

FISHING REPORT

PEACH POND

Was stocked the week of Oct. 8 with one-pound rainbow trout. Construction of a new fishing pier will occur mid-October to mid-November. The parking area at the pond will not be available for use during this time, but anglers may park along the road and walk in to fish as long as they do not interfere with construction activities.

GRANDE RONDE RIVER

Steelhead should start arriving in the Oregon section of the Grande Ronde over the next few weeks with fishing improving throughout October. Anglers are now consistently finding success. Expect angling to improve as the run progresses. Early season is a great time to catch a steelhead on skated and swung flies as well as a variety of gear types. Look for fish in faster water where there are high levels of dissolved oxygen. Reports indicate trout fishing has been good for medium size hatchery and wild rainbows. Water temperatures have cooled enough and fish are on the bite.

PILCHER CREEK RESERVOIR

The water level is now below both the high and low water boat launches so launching trailered boats is not possible. Recent sampling by ODFW shows that good numbers of rainbow trout and black crappie are available. Rainbows range from 8- to 15-inches and black crappie from 6- to 13-inches.

WALLOWA LAKE

Fishing typically slows during the fall and winter at Wallowa Lake. However, for the angler that is willing to tough it out, some large fish can be available. Stocked fish have now been in the lake long enough that they have keyed in on natural foods. Try fishing live worms, grubs, or flies that imitate midges, mayflies and crawdads. Kokanee fishing has improved recently and large fish are being caught.

MALHEUR RESERVOIR

The fishing is slow to good depending on the day, but the payoff is rainbow trout from 16 to 20 inches or more. The reservoir is low and there are unconfirmed reports that the boat ramp is usable. ODFW will sample the reservoir this fall and updated information regarding the fishery will be available in November.

HUNTING SCHOLARSHIPS

■ Raffles for guided hunts on Woody Wolfe's land raise money for scholarships for Wallowa County grads

By Katy Nesbitt

For WesCom News Service

WALLOWA — A conservation easement in the heart of Wallowa County farmland is being managed to grow large whitetail buck deer for big game hunting and, in part, philanthropy.

Much of the few hundred acres in the easement is actively farmed, but a section along the confluence of the Wallowa and Lostine rivers is being managed for fish and wildlife habitat. Cows no longer graze the banks, leaving plenty of forage for whitetail deer and elk.

Landowner Woody Wolfe said he's managed the river bottom to grow big whitetail bucks for several years, and with a handful of landowner preference hunting tags for elk, buck and doe issued through Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, he has a few tags to share.

"In 2016 the largest whitetail buck in the state was taken off my property by a neighbor," Wolfe said.

At the time, Wolfe said, the buck ranked fifth in the Oregon black powder record book.

Chad Garrett has guided hunts on the Wolfe Ranch for several years and is well familiar with the Wallowa mid-valley land with views of the Wallowa Mountains.

"Woody has a lot of trophy game on his place," Garrett said.

As he's become known around the county, Garrett said he's been asked to help local clubs and nonprofits raise money through hunt raffles, allowable under Oregon game laws.

When Wolfe was approached by Wallowa County Center for Wellness for a donation he looked for advice from staff at The Nature Conservancy's Zumwalt



Katy Nesbitt / For WesCom News Service

Woody Wolfe, left, and his son, Liam, prepare a seeder together on their Wallowa County mid-valley farm. The Wolfes are working with hunting guide Chad Garrett to provide whitetail buck hunting opportunities on private land while raising money for college scholarships for Wallowa County students studying agriculture at Oregon State University.

Prairie Preserve northeast of Enterprise, which offers raffle hunt opportunities to local nonprofits. Then he turned to Garrett for help.

With a website and a PayPal account, 100 tickets were sold at \$100 apiece in six days. Garrett was paid for his effort, Wolfe said, and

\$8,500 went to the Center.

According to Garrett, the winner of that raffle was a man looking to kill his first whitetail buck to qualify for the Super Slam of North American Big Game — the legal taking of all 29 of the traditionally recognized species of big game animals

native to North America.

Wolfe said the experience got him thinking. With such a rapid response to the first raffle, what other worthy causes could he support by raffling some of his landowner preference tags?

"If I could raise that money that with one tag or two,

I thought about what cause do I feel is the most valuable to me?" Wolfe said.

The answer was a scholarship for a Wallowa County high school graduate pursuing a degree in agriculture at Oregon State University.

As a sixth-generation Wallowa County farmer, the agriculture business, and education in the subject, is close to Wolfe's heart.

