

# The INDEPENDENT

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## Opinion

### Be thankful and help others

Thanksgiving in this country is considered to have started in 1621 when Wampanoag Indians and the Mayflower pilgrims shared a meal in Plymouth. Throughout the world, many civilizations have some type of fall harvest festival or feast or otherwise celebrate "a day of thanksgiving to honor God". In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday of November as a national Thanksgiving Day. President Franklin D. Roosevelt moved Thanksgiving to the third Thursday but after significant opposition moved it back to the fourth Thursday in 1941. There probably was not a turkey at the 1621 meal, but Ben Franklin gave the turkey a boost when he tried to have it named the national bird. The bald eagle beat out the turkey for that honor.

This year, in addition to giving thanks, consider giving instead of receiving. And not just during the holidays, but year 'round like the Freewheelers do (see picture on page 1). Here are just a few ideas; when you buy your Christmas tree at Mike's Tree Farm, take two cans of food and get \$2.00 off the tree. The food goes to Vernonia Cares and Mist-Birkenfeld Fire Department's food drive. Or, just take a turkey or some money to either food drive or, in Banks, give to the Sonrise Food Drive. Sign up to sell Christmas trees at Murphy's Furniture (see page 10), they give 100 percent of the money to the Inukai Family Boys and Girls Club. Sign up to help SOLV get rid of invasive plants at Stub Stewart Park this Saturday (see page 7).

Have a skill you can share? Make a quilt for someone who will appreciate it. Help a neighbor fix a fence. How about doing the dishes for a sick friend or taking them a casserole?

Help Vernonia's Kiwanis Club fill dignity bags to be given to children here in town who are in need of such simple items as shampoo and deodorant.

All of the many community organizations – the Vernonia Senior Center, the Lions Club, the Vernonia Boosters, Vernonia Cares, American Legion, Boy and/or Girl Scouts, the Pioneer Museum, volunteer firefighters, volunteer ambulance association – to name just a few – do good works and can always use a few bucks or a few hours of volunteer time.

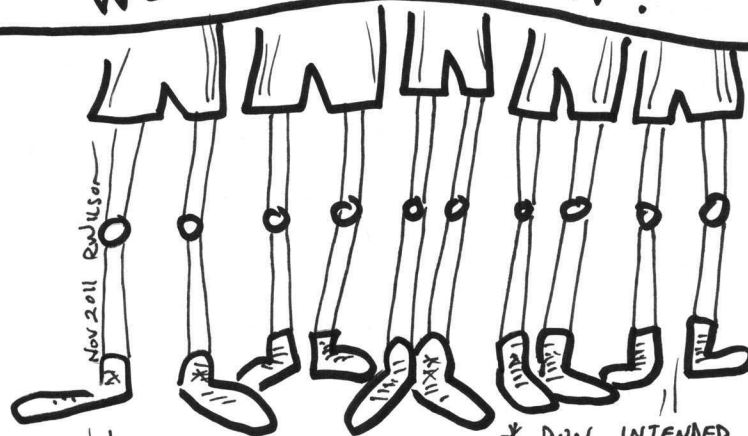
Put giving back in Thanksgiving. Everybody has something to give and the rewards of volunteering are tremendous.

Happy Thanksgiving.

AN OXYMORON of the 01% of the 1%?

"OCCUPY" THE NBA!

WE CAN'T PLAY BALL\* 'TIL WE GET OUR WAY!



HAPPY THANKSGIVING - DON'T FORGET YOUR LOCAL FOOD BANK NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

### Out of My Mind . . .

by Noni Andersen



The 12 member Congressional "Supercommittee" that is working on deficit reduction hasn't yet been able to develop a plan to reduce debt and increase income. It appears that, in spite of the many resources and staff people they can call on,

they need help.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Reduce defense spending, which has doubled over the last decade. Former Defense Secretary Gates suggested eliminating several billion dollars worth of expensive, unneeded equipment, but Congress refused to make the cuts.
- Return income taxes on those with annual earnings of \$1 million or more to the rates during the Clinton administration. This would raise their rates by less than four percent.
- Tax capital gains and stock dividends at the same rate as regular income. People whose income is derived from investments should pay the same tax rate as those whose income is derived from their labor.
- Reduce or eliminate agriculture subsidies for the crops that receive 90 percent of those subsidies (cotton, corn, soybeans, rice and wheat), most of which go to large corporate agribusiness, not family farmers.
- Eliminate ethanol subsidies. Most ethanol is made from corn and soybeans, which already

get the lions' share of ag subsidies – even while they are at all-time highs. They are already guaranteed a market by government regulations requiring regular gasoline to include at least 10% ethanol.

- Eliminate the tax provision that lets highly profitable oil and gas companies deduct the cost of searching for oil and gas. It is an operating expense, nothing special.

- Eliminate the depletion allowance for the gas and oil industry; it makes no sense. Their business is selling petroleum products; why do we subsidize them for depleting the supply?

- Change Medicare Part D to allow the Medicare administration to negotiate the costs of prescription drugs. (Canada buys the same drugs, from the same makers, at half the price.)

- Eliminate the tax break that pays corporations to send jobs and profits overseas. U.S. corporations with significant foreign profits paid tax rates to foreign countries that were almost a third higher than they paid to the IRS on their domestic profits.

- Eliminate no-bid and cost-plus contracts. They're invitations to over-charge.

- Close Guantanamo Bay. Keeping prisoners there costs \$800,000 per prisoner per year! Some of the reasons are that all supplies (office supplies, food or bulldozers) must be delivered by sea or air; personnel get combat pay, like troops in Afghanistan; and a revolving staff of 1,850 troops, linguists, intelligence analysts, federal agents and contractors. There are also schools, an Irish pub, a McDonald's, satellite TV,

Please see page 3