

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Spring Spirit Day brings out the best

Vernonia Pride's second annual Spring Spirit Day brought out more than 75 volunteers who swept, washed, weeded, pruned trees, planted, grubbed out blackberry vines, picked up trash and did a beautiful job of sprucing up Vernonia.

Bridge Street and other main streets were cleaned and cleared of litter. Overgrown vegetation was cleared from Ora Bolmeier Park and Vernonia Lake.

A scrap metal drive resulted in cleaning out yards and garages all over town and senior citizens prepared hot dog lunches for the workers.

Even after the clean up effort ended, there was more work. Volunteers donated food and pies for the chili feed that evening; volunteers cooked and served the dinner, and volunteers cleaned up after dinner.

Fund raising was equally successful, with the dinner, auctions and raffles raising more than \$3,500 for Vernonia Pride projects.

Many big "Thank You's" are in order, to those volunteers mentioned above; to Bob Prohaska of Nehalem Valley Sanitary Service and Ron Dodge of All Star Tree Service for removing the trash and debris at no cost; to the Vernonia School District for providing the cafeteria and gymnasium for the evening activities.

And, especially, to Vernonia Pride founders, enthusiasts and workers—Genny Fisher, Shirlee Daughtry and Enid Parrow. Even before the dust is settled from Spring Spirit Day, these volunteers are busy, both with existing plans and the development of new activities and projects for the betterment of the community.

Already flying downtown are colorful banners; the city library has received new paint, carpeting and window coverings; downtown beautification will continue and signs are planned for both entrances to Vernonia. Future plans include fireworks for July 4th; adopt-a-block and adopt-a-highway clean-up programs. Two potential projects are plaques for historically significant buildings and a float for the Friendship Jamboree parade.

Vernonia Pride isn't just an organization, Fisher makes clear, it is a condition, a quality that all members of the community can and should share. Participants believe, and act on the belief, that people of all ages, working together, can make a better, safer, more inviting community for everyone.

Vernonia Pride is definitely not an exclusive organization; it welcomes people and ideas and invites everyone to attend planning and project sessions. Any interested person can be involved in planning or in working only on specific projects. The important thing is to become involved.

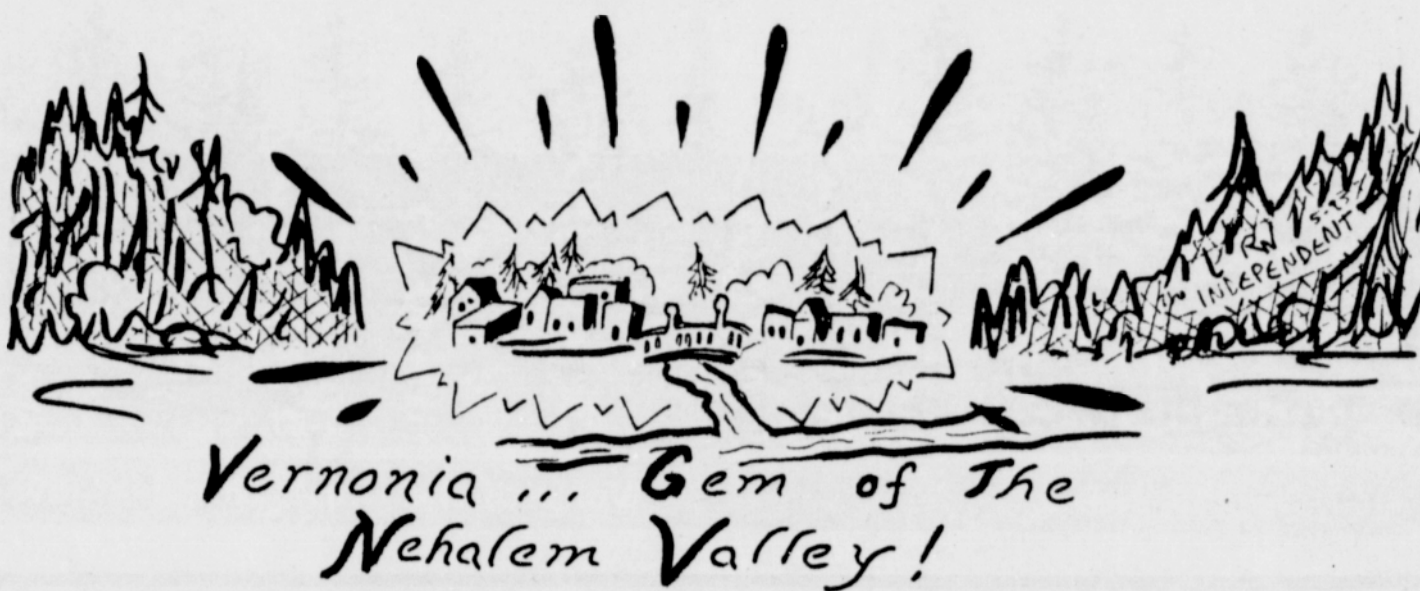
Your ideas are wanted, Fisher emphasizes, and your input is needed; join in the fun and develop your own Vernonia Pride.

