

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Correction: Last date to file for district boards is Mar. 17

While urging interested people to file nomination papers for school and fire district boards, we dropped a number. The last day to file is March 17, not March 1.

Because of our error, however, some candidates have filed without waiting until the last minute – which is appreciated by elections office personnel.

Mist-Birkenfeld Fire District incumbents Bill deJaeger, Trish Wright and Troy Horton have filed for re-election.

Frank Cieloha, who was appointed to a vacant Vernonia Fire District seat, has filed for election to Position 1.

D. William Moore has filed for Banks School District Position 2, currently held by Willis Meeuwsen.

Vernonia School District incumbent Cari Levenseller has filed for re-election to Position 5. Three new candidates are seeking seats, as well: Angela Taylor has filed for Position 1, Leslie Barnes for Position 4, and Kim Wallace for Position 6. These positions – 1, 4 and 6 – are presently held by Ed Buckner, Gienah Cheney and Jim Krahn, respectively.

The Vernonia School Board is of interest to many people for many reasons, but one organizational situation that is particularly annoying to residents who try to attend board meetings is their frequently changing meeting dates. The board adopted the second Thursday of each month for their regular meetings, but changes the schedule frequently. The March meeting, for instance, will be on Tuesday, March 8, and April's "regular" meeting will be on the first Thursday, April 7.

While this board obviously feels no compunction at changing meetings for their convenience, it is very rare for most boards. The five-person Vernonia Fire Board previously had some problems, when they had too many members going hunting at the same time, but it didn't happen more than twice in two years. Except for legal holidays, the five-person Vernonia City Council hasn't changed meeting dates more than twice in four years. Yet the seven-person school board changes meeting dates if the chairman can't attend, or if they aren't sure of a quorum, or if it would be more convenient. Emergencies happen, but these aren't emergencies and they don't meet the spirit of "regular" meetings.

People who want to be involved on public boards must also be committed to the requirements of those boards. Making the time available, each month at the same time, is one of those requirements, and it is done for the convenience of the public, not the board members.



I THOUGHT IT WAS A WEEKEND, A MONTH AND TWO WEEKS A YEAR!?

Ike Says...

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



Have any of you noticed the river this winter? It sure is low. I checked the current river readings at Foss as I prepared this column and the gauge showed the Nehalem flowing at just under 800 cubic feet per second (CFS), the average for this date over

the last 64 years is around 4,500 CFS. Now that is scary.

So what effect is this low water having? That's a hard question to answer, but it surely is having an impact on the amount of habitat available to salmonids. With the water flow being less than a fourth of what is normal, the pools are not as deep and the river edge is not up into the side river habitat, which makes up most of the refuge habitat for small fish. With the lack of cover habitat, fish will be more exposed to predation from birds. Fishermen have also noticed the effects of low water. Steelhead fishing up and down the coast has been noted as slower than usual. Low water also makes drifting rivers with boats harder or more dangerous. Hopefully, we will get some rain, but it will take a tremendous amount now to get us in shape for the summer.

The lack of rain may be helping big game populations, since it usually means more sun, which starts new growth of vegetation with good protein values. Also, deer with hair loss are prob-

ably better off with the clear and cold weather than the cool and wet weather of a normal winter. Hair loss is still with us, the reason people seem to not be seeing so much of it is because there just are not a lot of deer left. I went almost two weeks, driving back and forth from work recently, without seeing a deer. A friend and I went out coyote hunting a few weeks ago and spent most of the day in the field and never saw one deer, we did see two bull elk though! While out, I noticed how few deer tracks were imprinted in the roadsides, yet elk sign was quite visible. I think I may have seen more coyote tracks than deer! Nope, no coyotes, either!

It sounds like the Wolves are coming to Oregon. You want to talk about a contentious issue! Recently, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) adopted a plan with which to manage the inevitable return of wolves to Oregon. Many people in Eastern Oregon and a lot of sportsmen are not real happy with the idea. The livestock industry is understandably unhappy, since wolf predation on livestock is a given and the funding of payment for loss is questionable and onerous to prove.

Sportsmen are also unhappy with the prospect of adding another predator onto the backs of valued deer and elk herds. Predation by bears and cougars currently is at high levels in Eastern Oregon, and deer and elk herds are suffering, especially in the Northeast corner of the state. Predation seems to be increasing in a southwest direction from the northeast corner of

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