

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Decisions for Banks voters

Banks voters have three local option measures to consider on their November 2 ballots. Two of the measures are for residents in the City of Banks; one is for Banks Fire District.

Banks Fire District has earned the support of area residents

Measure 34-82 seeks a five-year levy of \$.62 per \$1,000 of assessed value for operational expenses for Banks Fire District. The levy would not apply until the 2005/06 fiscal year.

Banks Fire District provides fire and emergency medical services—24 hours a day with 60 volunteers—to the communities of Banks, Buxton, Manning and Timber. The district must also respond to emergencies on Hwy. 6, Hwy. 47 and Hwy. 26.

The district's call volume has increased by nearly 70 percent, from 297 in 1999 to 503 in 2003.

This service is a bargain at \$62 per year for \$100,000 of assessed property value. District voters would be wise to vote Yes on Measure 34-82.

Banks Police Department

Measure 34-80 would levy \$2 per \$1,000 of assessed value to help provide law enforcement services. The levy would begin in fiscal year 2005-06 and be in force for four years. The funds can be used only for law enforcement personnel, equipment and services. The only question for voters is to decide whether they want a local police department at a cost of \$200 per \$100,000 of assessed property value. Those who feel it is wise to have a local police department will vote Yes for Measure 34-80.

Banks Parks

Measure 34-84 would provide maintenance and improvements for Banks parks with a four-year levy of \$.75 per \$1,000. This would also begin in fiscal 2005-06. It is very difficult for a small town to operate parks without at least some funding mechanism. If Banks residents want better parks, they will have to raise the money for them.

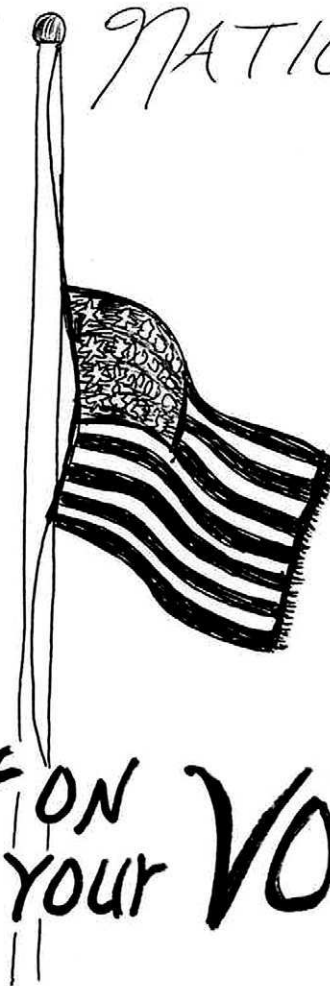
Banks Mayor and Council

After nearly 20 years of volunteer service for the City of Banks, Mayor Bob Orlowski is stepping down, so voters will also be choosing a new mayor. Two candidates are seeking the mayor's position – City Councilor Terri Branstitre and long-time planning commission member Mike Lyda will both be on the ballot.

Three vacancies on the city council have attracted only two candidates. Ryan Birr is seeking another term. Brian Biehl, whose planning commission term is expiring, has also filed for a seat on the city council.

The INDEPENDENT will not make a recommendation on the mayoral race, but all four of the candidates named above are well qualified and they are all dedicated to helping their community. After the election, there will still be one vacancy on the council and it is obvious that the community would be well served if the candidate who loses in the mayoral race is named to the vacant council seat.

the BUSH NATION



COUNT ON YOUR VOTE!

Art by [unclear] #INDEPENDENT

Letters

Display signs even if others disapprove

To the Editor:

We would like to encourage any of you that have had signs destroyed, removed, or somehow lost by an unknown source, or even been harassed because of certain sign(s) you are displaying because of your political preferences, go ahead, get another sign and/or spruce up the sign you have with balloons, streamers or anything that would be positive, something that will draw attention to the sign(s).

If you are not able to get new signs, make up your own. Be creative!

Happy Voting,
Bob and Debbie Huntington
Birkenfeld

Compromise for unity and national balance

To the Editor:

The thing I have never understood with politics is the simple fact that the real answers are not Democrat or Republican, Conservative, or Liberal. The answers have

always been there... right down the middle... and why this country has chosen for so long to separate itself, and allow such conflicts on fundamental issues election after election is just crazy to me. Why have they never joined forces and made this country truly great by combining their ideas, compromising when necessary, and create a country of unity and not separation? Instead we are left having to continually go back every 4 to 8 years and fix what the other screws up... back and forth, back and forth... Seems more logical to me to work together and find balance.

Marie Botchie
Vernonia

School board dates should be consistent

To the Editor:

As a parent I feel as though it is my responsibility to stay informed and active in my child's education. I do this by communicating with his teacher on a daily basis, volunteering in his class, helping with after school activities and by attending school board meetings.

The problem I am having is attending school board meetings which are scheduled for the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. I mark the day on my calendar, I make plans for my children so that I can be in attendance, and I spend time thinking about what I want to say or questions I want to ask the board. So, what is my problem? Well, my problems it I can't remember the last time the school board actually met on the second Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

I understood during the summer months, due to the fact that most of us live by a different schedule when we have great weather, long days and vacations planned with our families. And then during the month of September the first school board meeting was postponed one week, which I thought was confusing but I understood that it might have been too crazy to have a school board meeting during the first week of school. Luckily for me I called the day of the scheduled meeting to confirm,

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