



THE INDEPENDENT

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Vernonia High School Band members took fifth place at statewide 2A/1A competition. Pictured are Josh Butcher, Quin Johansen, Jackson Miller, Austin Edgar, Rachel Brown, Rowan Cheney and Kim Allen. Photo courtesy of Betsy Miller.

Hudson faces possible recall from city council

Vernonia Council Member Kevin Hudson joined council members Willow Burch and Marilyn Nicks to terminate the city's contract with Columbia Pacific Development Corp. (Col-Pac) during the May 2 council meeting. The Col-Pac contract allowed their employee, Bill Haack, to fill in here as interim city administrator, so terminating the contract removed Haack.

The following day, a campaign was organized to recall Hudson.

Chief Petitioner Sharon Bernal filed all of the necessary forms and a small group met on May 3rd. Blank petitions were obtained on Friday, May 6, and enough signatures were gathered over that weekend to turn the petitions in on Monday, May 9. The county elections division certified the signatures, which made the recall effort official.

A statement of reasons for a recall is required by law. The reasons given are as follows:

"Kevin Hudson has engaged in a personal relationship with a Vernonia Police Officer, yet he knowingly voted to protect that employee's interests and then voted to fire Bill Haack, Vernonia Interim City Administrator who is the best person we have had in that job for more than a decade. Hudson mistakenly concluded that Haack was a threat to his friend. When Hudson made those votes, he knew that his Police Officer friend had lied on his employment application to the City of Vernonia.

Hudson has demonstrated disregard for the welfare of the People of Vernonia and the City as a whole. He has a pattern of using his vote to protect his friend at the cost of those he represents. He has shown no regard to the imperative issues

of the city, for example: Due to Hudson's actions, the city is at grave risk of losing its liability insurance for clean water and other city services. Hudson had been warned of this risk prior to his votes."

Hudson had to decide by May 16 whether to resign his position, or to rebut the charges on the recall petition. His decision was to rebut. Following are excerpts from his Justification:

"I have a lot of friends in Vernonia, one of them being a police officer. Personal relationships do not affect my decisions as councilor; I will do what is necessary.

The statement that Haack is the best City Administrator in a decade is an opinion, and everyone is entitled to an opinion.

I believe the record will show I have overwhelmingly supported Vernonia by my council actions in favor of the new school, flood recovery, and many other issues beneficial to our community. I want

See Recall on page 5

Three recognized with Life Saving Awards

Please see page 5

Banks School bond goes down to defeat again

Results from the May 18 special election were unofficial at press time, but with 100 percent of precincts counted, showed the Banks School District General Bond measure 34-187 failing by 51.03 percent (48.97 percent voted for the measure).

Banks School Director position 3 was won by Laurie Sheridan Schlegel with 74.97 percent of the vote over Steven C. Greagor. Kathy Edison ran unopposed for position 5.

Director positions 4 and 5 on the Banks Fire District ran unopposed, Mark Schmidlin for position 4 and Mike Durham for position 5. In the contest for position 2, Mitch Vandehey won the seat over Craig Stewart, with 66.36 percent of the vote.

Directors running for election to the Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District; Joel Glass, Don Schulte and Terence Lindauer, also ran unopposed.

In the only contested 9-1-1 Director election, for Vernonia Zone 4, Kathy Denckla beat Leslie Seeberger with 50.32 percent of the vote to Seeberger's 48.28 percent.

Scott Wilson, Donna Adams, and Allen Tuck were unopposed for Mist-Birkenfeld Rural Fire Protection District Director positions.

Columbia County voters say no to increased funding for sheriff

In unofficial results from the May 18 Columbia County elections, the Sheriff's Levy, 5-120, failed with 57.07 percent of voters saying no to that measure and 42.93 percent voting yes.

The voter turn-out for the election was 46.43 percent, a fair number for a special election.

In other races, all three incumbents running for re-election for Vernonia 47J School director were returned. Greg Kintz, Tim Bamberg and Bill Langmaid all ran unopposed.

CCRider has student summer bus passes

CCRider Summer Fun Student Bus Passes are now available and may be purchased on the bus from a driver, or at the CCRider office, 700 Port Avenue, St. Helens.

Passes are \$30.00 (exact change is required on buses) and are valid June 15 thru September 7, 2011. Students must be 6-19 years old and show valid picture or student ID when purchasing and using the pass, or proof of school attendance. Students under age 9 must be accompanied by an adult when using the bus.