

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Citizens are trying, Council has the ball

The recent Town Hall meeting on law enforcement was instructive, if you were interested in learning.

Among the available lessons were:

- It's a waste of time to go to a meeting if you don't intend to contribute.
- If the only time you will contribute is when you write the rules, you should take your ball and go home.
- Not everyone who complains about the police department is a drunk; some of them don't drink at all.
- It is sensible to be sober when attending a meeting on the subject of law enforcement, especially if you want to complain.
- When the police department is trying to present an image of sweet reason, an officer shouldn't offer to "go outside and discuss" a disagreement with an individual.
- The mayor and council members should remember that they represent all of the citizens, not just the ones who agree with them...and they definitely should not voice the personal opinion, in public, that those who disagree are just "whiners and complainers."
- The police department should remember that they work for the citizens, and it's always a good idea to be courteous to your boss.

There are other lessons available for learning, too:

- If you want to replace the mayor or any of the council members, you had better be willing to volunteer 20 to 40 hours per month on such exciting incidentals as water curtailment, planning ordinances, major financial considerations and other tremendously exciting minutiae.
- If you want to replace the mayor or any of the council members, be willing to attend a minimum of three meetings per month, and as much additional time as is necessary to take care of the public's business.
- If you are not willing to spend three hours at one meeting, or 20 hours on a Smart Growth Development Ordinance, you shouldn't be a city councilor.

Give them a break, folks, they are unpaid volunteers who spend huge amounts of time trying to help you have the kind of community you want.

You should replace them only if you can do a better job.



Ike Says...

By Dale Webb, Member
Nehalem Valley Chapter, Izaak Walton League



The morning was dawning bright; it was going to be another hot day, but you don't care because, off in the distance, a bull elk is bugling. Gradually you work your way into the herd and softly cow talk to cover your movement. Soon you hear the herd bull circling off to your right, flanking a satellite bull that was trying to capture some of his cows. The timing is perfect and you let loose with a bugle, not a big bull, but not a spike either. The herd bull stops in his tracks, then charges straight for you, limbs and brush shredding as the big bull tears at everything in his path.

You can feel the weakness in your knees and the hair standing up on your neck. The bull keeps coming, then senses that something isn't quite right. It is too late. An arrow slices through the air and the bull lunges into the brush trying to escape the jab in the ribs. The bull doesn't go far and soon you are standing over his body, his very big body. This is the biggest bull that you have ever taken and you are shaking with excitement.

Now you have a monumental task ahead of you and think maybe your buddies can help out. After gutting the bull you get to a phone and make a few calls. Soon, your friends arrive and, with the help of a 4-wheeler, the bull is dragged out of the woods and hoisted into the back of a pickup.

A very happy day in the life of a bow hunter?

No, this story ends unhappily.

The land where he was hunting was closed due to fire danger, it was also closed to motorized travel, and trees were damaged dragging the bull out of the woods. Because a concerned citizen was diligent, this hunter, and many more like him, ended up without his bull, but with several expensive tickets for his misdeeds. This may sound like an incident that happened locally, but it is not based on that case. There were several big game cases made by police this year in the local area. Many hunters are violating timber companies rules regarding public entry. While I don't totally agree with how and when fire closures are used, they must be adhered to if all sportsmen are to have an equal chance at the animals for which they have tags.

A friend of mine, who is a bow hunter, had a very frustrating season this year due to fire closures and the inability to get timely information of when timber companies' lands were open. Hearing about other hunters sneaking animals out of his hunting area only compounded his aggravation. The only consolation for my friend will be if the fines are hefty, otherwise he may also be tempted sometime in the future.

Did you see it? Right there on the front of "Bill Monroe's Hunting 2003" in *The Oregonian*: Declining blacktail numbers at issue!

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is finally starting to face the fact that the Blacktail deer herd is declining, in some cases abruptly. There is talk of shortening the rifle season, shortening the bow season, eliminating the late bow season (Saddle Mountain unit just had the first season last year), and reducing or banning Doe

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