

Letters

Bush "reform" would harm Social Security

To the Editor:

According to President Bush, Social Security is going broke and must be fixed now! This is not true! Let me tell you a story, a story of progressive progress.

In 1939, two thirds of America's seniors were living in poverty. Today, that number is only 10 percent. That, my friends, is progress born out of the New Deal and the Democratic Party - Social Security. The very same program that Bush, Greenspan, Wall Street investors and opportunists in Congress insist is doomed and faces an imminent financial crisis.

These 'Chicken Littles' need to face the truth:

1. The system is now taking in way more money than it spends. As a result the President has borrowed from the social security trust fund, leaving IOUs for future generations to pay back with interest. Stop it now, I say. No more tax cuts or wars paid for by stealing money

from our retirees.

2. The system does not need to be "reformed" by privatizing our accounts, pushing people to put their social security nest egg into the stock market. The same market that saw Enron stock fall from \$97 a share to 57 cents in only one year!

3. The system needs a plan that will deal with the long term deficit occurring in 2052 - forty seven years from today! President Bush's proposal for privatization actually increases this long term deficit and his administration has admitted this. So why make the change to "private accounts"? Someone gets rich off of them and it is not you or me. Can you say Wall Street? Why not worry about Main Street?

4. The system does not need to raise the retirement age to 70 or slash benefits for anyone.

5. If we really wanted to make the system more progressive why not exempt the first \$20,000 of one's income from Social Security taxes and then remove the cap that allows billionaires to only pay taxes on the first \$90,000 of their

earnings. This would be a truly progressive tax cut, the benefits would fall on the truly needy and the truly wealthy would pay their fair share into the Social Security trust fund.

What President Bush is currently planning is not reform but Social Security 'deform' and Social Security destruction. We can and we must do better than this.

Craig Frasier
Scappoose

Thanks for facts in everyday English

To the Editor:

I opened the February 17 paper, read the Editorial and then my second choice, Letters to the Editor. My congratulations and deepest appreciation to Glen Purvee for his letter entitled *Letter to Geo. W. Bush*. Mr. Purvee's ability to present facts in plain everyday English could really help our President to be a more caring human being. I guess we could start by sending it to our Legislators. I have often thought how great presenting my thoughts and

feelings, so honestly, accurately, without emoting, "just tell it like it is" would contribute to our community if I could do it like Mr. Purvee. What our former City Councilman has shared is an education to be honored. Thank you, Glen.

Isabelle McDaniel
Vernonia

Letters sometimes too long to complete

To the Editor:

Perhaps *The Independent* could limit the length of these letters. I could read *War and Peace* for the third time before finishing Glen's letter of February 17, 2005.

Pat Knight
Vernonia

Vandals don't deserve friends' protection

To the Editor:

This subject is too hot for my Bits & Bites column.

I am incensed past the point of being mad. I am truly without words and it is best that I am. But - Friday, February 18, was

a beautiful day so I decided to stroll Webb Way. What did I find? Some person or persons has utterly destroyed the Eagle Scout project so thoughtfully given to the folks of Vernonia. Post 7 is the only one still intact. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 are ruined. Of one, only the post remains, another is just a piece of board, on yet another the frame has been pried away, the picture gone, glass shattered. The rest have broken plexiglass. Why and by whom?

Did it give you some sort of high, knowing you were destroying public property? Did you brag to your pals of your deed? If so, I pray they have guts enough to turn you in. You not only need to claim the deed publicly but pay for the replacement of each and spend some time in a cell thinking of where you are headed. This was not a Prank. It should not be laughed off as such. You will sometime in your life pay for what you are doing but you may not see it coming until it is too late. You can't turn back the clock of your life.

Jacqueline Ramsay
Vernonia

Between the Bookends

By Ann Krutsinger, Library Assistant
Banks Public Library



The theme for March's Preschool Storytime at the Banks Public Library is as follows:

MAR 2: "Home Again"

MAR 9: "Magical Music"

MAR 16: "Puppy Dog Tales"

MAR 30: "Spring Fever"

During the week of Spring Break (March 23rd) there will be no Preschool Storytime. If you haven't tried our Storytime and you have small children, please come! It is usually a small group and Miss Cathy is lots of fun!

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Banks Library was held Saturday, February 12th. A new board of directors was elected. They are:

Kirk Andrews, President

Tami Stewart, Vice President

Margaret Holland, Treasurer

Ann Krutsinger, Secretary

Joyce Krull, Recycling Coordinator

Thank you to all of these folks for committing the time and energy to maintain a viable Friends' organization.

Did you know that the single most profitable fund-raiser for the Friends of the Banks Library is through monthly Recycling at SWATCO? We are responsible for providing volunteers to help man the monthly 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. recycling at

SWATCO on Sellers Road. So, if you want to help the library and can offer two hours at recycling every few months, please call the library and leave your name and phone number.

Recycling help is a great way for kids to earn volunteer hours, too! There are some requirements and, generally, those under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

The date of the Annual Friends of the Library Plant & Book Sale has been scheduled for Friday, May 6th and Saturday, May 7th. This is an excellent time to purchase flowers, shrubs, trees, vegetable and herb starts and yard and garden art.

New on the shelves are some exciting best sellers. The Book of the Month Club has named James Patterson's newest, *Honeymoon*, the 2005 International Thriller of the Year. Robert Crais' newest thriller, *The Forgotten Man*, has returned to some of our favorite characters, private investigator Elvis Cole and his enigmatic partner, Joe Pike. Crais' novel, set in Los Angeles, revolves around Cole's search for the identity of a mystery man - his own father.

Banks Public Library: 111 Market Street.
Hours: Tues., Wed., Thurs., 12 - 7:00 p.m.;
Fri. and Sat. 12 - 5 p.m.
Preschool Story Time: Wednesdays, 10:15 a.m.
Phone: (503) 324-1382
Internet: www.WILnet.wccs.lib.or.us to
browse library resources or to reserve
materials electronically.

Rep. Wu makes multiple appearances in Vernonia

Congressman David Wu met with three different groups in Vernonia, February 23, stopping first at Vernonia City Hall to meet with staff and elected officials, then holding a town hall meeting at the Scout Cabin and appearing at an assembly at Vernonia High School.

While the conversation at city hall dealt more with the nuts and bolts of government finance, a broad spectrum of topics were discussed at the other two meetings.

Social Security was a topic in both venues, but the approach was different. The town hall audience was highly skeptical of President Bush's claim that Social Security is in critical condition and needs immediate changes. At the high school, Wu told the young audience that the president's plan depends on their belief in his statements that Social Security is failing, and their acceptance of a reduction in guaranteed benefits, plus heavy borrowing

to fund privatization. "Social Security has been, and will be, available for every generation," Wu said, and "will be there for you," with moderate changes.

He was more outspoken at the general meeting saying a big lie is being told that Social Security can't be saved without radical surgery. "It just ain't so," he emphasized.

Many of the town hall questions dealt with the administration's current and proposed budget priorities. Three people expressed anger at the growing difficulty of finding adequate health care for veterans.

Wu agreed that the government has failed to keep their agreement with veterans, and said many in Congress are upset about it. Nevertheless, he added, the Republican leadership replaced their own committee head because he was "too considerate" of veterans.

When the administration's proposal to make Bonneville

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