"I think an education can facilitate people who want to go into agriculture, whether in ag service or production," Wolfe said. "Ag is what has paid me back for the efforts I put forth — if it is a passion for someone else, I want to help create a return for that passion."

Again Wolfe turned to Garrett for help. He set up a website and a PayPal account to facilitate raffle hunts and serves as the guide. After Garrett's time, Wolfe said each scholarship award will be around \$7,500.

This year two raffles are being offered to raise money for the scholarship. Garrett said 100 tickets are available for \$100 each for each hunt. The winner of each of the two raffles will receive a three-day guided hunt and lodging.

Garrett said the first scholarship will be awarded in 2019, but the money will not be available until the winner's junior year when he or she declares a major. The winner must also have maintained a 3.0 GPA those first two years of college in order to claim the scholarship.

Tickets are available at www.biggamerrafflehunts.com through Jan. 1, 2019. The raffle drawing will be held Jan. 10. For more information call Garrett at 503-367-0207.

Best advice: Prepare for the worst case

As you get geared up for hunting season, you're probably preoccupied with sighting in your bow or rifle. Stocking up on food and planning menus, sharpening your knives and starting to pack. That's all good and necessary but don't forget about another main component — your truck.

There are tons of books and articles on how to pack a survival kit. Take a peek at Adventure Medical Kit's website. And yet we just take off without giving a thought as to what lies in wait for our trucks.

So my point is, everyone has a survival kit, but do you have a survival kit for your truck? If not, you should. Nowadays nearly everyone has a 4WD vehicle, which means you can get back deeper in the woods. If you break down, you're really in trouble.

When you think about it, our trucks are our legs and feet. You lose them and you're sunk, so I think it'd behoove you to set down and give it a thought. This is fresh on my mind right now. I'm up in the mountains helping a buddy build a cabin and my truck wouldn't start. Luckily a neighbor pulled up about that time and helped me get started. I then parked it on a hill so I can jump start it when I head home in a few days.

Oh, one more recent problem. Just a few weeks ago we were running over to Oregon to go fishing. I had a blowout. I normally carry two spares



BASE CAMP

TOM CLAYCOMB

but I had my Jon boat in back of the truck and only had one.

When I took it in to get fixed, guess what had caused the problem? A 3½-inch rock had punctured the tire and was still inside. But the worst I've ever had was years ago on a moose hunt. I woke up three mornings in a row with flats. I had to go to town at lunch every day and either purchase a tire or have a flat fixed. Now I carry two spares. You can pick up a spare tire/rim semi cheap at the junkyard.

If you're like me you're probably not much of a mechanic and even if you were, you couldn't carry a shop full of tools, but there are a few tools or items we should carry to get out of the obvious disasters.

Tire chains. In snow or ice they give you traction. And as with a lot of situations in life, put them on before you get in trouble.

You see a lot of trees fallen over in the woods, right? What if one falls behind you? You'll be stuck, so carry an axe and chain saw. I'm surprised this doesn't happen more than it does.

No matter what the season I always carry a shovel. In the winter they're good to dig snow out from under your truck if you high center.



Tom Claycomb photo

Running off in a badger hole could have been a bad deal. But, I had a Handyman jack and a shovel so I was out in a few minutes.

Last spring I was out whistle pig hunting and bottomed out in a badger hole. I had a shovel so I jacked up my truck, filled in the hole and off I went.

And for sure, do not trust the rinky-dink jack that came with your truck. Throw in a Handyman jack. I've been stuck a million times and had to jack up my vehicle and lay rocks or sticks under the tires to get unstuck or un-high centered. (Curse of all curses.) Also carry extra bolts. They always fall off the handle.

Carry two sets of keys. If you lose your keys that'd be a bad deal. Leave the extra set in your truck. You can break a window if necessary. Plus, you need to leave a set with your buddy. We were bowhunting over in Nebraska and a blizzard blew in. My

buddy made it back to the rig before me but was half froze because he couldn't get in!

When you replace your old fan belts and hoses carry them for backup. I've heard you can use a pair of pantyhose as a fan belt but I don't wear pantyhose.

I've noticed that 90 percent of the time my truck starts sounding a little weird before it whacks out. I've had this happen 3-4 times only days before I headed out on a hunt. Get it checked, it won't get any easier to fix in the woods.

A few other items to carry — flashlights, jumper cables, chain and a plug-in cigarette lighter tire pump. Hopefully I've listed a few common problems that you can be prepared for.

