

# The INDEPENDENT

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## Opinion

### It's time to wake up and smell the mold

No, the mold in Washington Grade School isn't what we need to worry about, it isn't toxic and it is being cleaned up successfully.

The mold we need to start examining, with great diligence, is the stuff that's growing between our ears and is clogging all the passages that allow oxygen to get to our brains. You'll know whether you have a serious case of mold if you start hyperventilating at the sight or sound of that little three-letter word "tax."

In the real world, we know that taxes pay for really big things that most of us couldn't afford on our own. In the dreamworld of brain mold, we delude ourselves into thinking that everything would still be taken care of if we didn't have to pay taxes, so we elect every candidate who promises lower taxes, then get mad at someone else when the promises don't pan out. That is delusional.

Brain mold is curable if you're willing to work at it, but it's not easy. It requires you to start scraping that mold off so you can think.

Then you have to start asking yourself questions like: "Why do we approve spending \$50 billion on a few stealth planes (that everyone can see), when we won't spend \$2 billion on our crumbling schools?"

"Why do we allow Congress to accept a 3.5 percent pay raise when Social Security recipients will get a "cost of living" increase of 1.4 percent?"

"Why do we elect congressmen who won't extend unemployment benefits to working people, but will allow U.S. corporations to "go offshore" and evade taxes here?"

Yes, brain mold makes folks delusional, allowing them to feel good about wasting money on those who don't need it, while harming ordinary folks.

And, yes, it is hard to get rid of. In addition to scraping the mold off your brain, sometimes it is even necessary to turn off the television!

If you fear the cure is worse than the illness, here's a question that may keep you awake at night:

"Why does Scotty Pippen qualify for more in farm subsidies than most people earn in a year of hard work?"

Think about it...if you dare.



### Ike Says...

By Dale Webb, member  
Nehalem Valley Chapter Izaak Walton League



Bull elk season is over for this year and, for many of us, it was a dry year. Both the weather and the elk did not cooperate. My partners and I had a good hunt, though. Any day spent elk hunting is a highlight of my year. Because of the mild weather this year, elk have not been forced to feed as much as in prior years, so they weren't moving around as much, either. This makes them harder to find because they don't leave tracks and don't make any noise, which helps a hunter locate the elk before they locate you. I jumped a lot of elk before I even knew they were around. I had the safety off a couple of times, but things just did not go my way. The freezer will just have to be content with the deer that's in it. There were elk taken this year so it will be interesting to see how the final harvest numbers come out.

Local gating issues caused some stir, with hunters being unable to scout gated areas the day before either the first season or the second season. Olympic Resource Management said things went well on their end and they didn't have any problems. I hope next year, though, they will not schedule a school tour during the elk season. Hunters were forced to give up a day of elk season, on ORM land, because they closed it to hunters on the last day of the second season. I am still a little puzzled about the closure reasoning since hunting is safer than the

occupation of logging. I suppose it is all about appearances and, again, confirms the feelings that hunters are getting from the logging community, that we are more of a nuisance than a partner in wildlife management.

The continued dry weather is starting to become a problem. While Chinook salmon were able to get up the Nehalem and spawn this year, currently, low flows are hampering Coho salmon in their efforts to return home. We also need normal rainfall to continue to recharge our ground water supply so we will not have low water conditions next summer. On this note, the Upper Nehalem River Watershed Council received a grant to install a new stream gauge on Rock Creek. It should be installed by next summer and will give all the resource users a better handle with which to manage this precious resource.

Many of you have seen the news reports on the West Nile Virus and the scare it has created nationwide. We were fortunate that this virus did not spread into Oregon this year. This has given us more time to prepare for the eventual spread into our state in the coming year. News reports have been talking mainly about the effects of the virus on human populations and our associated pets. Here are a few facts about the West Nile Virus.

West Nile Virus disease is a mosquito-borne infection that can cause mild flu-like illness or severe encephalitis. Only about one percent of the people bitten by an infected mosquito will develop flu-like symptoms. Only 10-15 percent of these people will develop a more serious case of encephalitis. Far more people die from the flu virus than from West Nile Virus. Only a small

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