

The INDEPENDENT

Vol. 21, No. 19

"Voice of the Upper Nehalem River Valley"

October 5, 2006

They're here...



In spite of limited rainfall, Chinook Salmon are working their way up the Nehalem River and Rock Creek and can easily be seen from the Rock Creek Bridge in the middle of town.

Do not interfere with Salmon during the spawning season

Salmon Festival on October 7, in Vernonia, gives people who don't live on a Salmon spawning river or stream a chance to see Chinook Salmon returning to their place of birth to lay eggs for the next generation of Salmon. It's almost universally considered an awe-inspiring thing to see close up.

It's very important to look but not touch when Chinook Salmon are spawning. Each Salmon has traveled over 90 miles from the Pacific Ocean, through low and warm waters, to reach their spawning beds.

The trip, plus the physical toll of making between 5,000 and 8,000 eggs, stresses the resources of the fish. Additional stress from being touched, having rocks thrown at them, being poked with sticks, or in any way being harassed, can lead to

what's called "pre-spawn mortality." Pre-spawn mortality is the term for fish that die from being over-stressed before they can spawn.

Assistant District Fish Biologist, Chris Knutsen, with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) in Tillamook, said, "There are usually only enough surviving Salmon returning to replace their parents. It's real important to leave them alone and let them spawn." Knutsen went on to say that Salmon stay in the ocean for two to seven years (the average is four to five) and only a handful manage to survive to return and spawn.

Another reason to leave the Salmon alone is that Wildlife Harassment, ORS 448.006, can be punishable by a fine of \$300. Enjoy the sight, but do not touch.

Water conservation again needed; low stream flow

When measured yesterday, October 4, the stream flow on Rock Creek was at 10.7 cubic feet per second (cfs), triggering a Second Level of Concern. From now until rain increases the flow, water conservation methods will be in effect.

Second level restrictions limit the following uses on either odd or even days of the month, depending on where you live. On even-numbered days users

who live west of State Avenue may use water on shrubbery, trees, lawns, grass, ground covers, plants, vines, gardens, vegetables, flowers, or any other vegetation. East of State Avenue users may do the same on odd-numbered days.

Water may not be used to wash *any* vehicle, sidewalks, driveways or other hard-surfaced areas, or on buildings of any sort.

Also prohibited are filling or refilling indoor or outdoor swimming pools or spas (except using recycling water systems and evaporative covers, or where pool use is required by M.D.s prescription.), or the use of water in a fountain or pond for aesthetic or scenic purposes (except where necessary to support fish life).

Vernonia Salmon Festival

Saturday, Oct. 7th

See page 28 for details.

Candidates for Vernonia mayor, council

Vernonia voters will have choices for two city council positions and for mayor on the November General Election ballot, though one mayoral candidate said he has withdrawn from the election.

MAYORAL CANDIDATES



Sally Harrison

Incumbent Mayor Sally Harrison, 65, grew up in Vernonia

and graduated from Vernonia High School. She then attended beauty school and opened her own beauty shop. She also drove school bus and was a cook for Vernonia schools. While in Alaska with her husband, Del, she cooked at a lumber mill. After returning to Vernonia, she cooked at the Clatsop County Jail for more than 20 years, until retiring.

Harrison served as a city councilor in the early '80s, until going to Alaska. She is seeking reelection as mayor, she said, in order to see the completion of several unfinished projects.

Vernonia's greatest assets, Harrison said, are its people, with their willingness to volunteer, and its geography, with both city and outdoor opportunities readily available. The city's biggest challenge is infrastructure, particularly streets and sewer, as well as the need to manage growth in a positive

way.

In the future, Harrison would like to see an expansion of the city's park system, which she thinks can be accomplished with the aid of grants and cooperation with other agencies.

George Tice

Although his name will be on the ballot, George Tice told *The INDEPENDENT* that he decided to drop out of the race because he feels that his major concern, the wastewater system, is now being properly addressed. He will continue to be active on the city's Public Works committee, a citizen advisory panel that is working on the project.

Please see page 4

**FLU SHOTS
AVAILABLE IN
VERNONIA**

See page 10 for details