

# The INDEPENDENT

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## Opinion

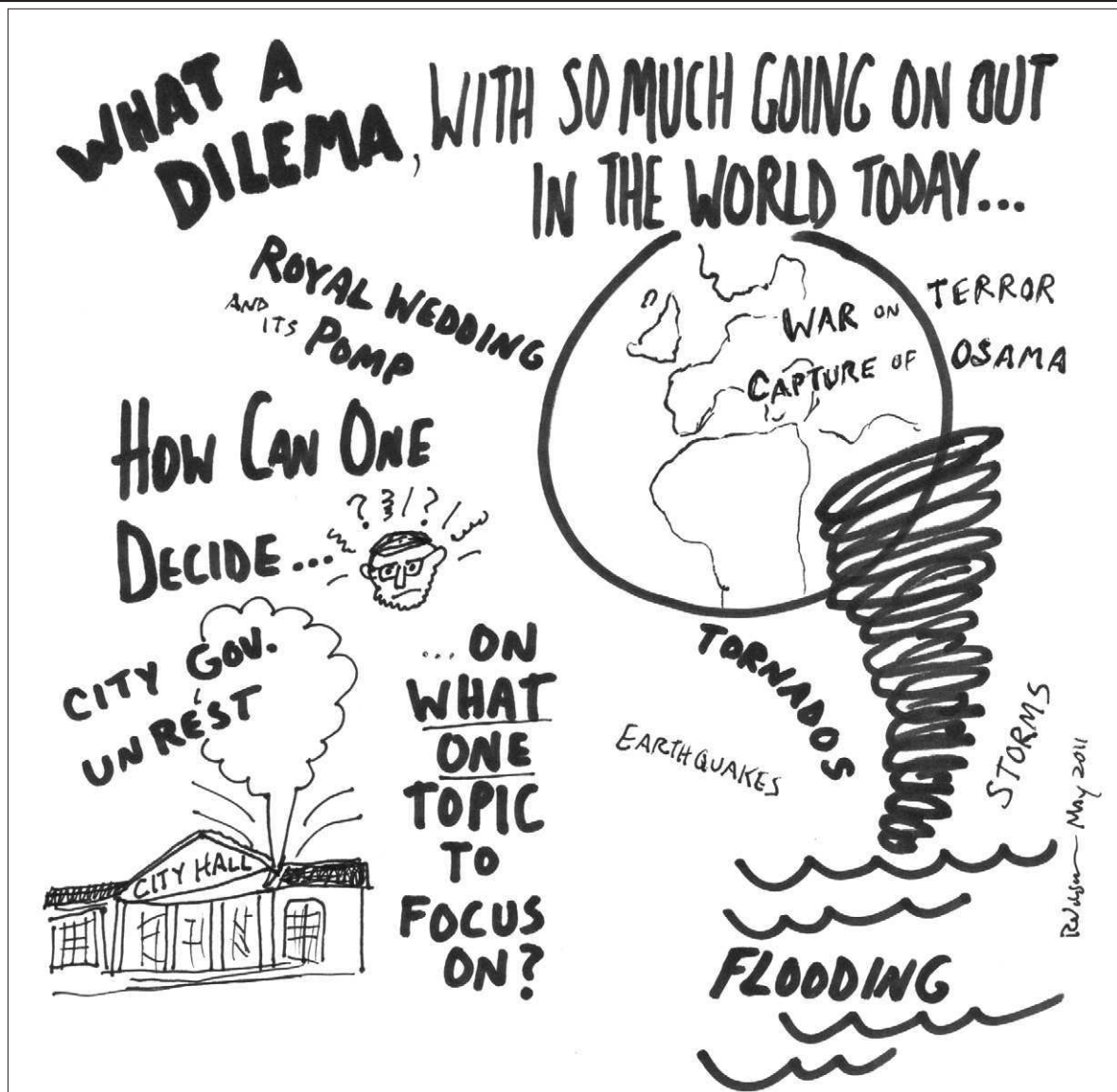
### What will you do on May 30?

