

Where to Find Them

U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (Dem)

1220 SW 3rd Avenue, Suite 585
Portland OR 97232
Phone: 503-326-7525
223 Dirksen Senate Ofc. Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510-0001
Phone: 202-224-5244
E-Mail: <http://wyden.senate.gov/contact>
Website: <http://wyden.senate.gov>

U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley (Dem.)

One World Trade Center
121 SW Salmon St., Suite 1250
Portland, OR 97204
Phone: 503-326-3386
313 Hart Senate Ofc. Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: (202) 224-3753
E-Mail: <http://merkley.senate.gov/contact>
WebSite: <http://merkley.senate.gov>

U.S. Representative Suzanne Bonamici, (Dem) OR District 1

620 SW Main, Suite 606
Portland, OR 97205
Phone: 503-326-2901
2338 Rayburn House Ofc. Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-0855
Website: <http://bonamici.house.gov>

Senator Betsy Johnson (Dem) Senate District 16

PO Box R,
Scappoose, OR 97056
Phone: 503-543-4046
900 Court St. NE, S-314
Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-986-1716
E-mail: sen.betsyjohnson@state.or.us
Website: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/johnson>

Representative Brad Witt (Dem) House District. 31

21740 Lindberg Road,
Clatskanie, OR 97016
Phone: 503-728-4664
900 Court St. NE, H-373
Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-986-1431
E-mail: rep.bradwitt@state.or.us
Website: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/witt>

Representative Deborah Boone (Dem) House District 32

PO Box 926
Cannon Beach, OR 97110
Phone: 503-717-9182
900 Court St. NE, H-375
Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-986-1432
E-mail: rep.deborahboone@state.or.us
Website: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/boone>

Letters

Help needed to meet funds for tourneys

To the Editor:

This is Payton Wolf, and if you don't remember me, I am a local 7th grade student at Vernonia Middle School and an avid Softball player. You might also remember me from some of my letters to the paper. I am currently playing tournament softball for a Beaverton team called Blaze~Ohana.

I have been raising money to earn my way to Colorado for the "Colorado Sparkler Junior tournament" at the end of June, which is a college exposure tournament. Also, my team is now planning to go to Western Nationals in California at the end of July. This is a tournament you have to qualify for, and since my team is doing so well, we qualify to go. Although I am very excited to travel with my team to these awesome tournaments, it does cost a lot of money. With the support of the community, family and friends, I have earned half my money needed to go. I've done several fundraisers and continue to collect pop cans and bottles.

I still have half my money to earn and that is why I'm writing, to ask for your help. If you have any pop cans/bottles you'd like to donate, give me a call. I am also available to babysit if you're in need of a babysitter. I also plan to do one last Krispy Kreme fundraiser, which has been very successful for me in the past. It will probably be in the beginning of July and if you are interested in pre-ordering a dozen or more, please call 503-429-0457 or e-mail at amanda.wow@msn.com.

Again, thank you so much for all your support you have given me, it is very much appreciated!!

Sincerely,

**Payton Wolf
Vernonia**

High utilities hamper Vernonia's growth

To the Editor:

I want to make it abundantly clear that this is not, by any means, an indictment against or criticism of our sitting City Council. They are an intelligent, thoughtful, caring, hard-working group of volunteers. I just don't want them to fall into

the same trap I did as your Mayor.

You all received a notice in your utility bill from city Administrator, Bill Haack, outlining the city's plan for the sewer rehab. If my calculations are correct, we will be paying \$19 a month on top of the minimum \$103 to pay off the \$4.3 million already used. Now there is an additional \$4.3 million balance they want to use to add 3 feet to the top of the sewer lagoons per FEMA's directions and install a system that allows the sewer overflow to be cleaned and cooled through the ground under the lagoons per DEQ's orders. That all sounds great, EXCEPT the cost to you and me will be an added \$7 per million. Now, that adds up to a monthly utility bill of \$152...that is if you keep your water consumption at 2000 gallons or less per month.

