



THE INDEPENDENT

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Vernonia Emergency Responders commemorate September 11, 2001, with a silent parade.

Commissioners' proclamation emphasizes preparedness

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners, at the request of Derek White, Columbia County Emergency Manager, approved a proclamation designating September as "National Emergency Preparedness Month".

It is important that residents be proactive in preparing for any and all disasters or emergency situations. "We encourage all residents and businesses to have a plan and a disaster supply kit assembled and ready to go", said Commissioner Tony Hyde. Columbia County has been affected by numerous disasters in past years, including five presidentially-declared disasters within the last decade, we want everyone to be aware of the information and training that is available to pre-

pare for emergency situations", he said.

For more information, go to www.redcross.org.

For information on the County Emergency Management visit the website at www.co.columbia.or.us, click on departments and scroll down to Emergency Management. Those interested can also sign up on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/columbiacoem> and read the Blog at <http://columbiacountymem.blogspot.com>.

Change of date for City Parks Committee

The next meeting of the Vernonia Parks Committee will be September 22, at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall.

This is only for the regular schedule of September 16.

Upcoming Events

ST. MARY'S 40TH ANNUAL QUILT FAIR

Sept. 16-19, 10 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
St. Mary's Catholic Church

DALLAS BRASS CONCERT

September 17, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
WGS (tickets at Creatures and district office)

COMMUNITY-WIDE GARAGE SALE

September 18, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., maps available beside Vernonia Realty office

VERNONIA SCHOOLS TOWN HALL

September 28, 7:00 p.m.
VMS (green) building

FIRST FRIDAY

October 1, 5:00-8:00 p.m.
Scout Cabin in Hawkins Park

SALMON FESTIVAL

October 2, 10 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Hawkins Park

Meet the candidates seeking to be the next Mayor of Vernonia

Vernonia voters will decide who will be Mayor of Vernonia in the November 2 general election. The incumbent is Sally Harrison who has served in the position of Mayor for the past six years. The position of Mayor is non-partisan.

All of the candidates were interviewed by *The Independent*, asking the same questions of each one. Here are the questions and the candidates' responses. Responses are in alphabetical order by surname. The candidates are Sally Harrison, Josette Mitchell, Victoria (Vici) Peters, and Emil Rode. After the questions and answers, there is additional information about each candidate.

From the Candidates:

1. Why are you running for this office?

Harrison – After six years of work, I think in the next two years we'll be able to finish it or at least get on an even keel to go forward. I'd hate to stop in mid-stream.

Mitchell – I think there are a lot of opportunities facing Vernonia and it's time for change. By opportunities I mean such things as the buyout process and what that means for the citizens and the city (the city will get new land) and there will be an opportunity to decide the best use

Oregon suicide rate higher than national

Oregon's suicide rate is 35 percent higher than the national average, according to the Oregon Department of Human Services. The rate is 15.2 suicides per 100,000 people, compared to the national rate of 11.3 per 100,000.

After decreasing in the 1990s, suicide rates have been increasing significantly since
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of that new land.

Peters – I think I have a unique set of skills (team building, problem solving, project management) and it's a good time for someone with a background in engineering and marketing. I want to help build consensus and then lead the city to find resources to help with projects.
Rode – I thought Mayor Harrison was running unopposed and that the voters should have a choice. I would like to see more transparency in council and city government and give some new ideas on the sewer project.

2. What do you think is the single most important issue facing Vernonia?

Harrison – Right now, it's a matter of getting all the projects completed (schools, senior center, health center, food bank) plus the sewer rehab.
Mitchell – I would say the financial situation. In this economy, the city budget is just like everyone's home budget and we have to start living within our means.

Peters – Ones that rise to the surface after talking to people; cost of utilities, something for kids to do, cost of living, and general quality of life. One thing I love about this town is it still has its original identity.

Rode – Right now, getting the sewer plant out of the flood plain and the poverty here in town.

3. What other issues are also important?

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Council candidate interviews next issue

The Independent's interviews with the eight candidates for Vernonia City Council will be in the next issue, on Thursday, October 7, 2010.