manage to pull forth an eloquent: "Ah, nah, I'll just...(are you for real?)...buy some." He kindly saves my fall from social grace and tells me where he finds the best coffee in town. I'd be happy to advertise for them but I promptly forgot the name and the directions upon the onset of yet another neighborly conversation. Do I have amnesia and this IS my home town?

Actually, the first Vernionians I met were in the cabin next to mine at Lincoln City KOA. A young couple with two kiddies, they struck up an "over the fence" conversation and, with uncommon hospitality, invited me to visit Vernonia. The young man actually took the time to write down directions...with a smiley face and "Good Luck!"

I landed for coffee at the Country Kitchen and was handed an *Oregonian* by a patron before I even sat down. Somebody pinch me...gently please.

Needing to get out of the heat, tired of my trail tent, I treated myself to the Vernonia Inn, where, if I could interrupt my stay for Saturday (two wedding parties booked) the room was mine.

First stop, the library. Asked if there was some way a non-resident could check out a book...."Come on back tomorrow and ask for Nancy... Which book are you interested in?...Oh, I have one back here that hasn't been cataloged yet...Here...Just bring it back when you're done." (What!? ...has Scotty beamed me up?) "Oh, would you mind taking this flyer up to the Inn when you go back? I called and Treasa said she would put it up." Sure. No

problem.

The Saturday that I needed to vacate the room, I used to proceed with my plan to touch a SW and NW tip of Washington. I didn't get very far thanks, in part, to Mr. Road Rage (the likes of which I had not experienced since NJ) telling me this was no time or place to take in the scenery...oops! Was he telling me that my cell phone just slid off the hood of... Oh, my cell phone!!

Time and space are taking on strange proportions. Is this my second, unexpected PTS (post-traumatic stress) experience since 9/11/01? I half expect to wake up on a gurney in a NY/NJ emergency room, look around, realize that I haven't driven across country, didn't have a one year mountaintop encounter in Colorado, and have never been in a little town called Vernonia...that felt like "home". Except, I did talk to my daughter on the phone and she said, "Mom, what did you say the name of that town is? Where?" All in that "I know they act like they like you, Mom, they're paid to" tone. But that's just her sense of humor. She's glad I may have found my happy hunting grounds.

Rebecca Carey
Lakewood, CO

Vital Columbia 9-1-1 is cost efficient

To the Editor:

Columbia 9-1-1 has been there since the people of Columbia County voted to form the district. Columbia 9-1-1 has improved its service constantly and is always working to get better, in ways we don't even know about or appreciate, until we need to call 9-1-1.

Columbia 9-1-1 has been the efficient, effective link in any emergency, and is now able to provide this vital service at a LOWER TAX RATE than five years ago. That's right, LOWER. Think that's not efficient? What else do you know of that has gone DOWN in cost in the last five years? Especially something you count on when lives are on the line, when seconds make a difference in how things end up.

Columbia 9-1-1 works so well, is so reliable, that it is easy to forget about it until we need it. Except, when you think about it, we don't forget it at all. It's right there in the back of our

minds, "Call 9-1-1."

Did you know that the new radio system will be coming on line soon? It will enable our police, firefighters, and medical professionals to communicate and respond more efficiently to our calls to 9-1-1 for help. But did you know the new system cost zero additional taxes? Did you know that the majority of the funding was obtained from the federal government? This is a mark of an efficient public agency. Many times those words do not go well together. For the Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District, they do.

I want to encourage everyone to stop and think about it for a minute. Think about this RENEWAL, which will cost LESS than we are paying now. Think about how much we count on vital 9-1-1 services; think about how much you want 9-1-1 to be there when YOU call and then just vote YES to renew Columbia 9-1-1 on the November ballot. Yeah, the one sitting on your table right now. Pick it up, vote YES and send your ballot in to make it count. This is very important, do not forget to vote. Do not put it off, and do not wait. Trust me, a YES vote will continue to make you safer!

Martin T. Anderson KC7ILK
Emergency Coordinator
and Radio Officer
Columbia Co. ARES/RACES

9-1-1 is there for us when we need them

To the Editor:

When we first got 9-1-1 service in Columbia County, it was something new, we weren't sure about it and we certainly weren't used to it. Now, we count on 9-1-1 being there, an essential service we don't even think about because we KNOW it's there when we dial 9-1-1.

And it's not just knowing 9-1-1 is there, it's knowing that a real person is there, always answering the call, 24/7.

