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**Letters**

**Learn about how to avoid foreclosure**

To the Editor:  
 I would like to take a moment and remind community members living in Columbia County that a valuable resource is available to them in the form of Community Action Team, Inc. This agency not only serves low to moderate income households, but households above the moderate income level.

Recently a Foreclosure Prevention Resource meeting was held in St. Helens to provide county community members the opportunity to speak with HUD approved agency counselors about foreclosure prevention options and tools to help them avoid foreclosure. I was surprised to see the meeting poorly attended.

We are all aware that dealing with banks and servicers regarding difficult situations such as foreclosure prevention can be an uphill battle in most cases. Community Action Team has trained foreclosure prevention counselors available to ease some of the stress this process causes. And the service is free. It is hoped to have another of these meetings in a different part of Columbia County in the near future. I remain the eternal optimist.

If you would like to know more about these meetings or other services offered by Community Action Team you can visit [www.cat-team.org](http://www.cat-team.org), call Cindy at 503-325-9215, ext. 2303, or e-mail Cindy at [cindkp@cat-team.org](mailto:cindkp@cat-team.org)

**Cindy Peake  
 Community Action  
 Team, Inc.  
 Astoria**

**Airport expansion is a threat to rural area**

To the Editor:  
 After a lengthy and expensive battle, the Land Use Board of Appeals allowed Apple valley Aviation to engage in aircraft operations under certain conditions. Primarily restricted to agricultural flights, it was a compromise that both sides could live with. Mr Applebee apparently has other plans. From the beginning, he has wanted to expand the original private airstrip into a full-

fledged airport. The main impediment has been that most of his property is below the flood plain and cannot be built upon. So, that should be the end of it, right? Not necessarily so. Mr. Applebee hired an engineering firm and, Surprise!, 11 feet of flood elevation disappear. With this new information, he has applied to Washington County to continue his expansion with runway improvements, and extension of an "existing" road for parking his big trucks. (Which looks very much like a future taxiway with turn-outs to eventual hangars.)

Washington County, in it's continuing appeasement, has accepted the application and is considering approval. The flood plain designation was established long before most can remember and has generally been accepted by state and federal agencies.

The Neighbors Against Applevalley Expansion (NAAVE) group has once again formed to stop this threat to our rural way of life. Our lawyers and engineers have questions about the validity of the findings in this report, especially with photographic evidence of severe flooding in '56, '96 and 2006. We'll show that the established line is correct, as it always has been and that our position will prevail. Unfortunately this will take money and we can't do it alone.

Through the generous contributions of our supporters in the past, we were able to prevent the unbridled expansion attempted last time. It's unfortunate that we have to ask again, but once again the livability of western Washington County is at stake. NAAVE will sponsor an information booth at the Banks Farmer's Market on Fridays. You can also visit the website at [NAAVE.org](http://NAAVE.org).

**Jeff Holmes  
 Banks**

**County man upset by lack of deputies**

To the Editor:  
 On 9/14/11, Sheriff Dickerson went public on Fox 12 News stating that effective October 1st there will only be one Deputy to patrol the entire County. One deputy to respond to all 9-1-1 calls received daily. This Deputy will, at his or her discretion, choose what calls to

respond to. They may not even respond at all! Sheriff Dickerson was quoted, "If you have a firearm, get trained in the proper use of that firearm, and be willing to use it if you need to protect your family."

*(Editor's Note: Sheriff Dickerson told The Independent his statement was, "If someone's kicking your door in, a double aught load in your shotgun is a good deterrent.")*

Sheriff Dickerson, you made a very powerful statement in telling the residents of Columbia County that they may need to be willing to use deadly force but you failed to tell them that if they don't follow the letter of the law they will be the ones going to jail!

I cringe knowing we are going back to the days of calling 9-1-1 and being told by C-Com "sorry no one is on duty or available to respond, you can call back tomorrow or we will take a message and a Deputy will call you back when he or she can".

I expected more from you Sheriff Dickerson, that's why I voted for you! I feel you are all about excuses and nothing about solutions. Are you punishing the residents of this county for not passing the tax levy so you could spend the money as you saw fit? Where is the Sheriff's Posse and your Reserve Program? Why don't you hold the County Commissioners responsible for this? The same goes for our Commissioners. Why are you not holding Sheriff Dickerson accountable for his budget that seemed to be adequate prior to the levy? When you focus on nothing but the problems, that is all you will get in return, more problems!

In Columbia County, Oregon, with a population of 49,351 people we have three County Commissioners that are directly, legally, morally, and individually responsible for the current state of this county. They are Tony Hyde, Earl Fisher, and Henry Heimuller. I believe it is time We the People start holding these three people responsible and accountable for our failing Sheriff's Office. If they cannot come up with a solution to this problem then why are we allowing them to represent the citizens of this County? They are supposed to represent the best interest of

the people!  
 If the County Commissioners and the Sheriff cannot come up with a resolution to keep our Sheriff's Office functioning to a satisfactory level of operations then at a minimum I feel that by October 1st, 2011, the Commissioners should have a County Ordinance in place that allows the citizens of this County the right to use deadly force in the defense and protection of personal property. The right to use deadly force to protect land, tangible, or moveable property. The right to use deadly force to prevent the imminent commission of Arson, Burglary, Robbery, Aggravated Robbery, Theft during the nighttime, or Criminal Mischief during the nighttime. The right to use deadly force to prevent the criminal that is fleeing immediately after committing the crimes listed above or when it is reasonably believed the property cannot be protected or recovered by any other means. Right now in this county there is no other means of recovering or protecting property because the Columbia County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) is non-existent and does not have the staff to investigate property crimes to recover stolen property. I know this first hand. Now let's include the right to use deadly force in protection of a third person's property with these guidelines. The third person has requested the protection and/or the third person is a family member. These are the same laws that are and have been in effect in Texas for quite some time. Now is the time to change the use of deadly force laws in Columbia County. The billboards have just been put up by Sheriff Dickerson welcoming every criminal in the Pacific NW to Columbia County. Change the laws allowing us to defend our property and you can bet that

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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.