

The INDEPENDENT

Serving the upper Nehalem River valley. Published twice monthly, on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, by Public Opinion Laboratory Ltd., 725 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR 97064, as a free newspaper. Editors and Publishers, Dirk & Noni Andersen. Phone/Fax: 503-429-9410, e-mail: noni@vernonia.com

Opinion

Jamboree is time to remember friends

After 45 years, it's fair to say that the Vernonia Friendship Jamboree has become a tradition, and the name of this community celebration is a great reminder of its purpose. It's not just The Jamboree, or even the Vernonia Jamboree, no, it's the Vernonia Friendship Jamboree, an important distinction.

Many community celebrations are designed primarily to bring more business to town. The Friendship Jamboree started for entirely different reasons—it was designed as an excuse for old friends to get together, as reunion time, and it works. During Jamboree, it's common to see many people who have left the area, but who take advantage of the celebration as a good time to visit.

Traditional aspects of the Friendship Jamboree may also be seen in some of the events: The logging show actually predates the Jamboree but, fairly early on, it adjusted its schedule so the events were combined. The parade has been a Jamboree element since the beginning and the softball tournament is in its 26th year, or thereabouts.

One place many people will want to visit is the Historical Society Museum and they won't be disappointed, because it will be open this weekend. Friday and Sunday hours will be 10 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. On Saturday, the museum won't open until 1:00 p.m. so everybody can watch the parade before opening time. Friends will also be stopping by the Vernonia Senior Center for a visit, throughout the weekend.

Newcomers needn't be shy, either. It's a great time to meet present and former residents and learn from them what the town used to be like. It's a time when conversation with strangers is commonplace because no one feels like a stranger.

Many of the events that have developed during the Friendship Jamboree, have been developed by friends for friends. The horse gaming is a friendly, family-oriented competition. Every year, the fast draw brings friends from Canada, allowing an international competition in this small town. Most of the musicians at the Alternative Stage are friends. Friends organize the cruise-in for others with similar interests. Anyone who has attended the logging show knows that, in spite of tough competition, laughter is the common denominator for both spectators and participants, as long-time friends rib each other publicly.

It's hard to imagine a better reason for a community celebration than *friendship*—let's hope that reason never disappears for, in the words of Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772-1834]:

Friendship is a sheltering tree.

We invite you to join us in enjoyment of the Vernonia Friendship Jamboree.



Ike Says...

By Dale Webb, member
Nehalem Valley Chapter Izaak Walton League

Summer 'tis the season for family vacations! I just got back from a nine-day trip all across Oregon. I didn't go hunting or fishing. This was a family vacation and a tour of some of Oregon's treasures.

For those of you who haven't heard, my bachelor days are numbered. I have fallen for a local lady who picks up trash in her spare time. Yes, if you guessed Donna Gehrke, you are right. We thought the ultimate test of my devotion would be to go on a family vacation with her two daughters, Erin and Jessie. See the end of the story to see if we're still engaged!

Our first stop was in Eugene and a motel with a pool. We didn't get started till after noon and we just wanted to cut our next days trip to Brookings down to size. The girls and I enjoyed the pool, while Donna was content with the Jacuzzi.

The next day, we went through Wildlife Safari at Winston, then headed over to the coast to Harris Beach State Park. When we arrived, there was a long line at the check-in booth. Donna had made reservations and we were allowed to have express check-in. Not having been to a State Park in eons, I just pulled in behind everybody else. Donna hopped out of the car and headed to the booth. Soon, she started waving her hands for me to pull out of line and around everybody else. I started to pass the line on the left, but the guy in front of me thought Donna was a Park Ranger and cut me off. He sure had a funny look on his face as I passed him on the left while he sat at the left side of the check-in booth with the sign that said "this lane for express check-in only," and the imagined Park Ranger hopped into my passenger seat and we drove off. Express check-in is the only way to go!

Harris Beach is a very beautiful park, especially the beach. The girls did a good job of getting wet, trying to outrun the incoming waves. I kept wanting my kayak, -slap-, "Sorry, honey, my mind wandered for just a second!" The camping is typical of state parks, a small paved pad, a fire ring and a picnic table. We pitched two backpacking tents and called it home.

On our third day, we traveled back up the coast to Gold Beach and the famous Rogue River. We had reservations with Jerry's Rogue Jets for an action-packed 104-mile jet boat ride. We had to settle for an 80-mile round trip instead, because of the low river level. The Rogue River was flowing at about 1100 cfs, and Jerry's has a

self-imposed minimum of 1300 cfs. Don't be scared off from booking a trip yet this year, though. The upstream dams are supposed to boost the flow up to 1800 cfs in August. I have been on this trip before and no matter what anybody says, three screaming 460 Ford engines combined to pump out almost 1000 horsepower is a kick in the pants any day. The day was beautiful and warm as we reached the white water portion of the river. I started wishing that I was in my kayak running these rapids -SLAP- "Sorry again, sweetheart!" The Jet boat pilot was very skillful as we dodged rocks and stream markers. He also showed constraint about getting us wet - until we were getting hot. Then, look out! The girls liked the getting wet part. There is talk about curtailing these commercial rides in the lower Rogue River. I think this would be a travesty, since it would prevent thousands of people each year from experiencing the rugged beauty of this region.

Day four was spent traveling down Highway 101 into California, then back up Highway 199 into Oregon. The redwoods on the first part of 199 were magnificent. I haven't seen trees this large since I was a kid. The highway parallels the famous Smith River, a kayaker's paradise - backhand- "Sorry darling, I was looking at the hawk in the tree above that class V drop" -jab to the ribs-. Soon, we were at Cave Junction and the crooked drive up to Oregon Caves National Monument. I thoroughly enjoyed the caves. I thought the girls might be afraid, but they showed NO FEAR. If you haven't been to the Oregon Caves, it is a must. It is a trip deep into the bowels of a mountainside, along the path of an ever eroding stream. Claustrophobic people should not attempt this adventure, though. A person also needs to be in good shape, since there is a lot of descending and climbing on the .6 mile journey back in time. Oh, did I mention the stream that carved the Oregon Caves is the magnificent Illinois River, another kayaker's destination, -eye gouge-, "Sorry sweetheart!" We traveled to Gold Hill next and the incredible House of Mystery. The girls loved the vortex's effects, especially when it made them taller and me smaller. This place is surely a mind teaser. We spent the night camping next to the upper Rogue River in a private campground near Shady Cove.

Day five dawned clear and warm as we scrambled to pack the back of the car with our overabundance of gear. Soon, we entered Crater Lake National Park, where Donna and I

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