

Pheasant fans keep fall tradition alive

Hunting site in Chinook

By **LUKE WHITTAKER**
Chinook Observer

CHINOOK, Wash. — The fall hunting season has started for a colorful game bird from China that tastes like chicken.

Pheasant season officially began with a bang in late September, but the hunt is primed to continue through November with birds stocked weekly at state-owned game land in Chinook.

As the main salmon season winds down and clambers eagerly await the next dig, another fall ritual is unfolding in the fields near Chinook.

Each year, 35,000 to 40,000 pheasants are released as part of the Western Washington Pheasant Release Program across about 25 sites, including a state-owned 1,000-acre property in Chinook, part of the Johns River Wildlife Area.

The purpose of the pheasant program is to provide upland bird hunting opportunities. Naturally sustained pheasant populations are limited in western Washington due to cool, wet climate and lack of grain farming, according to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Each Friday from September through November, Steve and Tina Padel release birds at designated spots at the Chinook site. The Padels have participated in the program the past two years, typically releasing about 120 birds weekly.

The pheasants come



LEFT: Ted Jones, of Olympia, prepares to hunt pheasant with his dog, 'Ripley.' RIGHT: Steve and Tina Padel release pheasants in Chinook.



Photos by Luke Whittaker/Chinook Observer

from the Bob Oke Game Farm in Centralia, where 43,000 birds are raised annually on 160 acres. The farm is the main source for birds released in western Washington.

The pheasant program is essentially paid for by pheasant hunters, like James Joyce, 75, of Seaview, who has hunted pheasants for decades.

"It's \$85 for their (birds) rearing, which is a fair deal," Joyce said following a morning hunt on Saturday. "If they didn't do it, we wouldn't have this. I look forward to it every year. And they're very good eating, like chicken."

Many of the pheasants live beyond the end of hunting season and have naturalized in the Chinook Valley to some extent. They face stiff predation by coyotes and other species, but the spectacular birds can often be spotted from local roads, casually walking along like hitchhikers in fancy pajamas.

The Chinook area faces less hunting pressure compared to other pheasant sites in the state.

"The Vancouver area has 500 licenses hunting pheasant out of the Vancouver area," Padel said. "Last year there were 80 active hunters

for this (Chinook) site that have signed up through the WDFW," Padel said. "It's pretty lightly hunted. There are a lot of people who don't realize this is here."

By comparison, the Vancouver area has about 500 licenses, he said.

A small game license is not required to participate, but a western Washington pheasant license is, costing \$84.50 for adults and \$40.50 for youth under age 16. The bag limit is two pheasants of either sex per day. A three-day adult permit is offered for \$40.50.

Nonresident licenses are \$167.

Supreme Court seems ready to require unanimous juries

By **MARK SHERMAN**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court began a potentially contentious election-year term this week in seeming general agreement that juries in state criminal trials must be unanimous to convict a defendant.

The justices took up a quirk of constitutional law, a 47-year-old ruling in a case from Oregon that requires unanimity in federal, but not state trials.

Meeting for the first time in public since late June, the court opened a term that could reveal how far to the right and how fast the court's conservative majority will move, even as Chief Justice John Roberts has made clear he wants to keep the court clear of partisan politics. The court is beginning its second term with both of President Donald Trump's Supreme Court appointees, Justices Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh, on board.

The justices could be asked to intervene in disputes between congressional Democrats and the

White House that might also involve the possible impeachment of the Republican president.

Roberts would preside over a Senate trial of Trump if the House were to impeach him.

Its biggest decisions, in cases involving abortion, protections for young immigrants and LGBT rights, are likely to be handed down in late June, four months before the election.

Those cases probably will highlight the divisions on a court made up of five conservatives appointed by Republican presidents and four liberals named by Democrats.

But on Monday, conservative and liberal justices appeared to agree that the same rules should apply in federal and state trials. They heard arguments in an appeal by a Louisiana man who is serving a life term for killing a woman after a jury voted 10-2 to convict him. Oregon is the only other state that allows for nonunanimous convictions for some crimes.

Louisiana voters have changed the law for crimes

committed beginning this year.

The court has formally held that most of the Bill of Rights applies to states as well as the federal government, but it has not done so on the Sixth Amendment's unanimous jury requirement.

"What about the constitutional rights of people in prison?" Gorsuch asked Louisiana Solicitor General Elizabeth Murrill, who argued that the state's court system could be inundated with claims if the justices rule against Louisiana.

A decision for defendant Evangelisto Ramos would result in his conviction being overturned and also would affect defend-

dants who are still appealing their convictions. But the court is not expected to say anything about defendants whose cases are final. It would take another round of lawsuits to figure that out.

Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum has warned that hundreds if not thousands of cases could be affected if the court rules nonunanimous verdicts are unconstitutional. Rosenblum instead wants voters to change the state constitution and end the practice.

Many legal scholars believe the 1934 vote in Oregon to allow nonunanimous verdicts has roots in racism and anti-Semitism and was intended to dilute minority voices on juries.

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