I understand why the Council is going forward. They have two very large state and federal agencies telling them they have to do it. DEQ says, "It's the EPA that set the rules we have no control." Couldn't DEQ refinance the city's debt to lower the repayments to a level we can afford to pay? FEMA wants to protect itself from future costs concerning the sewer in case there is another flood. I say, "Fine and dandy! Let FEMA pay for it!"

I think we should be concentrating on increasing our diminishing population. Let's get more utility users pulling our considerable wagon. It will be good for everyone, the schools, W.O.E.C., the city, the businesses, and ultimately the community as a whole.

There are several reasons I'm concerned:

1) The consequences of a high utility bill: Not a very good welcome sign - "Come live in Vernonia, highest utility and electric bills in the state!"

2) Who is to say that in the proposed 20 years that DEQ won't change the rules again?

3) We have other concerns like our water supply. Do you remember the summers of water rationing? We can't be naïve enough to think it's not going to happen again and again. How will we handle a forest fire?

All subjects for another conversation.

I don't know about you, but

I'm on a fixed income. I'm still paying for flood damage not covered by insurance or Flood Relief. Even though my house has been elevated I still have to maintain flood insurance. With higher property taxes for the new school, higher electric rates due to W.O.E.C.'s fancy new building, higher gas prices that make everything more expensive, my paltry income takes a heavy hit. I can't imagine how people raising children do it.

I know the City Council is trying hard to finally end the MOA imposed by DEQ and meet the demands of FEMA. An admirable undertaking, but let's do a little more talking before we sign on the dotted line and put another financial burden on our ever lessening utility users.

Respectfully,

**Sally Harrison
Vernonia**

Schools must stop bullying of students

To the Editor:

I have had children in this school district, actively, since March of 2001. I could and still might possibly put down on paper some events that have happened involving my daughters, but for now I am going to focus on the events concerning my son and the reasons I feel he has been treated unfairly in this school district and why I feel that he is not the only one.

My son is now 12 years old and has been in this school district from the beginning of his education. His first couple of years he had great teachers with my only complaint being his teacher saying just how cute he was in front of my boy. He was pretty cute, though!

His 3rd year was really rough and seemed to be the beginning of the end.

His 4th year I had no real complaints for his teachers who stood strong against the wrong and did not neglect praising the good.

His following years have been real rough but this year seemed to be better until some bumps towards the end.

My son has been labeled a mean, angry, unmanageable child.

Here's my story!

My son has learned that the school staff will not help him.

He has to fight his battles himself. Not one staff member has seemed to look at Trevor for Trevor!

This is what other kids see.

He has always been either the shortest or second shortest boy in his grade and this makes him smaller than many other girls also, which makes him an easy target for both boys and girls. The boys try to knock him around to make them feel more tough and strong, as boys do, and the girls knock him down because it's fun knowing a girl can knock down a boy.

For Trevor's 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades, I had a parent come to where I work and tell me how their daughter was shoving Trevor down to the ground at school very regularly. This parent thought it was funny and since I was at work I could not really say much. Trevor struggled with this for a long time, obviously because he has been taught not to hit girls and so he would try to stay clear of her as much as possible. Why none of the staff ever saw this happening I do not know!!

This size issue also gets the names attached; like shorty, shrimp, tiny, etc. None being ego boosters for a boy. Trevor has red hair that makes him stand out in a crowd and the eye naturally goes to him first, just for the difference in color. This also brings on the names like Leprechaun, Ginger, Cone Head, Carrot Top, etc. Then Trevor had to have glasses so bring on the classic Four-eyes named and the boy is overwhelmed. So now here is Trevor wearing glasses, being knocked down to the ground by girls regularly, and being called Tiny Leprechaun repeatedly. And when he would go to a staff member for help he was told to quit complaining and figure out how to handle it on his

Please see page 6

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.