

The INDEPENDENT

Published on the first and third Wednesdays of each month by The Independent, LLC, 725 Bridge St., Vernonia, OR 97064. Phone/Fax: 503-429-9410. Deadline is noon the Friday before each issue. Publisher Clark McGaugh, clark@the-independent.net Editor Rebecca McGaugh, rebecca@the-independent.net Printed on recycled paper with vegetable based dyes

Opinion

Governor John Kitzhaber shares his thoughts on Capital Punishment:

"Under Article V, section 14, of the Oregon Constitution, I am exercising my authority as Governor to issue a temporary reprieve in the case of Gary Haugen for the duration of my term in office. I want to share with Oregonians how and why I came to that decision.

"Oregon has a long and turbulent history with capital punishment. Our state constitution originally had no provision for the death penalty. Enacted by statute in 1864, the death penalty was repealed by voters in 1914, restored in 1920, outlawed again by voters in 1964, re-enacted in 1978, deemed unconstitutional by the Oregon Supreme Court in 1981 and again reinstated in 1984.

"It has been carried out just twice in last 49 years in Oregon. Both were during my first administration as Governor, one in 1996 and the other in 1997. I allowed those sentences to be carried out despite my personal opposition to the death penalty. I was torn between my personal convictions about the morality of capital punishment and my oath to uphold the Oregon constitution.

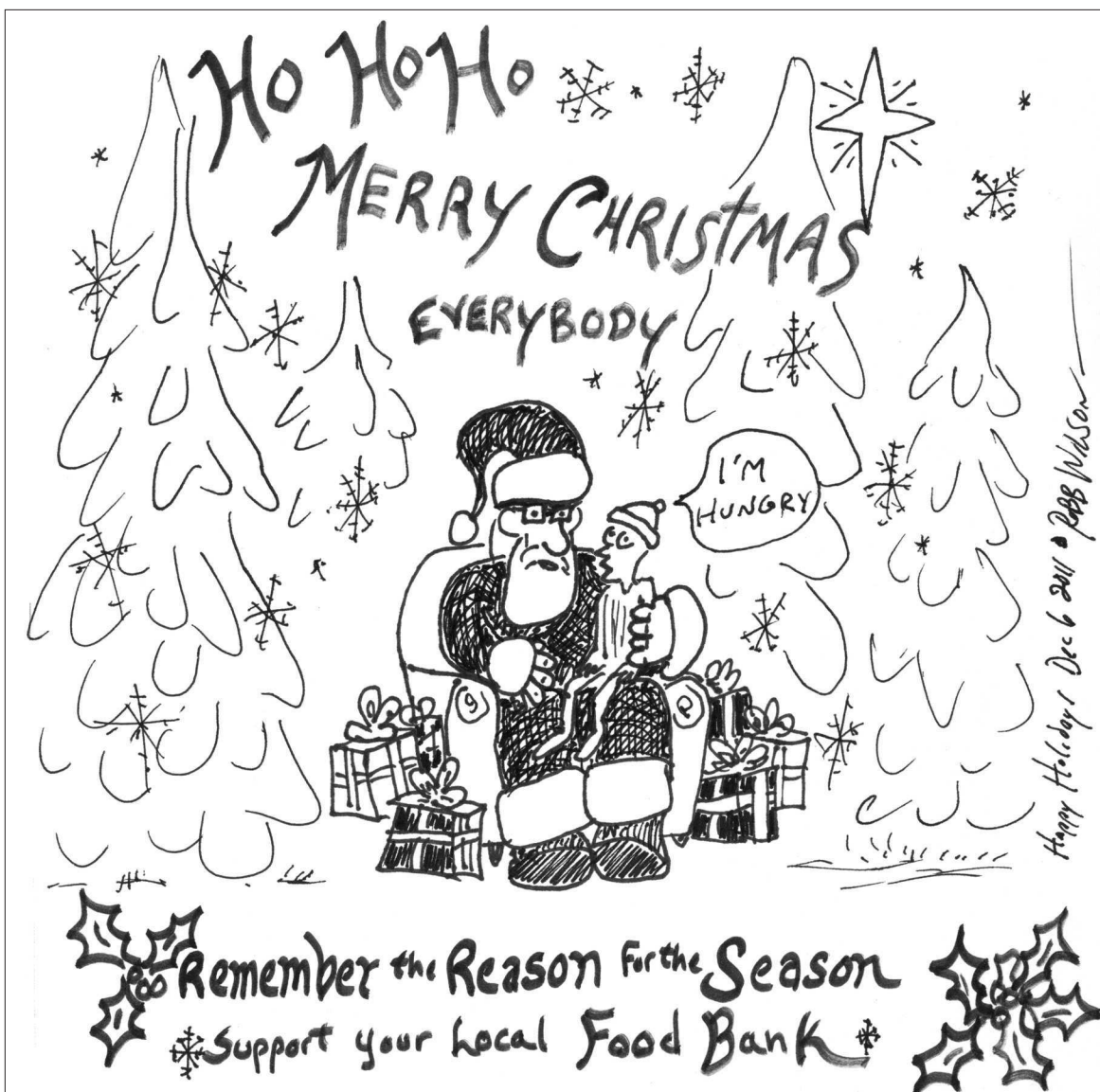
"They were the most agonizing and difficult decisions I have made as Governor and I have revisited and questioned them over and over again during the past 14 years. I do not believe that those executions made us safer; and certainly they did not make us nobler as a society. And I simply cannot participate once again in something I believe to be morally wrong.

