

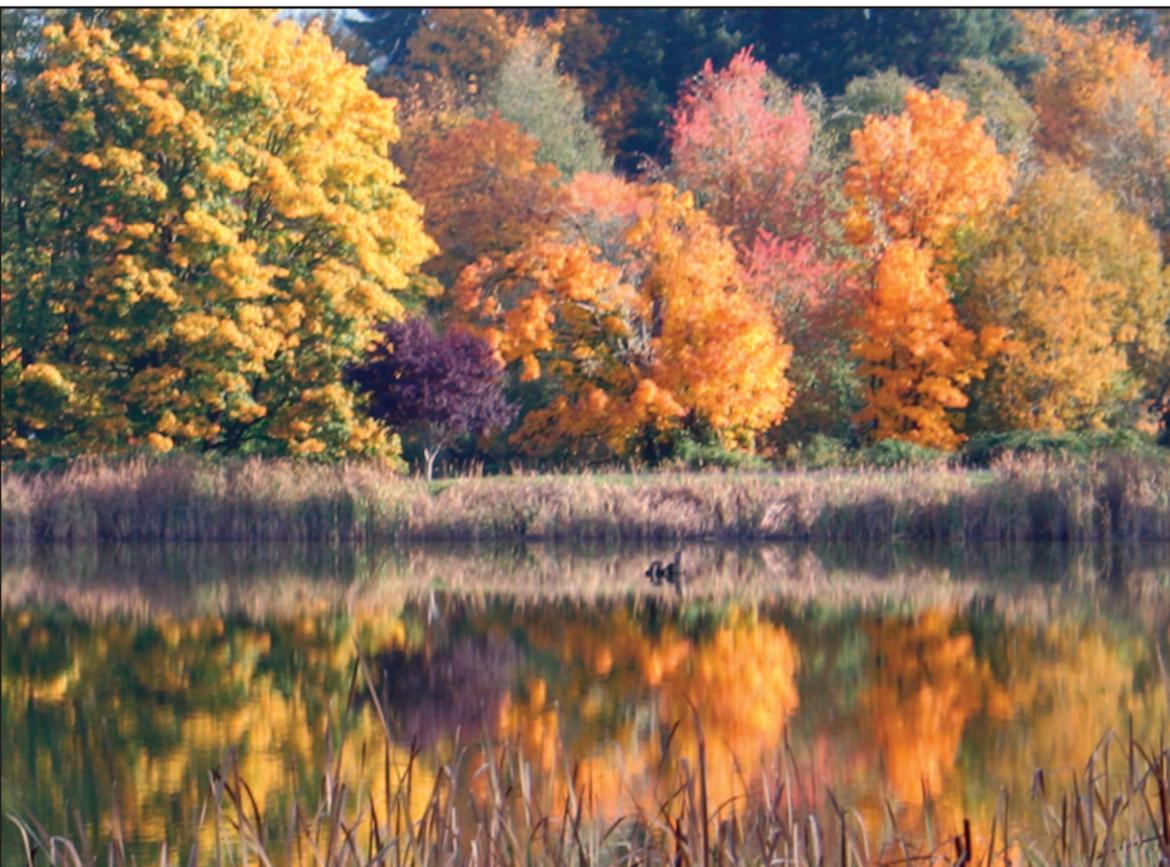


THE INDEPENDENT

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November 4, 2010



The vibrant colors of Autumn are reflected in Vernonia Lake.

New Vernonia council; Banks school bid fails

Vernonia will see changes on the city council, starting in January 2011. More than 48 percent of voters chose Josette Mitchell from the four candidates for mayor. Two new councilors will also be seated; Willow Burch and Marilyn Nicks came out ahead of the other six candidates.

Banks City Council will remain as is, since only incumbents ran for office in this election and all were returned to office.

Banks voters denied Banks School District's \$25.98 million bond measure request, with 53.04% of voters saying no.

Henry Heimuller was the choice to replace Rita Bernhard as Columbia County Commissioner, winning with 45.71% of the votes cast.

Columbia County voters thought that Chris Dudley should be Governor, though by press time, John Kitzhaber had been declared the winner and

had already received a congratulatory call from Chris Dudley.

Incumbents took the day in most state and federal races with Ron Wyden being returned to the U.S. Senate by 56.27%, David Wu staying as 1st District Congressional Representative (with 54.69%). Betsy Johnson continues as our area's State Senator after taking 54.45% of the vote, while Brad Witt as 31st District State Representative (57.04%), and Deborah Boone as State Representative for the 32nd District (52.29%) were also returned to office.

Columbia County furlough day Nov. 12

Due to the county's budget situation, the Columbia County Board of Commissioners approved the implementation of four unpaid furlough days for County employees at the beginning of the current budget year.

Friday, November 12, is a scheduled furlough day for all

Ted Wheeler was re-elected to serve as Oregon's State Treasurer.

58.76% of Columbia County voters agreed that the position of commissioner should be non-partisan in the future, while 65% of voters denied 5-208 Veterans Services Local Option Levy.

Statewide, Measure 70 passed, expanding home ownership loans for Oregon veterans. Voters also approved Measure 71, requiring the state

See Voters, page 5

County employees, with two exceptions; employees in the Sheriff's Office and the Roads/Parks Department will be open and operating as usual.

Residents will not be able to conduct County business on November 12, however, the State Court Offices will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Final B-V Trail segment now open

The final 1.5 mile section of the Banks-Vernonia State Trail was opened, October 29, in Banks, with much fanfare and a crowd estimated at around 230. Mayors from both Vernonia and Banks were on hand, along with other dignitaries, to cut the ribbon and open the final section of the 21-mile trail that was only an idea in the 1970s.

The Trail, known originally as the Banks-Vernonia Linear Park, was the first "rail to trail" conversion in Oregon. The route began as the railroad carrying logs and lumber to and from the Oregon-American Mill in Vernonia. The right-of-way was abandoned in 1973 and purchased by the state in 1974. It was about this time that a group of Vernonia residents started envisioning the conversion to a trail for walkers, bikers and horses.

Although the first effort was unsuccessful, in 1990, the land was transferred to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, triggering a second effort by residents of both Vernonia and Banks. The idea started to become reality.

At the time, there was concern and contention by some adjacent property owners, but the first section of trail opened in Vernonia on February 6, 1991. Sections have been added and paved as time and resources allowed. Work started earlier this fall to pave a few short stretches that are still gravel, and completion is expected (weather permitting) before the end of this year.

The trail includes 12 bridges and one 600-foot long trestle, and can now be accessed in the City of Vernonia, the City of

See Trail, page 5



Trick or Treaters enjoy Halloween on Bridge Street.