

## Thankful for Wilsonville's support of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

I recently attended a program during Black History Month at the Wilsonville Library sponsored by the city's DEI Committee. I want to say how fortunate we are to have a city that supports Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

My grandparents escaped the pogroms in Ukraine and immigrated to America in the early 1900s, history I don't expect many people to know much about, just as I didn't know much about the Black lived experience in Oregon's history. So I'm grateful for the program the DEI committee presented. The more we learn about each other, the richer our lives are, the wider our friendship circles become.

After all, we are, all of us — black, white, gay, straight, Asian, trans, Indian, everyone — people on this earth who want the same things for ourselves and our families: good housing, food, schools, jobs, safety, medical care, good neighbors and friends.

Thank you, Wilsonville, for giving us the opportunity to expand our horizons, learn and understand we have nothing to fear from anyone if we just sit down, talk and listen. DEI Committee, keep up the good work!

Susan Reep  
Wilsonville

Editor's note: This is the third in a series of columns titled 'Knowing our Willamette.'

Few Oregonians recognize the incredible creation we have in our Willamette River and its valley. It is a unique construction of geography, geology and economy in our world. Oregon's valley communities, agriculture and horticulture, food crops and nurseries have all benefited. Bounded by the Coast Range on the west and the Cascade Range on the east, the valley begins narrowly south of Eugene and broadens to over 60 miles in width comprising over

### MY VIEW



Jerry  
Herrmann

10,000 acres of watersheds, streams, rivers and amazing soils not duplicated elsewhere in the world.

Early leaders like Oregon City's John Inskeep (who later became a state senator) realized as Oregon State University's extension agent the humid temperate climate with deep rich alluvial soils comprising most of the Valley's width and length. Inskeep was not aware that though the majority of the soils were transported off our coast and Cascade Ranges, Ice Age floods, later proved in the late 1970s to have existed, brought in incredible richness of soils of eastern Washington, Idaho and even Montana to the valley as well.

Inskeep was sent here in the 1930s by a federal edict of President Franklin D. Roosevelt with a mission. "You are instructed with your knowledge of agriculture, timber and importantly conservation to go west from your home in West Virginia and keep our western US intact and importantly functioning for the economy while demonstrating conservation. I have witnessed several dust bowls that are destroying our Midwest region and you can't let that happen because there is an oncoming conflict in Europe I will soon have to face."

Inskeep became the first agricultural extension agent sent west of the Rockies and he brought his aspirations of economic growth and vitality to the early settlers

who had cleared for timber

Inskeep's production of crops including covers and Oregon's Valley Inskeep's effort land Association brought attention to forest could be naturally a new variety more decorative be a winter in the winter ry Award of Harmon (d

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