

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Summer fun requires effort, good planning and great volunteers

Summertime means lots of good things — swimming, baseball, picnics, camping, parades, fishing, boating, biking, riding and much more. In Vernonia, many of these activities are enjoyed in or on city, school and state-owned facilities, with minimal fees or no fees.

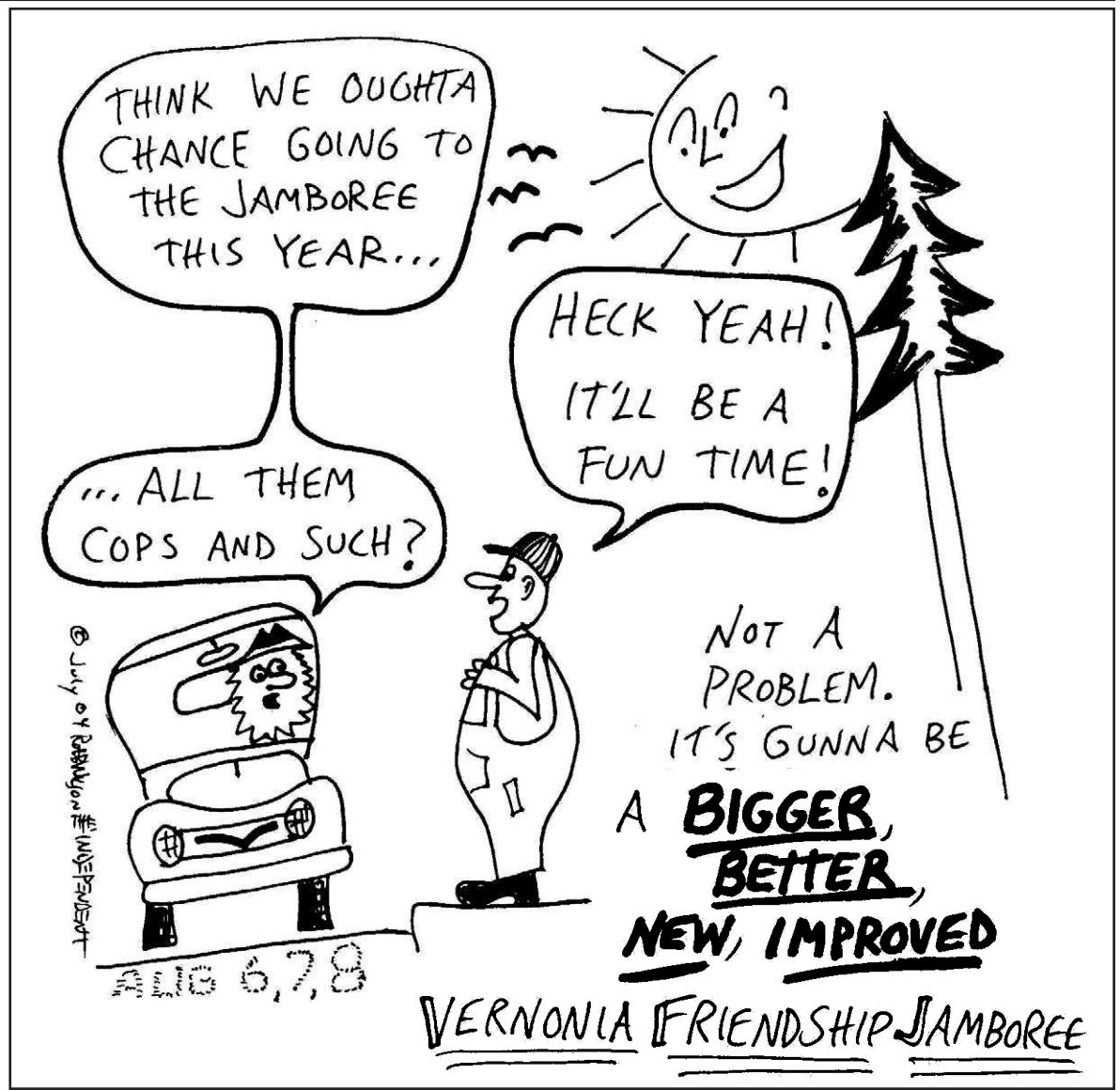
The Rock Creek swimming hole is a good example. This year, the wading pool was resurfaced and a new dam was built. These projects required sanding, surfacing, a new log, planks, hardware and labor. Some of the labor and materials were donated, most notably the 72' peeled log from McCormick Lumber Co. in St. Helens. Everything else was paid for by the city, and the area teems with free activity well into the evening.

If you fish or launch your boat at Vernonia Lake, camp or picnic at one of the city parks, play softball or soccer at Spencer Field, or basketball at the school, you are using public facilities. If you enjoy summer reading programs at the library, use the horse arena at Anderson Park, or fly out of Vernonia Airport, you are using public facilities. If you walk, ride a bike or horse on the linear trail, you are using public facilities.

There are not many towns as small as Vernonia that have so many recreational opportunities, so a question often asked is how, given a very tight budget, can the city do this? In addition to careful use of available resources and aggressively seeking grants, there is another element: VOLUNTEERS!

Volunteers help with both planning and developing the facilities. They help with operations and maintenance. All youth activities have adult volunteers who take care of business so the kids can have fun. Jamboree is coming up with a multitude of activities and events that wouldn't be possible without volunteers - from the fishing derby to the logging show.

Look at it this way: It's great if you participate in any of the activities mentioned above. It would be even better if you volunteered a little time in an area of your choice to help keep these opportunities available.



Letters

Use of workers comp not abuse of system

To the Editor:

The purpose of workers compensation insurance is to provide medical care for people who are injured on the job.

Quotes from Vernonia School District Superintendent Mike Funderburg and school board chairman Jim Krahn (The INDEPENDENT July 1, 2004) give the impression that district employees who have used workers compensation more than once "abused" the system and are no longer employed in the district.

Since a claim has to be approved before there is treatment, is this a way to accuse health care providers of collusion with false workers compensation claims?

Or, more likely, is this a not-so-subtle hint to current employees that, if they are hurt on the job and want to stay employed, they'd better keep their mouths shut and not file a claim?

Charles G. Davis
Vernonia

Scholarship awarded to Bo Rumbolz

To the Editor:

Due to some timing and clerical errors, the Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters Association did not get their scholarship information to Vernonia High School in time for the graduation awards. This letter is intended to publicly acknowledge the young man who was this year's recipient of the Gene Weller Memorial Scholarship.

This young man has shown a commitment to his fellow classmates throughout his career at Vernonia High School, through participation in school activities, and through community involvement. He was a member of the school's firefighter program his Junior year, and has been a Volunteer Firefighter throughout his Senior year.

Because of this commitment to others, the VVFA is proud to present this year's Gene Weller Memorial Scholarship to Bo Rumbolz.

Thank You
Ernie Smith
VVFA President

Thanks for July 4th help

To the Editor:

I hope everyone enjoyed our parade and fireworks as much as I did.

We would like to thank everyone who donated to our fireworks fund. It was a very successful year. With that kind of response maybe we can add to our display next year. Our parade, sponsored by the City of Vernonia was great. I would like to thank my parade helpers — Racheal Bentson, Darlene Parrow, John Murray and Dylan Snyder. A thank you to everyone who made our parade and fireworks special, including our police dept., Metro West Ambulance and our volunteer firemen, especially Tom Ramsey. Thank you for not bringing your own fireworks onto the school grounds. Thank you for the use of the school grounds and to whoever cleaned up the school grounds the next morning. A good community effort by everyone helps everything run smoothly.

Enid Parrow
Vernonia Pride