What will you do this Memorial Day? Spend the day at a leisurely pursuit such as fishing or golfing? Perhaps enjoying the company of friends and family at a picnic or barbeque? Every Memorial Day, many Vernonians, and others, join in a ceremony of honor at the Vernonia Memorial Cemetery. People come to pay their respects and remember. We wonder...if more people understood and remembered the sacrifices of those who did not get to return to their loved ones because they died in service to our country... would we try to find a better way to resolve conflict, instead of going to war?

The ceremonies at Vernonia Memorial Cemetery will include a speech about the meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance, songs, a rifle salute, taps, an Honor Guard, and prayer. Whether you attend every year, or this will be your first time, you'll find the ceremonies moving and highly appropriate to the day.

Memorial Day started as Decoration Day, a day to decorate the graves of those who gave their lives for this country. Waterloo, N.Y., was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, but it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, officially proclaimed Memorial Day on May 5, 1868, in General Order No. 11, and it was first observed May 30, 1868, with flowers placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. The first state to recognize the holiday was New York, in 1873. When it was expanded to include those who gave their lives in any war, it was renamed Memorial Day. It is now celebrated in almost every state on the last Monday in May (passed by Congress with the National Holiday Act of 1971). Some southern states have a separate day for honoring the Confederate war dead. In 2000, President Bill Clinton instituted a National Moment of Remembrance on Memorial Day, when everyone is urged to take a minute of silence, at 3:00 p.m. local time, to just remember.

Since man has walked the Earth, there have been wars, perhaps there always will be. The least we can do is take one day out of the year to spend a moment remembering those who served and gave their lives.



### Out of My Mind . . .

by Noni Andersen



"Mendaciousness", given to or characterized by deception or falsehood or divergence from absolute truth,\* is about the best description of what has been going on in the City of Vernonia. It isn't all deception or falsehood, though there's plenty of

that to go around, there is also a lot of divergence from absolute truth.

It appears, though, that many, many Vernonia citizens are not simply tired of misrepresentation at the city level, but are working to do something about it. The initial effort involves a campaign to recall council member Kevin Hudson, with plans for a subsequent campaign to recall council members Willow Burch and Marilyn Nicks as soon as possible, which will be early July, the required six months after they take office.

The three council members (a majority) seem to think that interim administrator Bill Haack was somehow responsible for state investigations of Mike Kay, a city police officer, for numerous incidents which appear to fit the above definition. At least one of the three didn't even bother to read any of the 900-plus pages of the state report before they voted to get rid of Haack.

Citizens were just annoyed, initially, but firing Haack triggered widespread anger. Technically, they terminated the City's contract with Haack's employer, Columbia Pacific Development Corp.

(Col-Pac), which had loaned him to our cash-strapped and leaderless city.

Primary among the reasons for that anger was the competency Haack brought to the city's many complicated projects and the elements within those projects, which include the following:

- ROSE AVENUE PROJECT – feasibility plans for Clinic, Vernonia Cares, Senior Center, program development plan for each entity, coordination with FEMA for Seniors and Clinic, leasehold agreement design, proposals for CDBG funding, proposals for road improvement funding, negotiate with WOEC on dedication of road improvements, biomass project planning
- WATER FACILITY – water rate study, meter upgrade project, master meter planning,
- WASTEWATER FACILITY – project manager selection, pre-engineering selection, final engineering selection, general contractor selection, wetland mitigation as required, improvements to lake if required, sewer rate study
- SCHOOL/CITY related – Missouri Ave./Bridge St. construction, wetland mitigation construction, wetland mitigation oversight, new Spencer Park planning, school demolition, new Spencer Park construction
- CITY SYSTEMS – negotiate collective bargaining agreements, establish human resources systems including compensation plan, job descriptions and updated employee handbook; upgrade fiscal management systems including purchase orders, fund analysis tool, potential use of DASHBOARD product

Please see page 3