

## Letters

### Objects to 47J long range plans for WGS

To the Editor:

I don't want Washington Grade School torn down! Destroying WGS would be like burning family pictures in a living album, it would be so sad. There was a meeting in the Vernonia Middle School cafeteria on March 15, 2006, sponsored by the Long Range Planning Committee. I arrived late to the meeting even though I had marked the calendar. I guess I was looking for a sign posted to alert the good folks of Vernonia so we all could have our say and be informed. We should be part of the decision making process that would ef-

fect our taxes, our children, our grandchildren, and the skyline as I come down off the hill. I wonder how many folks even knew about this important meeting? I'm just afraid that by the time that word gets out to the people of Vernonia that the plans would already be set in motion. We will be saddled with whatever taxes, our children shuffled about and the local builders insulted again without the opportunity to bid on the jobs to be done.

I didn't see notice of the March 15 meeting in this good paper, in the PTA newsletter, on the scrolling news board on Vernonia High School, in the senior center, on any of the local business windows or by

word of mouth. I found out about the meeting by a small loose yellow flyer, floating around in my child's backpack that was sent out only the previous week. There was a posting on one side of the message board out in front of WGS that read: Community MTG VMS VERN Schools Facility Planning WGS March 15 7pm. That sounds very ho-hum to me. I don't expect them to say: PLANNING TO DESTROY WGS AS IF ANYONE CARES, but I am disappointed that for every one Long Range Planning Committee member that attended the March 15 meeting there were maybe three non-members. I echo the message given on that little yellow flyer

floating around in my child's backpack that read "Community Meeting. Give input on the development of future facility plans for the Vernonia School District! \*Everyone Welcomed\*" Please get in touch with the Long Range Planning Committee at their Vernonia School District Website: [www.vernonia.k12.or.us](http://www.vernonia.k12.or.us) before the next 3 meetings, and before they start what they plan. Please share your knowledge and opinions with your family, friends, neighbors, church members, and folks that might care about our town.

**Amber Dahl  
Vernonia**

*Edit. note: An article by Schann Nelson in the Feb. 16, 2006, issue of The Independent presented a comprehensive look at the work of 47J's Long Range Planning Committee, and emphasized the importance of public attendance at the March 15 meeting. There was no notice in the March 2 issue, because the district missed the publication deadline.*

### Appalled by 167% sewer rate increase

To the Editor:

DO THE MATH.

The city of Vernonia plans to increase your property taxes by \$4.00 per thousand to pay for general obligation bond funds to upgrade the sewer system for the next twenty years. And, they plan to increase your monthly sewer rate by \$10.00 per month to operate and maintain this upgraded system.

If the bond measure fails they plan to increase your monthly sewer rate by \$62.00. An annual increase of \$744.00. That is a 167% increase in sewer rates.

Meanwhile a typical house in Vernonia assessed [at] \$200,000 will pay an increase in taxes of \$800.00 per year plus the \$120 per year in increased sewer fees for a combined total increase of \$920.00 per year.

Now remember also that over the next twenty years that typical \$200,000 house will increase in assessed value to \$350,000 due to the 3% annual increase applied by the county as a result of Measure 5. So, in the final year of this 20 year payback your typical house will be paying \$1400. per year in in-

creased taxes plus the \$120.00 per year operation and maintenance fee for a total of \$1520.00 per year. Add that to your current monthly rate of \$37.00 per month or \$444.00 per year for a total of \$1964.00 per year or approx. \$164.00 per month. Now picture yourself living on a \$700.00 per month Social Security check.

**Frank Schrier  
Vernonia**

### Arrested for seeking end to Iraq war

To the Editor:

Last Monday [March 20] I was arrested for the first time in my life. Eighteen others and I took the non-violent action of sitting in Senator Ron Wyden's office to request that he introduce legislation to get us out of Iraq in months rather than years.

As the polls show, we were representing the majority of the people of Oregon, Iraq, and our brave troops now serving in this unjust war. I wish Senator Wyden would represent us and be the leader he should be. Instead his action is to support the status quo. For our action we were handcuffed, arrested, and must now go to court.

