

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

For your own safety, vote to renew the 9-1-1 levy

Measure 5-122 on the Columbia County ballot should be a no-brainer: Do you want a quick emergency response when you need help from fire, emergency medical or law enforcement?

If your answer is "yes," then mark your ballot "yes" to renew the operating levy for Columbia 9-1-1 Emergency Communications District.

This is not a new tax. It is not an increased tax. It is a continuation of funding for emergency dispatching and, remarkably, is even slightly less per thousand of assessed property value than the old levy.

Taxpayers have benefited from a conscientious, well-run district that has greatly increased reliable service throughout the county without increased costs. We really can't afford to let this levy fail.

Banks Library deserves support

Banks Library patrons may be only a small percentage of voters in Washington County but, if you use your library, there are many reasons for voting "yes" on Washington County ballot measure 34-77.

Fiscal restraints have already forced the reduction of some services. If the trend continues, there will be little choice left except to cut hours and personnel. That would certainly be a negative response for a growing community.

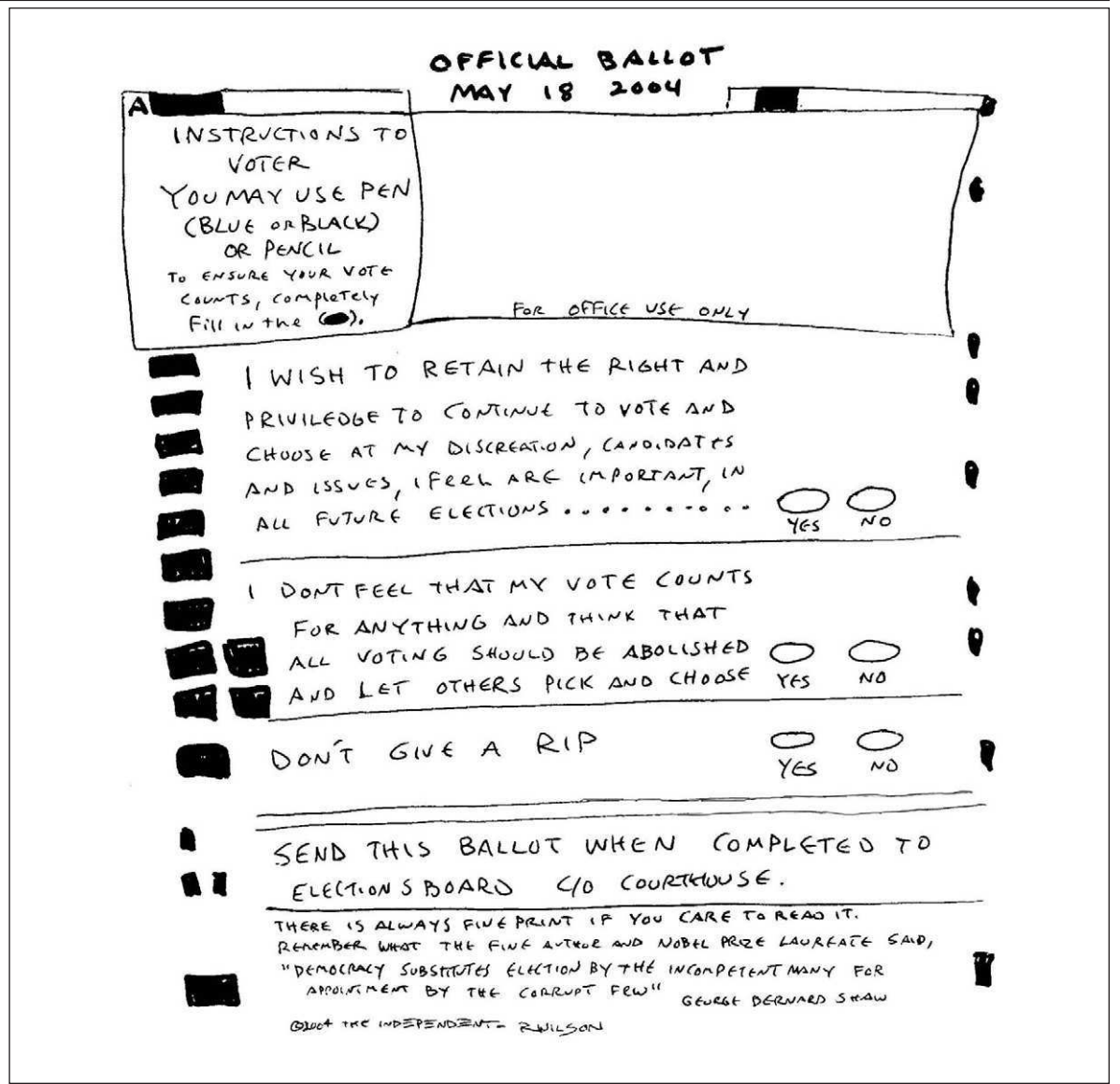
State Rep District 32: Boone and Olson are excellent choices

With the retirement of incumbent Elaine Hopson, voters have choices on both Republican and Democratic ballots.

Both Democratic candidates are well qualified, but Deborah Boone has much broader experience and greater knowledge of the whole district.

On the Republican ballot, Douglas Olson has a solid business background that will appeal to many voters, as well as some experience with government.

District 32 covers most of Tillamook and Clatsop Counties, as well as the western portions of Columbia and Washington Counties.



Ike Says . . .

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



It is easy to go through life and not see the big picture that is constantly evolving around us. With our nation at war and our young men and women dying in a foreign land, it is easy to dismiss concerns that are easily overlooked here at home. Yet the impacts of these oversights will dog us for the rest of our lives and the generations to come.

Many of you, my age or older, remember the simpler days of our youth, when we fished local streams almost year-round, plinked squirrels on the hot lazy days of summer and were introduced into a man's world of hunting big game. We roamed the roads of the surrounding forest in our old clunker cars and pickups, hunting grouse and pigeons and finishing the day with a few hours catching cutthroats out of a clear, cold mountain beaver pond. Today's youth seldom know these pleasures. Today it is computer games, cell phones and hanging out downtown. Can we, as parents, really say that we have provided our children a better quality of life?

It would be easy to blame the large timber companies and their gate-it-off-and-post-it mentality. Yet, even though the roads are gated, opportunities are still there. Our laziness is probably a greater factor in keeping our children from enjoying the wonders that surround our town

than anything else. You see, we grew up using automobiles as our mode of transportation and once our wheels were denied us by gated forest roads, we let our traditions slip away. It is this slow, steady slipping away of traditions that is killing our heritage and, with it, the value of the activities and animals that we used to pursue. Our quality of life steadily erodes, like a stream bank slipping into a river.

Many of you are probably wondering what struck this chord for me. The answer is: a book. A friend recently gave me a book by Chris Maser, titled "Forest Primeval-The Natural History of an Ancient Forest." I have never given much thought about the ancient forests that once occupied where we live. It's easy to justify cutting down the trees to make room for fields to farm and timber for homes. My living is dependent on a wood resource, like many of my fellow Oregonians. It is easy to turn a blind eye to the impacts of cutting down the last of the great Old Growth forests when you are not informed of the relationships and costs of losing this heritage.

While I was always uncomfortable with the lack of Old Growth remaining in our local area, I never understood the actual loss that has occurred - until I read Chris Maser's book. Having an inquisitive mind, I was intrigued by the information that this book provides to fill in the gaps in my knowledge about relationships between the majestic old forests and the creatures that struggle today to survive without them. When we learn more, we think: "No wonder

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