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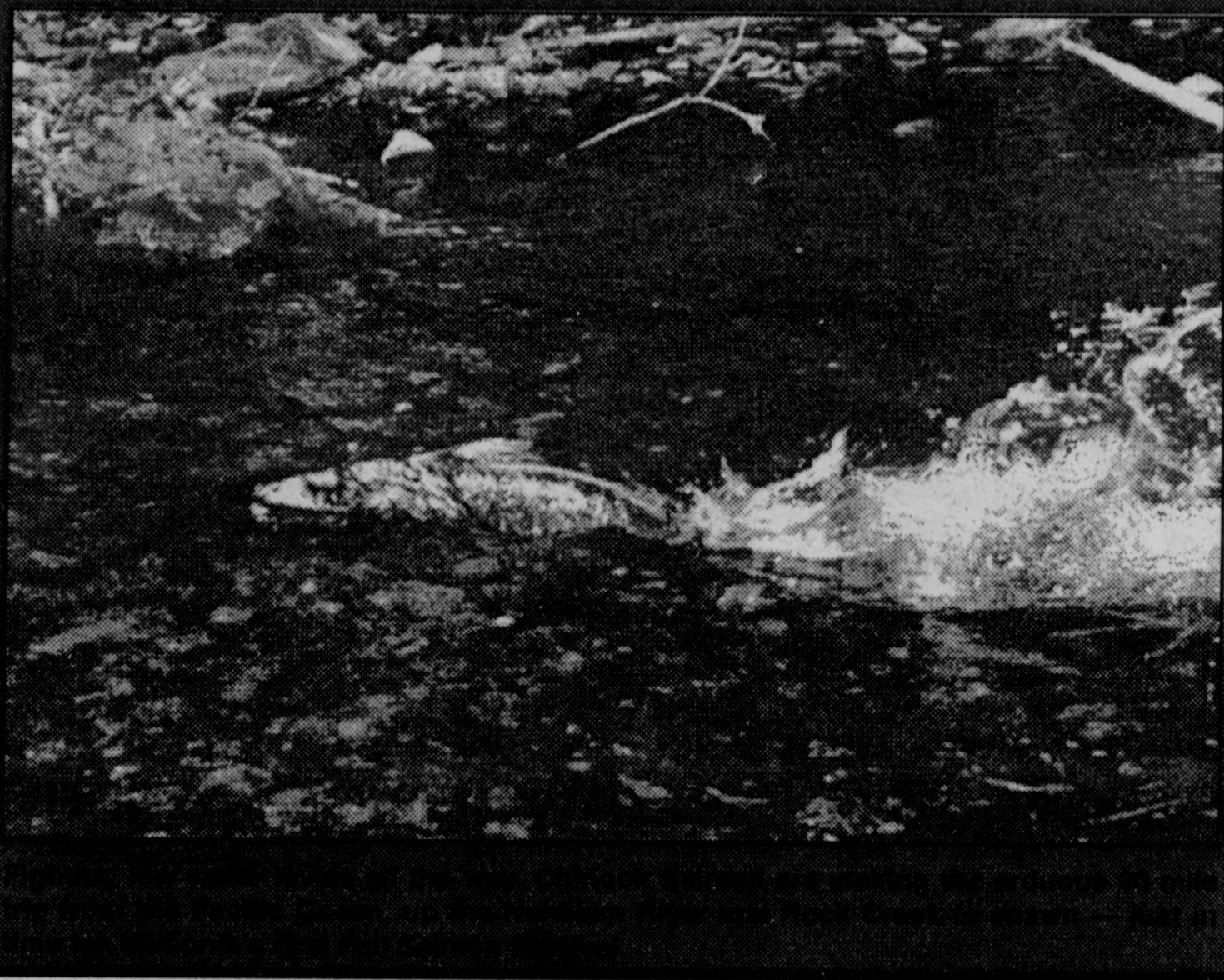
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"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

October 2, 2003

Here we come...



Chinook on time for Fall Salmon Festival

Picturesque Rock Creek is home to many species, including Chinook Salmon that are arriving on schedule for the first annual Vernonia Salmon Festival this Saturday, October 4. The day's festivities will state with a parade at 11 a.m. Everyone is invited to participate; the only requirement is to base your entry on a "Salmon" or "Fall" theme and show up at the staging area on Weed Avenue, alongside City Hall.

