

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

The best July 4th parade was here

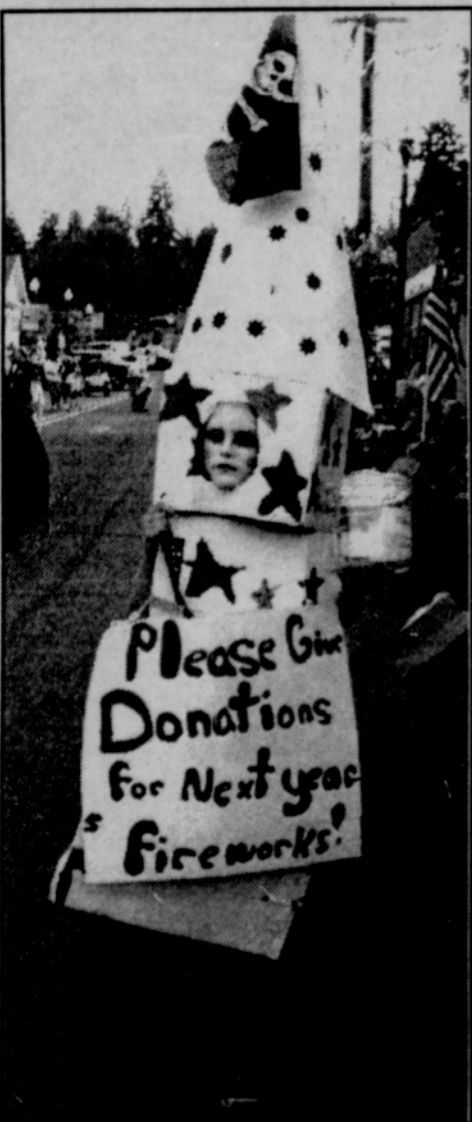
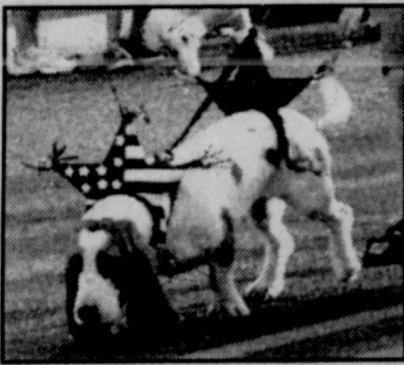
No, we didn't have any fancy floats, we didn't have any queen's court, we didn't have a 100 member marching band, we didn't even have music and the parade certainly didn't take an hour to pass by.

So what was so great about Vernonia's parade? The people.

Life in Vernonia tends to be family-oriented and informal. The July 4th parade was family-oriented and informal. Dressed in red, white and blue, kids and dogs composed about two-thirds of the participants. They walked or rode bikes, or were in wagons. They waved and threw candy (No, not the dogs!) They were in a parade and they were proud.

The other half of the parade's success came from the people lining the sidewalks – the spectators. They came to watch family and friends, many arrived before the parade and visited with others who were waiting. They cheered the Scout color guard, they laughed at the jokes, they had fun. It was a great parade!

Vernonia Pride deserves thanks for both the parade and the fireworks. The organization is appropriately named. They take pride in their work.



Ike Says...

By Dale Webb, member
Nehalem Valley Chapter Izaak Walton League

In May, Dad and I traveled over to the Snake River for our annual spring fishing trip. The weather was a bit on the cool side, but the fishing was good, except for the size of the crappie. We did very well with catfish, as usual, catching between 30 to 40 fish in a couple of hours. Our largest was around seven pounds and we didn't keep anything under two pounds. The only drawback was that we don't care as much for catfish as we do crappie. Most years, we end up giving most of our catch away to neighbors. This year, we again ran into those two old geezers from Idaho who say they love to eat catfish. We told them we didn't really care for the taste of the fish. They inquired how we cooked it, told us, again, how they do it and even offered their recipe to us.

First they combine three parts corn meal, one part flour and a good dash of lemon pepper. Salt and pepper the cleaned, damp fillets to your taste, then shake in the coating to cover. Make sure to remove all the dark meat from the fillets, since this is where the strong taste comes from. The key is in the cooking, they told us. Use corn oil heated to a very hot temperature. Place at least an inch of oil in a cast iron frying pan and heat until, when you throw a strike-anywhere wood match in the oil, it ignites. Dad and I thought they were crazy and that the oil would catch on fire, but it doesn't. Once the match flares off, place the fillets in the oil gently, so as not to splash oil all over. The oil doesn't splatter too badly and the fillets cook very quickly, around three minutes. Cook till the coating is golden brown. Thicker pieces may require cooking to a darker brown.

Dad and I enjoyed the first really good tasting catfish fillets we had ever had. I think our neighbors will be seeing less catfish this year.

June is an exciting time for hunters. No, there isn't much hunting to be had except varmints, but it is when we find out what tags have been drawn for this fall's hunting season. This year posed more problems for local elk hunters because of the decline in the number of Saddle Mountain tags for bull elk. Hunters this year had to decide whether or not they wanted to gamble and take the risk of putting in for an East side tag and not getting a Saddle Mountain tag as their second choice. Some local hunters took the risk and lost, but most got their local tags.

This year is the first time ever to get a second elk tag for the regular price. In their infinite wisdom, the state legislature got into the wildlife

management business and decided that the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife could make more money by selling these left-over tags at a price not to exceed four times the regular price. Unfortunately, in looking at the hunts that had left-over tags, it is apparent that these are hunts that most hunters don't want to participate in... Spike only hunts in Eastern Oregon.

The exception, though, is the Tioga and Powers units in Southern Oregon, where hunters would hunt if a second tag was granted. The district biologist for that area realized that his tag allotments were too high to handle that much hunting pressure on his herds. He did the sensible thing and sent a mailer to past tag holders, giving them the option to remedy this problem. I read the correspondence to him and it was unanimous. They wanted to limit the tag allotments so that most everybody who applied for those two units in the drawing would get a tag. The goal was to have very few left-over tags. It appears to have worked in the Tioga unit, which has around 25 tags left over, but the Powers unit ended up with over 100 left over tags. Most of the correspondence contained comments that the additional second tag sales are ridiculous. I agree. Nobody needs two elk tags in one year. We have enough hunter crowding as it is. To allow even more will only add to the problem.

When most biologists are already screaming that we are harvesting too many bulls, are we going to allow more harvest? It seems to me that the district biologist in Southern Oregon was not in favor of this second tag scheme and did the right thing.

Did you hear about the proposal to add a late season any deer hunt for archers in the Saddle Mountain Unit next year? Well, you are not alone. I didn't catch wind of it either, until a week before it was scheduled to be adopted by the ODF&W Commissioners at the June 8-9 meeting in Portland. The Portland office of ODF&W sent me a copy of the Commission packet the weekend before this meeting. I always scan this thoroughly and, tucked away in the middle of this packet in one paragraph, was this proposal endorsed by staff. In addition to being astonished that they would even consider having any additional harvest of deer, the starting date for the season was unbelievable. It was scheduled to start on the same morning as opening day of the second rifle bull elk season!!! Bow hunters and rifle hunters hunting side by side!!!

I couldn't believe what I was reading, so I called Portland and confirmed it with Dan Edwards, ODF&W staff. I gave Dan an earful, but

Please see page 3