

# The INDEPENDENT

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## Opinion

### More activities than ever fill Vernonia's calendar

The Vernonia Friendship Jamboree and Logging Show will celebrate its 49th year this summer. Jamboree increases the population of Vernonia during the first full weekend of August from 2000 people to as high as 10,000 people. It is a fun-filled event.

Over the past few years, additional activities and festivals have been initiated to help attract visitors to Vernonia and provide both residents and newcomers with more opportunity for fun at other times of the year.

The Salmon Festival, "spawned" in 2003, will celebrate its third year this October, and Riverfest will paddle into its second year of water-related fun and frolic later this month. Also, word has it, that an annual summer barbecue cook-off is being planned. There are, undoubtedly, many other ideas being planned to increase the attractiveness of our town for those who live here and for the many people seeking new adventures and activities in Oregon's northern coast range.

These festivals have always been – and still are – nonprofit and volunteer driven. Any net revenue realized is donated to community programs and groups which benefit our town.

Those who take part in the planning and operation of these events meet new people, learn about Vernonia's past, share ideas and, by helping to create the family fun that these festivals provide, give something back to the town. And volunteer groups always need fresh faces, ideas and enthusiasm.

So you have an open invitation to join a group of fellow citizens for the good of your town. The only special talent needed is a desire to contribute some energy to a group effort. Of course, if you happen to possess festival-related experience or talent that is very welcome.

Students can add civic participation to their college resumés by being involved in one of these activities. Parents can provide ideas or help for more kids' activities. Bored seniors can change their routines.

For more information, call Vernonia Chamber of Commerce at 503-429-6081 or Vernonia City Hall at 503-429-5291. On the internet, go to the Chamber website at <www.vernoniachamber.org> and click on Activities, or the City website, <www.vernonia-or.gov> and click on Events.



### Ike Says . . .

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



Finally some rain! Even with the rain, the Nehalem River is running about a third of normal. I am starting to get kayak withdrawal syndrome! Things are looking better and with more rain in the forecast, I expect to get on the river soon.

This is the time of year for Spring Chinook fishing over on the big Columbia. So far, the fishing has been average, which means slow, but things should turn on in the coming weeks. A few fishermen have had close calls with sea lions. Some have had the fish, and net, torn away from them while landing salmon. A couple of guys thought they were going in the drink with the net. It is probably just a matter of time before an incident happens when somebody gets hurt. The sea lions are getting bolder every year. It has been suggested by many fishermen that it is time to allow at least non-lethal deterrents to make the sea lions wary of people in boats.

Recently, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife undertook a management objectives review for Mule deer and both species of elk that reside in Oregon. The way the system worked was by having a group of people, representing different regions around the state, hold meetings and propose any changes that they felt were needed in each management unit. In most

instances, few, if any, changes were proposed. Most encouraging were proposals to increase elk or deer population management objectives in units where ODF&W has admitted their number were off in the past. This has reflected in significant increases in a lot of units on the Eastside of the state. While this is good news, it is tempered somewhat by the realization that most of these units are struggling to maintain their current populations, due primarily to habitat and predation issues.

One proposal that has caused a stir, though, is in a unit where a lot of Vernonians have hunted over the past years. In the Murderers Creek unit, it was proposed that the Rocky Mountain elk population be reduced from 1800 animals to 1300, and that the bull escapement management objective be raised to 20 bulls per 100 cows. If these proposals are approved by the commission, the effect on rifle bull elk hunters will be about a 50 percent reduction in tags. This is disturbing since the tag numbers in this unit are only about half of what they were in the late '80s. The wait period for drawing a tag is projected to extend to 7-8 preference points, but I think it could go longer because the unit will basically be turned into a trophy unit and a lot more people will apply for it.

I made a few phone calls and got to the bottom of how this proposal came about. First, the members of the working group who made this proposal are all from the local area in Grant County. Secondly, five of the eleven voting posi-

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