

The INDEPENDENT

Published on the first and third Thursdays of each month by The Independent, LLC, 725 Bridge St., Vernonia, OR 97064. Phone/Fax: 503-429-9410.

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Printed on recycled paper with vegetable based dyes

Opinion

Who is the Police Chief?

Vernonia Chief of Police Frank Grace told Vernonia's City Administrator (then Bob Young) that he did not intend to stay on in Vernonia after his one-year contract was up on August 31. That was months ago. Admittedly, between the city's budget and sending Young packing, there have been a few things going on, but...the position of police chief is the second highest official in the city after the city administrator. At the council's August 2 meeting, Interim Pro Tem (yes, it's redundant but that's what they are calling him) City Administrator Bill Haack's report to council said he was going "to poll the City Council on their general support to initiate an internal hiring for an interim Chief of Police position to be selected in early September". He did not poll the council in public session, so we don't know if that's been done.

At the August 16 council meeting, Chief Grace's final appearance before council, nothing was said. Not even good-bye or thanks. That was poor form. Nothing was said at the meeting about a replacement for Grace.

On August 24, Mayor Sally Harrison indicated nothing had been decided. August 31 was Grace's last day on the job, according to the timeline the public was given. Information was requested from Haack this week, but no response had been received by press time. Certainly at the next meeting, September 7, there should be news of who is in charge of Vernonia's police department.

Reports are not informative

Vernonia City Council used to approve a list of the bills being paid at each meeting. The report listed who was paid, how much and what for. This was the report that told us (so we could tell you) that the city had sprung for a \$20,000 security system (cameras), for instance. Just a bit more information on that report and it would have been a very useful tool. Now the report given to council gives a running total of the percent of the budgeted amount that has been used for each area. No longer does the public (unless you are on the Blue Ribbon Ad Hoc Committee) know what's being purchased. Though somebody has to sign off on big and small purchases, the council isn't looking at this. Hopefully, council will wish to look at more informative fiscal tools in the future.

Candidate filing is closed

Four candidates filed for the Vernonia Mayor position and eight for the two council positions (see page 1 for a list). It's great to see so many willing to help Vernonia in this way. We urge all the candidates to attend the meetings from now on to see what council does, and get up to speed on current issues.

SCHOOL IS STARTING

WATCH OUT FOR THE CHILDREN...



...THEY'RE ~~NOT~~ WATCHING OUT FOR YOU!

SEP 1-2010 @Rullon
L.M.P. 3:41P

Ike Says...

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



Ok, did we make it? My last two articles have included stream temperature data for the local area and the hope that we would have a summer season that did not exceed the upper lethal limit for salmonids. Well, we did it! The recent hot

stretch didn't help our little fish friends, but did escape reaching the lethal limit of 75 degrees. The water did reach 73.9 degrees on August 17th and most likely caused some mortality among juvenile salmonids that were not in the optimal pools for survival.

I was crawfish catching on the 16th and observed schools of salmonids in only certain pools in the Nehalem; I was down stream from the confluence of Rock Creek. I would estimate that the fish schools ranged in size from 100 to 300 fish and they appeared as a ribbon of fish that flowed out of fairly fast water and into slower side water as I spooked them from their optimal place in the stream. I tried my best to identify them, but came up short. I could not say for sure that they were Coho juveniles; they may have been cutthroat trout or steelhead, although I would be amazed if it was the latter since the numbers were so high. Rock Creek fared very well this year, with a

high reading on July 26th of 68.7 degrees at its confluence with the Nehalem. This is an excellent temperature and optimal for salmonid growth. We should be out of the woods for high stream temperatures this year. This late in the year the days are shorter, the sun is lower in the sky and the nights are cooler, all these factors will keep the streams cool, even if daytime temperatures reach high levels.

Archers are now in the woods in pursuit of deer and elk. So, how is Oregon doing in regards to deer and elk populations? Here is a quick look at the most reliable indicator that we have for these populations, harvest data.

In 2009 the Western Oregon Blacktail harvest was 20,033 bucks and 22,496 deer total (female deer made up the balance). In 2008 the harvest was 23,381 bucks and 25,851 deer total. To gain some perspective over time, I looked up the 1996 harvest stats. In '96 the harvest was 27,014 bucks and 33,998 deer total. So one can see that we has been a 25% decrease in deer harvest since 1996 and a 14% decrease between '08 and '09. Saddle Mt. unit had a decrease to 493 bucks taken during the general season.

For Western Oregon elk, in '09 we had a harvest of 4,057 bulls and 6,777 elk total (cows made up the balance). In '08 we harvested 3,625 bulls and 6,392 elk total. In 1996 we harvested 4,447 bulls and 6,869 total. So one can see the harvest increased by 6% between '08 and '09, but is down 1% since '96. So it would appear that

Please see page