

## Letters

### Volunteers can create a vibrant Oregon

To the Editor:

I routinely dine with Oregon's governor. Sometimes it's just the two of us and sometimes we're with 300 or so "close friends." When we dine alone, our conversations are pretty much like anyone's (how was your day?; what did you do?). But one recurring theme in our conversations that might not be part of yours is "Can Oregon government solve this or that problem? What may surprise you is that a recurring answer in our household is "No! Oregonians can solve this or that problem!"

Given the shaky state economy of the last two-and-a-half years, and the budget cuts and salary freezes that we've endured, it's becoming clear to all that government can't "do it all." And, in truth, Oregon's tradition is to use the expertise, muscle, and commitment of volunteers — even to run the government. That's why Oregon government boards and commissions comprise able, public-spirited volunteers.

Working beside the volunteers who serve on government boards and commissions are Oregonians who volunteer to im-

prove their communities and their lives in myriad ways. And Oregon is the home of a unique organization, SOLV, that creates and supports thousands of volunteer opportunities throughout Oregon. Take advantage of it!

SOLV — our "beach cleanup" group — is a model for volunteer opportunities, from identifying community problems, to working with local leaders to tackle the problems, to coordinating volunteers to resolve the problems. And while government budgets are shrinking, SOLV is expanding. What could be better?

SOLV's "Campaign for Volunteer Action" is aimed at you — and me and every Oregonian who cares about our special state. And that's each of us, isn't it? SOLV's campaign theme is "When People Get Together, Things Get Done." We've proven it with the beach cleanups (4,100 volunteers this year, the "Down By The Riverside" watershed restoration projects (19,000 volunteers), and hundreds of smaller projects. (For a taste of SOLV, see <www.solv.org>.)

Oregonians *do* get things done. And we're lucky to have SOLV's expertise to help identify doable projects and coordinate our volunteer activities.

Think about what needs attention in your community (I know there's something) and then call SOLV at 844-9571 or 1-800-333-SOLV (7658). Take advantage of SOLV's resources, and make your community better — for you, your neighbors, your children, and your neighbors' children. For Oregon.

Mary Oberst  
Office of the First Lady  
Salem

### Interpretive dance program cancelled

To the Editor:

It is with considerable regret that we must inform those of you eagerly awaiting our interpretive dance program that we will be unable to inspire and enlighten you with that particular means of creative expression. It seems that as Postal employees we are forbidden by Federal statute to perform interpretive dances that may touch upon hot-button political issues. We are currently investigating whether mime is covered under those same regulations. We will keep you posted and we thank you for your support.

Peter O'Leary  
Jimi Kolestar  
Vernonia

### Former student says analysis was wrong

Letter to the Editor:

Upon reading the student's letter in support of the 47J school district in the June 16 publication of *The Independent*, I admit I was somewhat confused by one of the closing lines: "Please get your facts straight." This line seemed singularly foreign and out of place, given the intellectually dishonest, factually devoid diatribe in which I found it. This is forgivable, however, considering the circumstantial biases undoubtedly influencing the student's opinions; namely that he IS a student in the 47J, and also related to a current member of the teaching staff. So I here take it upon myself to make privy to the author of the letter, and to the readers, a few facts and opinions. (Though I will try to distinguish between the two where I can: hence the parentheses.)

Regarding the music program, I have a few points to make. The fact that Mr. Isted did not simply resign, but was strong-armed out of his position (fact) to make way for not "the most qualified applicant," but the cheapest (educated guess). Furthermore, you seem to try to make the point that the quality of the music program did not decline under the command of Mr. Shannon. You cite as evidence the fact that honors band took place under Mr. Shannon, as it did under Mr. Isted. But you neglect to mention all the things that have not taken place since Mr. Isted left. Honors choir, Tuba Christmas, and various group and solo competitions, among many, many other things. I would also like to remark that Music in May took place EVERY YEAR MR. ISTD TAUGHT (fact)! So, if there is no qualitative difference between the two teachers, I find it hard to explain these differences.

As to the lack of a drama program at the high school, I am here to inform you that it would likely still exist today had the District not CUT IT (fact)! The Drama program survived for some time after it was officially cut, because of the dedication to education exhibited by George Ray, the former Drama

teacher. My point is that the District has consistently shown its low opinion of academic extra curricular activities. This fact says nothing about the teaching staff or the student body, but rather, tells of a predisposition of the citizens of Vernonia to allow the priorities of its children to be misplaced (opinionated observation).

I could go on with many more examples of academic activities being abused, underfunded, and ignored, in and out of class by this administration, but in order to keep this letter concise I will go no further.

In closing, kudos to you, Mr. Schorzman for engaging in this ongoing debate, and for composing a strong argument for your point, in spite of factual errors and unsubstantiated opinions.

Myles Brock  
Vernonia

### County Parks thanks volunteers for help

To the Editor:

Columbia County Forest Parks and Recreation would like to thank all the volunteers who have helped spruce up our parks this spring. Several groups have taken on a variety of projects including: Members of the Mayger-Downing Community Church, by keeping the lawns mowed at the Beaver Boat Ramp in Clatskanie. On April 16, several volunteers with Oregon Equestrian Trails (Columbia County Chapter) groomed horse trails, which are currently under development at Camp Wilkerson. On May 5, 47 area students and nine teachers/volunteers put in a hard day's work at Camp Wilkerson. Projects accomplished that day included splitting fire wood, building bird houses, flower boxes, and a bat house. Students helped clear trails, tidy up the lodge and kitchen, and cleaned the restroom roof. On May 14, Tim Ohling took charge of grooming the playground and day use areas at Scappoose RV Park, his volunteer assistants were three cub scouts with troop 294 and four adults. On May 21, the Spruce Runners participated in the Good Sam RV Club's "adopt-a-park" program at Hudson Park.

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## Between the Bookends

By Angie Spiering  
Banks Public Library



"Dragons, Dreams and Daring Deeds" is the theme for Washington County Libraries Summer Reading Program. Sign ups for the Summer Reading Program at the Banks Public Library will continue through July 16th.

Every child in Washington County who signs up for the Summer Reading Program will receive a coupon good for two free activities at the Family Fun Center and Bullwinkle's Restaurant (coupon is valid June 16-September 6). In addition, children who meet their goals and turn in their reading records after August 1st will each receive a paperback book and a coupon good for an all day Oaks Park Amusement Park bracelet for only \$2.00, for use on August 17th at the "End of the Summer Reading Party."

All programs are Thursdays at 2:00 p.m. The schedule for Banks Public Library is:

July 14th: Arthur Atsma  
July 21st: Pink Pig Puppet Theater  
July 28th: Henrik Bothe

Preschool Story time will continue through the summer until August on Wednesdays at 10:15 a.m. It will resume the first week of school in September. July's programs will be:

July 6th: The House of Mouse  
July 13th: Crazy Critters  
July 20th: Cat Tales  
July 27th: Kid Stuff

Our newest books include *Soapsuds* by Finola Hughes, who brings her knowledge of soap operas to the page in this scathingly funny novel that catapults readers into the heat and hilarity of daytime drama.

*High Plains Tango*, by best-selling author Robert James Waller, is a haunting, evocative story of a small town, a beautiful and mysterious woman, and the man who is changed by both.

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