

Where to Find Them

U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (Dem)

1220 SW 3rd Avenue, Suite 585
Portland OR 97232
Phone: 503-326-7525
223 Dirksen Senate Ofc. Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510-0001
Phone: 202-224-5244
E-Mail: <http://wyden.senate.gov/contact>
Website: <http://wyden.senate.gov>

U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley (Dem.)

One World Trade Center
121 SW Salmon St., Suite 1250
Portland, OR 97204
Phone: 503-326-3386
107 Russell Senate Ofc. Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: (202) 224-3753
E-Mail: <http://merkley.senate.gov/contact>
WebSite: <http://merkley.senate.gov>

U.S. Representative David Wu (Dem) OR District 1

620 SW Main, Suite 606
Portland, OR 97205
Phone: 503-326-2901
2338 Rayburn House Ofc. Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-0855
Website: <http://house.gov/wu>

Senator Betsy Johnson (Dem) Senate District 16

PO Box R,
Scappoose, OR 97056
Phone: 503-543-4046
900 Court St. NE, S-314
Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-986-1716
E-mail: sen.betsyjohnson@state.or.us
Website: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/johnson>

Representative Brad Witt (Dem) House District. 31

21740 Lindberg Road,
Clatskanie, OR 97016
Phone: 503-728-4664
900 Court St. NE, H-373
Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-986-1431
E-mail: rep.bradwitt@state.or.us
Website: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/witt>

Representative Deborah Boone

(Dem) House District 32
PO Box 926
Cannon Beach, OR 97110
Phone: 503-717-9182
900 Court St. NE, H-375
Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-986-1432
E-mail: rep.deborahboone@state.or.us
Website: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/boone>

Letters

Congratulations on 25th anniversary

To the Editor:

As usual, I was a bit late catching up on my reading last week and didn't get to the Jan. 7 issue of *The Independent* until today (Jan. 15). Congratulations on reaching the quarter-century mark. You've got a ways to go to catch up to the News-Times (established in Forest Grove in 1886), but 25 years is an achievement worth celebrating for a kid like *The Independent*.

Seriously, I hope the residents of Upper Nehalem River Valley appreciate what you do. Over the past two years, dozens of newspapers – from the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* to the *Colorado Rocky Mountain News* have folded. Others – including the *Chicago Tribune* and *Chicago Sun-Times*, have filed for bankruptcy protection.

It's a tough time to be running a newspaper, particularly one like *The Independent*, which truly lives up to its name by bringing readers the facts about what's going on with local government while also keeping them posted on the new arrivals at the public library and the bargains to be found at local stores.

Most people who pick up the paper have no idea of the amount of work that went into it. As someone who does, I again extend my congratulations to all of you. Here's to the next 25 years of great community journalism!

John Schrag
Editor & Publisher
News-Times
Forest Grove, Oregon

Thanks for helping VHS 2010 Senior Trip

To the Editor:

Class of 2010 Senior Trip: We would like to thank the local businesses and community members that have been so generous in assisting the Class of 2010 students in their fund raising efforts. A special thanks to Sentry Market for their donation of soda and candy for us to give out as prizes at basketball games and also their patience during all of our can/bottle drives; Black Bear Coffee Co., Blue House Café, Café 47, The Clever Cricket, Penny with

Jazzercise, and Vernonia Pharmacy, for their donations of gift cards and/or products for our raffle baskets at the Christmas Bazaar, and every community member that has bought a raffle ticket, attended our rummage sale or donated cans to our can/bottle drives.

The students are working very hard at raising their money but as of today are just half way to meeting their fund raising goal. fund raising will continue through May. A chili feed is scheduled for Thursday, February 11th, at the home basketball game, which is also Senior Night. The next can/bottle drive is scheduled for February 20th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the WGS play shed.

Once again, thank you to EVERYONE that has helped us. It is greatly appreciated.