Vernonia Pride meets on the 4th Thursday of each month in the Vernonia High School library, 7:00 p.m. Join the fun!



A TIP O' THE HAT

TO ALL EFFORTS
AND WORK ON
VERNONIA PRIDE'S
CLEAN-UP DAY!



The Josi Report

By Rep. Tim Josi
Oregon Representative, District 2

One of Oregon's attractions has been its abundant wildlife. As our state's population increases, however, we are finding it more difficult for man and the rest of the animal kingdom to live in peaceful co-existence, as often-times we now compete against each other for the same food, water, and territory. As the human population grows, it usually has meant a decrease in wildlife species populations, some to the point of extinction.

Legislation has been introduced this session that may prove to negatively impact many animal and plant species, including the rewriting of Oregon's Endangered Species Act. Since I sit on the House Natural Resource Committee, I have found myself hearing many of these bills. By and large I have voted against them because I believe most are very short sighted in nature. Many of you have contacted my office to express concern over these bills, too.

One bill receiving a great deal of attention now is SB 707. It would allow the Fish and Wildlife Commission to issue a limited number of permits a year to individuals to receive compensation for scaring off cormorants from Oregon coastal river systems between Cape Falcon and Cascade Head. This would occur when the birds congregate to trap and feed on juvenile salmonids as the smolts migrate out to sea. The Commission would have \$50,000 for the next biennium to disperse to permit holders.

I will not be supporting this bill in its present form because I do not believe that there is long term benefit from such practices, indeed, they may have unintended detrimental effects

we cannot be aware of until they happen. Fish-eating birds have adapted to fill a biological niche. This predator-prey relationship has existed for millions of years without destruction of either species and is subject to a multitude of feedback mechanisms that regulate the populations. Attempting to deter these relationships without fully understanding the implications is ecologically dangerous. Unfortunately, to gain such an understanding would require a study that even with today's technology is almost impossible.

But we do know some things: first of all, it is hard to say what proportion of the smolts would not have died of other causes, anyway. Predators normally take the weakest, sickest, or genetically inferior prey, thereby helping the survivability of the species on which they are preying. Another factor is the birds; they must eat, and if they are scared off from one area they will simply move to another. Even if another source of food is chosen over salmon by the cormorants that would not necessarily affect the mortality levels or be of long-term benefit to the salmon. Another consideration is the effect on other species. How would the nesting pair of bald eagles on Tillamook Bay be affected by hazing efforts against the cormorants? Would they find it difficult to raise their young with such activities occurring around them? I believe our best approach is to pursue watershed health plans and improve riparian zones to provide fish with natural protection from their predators.

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The Says

By David Michael Jones, member
Isaak Walton League, Nehalem Valley Chapter

Nehalem Valley chapter of the Izaak Walton League has taken on another project that will help improve the fishery now and in the future. Maps have been purchased and an inventory has begun on culverts in the upper Nehalem River system, with a plan to target culverts that block fish passage and work with the parties responsible and Fish and Game to alleviate the problem.

Two fishes in particular use small streams that are impacted most by culverts that can or do block passage of fish. Those fishes are the coho or silver salmon and the cutthroat trout. I was amazed in my younger days by the small size of streams in which one could find spawning coho salmon. These little "step across" streams like Bear Creek in Vernonia and Ivy Creek, just below my house on Rock Creek, are typical of the small streams the coho use for spawning. They enter these

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