

Letters

Holiday festivities in the planning stages

To the Editor:

At our last Vernonia Pride meeting, the talk of Christmas was in the air.

Tentative plans were made to have the lighting of the Christmas tree on December 2nd, to coincide with the annual Christmas Bazaar.

We are hoping to entice trucks of all kinds to join in the Lighted Truck Parade. In the past, those of you who did looked fantastic. It is not limited to log trucks, even your favorite pick-up will work. We are hoping to come up with a prize for the best decorated.

In the past, some businesses have stayed open later that night and we would encourage them to do so again.

We would also enjoy seeing all the businesses decorate their place of business, especially with lights.

Watch *The INDEPENDENT* for further details.

De Loris Webb
Vernonia Pride

Information wanted on Pioneer Cemetery

To the Editor:

A census has been taken at the Vernonia Pioneer Cemetery in the past few weeks. This has been done by tombstone identification and original plot records, plus personal knowledge.

No records kept by the city over the years could be found. The cemetery is over 100 years old so, if records were kept, they have been lost or in some way destroyed.

All we have are the names of the original owners of the 3-6 plot grave sites on a small map. We understand all plots were sold some time ago, but reselling and transfers have taken place.

We would like to know if you have any identification of your own plots or of others. A brief history of your relatives or anyone else buried there would also be welcomed. The Cemetery Beautification Committee and the Vernonia Museum are working together to preserve as much of this history as possible now.

In the near future we will be

mapping the cemetery with names placed according to plot. Also, a DVD is being made of the entire cemetery and will be available for viewing at the museum.

We appreciate your time and interest, since we have undertaken this task, quite a bit of new information has been received. Send anything you may have to the Vernonia Museum or visit there to see history being preserved and enjoyed. Museum hours are 1:00-4:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday.

Ellen Meyer
Christine Redmond
Ralph Keasey
Cynthia J. Robertson
Vernonia

Bernhard deserves to be reelected

To the Editor:

I write this letter in support of Rita Bernhard who now serves as a Columbia County Commissioner. Rita is running for a third 4-year term in this position. I have known Rita for several years both as a friend and in her political career as a commissioner. She has always been an approachable person that will take the time to listen to what is going on around her and although this is a partisan position she has consistently been a listener to all. I have been a part of our Columbia County RSVP since retiring and Rita has shown interest in all of our activities to help out in the community. Just her showing up at some of these meetings and making suggestions helps us to gather momentum. I believe our local officials should make time for this type of approachable attitude as Rita certainly has. I will vote for her in the upcoming election and I suggest that you look at her approachable attitude and what it means to Columbia County government.

Kenneth R. Corliss
Scappoose

Vote Jeff VanNatta for intelligent progress

To the Editor:

Voting this November can make a real difference.

Over the past eighteen years our county planning commission has been chaired efficient-

ly and fairly by one volunteer, Jeff VanNatta. Some of our current County Commissioners are not working together with the same organization and dedication to the public. We need a commission that will work together to address our high unemployment by creating an environment in which a diversity of companies will relocate or expand in our county.

Our current commissioners have made appointments to the planning commission based on political agendas. Those agendas oftentimes have nothing to do with Columbia County's economy, quality of life or property rights.

In addition, one of our Commissioners has used their position to purchase public land by making promises of businesses and jobs. None of this has come to fruition. The land sits vacant, undeveloped and under speculation for resale.

I believe that the political gridlock that our county is currently engaged in can be broken this election. It is time that we elect a person who understands the needs of our property owners, resource workers, businesses and the elderly. We can no longer stand for the inefficiency, personal agendas and outside influence that has plagued the offices of the Columbia County Commissioners.

I am asking you to vote for Jeff VanNatta this November.

Tim Bero
Vernonia

Sheriff's levy crucial for safe communities

To the Editor:

The General Election is a critical election for public safety in Columbia County. Our families need and deserve to be protected from crime. At this time we do not have enough Deputies in Columbia County to protect the public. We have good Deputies who want to do the job correctly but there are only four Patrol Deputies available for full time assignment.

Our citizens voted for an Enhances Law Enforcement Operating Measure in May but the vote did not count as only 45% of registered voters cast their ballots and Oregon Law requires that at least half or 50% of the voters cast their ballots in a primary election for the elec-

tion to count.

We are asking voters to approve the same measure in this election. The measure will provide for fifteen (15) employees. Thirteen (13) of them will be Deputies and two (2) will be support people who type reports and assist in case preparation so Deputies can stay in the field where they can help our citizens.

We will be able to provide twenty four (24) hour coverage, follow-up criminal investigation such as homicides, burglaries, sexual abuse cases and other serious crimes and in general protect our citizens. The cost is a reasonable .39 cents per \$1000.00 or \$39.00 per year for a \$100,000.00 house.

We need your vote for More Deputies, Stronger Enforcement and Safer Communities. Please join with me and vote yes for ballot measure 5-154.

Thank you,
Philip W. Derby
Columbia County Sheriff

Rep. Brad Witt serves this district very well

To the Editor:

It is important in today's environment to have people in elected office that understand the needs of the community, can see solutions to the problems of the community, and have the will and strength of character to do what is needed for the good of the whole community. Brad Witt is such a person. Brad has taken the time necessary to talk to the people of this district and to get to know what is important to them. He has heard their ideas, as well as suggested his own notions, as to how to address the needs they have sounded. And Brad has demonstrated in numerous instances his willingness to speak out for the people of this district on the floor of the legislature.

Brad knows the importance our local communities' place on education and has supported all efforts to obtain the funding necessary to ensure all our kids get a good education. He supports the creation of a rainy day fund to help balance the funding process for schools and he also knows legislative mandates requiring more of our schools without proper funding is folly.

Brad Witt wants what we all want for our children, a world class education that will allow them to compete in a global market place. Like us, Bard, wants an educational system that will attract businesses to our area that will allow our kids to find the good living they deserve and to find it right here in Columbia County.

I urge you to join me in supporting Brad Witt for the Oregon House of Representatives from house district #31.

Earl Fisher
Clatskanie

Union endorses Rita Bernhard reelection

To the Editor:

Local 1 AWPPW is proud to endorse Commissioner Rita Bernhard for reelection. She has many accomplishments and has served the county very well.

Frank Johnson
Local 1 AWPPW
Executive Board
St. Helens

Yes to Sheriff's levy and Jeff VanNatta

To the Editor:

Your election ballots have arrived! Columbia County voters have an excellent opportunity to change the direction for all residents by voting, of course. Please plan to do so.

My wife and I see the Sheriff's Levy as crucial for law enforcement in our county. In our rural area of Apiary, we have twice seen, first hand, the impact of a limited number of officers who were attempting to apprehend dangerous and desperate felons. Let's see if we can pass this for the second time. Every vote counts.

We also see the County Commissioner's race as another major opportunity for change. We have known Jeff VanNatta for many years as a neighbor, as a volunteer with Columbia County Small Woodlands Association, as a fellow Granger, as a business person, as a member of the Planning Commission, and as a responsible parent and husband. We have found him to be a person of intelligence, integrity, sincerity and strength. One can ex-

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