Kari Moeller,
Michelle Gilbertson
Coordinators for
Vernonia High School
Senior Class Trip

Florist tells how to get the best services

To the Editor:

Sending Flowers?

Being in the florist business during a recession has been a real challenge to myself and family. Not only do we have Costco and other grocery stores selling flowers, but many other online services that lure customers with great prices and easy access. After several different situations, I thought it best to share what I have learned.

First, having a wire service involved (FTD, Teleflora, etc.) will cost the customer approximately 30% more to place the order. Secondly the amount charged to the florist for using these wire services is on the average of \$200 monthly as we are paying a membership fee and being forced to purchase containers etc. that are sold through the wire service. This amount forces the prices on floral arrangements to be more and/or takes away from the quantity of flowers going into the arrangement so that the florist can cover all costs involved.

I have made many a phone call for customers who walk into my shop and need something sent to different states, I

sure do not mind doing this, pleasing my customers is important to me. I look for florists in the yellow pages on line who are willing to give a florist-to-florist discount so that I can have my time and long distance reimbursed. This not only gives the florist doing the order more money to work with, but saves the customer fees that wire services charge.

Quality is still the best through a florist. We spend many hours shopping for the best quality and freshest product for our customers. We also put a considerable amount of time and effort into each arrangement to make sure the client gets a beautifully, long lasting design piece.

I have shopped at Costco for years and, yes, they have some beautiful arrangements and I did some research of my own to figure out how they can offer such great prices – well of course quantity is always a factor. I googled “Costco Flowers Imported” after being told about incidents where workers were becoming ill due to the pesticides used on the imported flowers and the link I found told a story that we might all consider before buying imports. <http://www.panna.org/node/606>

In conclusion, saving my customers time and money is important to me, if you have a computer and the internet, we advise that you look for a florist in the town you are sending to, through the yellow pages. Florist websites are linked at www.superpages.com for those who like to have visuals of what they are sending. If you choose the zip code for a florist the same as you are sending you might be surprised at the quality and quantity your recipient gets, as you have saved the florist time and money in being closer for delivery. Hopefully this is some helpful advice to all who would like to afford sending flowers in such a financially challenging time. Receiving flowers is such a joy, so should be giving them. Shopping local pays.

Lisa Edgar
Vernonia Florist

Don't be dismissive of domestic violence

To the Editor:

The January 5th edition of

the *Voice* reported on the Oregon Department of Police Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) investigation of public safety officer Mike Kay. That reporting of the DPSST's investigation and factors surrounding Mr. Kay's pre-employment litigation activity appeared to be rather shallow. It lacked the detail to give the public a true picture of what had occurred. The *Voice* treated this matter as a petty ordeal with little merit, however, the victim probably doesn't agree. The following is my understanding of what occurred:

In the late “1990s” Mr. Kay, while working as a public safety officer, was arrested and charged with an “assault in the presence of a victim's child,” a felony in the State of Oregon. Mr. Kay was issued a restraining order prohibiting him from having any contact with the victim. A trial occurred and Mr. Kay was found not guilty on the felony charge. Mr. Kay had violated the restraining order, was indicted, and once again he requested a trial. The jury found Mr. Kay guilty of violating the restraining order. Mr. Kay was placed on probation and was required to do community service or go to jail. It was later found that Mr. Kay had violated his probation, as well.

The victim filed a Title 42 USC section 1983 complaint in the US District Court. This type of complaint is a “civil action for deprivation of rights.” This type of action is generally filed against the police department and/or the city when the victim is deprived of constitutional rights, privileges and immunities by an official's abuse of his/her position. In her complaint the victim alleged that Mr. Kay intimidated her, threw her down and slapped her face, held her in a hostage-like situation, etc. At one point the victim alleged that Mr. Kay “hit her with

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Policy on Letters

The INDEPENDENT will not publish letters with personal attacks on private citizens. Preference will be given to brief letters, 300 words or less.

All letters must be signed and include a verifiable address or phone number.