"Let me be clear, I had no sympathy or compassion for the criminals or for anyone who commits the most heinous of acts – taking the life of another person. The families and friends of victims deserve certainty that justice will be carried out on behalf of the loved ones who have been taken from them in such a cruel fashion.

"But the nature of their crimes was not different from other murderers, some of whom are sentenced to death but never executed and others who are sentenced to life in prison. What distinguished those two death row inmates during my first term was that they volunteered to die.

"Oregonians have a fundamental belief in fairness and justice – in swift and certain justice. The death penalty as practiced in Oregon is neither fair nor just; and it is not swift or certain. It is not applied equally to all. It is a perversion of justice that the single best indi-

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Ike Says . . .

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



The last week of deer season finally saw the bucks getting all rutted up and many went home with hunters. The 10th deer I saw this year was finally a buck, but a 300-yard shot, a 20 mph cross wind and poor luck contributed to the mak-

ings of tag soup for me this year. The fact is, if it had not been for the last week of deer season, many sports people would have gone home empty handed.

Vernonia was invaded by thousands just before the beginning of the second elk season on the 19th, yet very few people here in town even knew that this event occurred. So what were these thousands? Coho salmon. I happened to guess right and had the time to observe the fish swimming over the concrete apron down at Dewey Pool (the summer time swimming hole in town). I was quite amazed to watch scores of fish scooting half out of the water as they crossed the shallow area caused by the concrete. In one-and-a-half hours I counted 115 fish. The next day I counted 19 fish in 10 minutes, so this run of fish was going strong for several, if not more, days. I also had a report of fish trying to jump into a little culvert on a tributary so small you could jump over it during the recent high water event. The Coho should have no problem going wherever they wanted to this year.

Elk season this year for the rifle hunters has, so far (fourth day of the second season), sounded on the light side in regards to harvest. First season hunters didn't report a good harvest, and elk were hard to find. Of course I was doing some of my own elk scouting while I was deer hunting, and noticed the elk were hanging pretty tight this year. Warm weather probably had a lot to do with this, since the elk could get all the forage they needed in the thick reprod where they were hiding. I saw only one legal bull in the Saddle Mt. unit during the 11 days that I hunted deer, but I know there were more out there. My season ended on the second day of the season, when a herd of about 20 elk walked right underneath me in a patch of big timber. The last animal through was a little raghorn bull and my old .270 made short work of him. The bull did give me a scare when I walked up to him and all that was showing was a spike with an eye guard, but another look revealed 4pts, which I thought I had seen when I first looked him over.

My good friend Jim King, and I, have been swapping back and forth, helping pack in bulls. Jim's bull this year, for me, was from the ditch to the back of a pickup, since Jim and his son Marshall had already done the heavy work the evening before. Now that is what we call an easy pack! So, after shooting my bull, I left Jim a message that I had a bull down, soon I had a call back that he was coming to give me a hand. I had hiked back to my pickup and got the elk bags, pack board and axe, and had my hindquarter ready to go, then Jim showed up

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