

# The INDEPENDENT

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## Opinion

### Graduates: Choose wisely

Graduation ceremonies are happening all around. After that walk across the stage, graduates will find that life is full of choices.

Some will go to college, some straight to work, some into the service. Some will get married and raise families, some won't.

We hope every graduate will go forth on their journey keeping an open, inquiring mind. Life-long learning is a great goal. You can't go wrong with too much knowledge.

Some graduates will make bad choices that will take them to places they will wish they had never seen. Excess drinking, drugs, crime, or just being mean and unhappy can ruin lives, theirs and their loved ones. We hope they all find their way to healthy, happy, safe places – now or later.

We hope many will get involved in their community and make a difference. Have a happy life, grads.

### How to get a letter printed?

We have received a number of quality Letters to the Editor lately without signatures. Unfortunately, it is our policy not to print anonymous or unsigned letters.

If you are afraid to sign your name, let us know as we may choose to print it anyway as long as we know who you are.

But remember the signers of the Constitution – who knowingly put their livelihood, property, families and lives in jeopardy so we can enjoy the freedoms we have today.

However, we couldn't resist printing the recently received letter below, signed only "Please Print, Mr. B. Vernonia."

THE FOUR R's  
 REVOKE - KAY  
 RECALL - HUDSON  
 RESIGN - BURCH, NICKS  
 REINSTATE - HAACK

◆ Z. JUNE WILSON ◆

HAPPY

90<sup>TH</sup>

BIRTHDAY

Wow MOM WHAT A MILESTONE!

← CONGRATULATIONS →

From the Staff at the INDEPENDENT

June 2011 Robb Wilson

### Ike Says . . .

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



Once again, it is "that" time of year, tag draw waiting time! Unfortunately, this time of year is getting to be more and more uncomfortable for many of us, due to the declining game populations in our state. Drawing a deer tag in this state for a desirable unit is almost impossible on a yearly basis; in most cases it will be every 3-4 years. Eastern Oregon elk are in the same boat...sinking. The saving grace for Westside hunters is the Westside elk population, which on the whole is maintaining.

I attended the spring ODF&W tag proposal meeting and had a good chat with Herman Biederbeck our district biologist. Of course I voiced my opinion that the antlerless deer hunts need to be deleted. ODF&W has proposed reducing antlerless tag numbers in the Saddle Mt. unit by 200 tags, 100 tags in the Scappoose unit, 100 tags in the Wilson unit and 100 tags in the Trask unit. While I agree this is a step in the right direction, it really is too late and they might as well scrap the hunts altogether. One reason I say this is that, while reducing the rifle antlerless tags is a 66% reduction, the impact to the total antlerless harvest is really only 40%. This is because the archery and disabled antlerless harvest will most likely not be affected by the reduc-

tion in rifle tags. Unless ODF&W makes an exception, the rule they usually follow is that, if a unit has a unit-wide antlerless rifle season, then archery and disabled tag holders are allowed an either-sex harvest. It was discussed that the commissioners would be looking at this issue at the June meeting, but I wouldn't hold my breath that they will allow a limited rifle antlerless harvest and scrap the archery and disabled tags.

I asked Herman where the numbers came from for the proposed reduction in antlerless tags. His response was, "it did not come from the district biologists, but came from the big game managers in Salem."

I did get some draft harvest data from Herman regarding buck deer harvest in the Saddle Mt. unit. It appears that the total buck harvest was slightly lower, compared to the prior year's harvest, at 551 bucks.

The elk picture remains pretty stable and I questioned Herman whether there was any idea of changing tag allocations; the answer was no, with the possibility of an increase in rifle tags if the bull escapement numbers continue to remain high, more on this later. While many in the local area viewed last year's first season rifle as being a tough one, the stats showed it was on par with the previous year, with a bull harvest of 170 and a 17% success rate. Second season bull hunters saw a highly successful season, with 252 bulls taken for a 26% success rate. Archers had an average season with 140 bulls taken; I did not get a success rate.