

Letters

Another happy day for young anglers

To the Editor:
This year's Jamboree Fish Derby went off well, everybody seems happy with the one hour fishing time.

We did not have as many prizes as some past years, but maybe next year we will have more sponsors.

A special thanks to *The Independent*, who has been a sponsor for years, True Value Hardware and the Old Mill Eatery.

Bill Yeo auctioned off some items for us, and we had a few drawings for prizes. Thanks, Bill.

We had sixty-four youths fishing this year, and had a lot of fun. They caught a total of 114 fish.

Big thanks to those that helped measure and count the fish and pick the winners – Bob Scroggins, Marvin Long, Dennis Nelson, DeDe Webb, Donna Webb, and Gerie Reynolds.

Don Webb
Fish Derby Helper
Nehalem Valley Chapter
Izaak Walton League

Principal apologizes, discloses sanctions

To the Editor:
To the Vernonia Community: Many of you know that I was cited for possession of marijuana during a recent vacation. Although words do little to resolve

this situation, let me take this opportunity to tell you how deeply sorry I am.

I made a serious mistake – one that has affected many, many people. I have let down my family, my students, my staff, my co-workers, this wonderful community and myself.

Several people expressed a desire for me to resign. Many more, however, have asked me to address the situation and continue my work here in Vernonia. Although it could be easier to give up and move on, I have chosen to stay. Taking responsibility for my actions and demonstrating that people learn from their mistakes is one of the most important things we teach our children – and this is what I plan to do.

While I am the principal of an elementary school, I am also human. When students come into my office because they have made a mistake, erred in judgment or broken a rule, we talk a great deal about responsibility. "Yes. You made a mistake. You can't go back and change that, but you can take responsibility for the problem, try to make up for it, move on and learn from your mistake so that it doesn't happen again."

It is now time for me to take my own advice. I will work for as long as it takes to restore your trust in me. You need to know that I plan to be the same hard-working, kid-focused individual who has served you for the past two years. You have

my word – and my deepest commitment to make things right.

I plan to begin the process of healing the wounds I have caused my family and the District, and get back to the job at hand: educating the youth of Vernonia, a job that I love!

While the School Board cannot legally discuss the sanctions they adopted, I can. My discipline includes being evaluated by a licensed professional in the drug rehabilitation field, following a prescribed treatment plan, and being regularly and/or randomly drug-tested to ensure that I am living up to the agreement. A merit raise that I had earned has been revoked. If I do not live up to these obligations I will no longer be employed by the District. Our superintendent and school board have made this very clear, and I will not disappoint them.

You can also be assured this mistake will not happen again.

Besides apologizing for my error in judgment, I would also like to thank the dozens of people who have called my family and me with messages of support. You have no idea how helpful your kind words have been as we work through this

difficult time. Again, I apologize for the impact my actions have had on our community. I will do what needs to be done to help mend the rift I have caused.

Sincerely,

Aaron Miller
Vernonia

Thief uses dark to rob fruit of other's labor

To the Editor:

Well, it's that time of year again. You came by Sunday night (August 5) and stripped the plums off my tree. I don't know if it's all the colors on the grafted cultivar, the summer sweetness of the fruit or the excitement of a nighttime raid that drove you this time. I hope you're at least eating them and enjoying them as opposed to having a fruit fight as has happened in years past.

It's kind of funny, because if you had knocked on the door I would have been glad to load you up and I wouldn't be left with this annual sickening feeling thinking, "Where the heck do I live anyway?" I prune those trees, fertilize them, water them faithfully and try to wait patiently for the summer reward. I share my fruit with the neigh-

bors and kids, and try to can a few pints for next winter. And in a few minutes, slinking in at dusk or after dark, you come and take that away from us.

It's ridiculous. Just knock on the door and ask. Or leave my property alone. If you think about your behavior, skulking around like that, you know you shouldn't be doing it. Stop by in the daylight like dozens of other people during the summer. I've never had any reaction but to talk excitedly about my trees, and give away fruit. I do, however, resent it immensely when I wake up and the first feeling of the morning is, "Here we go again; is this ever going to get better?"

Are you selfish, inconsiderate or a thief? It feels like it's got to be one of those when you come by after dark and help yourself to my work.

Sincerely,

James Brookins
Vernonia

— Correction —

The August 2 issue of The INDEPENDENT should have said that Elroy Miner received a lump sum from the City of Vernonia, not a monthly payment.

Between the Bookends

By Nancy Burch, Librarian
Vernonia Public Library



Although summer reading activities have ended, youngsters completing their reading goals have until September 1st to claim their prizes. This year's theme of "Get a Clue @ Your Library" was one of the best I've seen in the variety of activities

from which to choose—scavenger hunts, following clues, making pirate accessories, guessing by feel and smell, etc. Linda Johnston and Camrin Eyrrick are the ladies to thank for planning and implementing this year's activities. I would also like to thank Sentry Market for the candy thrown by the summer readers during the Jamboree parade and Brandon Eyrrick for once again driving the truck.

Weekly preschool story time will resume on September 10th at 10:30. Each Monday some stories will be read, with a craft/activity following, and all preschoolers with an accompanying adult are invited to attend.

Monday, August 20th will be the next meeting of the book discussion group with *What Makes Sammy Run?* by Budd Schulberg, being the book for August.

New acquisitions include audio CDs of Ridley Pearson's *Killer Weekend*, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*, and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

New books for adults include *The Quickie* by James Patterson, *Eye of the Beholder* by David Ellis, *Up Close and Dangerous* by Linda Howard, *The Burnt House* by Faye Kellerman, *Beyond Reach* by Karin Slaughter, *Critical* by Robin Cook, *Still Summer* by Jacquelyn Mitchard, *Hard Row* by Margaret Maron, and *Justice Denied* by J. A. Jance.

New for young adults are *Peak* by Roland Smith, *Bad Tickets* by Kathleen O'Dell, and *Dream Quest* by Brent Hartinger.

For youngsters, new purchases include *Jungle Drums* and *Uno's Garden* by Australian author and illustrator Graeme Base, and word puzzles *C D C* and *C D B* by William Steig. Try these: I F N N E N R G and Y R U Y N N? (I haven't any energy. Why are you whinin'?) D N (the end).

Policy on Letters

The INDEPENDENT will not publish letters that include personal attacks on private citizens. Because of space limitations, preference will be given to brief letters, 300 words or less.

All letters must be signed and include a verifiable address or phone number; all letters are subject to editing for clarity or length.

Out of My Mind

From page 2

with taxpayers paying \$528.73.

Oregon rates are a little different. High coverage premium for a family is \$1044.38/month, with taxpayers picking up the tab for \$697.43. Standard family coverage is \$865.84/month, with government paying \$216.46.

When you hear Congressmen express horror at the idea of "socialized medicine," ask them to pay their own way.

NOTICE

The INDEPENDENT publishes on the first and third Thursday of each month. Because there are five Thursdays in August, the next issue will be published on September 6, 2007.

The deadline for articles and ads for the September 6 issue will be Friday, August 31, 2007.

Vernonia Public Library: 701 Weed Ave.
Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri. 10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Tues., Thur. 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Sat. 10 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Preschool Story Time: Mondays, 10:30 a.m., when school is in session.
Phone: 503-429-1818