

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

No reason to wait for Thanksgiving

In spite of the weather, many good things have been happening around Vernonia and there is no reason to wait until next Thanksgiving to mention them:

WOEC line crews have been working so many weekends and nights since the January 12 wind storm that young children and grandchildren probably don't recognize them—and vice-versa. The wind storm was followed by snow that broke limbs and downed trees weakened in the wind storm. Then torrential rains caused mud slides, tilting trees and poles. Next came the ice and, once again, heavy rains. They've done a good job under difficult circumstances and they deserve a hand.

Volunteer firefighters and EMTs have been on call and on the job throughout all of the bad weather. Their dedication is such that it carries over to their families, too, as was demonstrated last weekend in Vernonia when more than 20 travelers stranded by icy roads were taken in, fed and kept warm and safe. They respond whenever and wherever they are needed, regardless of conditions. The small fire districts in this area have only a handful of paid professionals, and they also deserve kudos for the long, long hours they've been spending on the job. Volunteer or paid, this is a truly selfless bunch of people; we're lucky to have them around.

The weather has nothing to do with this next thank you. Linda Hartman, manager of the Cindernook has taken lots of heat from people who may be just a bit "Holier than thou," so it's time to thank her for donating the use of the Cindernook for the Sweetheart Ball, a fundraiser for the Community Center Project. There aren't very many business establishments that will close the doors to their regular customers (on the best night of the week, too) in order to help a non-profit organization.

Thank you all for your contributions to our communities.

Banks School Board says \$11 million; Vernonia board chokes on far less

Recognizing the need for expansion and improvement, the Banks School Board will ask residents of their district to approve an \$11 million bond issue. They have done what they need to do to solve a problem.

Recognizing the need for expansion and improvement, the Vernonia School Board appointed a special study committee and hired a consulting firm to develop a long-range plan. Eighteen months after the study started and a month after receiving the committee recommendation, the Vernonia board is still trying to figure out how to expand and improve without spending money.

It's not fun to ask voters to increase their taxes, but people who can't make hard decisions shouldn't run for office. It's time to make some decisions.

THE AMERICAN WAY...

...give it 100% 90 for the gold
...IF YOU'RE GOING TO DO SOMETHING - DO IT ALL THE WAY!

Religion Feb. 96 The Independent



From the STATE of The UNION ADDRESS:
... IF OUR CRIMINALS WOULD JUST SPEND AT LEAST 85% OF THEIR SENTENCE ... INSTEAD OF GETTING OUT ON AN EARLY PAROLE.

Does this make any sense?
What's Wrong With This Picture?
IT'S NOT 100%: is the answer building more PRISONS? !!!!!

Do The Victims Get 100% Justice?

Ike Says

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

Here is a list of proposals I worked up—before I read either the Fish and Game proposals or Dale Webb's "Ike" column in the last issue—for the 1997 Oregon fishing regulations.

1. No bait during trout season in any stream that dumps into the Pacific Ocean or is a tributary of any system that runs into the Pacific.
2. Limits in streams like the above of two trout daily, between 10-12 inches, with no more than seven in a week (The idea is to encourage conservation, not consumption.).
3. Publish in the regulations those lakes that are stocked for the meat pole fishermen.
4. Use a punch card for trout, especially the searun cutthroat.
5. Single, barbless hooks in all waters that empty into the Pacific from the mother stream or from a tributary stream and/or lake system.
6. Reduce the salmon/steelhead punch card limit to 20 fish per year, only ten of which can be steelhead (Trout could be incorporated into this punch card for data and to upgrade the fish in the eyes of the angling public.).
7. Close all small tributary streams that run into systems that drain into the ocean (The purpose of this is to secure rearing streams for native coho, chinook, steelhead and cutthroat trout. Without rearing streams, we are going to lose our fish, especially the coho, which spends so much time in the system before it smolts.). If we don't close all the streams, at least close a portion of them. For example, close Clear Creek and Wolf Creek on the Nehalem and leave the East Fork Nehalem open because of Scaptonia Park. One way to put this in the regs is to say a stream is open only if it is listed.

8. Because there have been some late run fall chinook showing up in northcoast streams, most notable the Kilchis, close the fall chinook season on the north coast on Dec. 10, to enable these runs to establish themselves. Nature can't establish new runs if we kill the fish before they can spawn!

9. Close winter cutthroat season in coastal streams.

On to another matter:

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has a program to help pay for installing fish screens on water diversions to

protect juvenile fish. This program requires the water user to pay one-third of the cost; the remainder will be paid by the state. The water user can also receive a tax credit for fifty percent of his/her cost if the screen is built to ODFW specifications. Contact fish biologist Joseph E. Sheahan at Hamlet Rt., Box 360, Seaside, 97138. Sheahan's phone number is (503) 738-7066; fax (503) 738-6929. This sounds like a good way to upgrade screen systems, help the fishery and save some money.

Some good news has come up from the Coos Bay area, where some coho salmon are back in a stream for the first time in about 25 years. Three years ago, school children released 10,000 fry into Blossom Creek; after the coho spent a year in the stream, they migrated to the ocean for two years of growing time, then returned to the creek to spawn. This is of special interest to Vernonia residents because Blossom Creek travels under the streets of Coos Bay, just as Bear Creek does under the streets of Vernonia. We are fortunate to still have coho in Bear Creek.

It was just last week that the return of the first two fish was observed by the school children and ODFW biologist Tom Rumreich. School children and biologists are working to restore the creek as a spawning stream and are being helped by the Oregon Coastal Environments Awareness Network. The fingerlings for the project were taken from native Coos River coho stock and reintroduced into the system by the children and biologists.

There is "hire the fisherman" money available for unemployed fishermen to work on improvement of salmon habitat. Some eligible projects include fencing streams and allowing livestock to access a stream in one area, or putting in watering areas above the stream. Planting streambanks, placing in-stream structures and creating alcoves for rearing areas are also eligible projects. There is no charge to land owners for any of this work. Contact person for these projects is Bill Eagle of the Natural Resource Conservation Service in St. Helens at (503) 397-4555.

Izaak Walton League meetings are the third Wednesday of each month, Vernonia Public Library at 7:00 p.m. The public is welcome.