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**Letters**

**Student seeks work to fund trip to Italy**

To the Editor:  
 My name is Bridger Steward and I am a fifteen year old sophomore at Vernonia High School. Some of you in the community may know me, some of you may not. I have an opportunity to travel to Italy during the summer of 2012 with my Literature teacher, Ms. Saifler, and a few other students. The dates for my trip are June 27 – July 11, 2012.

I am especially looking forward to going to Milan, Venice, and Rome. What I will be doing in Milan is visiting the town's Roman arena, which dates back to the first century. In Venice we will visit Doges' Palace. In Rome we will be seeing the Coliseum of course and many other sights.

I need to earn money to help pay for my trip. I am willing to do any yard work (raking leaves, mowing, weed eating). Do you have any returnable bottles and or cans? I would be happy to come and pick them up if you would like to get rid of

them. Also do you have a pet needing care? I'm willing to feed and take care of a pet if you are leaving and need a pet sitter for a few days. The total cost of my trip is \$3362.00 plus spending money.

Please call me at 503-804-4078. This is a once in a lifetime trip and I am looking forward to the experience.

Thank you,  
**Bridger Steward  
 Vernonia**

**Regulations and law are synonymous**

To the Editor:  
 Thank you for including the responses of Republican Jim Greenfield to the questions posed to all District 1 candidates. They helped clarify his position and those of Republicans in general.

A recurring theme of his answers was that business regulations are the root cause of all our economic woes. The gist of his argument is that if we eliminate regulations, like the wave of a magic wand, our economy

will prosper.

The best way to test the feasibility of that argument is to look at nations that have followed those recommendations and see how they are doing. The best current example that fits that criteria is Somalia. No business laws are enforced in Somalia – no Environmental Protection Agency, no wage and hour regulations, no OSHA, no Equal Employment Opportunity regulations, no product safety regulations, no minimum or maximum interest rate on loans. No Social Security taxes, no Medicare, Medicaid, Workers' Comp, collective bargaining or unemployment insurance to worry about. There are no zoning regulations or building codes. There are no laws that protect a business from being taken over at gunpoint by someone who wants to do so. There are no courts where an aggrieved business owner or employee or consumer can plead their case.

In other words, for those who says that deregulation is the cure to whatever ails ya, Somalia is the closest thing to

heaven on earth.

This does not prevent business from operating, in a fashion. The official unemployment rate is 47%. Per capita income is \$600. Annually. Somalia has two highly lucrative industries: kidnapping for ransom and weapon sales. Without regulations to control them, they thrive.

The words "regulations" and "laws" mean the same thing. Whenever you hear a candidate lobby for doing away with regulations, s/he is proposing the elimination of laws. The absence of law, by definition, is anarchy.

**Miles R. Wickstrom  
 Vernonia**

**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.

**Out of My Mind . . .**

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a library, sports facilities, etc. Oh yes, and 171 prisoners.

These few suggestions add up to billions, maybe trillions, of dollars, but don't expect Congress to accept any of them.

Too many members of Congress get big "campaign donations" from defense contractors, big agriculture, pharmaceutical, communications, financial, heavy equipment, mining and energy companies. Too many members of Congress are more interested in keeping that income flowing than they are in doing the job their constituents elected them to do.

When politicians talk about cutting "entitlements", they are referring primarily to Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. They should be talking about how ordinary people are subsidizing profitable corporate entitlements. They should be talking about how ordinary people are subsidizing entitlements for the wealthy through a tax code that charges them at lower rates than most of us.

A recent study of 280 profitable Fortune 500 corporations, revealed an average effective tax rate for 2008-2010 of 18.5 percent, about half the statutory rate of 35 percent. Tax subsidies given to all 280 profitable corporations from 2008-2010 totalled \$222.7 billion. More than half of federal corporate tax subsidies for companies in the study went to four industries: financial services, utilities, telecommunications, and oil, gas & pipelines.

Job creation and other community needs are increasingly underfunded. Recent census data reported that the poverty rate for 2009 was 14.3 percent, higher than it has been since 1994. There is also a rise in extreme poverty, with more than 20 million people living on income that is half, or less, of the federal poverty line. Economic injustice is reaching further into mainstream America than at any time since the Great Depression.

But...if you paid any federal income tax last year, you paid more than General Electric, Pepco (Pepsi), Boeing, Yahoo, Yum Brands, Marathon Oil, FedEx, Hewlett Packard, American Express, and Time Warner – combined.

**School continues funding search**

**From page 1**

and federal governments, and individuals to make up the difference. With their help, we have recruited a great set of Portland area and local business and community leaders to assist with this effort. One of the first meetings that were set up, was to discuss bridge financing, to get enough funds to construct the school while fundraising efforts began.

Through the Metropolitan Group's work, since January 2010, our fundraising committee with the ongoing help of Oregon Solutions, has identified an additional \$16.7 million. The major elements of that effort include a \$1 million challenge grant from The Ford Family Foundation, which has helped to garner an additional \$700,000 in contributions so far this year. With our government partners, we were able to obtain a \$1.1 million Oregon Department of Energy grant for the biomass boiler and other energy saving aspects of the new schools, and Governor Kulongoski announced a \$3.8 million grant through Oregon Department of Transportation

to pay for the street and transportation improvements. Our federal legislative delegation and local elected leaders helped support the work of Oregon Emergency Management and our local flood relief folks to obtain an additional \$11.3 million from FEMA. However, some of these funds are needed to pay for demolition and the construction of Spencer Park, so \$1.5 million is not included, since these items were not in the scope of the new schools project budget. It is our hope that some portion of these funds will be returned to the project budget.

Now, we still have a way to go to finish the schools. So we are looking for ways to save on  
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**NOTICE**

The INDEPENDENT publishes on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Because November has five Wednesdays, there will be three weeks before the next issue, on December 7, 2011.

The deadline for the Dec. 7 issue is Friday, Dec. 2.