

Letters

Difference explained between tax and fee

To the Editor:

As a member of the Oregon House of Representatives during the '80s I served on the Revenue committee for six years and the question "Is it a fee or a tax?" came up frequently. The courts have clarified the issue many times and have stated a clear distinction.

A fee is an assessment for a specific use paid by the particular user of a public service. (e.g. a fee for the collection of garbage or a fee to use a State park campsite)

A tax is an assessment to generate funds for general government purposes. The cigarette tax is, in fact, a tax even though it is assessed only against people who buy cigarettes, because the money collected is allocated to the State general fund for general government purposes.

When the Columbia County aggregate depletion fee [of 10 cents per ton] was first established, it was dedicated to administration of the County's surface mining ordinance which regulates and benefits the mining industry, with any surplus going to the road department. The road

department was not guaranteed any of the proceeds of the aggregate depletion fee.

When it was raised to 15 cents, it became a tax because a portion of the 15 cents was allocated to the road department. The most recent proposal was also a tax because it not only maintained the road department allocation but added parks and animal control as dedicated recipients.

Bruce Hugo Scappoose

Opinion on land use? Bring your thoughts

To the Editor:

What is your opinion of land use in this county? We want to hear about it.

We are your local C.P.A.C. We are residents of the Vernonia area. There is one volunteer from each of five neighborhoods. We are your voice to the Land Use Planning Dept. We advise the Planning Commission on Land Use Applications that are applied for by Vernonia area residents. The County Commissioners also keep us informed about any land use changes that are occurring so we can make sure our voices

are heard.

We would like you to come down and meet your neighborhood representative. Our next meeting is the 2nd Tuesday in April, April 13, 2004, 7:00 at City Hall. Come for dessert.

Sincerely, your Upper Nehalem Citizen Planning Advisory Committee,

**Tim Bero, Nancy Dailey,
Gayle Lee, Rick Gardner,
Susan Goodhope
Vernonia**

Join program to Adopt-A-Soldier

To the Editor:

Have you ever wondered how you could help our soldiers who are continuing to defend our freedom? Well, here is your opportunity. Cub Scout Pack 201 is joining up with The Boy Scouts of America Cascade Pacific Council in supporting the "Adopt-A-Soldier" program. You can help by donating items at any one of the following local businesses: Sentry, U.S. Bank, Western Auto, or Vernonia Hardware.

If you have questions or need to arrange for a pickup of your donated items, please contact Kinnell Steward at 503-

429-8133. If you would rather, make a cash donation to help pay for postage or purchase other necessary items for the care packages. Checks can be made payable to "Family Programs."

We will be collecting items for the entire month of April 2004. Some items that are being sought after are: jerky, nuts of any kind, trail mix, high protein power bars, granola bars, crackers & cheese, tuna packets (NO CANS), powdered drinks/lemonade, chips in a can, store bought cookies, hard candies, gum, etc. Due to shipping, pre-packaged, non-goosy, non-crushable items are preferred. NO pork products or coffee will be accepted. Game books, paperback books, cards, dice, panty liners, international phone cards & stationary are also needed.

Supplies needed for shipping include: plain boxes, tape & postage vouchers. It is expensive to ship the packages overseas; it costs approx. \$8.00 - \$20.00 per five pound package.

Your help is greatly appreciated & we would love to make a small difference in these dedicated people's lives. Thank you in advance for your support.

**Kinnell Steward
Vernonia**

C.A.S.A. grateful for generous donation

To the Editor:

The volunteers of C.A.S.A. (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Columbia County would like to thank the Samuel S. Johnson Foundation for their generous donation.

Community members donate their time to work with and assist children of Columbia

County that are under the care of the Department of Human Services. Each volunteer works as an independent voice to help determine the best needs of the child in dependency cases. At any given time in Columbia County, a minimum of sixty children could use the support of a C.A.S.A. volunteer. Currently, we have eight volunteers providing services to nineteen children.

The Samuel S. Johnson Foundation has made it possible to support our volunteers by providing supplies and allowing for continuing education. It is our hope that with the support of organizations like the Samuel S. Johnson Foundation that we will be able to grow, providing much-needed assistance to many more children in the juvenile justice system.

Sincerely,

**Doreen Hocraffer, Director
C.A.S.A. of Columbia County**

County GOP slates Candidates' Fair

To the Editor:

We would like to announce to your readers that the Columbia County Republicans will be holding a candidate fair on April 15, 2004, at the Columbia River PUD. It is open to all Republican candidates running in the primary that is on May 18. It would be a great time to come and meet the candidates and hear their views on the subjects being presented. Any candidates that we have not yet contacted can contact us at 503-728-3548. We look forward to having all interested parties attend.

**Pat Powell
GOP Secretary
Rainier**

From small towns

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five years-old, plus three dogs. Mrs. Workman is originally from the Pacific Northwest so they anticipate a smooth transition in the move to Oregon. Both grew up in towns smaller than Vernonia and believe Vernonia will be a good place to raise a family.

Workman enjoys sports, singing and computers, and claims to have only a few clothing items in 'Husker red.

Between the Bookends

By Ann Krutsinger, Library Assistant
Banks Public Library



Winter and early spring are good times to read and prepare for summer fun and adventures. In that vein, the library has purchased some new outdoor guides to help our patrons plan trips in the Northwest.

Washington's Rail-Trails second edition, by Fred Wert, outlines and maps old rail trails that are now available for walking, running, bike riding, in line skating and horseback riding. There are four sections in the book: Northwest Washington, Puget Sound, Southwest Washington and Eastern Washington. Another book about Washington State is Best Hikes with Dogs in Western Washington by Dan A. Nelson. Nelson's book outlines both safety and health requirements for hiking with a dog, and outlines specific trails that are "dog friendly."

Regarding Oregon's beautiful outdoor experiences, the library has purchased the companion volume, Best Hikes with Dogs in Oregon, by Ellen Morris Bishop. Bishop has a thorough overview of both health and safety requirements and many trails. Her chapter headings include the Coast Range, the Columbia River Gorge, the

Cascade Mountains and the Blue Mountains.

Other new outdoor books about Oregon are Best Short Hikes in Northwest Oregon, by Rhonda and George Ostertag, Soggy Sneakers: A Paddler's Guide to Oregon's Rivers by Pete Giordano and the Willamette Kayak and Canoe Club, and Hiking the Oregon Coast by local guide Lizann Dunegan. I got excited reading about the riding possibilities in Bicycling America's National Parks: Oregon & Washington, by David Story. This book has the best road and trail rides from Crater Lake to Olympic National Park.

Three other outdoor books that are not strictly about Northwest experiences are The Fly-Tying Bible by Peter Gathercole, and Marathon Training: A 100-Day Program to Your Best Race, by Joe Henderson. It is raining as I write this, but these books are great ways to dream about summer and plan some outdoor fun.

Banks Public Library: 111 Market Street.
Hours: Tues., Wed., Thurs., 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.;
Fri. and Sat. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Preschool Story Time: Wednesdays, 10:15
a.m., through July.
Phone: (503) 324-1382
Internet: www.WILnet.wccls.lib.or.us.
to browse library resources or to
reserve materials electronically.

Policy on Letters

The INDEPENDENT is pleased to provide this forum for public comments. To help assure your letter is published, note the following:

- Brevity is best. Long letters may not be published, or they may be edited.
- Form letters and personal attacks will not be accepted.
- A verifiable name and address must be included.