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Letters

Will have old pics to share at Jamboree

To the Editor:

Vernonia is a Loving, Caring Community.

Thank you for the prayers, phone calls, cards, letters and flowers received the past three months regarding the brain tumor I had removed. God answered your prayers and all is well.

It was a blessing to hear from you. We love each one of you and thank you for caring.

We plan to be at the Friendship Jamboree on Saturday. We will have a booth by the school district office on Bridge Street. We have free "left over" school pictures to give away.

Stop by our table and find yourself, former students and staff (1970-2003).

Marguerite Nice (K-3, WGS, MGS, LGS) and Mel Nice (VHS) McMinnville

We can all help keep our parks litter-free

To the Editor:

The city of Vernonia needs your help, with all the parks and empty lots caused by the many homes removed because of the flood, they are struggling to keep them mowed. There is no money for someone to clean up the litter in the parks.

As parents, try to instill in your children to clean up their litter, food wrappers, cigarette butts, and used condoms.

Hawkins Park is especially bad, the cigarette butts are a real problem around the gazebo and picnic tables. Although there are garbage cans a few feet away they fail to use them.

My husband and I have been cleaning up after these teenagers all summer, and surely there is someone out there younger than our 78 and 85 years-old who would be willing to help keep our parks litter free.

Thank you,

Don and DeLoris Webb Vernonia

WOEC needs to look at new solutions

To the Editor:

I wrote an open letter to Marc Farmer of WOEC. He countered. My response:

1. Yes, WOEC is organized as a co-operative. Marc acts, the Board approves. Most of the time, in most co-operatives, this works for day-to-day operations. A problem occurs when a crisis appears. WOEC has a big problem: a shrinking base, falling income and rising costs. The Board needs to get fired up, take control, solve the problem(s) and have Marc expedite the process, not the other way around.

2. "Capital Credits": If income exceeds costs, members are credited with their share of the excess, i.e. "dividends". The co-op has been experiencing ongoing losses, and "dividends" are put back into the co-op.

3. BPA?. The law which governs BPA and WOEC requires a percentage of WOEC's budget to be dedicated to renewable energy in order to meet future energy needs. WOEC has met this requirement with minimum effort.

It owns approximately 1% (yes, that is 1%) of a landfill methane project near Corvallis managed by Pacific Northwest Generating Cooperative (PNGC). Another is a wave energy project not yet in production. And finally, a PNGC solar effort in Eugene (not Vernonia). BPA, as a wholesaler, receives and distributes energy generated by others, some with nuclear, natural gas and coal; and others with wind, geothermal and bio mass, but that is not the same as, nor an excuse for, WOEC producing minimum alternative energy. As Marc notes, WOEC has relationships with BPA in other ways. However, there has been reluctance, e.g. by Marc saying, and publishing, that BPA has a "Dirty Little Secret", referring to BPA's responsibilities towards the protection of Salmon and the environment. That may his personal opinion but such statements do not help WOEC/BPA relationships or represent our membership as a whole. It does not solve, in any manner, the issue at hand, WOEC's current financial crisis.

4. Marc has repeatedly cited the costs of alternative energy as prohibitive. He said solar for the HQ roof would be \$200,000, or more, without referencing what it specifically produced, just that it was too

expensive. If that is true, how is it that Germany, most of which has more rain than we do, generates 20% of it's national energy needs from solar; and is shutting down nuclear reactors as a result? Solar requires gov't subsidies? Yes! And designed to amortize quickly at interest rates acceptable to commercial banks, leaving individual citizens, and businesses, with free and clear ownership of the solar units. That is not Germany's dirty little secret, it is their pride and joy. We are capable of the same if we all, collectively, get off our duffs.

5. Now comes the crux of WOEC's problems, electrical energy generation. WOEC is a "transmission only" agency. WOEC has always had one supplier, BPA. A single supplier scenario always results in rising costs. No way out! Therefore, the solution to WOEC's financial problems has two choices: (1) Shut down and divide up WOEC territory under PUC supervision (it does not matter other energy producers do not want all or part of WOEC. The PUC will take care of that); or (2) become a "Generation and Transmission" agency and control our own costs and income. If we choose to generate electricity, how do we do it? We do it by incrementally amassing solar and micro hydro electric units. I will discuss affordable solar later. Meanwhile, information is available online. As to Marc wanting hydro electric, concrete and/or earthen dams within our Nehalem river system, forget it. These types of units generating hydro electricity (a desirable product) are an

environmental and high cost problem. What is needed are non-invasive, fish-friendly, slow moving, reverse direction, in-stream hydro electric generators, expressly made by Hydrovolts, Inc. (look them up!). Cost? Dramatically less, easy to maintain and very efficient (income producing). Subsidies? Political action we can, as a membership produce, plus I have never known a bank to turn down a profit guaranteed by the government.

6. Trees? Clearing right of ways? I stand my ground.

7. Washington, D.C.? They are "complimentary that we take the time and effort to visit them in Washington D.C.?" They can see us, here, in our new facilities. They work for us, not visa versa.

If in reading this you want to see a solution to your high, and rising, electric bills (yes, rates are going up), please show up at WOEC Board meetings on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday evenings at the new facility. Plus attend membership meetings, when called. Become part of democracy by exercising "The Power of One".

Jack Phillips 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.

Ike Says . . .

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ture in the form of sidewalks are being torn up and thrown away long before the end of their useful life time.

Environmentally this project was abusive, but as a community, if we wanted to move forward it became a necessary evil. Have I appreciated the noise (I sleep during the day), dust and added traffic at my home adjacent to the new school? No, but being a member of our community I must overlook the inconveniences because I believe in the good for the whole community at the expense of the few. Would we have overlooked these same concerns for a private enterprise, even though it would be an overall positive for the community? Think about that.

Izaak Walton League, Nehalem Valley Chapter

meets monthly on the 3rd Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

Call 503-429-7193 for location.