There aren't a whole lot of things we can count on to always be there for us. Columbia 9-1-1 is one of the few we CAN count on. Which is why we're voting YES to renew Columbia 9-1-1 operating funds, and we encourage everyone else to vote YES, too.

Don & DeLoris Webb
Vernonia

Obituary

MARVIN A. GEHRKE

Marvin Arnold "Arnie" Gehrke, 80, Forest Grove, died September 27, 2003. A memorial gathering was held October 3 at the Forest Grove Elks Lodge B.P.O.E. No. 2440. A private gathering was held to spread his cremated remains at Lawyer's Canyon in Idaho, where he spent many hours of his youth fishing.

Mr. Gehrke was born March 4, 1923, in Nezperce, Idaho, to Roy and Laura Berry Gehrke. He grew up in Nezperce.

In 1954, he married Aloma L. Albers. They lived in Texas and moved to Forest Grove in 1956.

He worked as a ranch foreman, an ambulance driver, a steelworker, in the shipyards of California as a welding inspector, and in car sales, in Portland, for Riviera Motors and for Carr Chevrolet in Beaverton.

Mr. Gehrke was a member of the Grangeville, Idaho, Elks Lodge and the Forest Grove Elks Lodge B.P.O.E. No. 2440.

He was preceded in death by a daughter.

Survivors include his wife; two sons, Roy of Nezperce, Idaho, and Arnold of Forest Grove; three daughters, Toni Palmer of Buxton, Lisa Gehrke-Vogt of Tillamook, and Mona Hollien of Forest Grove; a brother, Delwin of Ferdinand, Idaho; 10 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; nieces and nephews.

Forest Grove Memorial Chapel was in charge of arrangements.

ROY W. OAKES

Roy Waldo Oakes, 72, Hillsboro, died October 8, 2003. Graveside services, Flag Honor Presentation and interment were held October 10 at the Mist Cemetery.

Mr. Oakes was born September 2, 1931, in Brooks, to Milton and Myrtle Taylor Oakes. He grew up in Vernonia. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1950, during the Korean Conflict, and was discharged in 1954.

In 1971, he married Arminda L. LaLonde. They lived in Hillsboro.

He worked for the United States Postal Service from 1961 to 1987.

Mr. Oates was a member of the Beaverton Foursquare Church.

Survivors include his wife; a son, David G. of McMinnville; three daughters, Leona Mae Adams of Spokane, Wash., Colleen A. Hall of Bend, and Zelinda M. Dubane of Beaverton; a stepdaughter, Kathleen Johnstone of Seattle, Wash.; brother, Jerome of Brownsville; 11 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; nieces and nephews.

Remembrances are suggested to Beaverton Foursquare Church, 13565

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Fuiten, Rose & Hoyt Funeral Home in Forest Grove was in charge of arrangements.

DORMAN M. MOEHNKE

Dorman Michael Moehnke, 97, Hayward Hill, near Banks, died October 7, 2003. Funeral services were held October 11 at Fuiten, Rose & Hoyt Funeral Home in Forest Grove, with Reverend Gene Upton, Pastor Emeritus of Tualatin Plains Presbyterian Church in Hillsboro, officiating. Private interment was held.

Mr. Moehnke was born May 15, 1906, in Kelso, Washington, to John G. and Rose Bullard Moehnke. He grew up in Beavercreek and graduated from Oregon City High School.

In 1940, he married Helen M. Berwald. They lived in Jewell and Alsea and moved to Hayward Hill in 1945.

He worked in the logging industry, for his father from 1926 to 1936, then for 3-M Logging Company in Alsea. He and his brother owned and operated Moehnke & Berwald, a logging and land clearing company. Prior to retiring in 1971, he worked for Purvine Logging as a loading engineer.

Mr. Moehnke served on the Banks School District school board.

He was preceded in death by three sisters, Lovelle, Twyla Repp, and Irma Lee Whitaker.

Survivors include his wife; two sons, Michael J. of Banks, and Robert H. of La Center, Wash.; three daughters, Linda L. Rieben of Banks, Irene O. Mott of Conifer, Colo., and Ella M. Duyck of Parkdale; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandchild; nieces and nephews.

Remembrances are suggested to Doernbecher's Childrens Hospital, 1121 SW Salmon, Suite 201, Portland, OR 97205-2021.

Fuiten, Rose & Hoyt Funeral Home in Forest Grove was in charge of arrangements.

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