While we tried to reach the senator, evidently we do not have the money behind us to warrant his time or action. While disappointed, we will not go away, and we ask that you will join us to stop business as usual.

**Troy Horton  
Fishhawk Lake**

### Join with Pride for annual clean-up day

To the Editor:

Vernonia Pride wishes to invite members of the community to come out and join us for this year's clean up day. It will be April 22, registration at Providence Health Center, starting at 9 A.M.

Please bring yard tools, weedeaters are especially needed.

If you are a group or an organization, or have a specific area or project in mind, please pre-register by calling Genny Fisher at 503-429-4019.

Please bring yard tools,

**Please see Page 21**

## Between the Bookends

By Angie Spiering, Library Assistant  
Banks Public Library



### Join in a Celebration of Family, Community and Culture through the Art of Storytelling

Washington County Cooperative Library Services has been hosting the second annual Hearing Voices Storytelling Festival, April 1 – 8, in celebration of National Library Week. Designed for all ages, the week-long Hearing Voices Storytelling Festival has showcased professional storytellers and provided opportunity for members of the general public to tell a tale. You may visit the Cooperative Library Services website for a list of the remaining festival events and a preview of the style and caliber of storytelling being presented, <[www.WILnet.wcccls.lib.or.us/hearingvoices](http://www.WILnet.wcccls.lib.or.us/hearingvoices)>.

Storytelling provides a foundation for literacy – and the appreciation of life-long learning. Our goal is to foster an appreciation for the role that the oral storytelling tradition plays within families, communities and cultures. It is our hope that this festival will help all of us understand that the stories we collect in our libraries can be multi-dimensional – when stories are spoken and are heard, they come alive.

Remember to join Miss Cathy for Preschool Storytime on Wednesdays at 10:15 am. Miss Cathy has been with us for the past six years, entertaining both children and parents during storytime.

The themes for April are:

- April 5th: The Bunny Hop
- April 12th: Who Laid the Egg?
- April 19th: Daffy Down Dilly
- April 26th: What is It??

On our new book shelf we have:

*Bad Childhood Good Life* by Dr. Laura Schlessinger. Dr. Laura will help you realize that no matter what circumstances you came from or

currently live in, you are ultimately responsible for how you react to them. The acceptance of this basic truth is the source of your power to secure the good Life you long for. In her signature straightforward style, with real-life examples, Dr. Laura shows what you will gain by not being satisfied with an identity as a victim, or even as a survivor – but striving to be a victor.

*Liars and Saints* by Maile Meloy. This richly textured novel tells a story of sex and longing, love and loss, and of the deceit that can lie at the heart of family relationships. Set in California, *Liars and Saints* follows four generations of the Catholic Santerre family from World War II to the present. In a family driven as much by jealousy and propriety as by love, an unspoken tradition of deceit is passed from generation to generation. When tragedy shatters their precarious domestic lives, it takes astonishing courage and compassion to bring them back together. By turns funny and disturbing, irreverent and profound, *Liars and Saints* is a masterful display of Maile Meloy's prodigious gifts and her penetrating insight into an extraordinary American family and the nature of human love.

*Yes, The River Knows* by Tracy Dunham. Tracy Dunham's acclaimed debut novel *Wishful Sinful* introduced us to Tal Jefferson, an attorney who fled the big city in disgrace after losing a headline-making capital case. Now, in the second of this evocative series, Tal must confront the racism simmering beneath the surface of her hometown to solve a vicious murder.

The annual Friends of the Banks Public Library plant and book sale will be held on Friday May 5th and Saturday May 6th. Times to follow.

**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 at 10:15 a.m.

**Phone:** (503 ) 324-1382 for information  
(503) 846-3245 to renew material

**Internet:** <[www.WILnet.wcccls.lib.or.us](http://www.WILnet.wcccls.lib.or.us)>  
Browse library resources, reserve or renew materials online. *Call for information.*