

Letters

Illegal workers didn't cause recession

To The Editor:

"Half-baked, and admiring it!" is an expression I once heard from an old farmer. That came to mind while reading Wayne Mayo's little gloat about Ballot Measure 5-190, along with the letters from his Amen chorus.

This anti-immigration measure can be enforced, or not enforced. We could kick in the doors of every business in the county searching for 'illegal' workers, or a lawsuit could toss it out on its ear. But here is the bottom line: Either way, this is going to have exactly zero effect in protecting jobs or enhancing economic security in Columbia County. Why? Because 'illegal' immigration is not the reason why thousands of our fellow citizens are losing their jobs, retirement accounts, and homes. Saying that illegal immigration is the cause of the economic hurricane breaking on our households is like saying that an ant dragging his foot

in the water while clinging to a log is actually steering.

At one point, the majority of people in our community are going to come face to face with economic reality. We need each other. We need to stand together, and figure out how we can be of use to each other, practice charity and solidarity. Specifically, we need a plan to provide useful work and a decent livelihood for everyone willing to pull their weight. Jihad against 'illegals', gays, and other culture war targets will probably not be part of such a plan. As Ben Franklin said during the Revolution: "We need to all hang together, or surely we'll all hang separately."

**Mike Edera
Scappoose**

Good health for all is committee's goal

To the Editor:

Restarting The VSHAC (Vernonia School Health Advisory Committee) – The primary function of a school is to provide students with the learning

experiences necessary for maximum intellectual development. The success of this process is limited by the child's emotional, social, and physical health.

For this reason, the purpose of a comprehensive school health education program is twofold: first, to consider the total human being in the educational process, and second, to motivate students to help themselves and others to live healthy, productive lives. To help achieve this goal, we created the VSHAC, an advisory group made up of parents, community members, students, and school staff working together to improve the health of all students and families through coordinated school health programs.

As you may know, our district received a grant from the Oregon Department of Public Health last year to initiate the development of the VSHAC and examine the school health index, conduct a needs assessment, evaluate data, and draft plans to improve health and wellness. This committee is intended to provide advice and will not become part of the administrative structure of the schools, nor do they have any legal responsibilities within the school system.

Research shows that healthy children do better in school – from attendance and behavior to academics and overall performance. The Vernonia School Health Advisory Committee (VSHAC) will work with the district to help school communities support good health and academic achievement. I think that is why you are reading this today. You believe in this.

We need your expertise and consultation to prioritize, guide, and develop interventions to provide students with the knowledge and skills that enable them to adopt and maintain healthy attitudes and behaviors throughout their lives. The health of our children doesn't depend on major medical breakthroughs, but on everyday practice of good health habits. School Health Advisory Committees (SHACs) provide an efficient, effective structure for creating and implementing age-appropriate, sequential health education

programs, and early intervention and prevention strategies that can easily be supported by local families and community stakeholders.

In our first year as a committee we did the following: Pedometer Project, healthy prizes for participation, staff massages, air scrubber (for Washington Grade School), PE equipment, promotion of healthy snacks in class parties, healthy breakfast for staff every Friday, walking club after school, rhythm/dance class after school, purchased heart monitors for high school/junior high PE class, and made water available in modular classrooms.

We did a great job last year, and I look forward to another full and productive year. We are here to decide what our goals and objectives are. Where do we want to go? What do we want to do or change? If you would like to be a part of this, please contact me at Washington Grade School at 503-429-7941. The VSHAC's next meeting is Thursday, December 11, in the Washington Grade School library from 4-5:30 p.m. We meet once a month. I look forward to seeing and working with our community. Take care and thank you for the support and time. Remember "Healthy Kids Learn Better, Healthy Teachers Teach Better, One Step At A Time."

Sincerely,

**George Spaulding
Washington Grade School
K-5 PE Teacher**

Protect remainder of North Slope refuge

To The Editor:

With someone so beholden to the oil industry, it should not be a surprise that a jury found Senator Ted Stevens guilty of seven felonies for failing to report gifts by the oil company Veco, for which Stevens has worked to give massive government contracts.

With Stevens being the main proponent of drilling in the Arc-

tic National Wildlife Refuge, those favoring such a horrific move should reconsider their position. The facts are clear that we need to protect the last five percent of the North Slope of Alaska that is the biological heart of the last intact Arctic ecosystem with a free ranging caribou herd left in the world. The 123,000 caribou feed the Gwich'in Nation as well as the Inupiat peoples. The Gwich'in are caribou people, and have lived off the Porcupine Caribou herd for tens of thousands of years.

That is the herd that breeds on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge coastal plain, right where people like convicted felon Ted Stevens want to drill for oil. Currently, oil companies have not developed more than 85 percent of the land that they have already leased. There is plenty of oil there until we make the fast needed transition to renewable energy. They are trying to get the last five percent while President George Bush is in office, because they realize that no one else will likely be corrupt enough to go along with such a disastrous move.

In my first personal contact with Ted Stevens at a public meeting in Kaktovik, on Barter Island in the Arctic Ocean, the senator ordered me to not videotape or take photos, even though others in the meeting were allowed. Stevens held the meeting, which attracted nearly 200 native Inupiat peoples, looking for support for drilling in the refuge.

Instead, Inupiat leader Robert Thompson presented him with a petition of the majority of residents opposing drilling. Stevens told the group that Congress had promised him drilling. I began to shake my head in disagreement. Having written two books on the subject, I knew this was not true.

Stevens stopped the meeting and said in a raised, stern voice: "if you don't stop shaking your head, I will have you re-

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