

SIGNS

Continued from Page 1B

Hoping to find evidence of a displaced skunk or porcupine, I come upon deep tracks that have a long stride. Their route leads around a small stand of big sage as if a large animal nosed for prey. Impressions culminate near a steel fence. Snow is worn down to dirt and piled up at the edge of multiple tracks. Grisly evidence of an encounter between a coyote and a cottontail rabbit, I wonder? Then it comes to me: The neighbor's 100-pound, golden Lab pup got loose again.

The wide-open spaces, gentle slopes, and dogleg me-

anders of area golf courses provide excellent opportunity for winter sports. However, these settings don't have the ambience of forested slopes and river valleys. My vintage snowshoes are now slated to take up residence at our cabin in the Umatilla River canyon. Three feet of fresh snow blanketed the surround there in late February. Higher elevations of the Blues are expected to retain ample snowpack over the next few months. There's no better time than now for a winter trek.

Snowshoes allow for a reliable pace that encourages reflection. They lead you to places where the hollow thump of falling snow and

the raucous call of a sentinel jay might be all that splits the stillness. Perhaps best of all though, they provide ample opportunity to look for animal tracks in the snow.

Dennis Dauble is a retired fishery scientist, outdoor writer, presenter and educator who lives in Richland, Washington. For more stories about outdoor adventure, including fish and fishing in area waters, see DennisDaubleBooks.com.

Dennis Dauble/Contributed Photo
The reflection of cattails in a snow-covered pond can reward winter hikers.



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife/Submitted Photo

Five mule deer in Burns have been struck by blow gun darts, with two deer dying, since early November 2020.

Deer in Burns killed, hurt by blow gun darts

BURNS — The Oregon Hunters Association is offering a \$1,000 reward for information that leads to a citation in a rash of mule deer being hit by blow gun darts in the Burns city limits.

Two deer have died and at least three others were hurt when they were struck by darts over the past four months, according to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).

In the most recent incident, Oregon State Police fish and

wildlife troopers, alerted by a Burns resident, found an injured mule deer doe near Court Street and Railroad Avenue in Burns on Feb. 13. The doe had been hit by a blow gun dart, which was stuck in her side. Troopers had to euthanize the deer.

They had found the carcass of a mule deer fawn, with a similar blow gun dart in its neck, in that same area on Nov. 6, 2020.

Between November 2020 and February 2021, ODFW

biologists and OSP troopers found three other mule deer, all in the same area and with darts in their bodies. Biologists sedated the animals, removed the darts and released the deer, which should recover. Although blow gun darts can be effective at killing small animals such as squir-

rels, it's illegal to use blow guns to hunt deer in Oregon. A dart wound can cause an infection that slowly kills a deer.

Anyone with information can call the Turn in Poachers (TIP) line at *OSP (677) or 800-452-7888. Or report by email: TIP@osp.oregon.gov.

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CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- Cold feet
- Team cheer
- Weather system
- Dig deep
- Inventor — Whitney
- Stein filler
- Alpha opposite
- Vowed
- Horse color
- False
- Grad-school exam
- Damage superficially
- Work doggedly
- News agcy.
- Danson or Kennedy
- Nest-egg letters
- Fluctuates (hyph.)
- Whites' counterparts

DOWN

- Long bone
- "Maria —"
- Dow Jones fig.
- Swing a scythe
- Do again
- Charm
- Scurried along
- Fail to maintain the pace
- Bravo, in Spain
- Meld
- Non-flying bird
- Salon styles
- Sz. option
- - tze
- Abner, of the comics
- Mork's planet
- Balloon filler
- Tire pressure meas.
- Change color
- Kennel sound
- Nocturnal bird
- Affirmative vote
- Different
- Small crevice
- Time of the mammals
- Pinch, in a way
- Author — Lawrence
- Bid
- Bride parts
- Desires
- Type size
- Cartoon shrieks
- EMT technique
- Cry of discovery
- Tractor-trailer
- Luau keepsake

Answer to Previous Puzzle

O	H	M		M	E	N	S	L	E	D		
F	O	O	T		O	D	E		N	A	N	O
T	O	L	E		B	I	B		A	R	I	Z
	K	E	R	M	I	T		G	R	A	D	E
				M	I	L		Y	U	L		
T	O	A	S	T		W	I	N	S	T	O	N
A	W	L			B	I	N		E	W	E	
D	E	P	O	S	I	T		G	U	E	S	T
				C	O	D		T	U	N		
S	H	R	E	D		Z	I	T	H	E	R	
H	E	E	L		P	O	T		I	B	I	S
O	R	E	O		A	N	A		P	A	C	E
W	A	F	T		Z	E	N		Y	O	W	

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