In Shay Park, there will be an interactive stream discovery booth hosted by the Upper Nehalem Watershed Council and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Nehalem Valley Chapter of the Izaak Walton League has prepared salmon viewing areas and hayrides offered by the Vernonia Volunteer Ambulance Association and Metro West transportation will take visitors from downtown to the most distant viewing area. Viewing areas can also be accessed by foot or by car. A map of the day's events will be available at the information table in the park.

At Anderson Park, the Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association will put on a display of shooting, starting at high noon

increased training.

By this time, it was ten o'clock and quite a few people left because they had to be up early the following morning.

The remainder broke up into six small groups to brainstorm ideas and try to develop potential solutions to the impasse. Each small group had a volunteer facilitator to help bring ideas out for discussion and, after hearing ideas proposed for nearly three hours, the groups quickly focused on areas they felt had promise.

One group suggested a law

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in the horse arena. Competitors dressed as turn-of-the-century cowboys shoot 45-caliber revolvers at targets while mounted on galloping horses. This should be a lot of fun to watch.

Hawkins Park will be busy with a wide variety of activities throughout the day. A wine tasting featuring Oregon wines, and a silent auction will take place from 12 to 6:00 p.m. in the Scout Cabin, while Lee's U-Catch will host a trout pond for kids in the children's wading pool.

Music including the Vernonia Hands On Art Orchestra, Diana & The Song Dogs, and Cindy Lou Banks will entertain in the Lions Club gazebo. There will be a pumpkin pie baking contest, pumpkin carving, scarecrow building, and pumpkin seed spitting contests, too. At 6:00 p.m., awards will be presented to winners of the day's events, followed immediately by an auction of pies, wines and other goodies.

In downtown Vernonia, you'll find the kids' coloring contest entries, the freestyle art competition entries and a place to participate in the sidewalk chalk art contest. Grey Dawn Gallery will also hold an opening of its annual fall show, "Autumn Leaves," featuring photographer Christopher Burkett and others. Hands On Art will host arts and crafts on Adams Avenue and in the old City Hall building.

Food booths will include Vernonia Cares Salmon Bento, the Lions Club Kraut & Dogs, plus Antipasto & Quiche from Lew's Place.

The Festival Committee needs about 12 volunteers to help with various activities during the day. For information call Randy Parrow, 503-429-3811.

A full schedule of events may be found on page 15.

Differences defined, ideas suggested

Approximately 140 people attended the September 22 Vernonia Town Hall meeting on law enforcement, with nearly half that number staying to the end to work on the difficult and lengthy process of trying to find mutual ground between the mistrust and dissatisfaction expressed by many citizens toward Police Chief Mike Cahill and his staff, and the trust and satisfaction expressed by many others.

To assist that effort, the City of Vernonia obtained the aid of a facilitator, Craig Smith of Rural Development Initiatives.

Smith first explained ground rules for the meeting that would allow people to comment without intrusion by others and without personal attacks. He then outlined an agenda that utilized the S.W.O.T. approach — identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats — for decision-making based on a clear un-

derstanding of the police department's strengths and weaknesses, combined with a clear set of community goals for police services.

Some of the Strengths and Weaknesses identified by participants were polar opposites, i.e.: Officers are friendly, willing to know citizens and enforce the law equally — or — Officers are confrontational, unwilling to admit mistakes and discriminate by age.

Among the Opportunities identified were a chance to "wipe the slate clean" and replace the entire police force; abolish the "us vs. them" mentality and re-unify; develop DARE, Cadet, Reserve and Neighborhood Watch programs; change hiring guidelines to reduce officer turnover; community liaisons.

Identified Threats were budget constraints made worse by loss of state and federal funds; lack of communication; a

location that makes backup support difficult; lack of control over a lenient court system; insufficient staffing.

Use of the S.W.O.T. agenda was frustrating for some at the meeting who attended to express their complaints, and felt they should be allowed to do so even if identical complaints had already been vocalized.

After completing the S.W.O.T. portion of the meeting, Chief Cahill reviewed the 2003-04 police department goals adopted by the city council before his arrival. They include ten public presentations annually, publication of a bi-weekly information bulletin, exploration of alternative funding options, development of a long range plan for police service, providing training; developing a reserve force and increased office staff with volunteers.

Currently, work toward these goals includes two office volunteers, one reserve officer and