

## Where to Find Them

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### U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley (Dem.)

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

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### Senator Betsy Johnson (Dem) Senate District 16

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### Representative Brad Witt (Dem) House District. 31

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### Representative Deborah Boone (Dem) House District 32

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## Letters

### Young teen looking for summer work

To the Editor:

My name is Hayden Cieloha. I am 13. I am going into the 8th grade next year. I am looking for work to earn some money over the summer. I know how to mow lawns, operate a weed wacker and operate a leaf blower. I am also willing to do small jobs like move firewood, rake leaves, wash cars/crummies. If you're interested then call 503-429-0745 or 503-688-8103.

Hayden Cieloha  
Vernonia

### Thanks for helping seniors' plant sale

To the Editor:

The Vernonia Senior Center would like to say "Thank You" to all its members who helped with the "Annual Plant Sale". We also had help from two Master Gardeners who jumped in at the last second to help sort, price and sell, so a "Thank You" goes out to Leticia Soma and Pat Stacklie. A "Thank You" to Noni Andersen for volunteering as cashier on Saturday. Also, a big "Thank You" to May at "Jim Dandy's" and Tammy at "Woodstock Nursery" for the wonderful garden plants. A big "Thank You" to Trader Joe's and Linda Tellef and her Manager, Klea, at Joe's, for the weeks of plants we were able to pre-sell. Plus, the many many plants Linda gave from her own garden, "Thank You".

We were able to raise about \$1,200! Good Job, Vernonia. Thank you all for making the Annual Plant Sale a huge success. Hope to see everyone next year!

Jack Harvey  
Vernonia Senior Center

### We all lose without local businesses

To the Editor:

I am not happy that Vernonia Pharmacy is no longer here! Come on people! As a business owner in Vernonia for 18 years, I have struggled to feed my family so that I could stay in a community where I thought people cared about each other. I have struggled so that I could raise my children with the morals I wanted to instill, and be there for them. It has not

been easy. I hear many say, "I can get it cheaper at Walmart or Winco." Well, does Walmart donate to your kids sporting events? Does Walmart make sure you have a gallon of milk at 8:30 at night so your kids can have breakfast? Does anyone at Winco even say "Hi" to you when you walk in the door? No, no and no! If I needed a prescription and had questions, Phillip was there to answer my questions. He made time to make phone calls and get my prescriptions when I ran out even though it was my own fault. He had a face, and a family to feed. Now he is gone because so many felt it was easier to use the internet or mail order prescriptions. It might have saved you some money but what happens when you run out and you have forgotten to order? Now you have to take the time and gas to drive, not such a big savings now...Do you think those insurance companies who are taking your money from one pocket and putting it in another really care about you? NO, they care about your money! You are nothing but a number to them, a \$ sign!

If small businesses leave Vernonia, the town looks deserted, no one wants to live here, the utilities and property taxes are divided between fewer people and those who stay struggle more! Do you not see that? Sure Sentry is more expensive, they don't get the discounts by buying in huge bulk that Winco and Walmart do, they also have more cost of overhead here in the highest utility area in who knows where. My electric bill in April was \$900! I can't even imagine how much Randy and Sharon pay! Sure gas at Minimart is more expensive. How much does it cost to drive to another gas station? More than .20 cents/gallon. It costs you a gallon of gas just to get there to save...And, did that gas station give money to your kids' all night grad party? NO, but Matt did and look how many people are working at these stores and feeding their families. Do we only show compassion when we lose someone or should we be more considerate to our community and want to keep it together by doing a little shopping here in town daily instead of handing our hard earned

money over to those who really don't know us, don't care about us and only see us as a dollar bill. Thank you to all who support Vernonia Florist and all other local businesses. We care about your families, we do our best to contribute to all fundraising events, and we do our best to help when we can. Please consider the same and shop local before it's too late.

Sincerely concerned about Vernonia,

Lisa Edgar  
Vernonia Florist  
Vernonia

### Look at alternatives to higher utility rates

To the Editor:

The thought of the water/sewer bill increasing about \$20 per month, is just too much, and bad for town morale.

People will be grumpy. We've already had a substantial increase, from \$89 to \$103. Four years ago I was told the \$89 would decrease as a loan ended, but now a loan just gets bigger. I've read the information presented by authorities, which is stretched over decades, and we must consider alternatives. Preventing large increases in basic services should be a top priority.

1. It would be great to have water billed like other utilities, by quantity used. It's always seemed strange to me to bill \$103 for 2000 gallons, but it's only a few bucks more per 1000 more gallons. I often use less than 2000 gallons, but pay nearly the same amount as someone who uses 4000 gallons. Twice as much for almost the same price! It seems there could be a more fair pricing schedule, and make more economic sense for our budget.

2. The town is lit up all night long while we're asleep. We all turn off lights when we go to bed. Maybe Vernonia should too. I have a bright street light over my property that I find much more annoying than helpful. It ruins much of my landscape. I always think of money wasted looking at it.

3. The police budget is very high and maybe that should be reduced. Perhaps a basic white police car versus the custom paint job it has.

4. When riding our great bike trail, I look at the "bicycle skills park." I guess that's what

it is, the grassy land adjacent to the bike path. It's been unfinished, and sometimes flooded, for some time. Is this really going to generate any serious income for the town? How much has been invested? I think lower utility bills are a much higher priority for Vernonians.

5. Is NPDES compliance that critical? How close are we? Is it worth the time and money?

6. Can we work something out with the state? Because the proposed increase is just too much.

7. We could face more delinquent, unpaid bills because of the large increase.

The high sewer rates are tough to swallow, especially in an era where banks make mistakes, and get bailed out.

I hope we can find creative, smart solutions to this problem.

Peter Nelson  
Vernonia

### We, too, can become third-world country

To the Editor:

I went shopping for sheets yesterday – just plain, ordinary queen size sheets. I did, however, want a large choice of material and color so I went to Washington Square where I could shop at Penneys and Macys, two large, nationwide department stores.

Imagine my dismay when every set of sheets was made in either China or India (and, with the rare exception, in Portugal).

Of course, that set me to thinking about all the out-sourcing of natural resources and jobs which is happening in the United States. We have acres of logs setting in Rainier and across the river in Longview waiting to be shipped to other nations so that those nations can produce products to send back to our country for us to purchase.

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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.