

# The INDEPENDENT

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## Opinion

### A great effort was enjoyed by everyone at Jamboree

This year's Friendship Jamboree was everything the community could wish for — it was fun, it was busy, there were activities for all ages, the crowds were huge — and best of all...it was friendly!

The atmosphere carried right on through the weekend and into Monday morning, too. If you were downtown early on Monday, you might have noticed that the streets, school grounds and parks were clean and most sidewalks had been cleaned, too.

Congratulations to all of the volunteers who worked both before and after Jamboree, to the groups who took on the cleanup, and to the city public works crew. You did a great job!

### School will soon start, so please, drive carefully!

Some kids love school, some feel differently, but they all have one thing in common: Young children (and occasionally older ones) forget to watch for traffic. They are exuberant, excited and careless, in other words, they are children.

Changes in speed laws now in effect, already make it mandatory to drive no more than 20 miles per hour in both Banks and Vernonia school zones. Drivers need to be alert to kids dashing into the street and to be extra careful at crosswalks.

Kids act like kids, so please drive carefully.

### Waste Management plans to close transfer station

The City of Vernonia was informed this week that Waste Management plans to close the local transfer station. This multi-national company has given our small town about six weeks to come up with a way to keep the transfer station open.

This topic will, of necessity, be on the agenda at the September 7 council meeting. Undoubtedly, all ideas will be open for consideration and anyone interested should be sure to attend the meeting.



## Letters

### Changing one's mind is better than rigidity

To the Editor:

Once again, the President is charging Senator Kerry with "flip-flopping." The president seems to think Kerry's ability to take in new information is a bad thing. (Next thing you know, the president will be saying nasty things about Kerry's distinguished military service.)

There have been many times in my life when I've changed my opinions due to new information. Maybe you have, too. I think that's a good thing. Anyone so rigid in his beliefs that he cannot change his mind or admit a mistake — even when given new facts — is not someone I want as the leader of our great country.

Diana Boom Scappoose

### Intolerance is recipe for a divided nation

To the Editor:

As an Independent voter my presidential voting history goes like this: For Nixon in '72, Ford in '76, Reagan in '80, Mondale

in '84, Bush in '88, Perot in '92, Clinton in '96; and Gore in 2000. I am also a 60's era U.S. Army veteran who believes firmly in a strong national defense that should be applied forcefully when the citizens of our country are in imminent danger or, in the case of humanitarian need, when a concert of nations concur that military action is warranted or required.

Regarding "tolerance," I have no doubt that tolerance and acceptance of other cultures, points of view, and philosophies is a requirement for our long term survival as a nation in this increasingly complicated world. I view the 2004 election cycle as arguably the most important one since the election of Abraham Lincoln. Tolerance versus intolerance seems to me the bottom line in this election.

I suppose that there is an argument for creating two Americas: one nation for those who cannot compromise or accept the views of others and a separate nation for everyone else. But, I can't help think that a nation of homogenous-think-

ing folks would be seriously lacking in terms of ability to interact successfully with other nations; in creativity and innovation; and being an engaging place to live. The current notion of blending a certain flavor of religious ideology with government, I think, is a recipe for disaster. Those who will take the time to look at the historical consequences of nations who blend a particular ideology, philosophy, or dogma into government will likely agree.

Hopefully, the voters this year will be diligent in pursuit of the facts before making their November election choices.

Joel Haugen Scappoose

### Attackers mean to force us to leave Iraq

To the Editor:

I am writing concerning the war with Iraq and the public's growing negative opinion of our involvement in "Iraq's affairs."

We are all grieved when Saddam-loyalists attack our soldiers and take the lives of some of them, and we often

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