

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

Profile of a volunteer

Delores "DeDe" Webb has been volunteering in Vernonia continuously since she started going to Vernonia High School in 1948. She "belonged to about every organization and club there was" and was voted May Queen in 1952, in addition to serving as a class officer. She joined Girls League, Girls Athletic, was in a couple of operettas and class plays and helped with the yearbook, along with working on the school paper, The Timberline. She married Don Webb in 1953 and went right back to volunteering, serving as the secretary/treasurer of the Jamboree committee for a couple of years. She says she was always involved with PTA and was their treasurer for a long time, then served as President. She sold Savings Stamps (when you bought \$18.75 worth of stamps you got a bond). Then, she volunteered at the Vernonia Police Dept. for three years (when Phil Jacobus was chief) and also cleaned the office and the city hall bathroom (yes, as a volunteer).

Sometime before 1996 she joined Vernonia Pride, an organization formed to beautify downtown Vernonia (she was still treasurer when it disbanded in 2011). She helped at St. Mary's Catholic Church after the flood of 1996 and ran the flood clothes closet at the Grange. She served two terms on the Library Board and was treasurer for the Fire Volunteers for 11 years.

When the Scout Cabin was being rebuilt in the 1990s, she took donuts and coffee down to those who were doing the reconstruction (including husband Don) and made their lunches for a year and a half. She said about that project, "It was a miracle it got done. I don't know if you could do it now," because it was all done by volunteers. After it was completed, they needed a treasurer so DeDe stepped up, then started helping clean it. She's still involved with the Scout Cabin.

She joined the city Parks Committee over 16 years ago (before the '96 flood) and just resigned this week. She thought it was time and that "some young blood might have more to offer." She said, "I always enjoyed being involved. We've had a good life here and raised our kids here so I wanted to give back to the community. You need volunteers if you are going to get things done in a small town," she continued.

Thanks, DeDe, for all your years helping this town.

She's a great example of what can still be done by volunteers.

Are you volunteering?

PAYING TAXES

I DON'T MIND



April 2012 - Rawliso

WHY IT'S THE COST OF

CIVILIZATION

Ike Says . . .

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



I am one of the members of the Vernonia Public Works Committee and, as many of you know, there are new water rates that will be implemented this summer, so I thought it would be interesting to you, the readers, to see a portion

of the adventure the PWC took in hashing out these new rates.

This article will focus only on the conservation aspect as it applied to the discussions about water usage, since this is an outdoors column. It wasn't too long in our discussions around the water rates before the topic of water conservation came onto the table. Sure, conserving water is a good thing. Then the proposals of what some of the rate structures should look like made their way onto the table. Conservation didn't look so good in this light. Why was that? False assumptions.

Years ago, Maggie Peyton and I championed the current water curtailment ordinance, as it worked through the city council. The premise of our argument was that during times of drought, it was inappropriate to use water for non-necessary purposes while our aquatic resources suffered. Vernonia's impact upon Rock Creek during these droughts can be up to 7% of the daily flow. The curtailment measure is incremental and adjusts curtailment to the stream flow. Jeff

Burch, who is responsible for operations at the water plant, has stated that the public responds well to the curtailment measures and that they have noticed a large decrease in customer usage during the few times we have been under curtailment. At no time has the City of Vernonia been in danger of running out of water due to low stream conditions, please understand this, since it seems to be a far and wide misconception.

The first assumption some PWC members made, was that Vernonia water usage had an undesirable effect on the local aquatic environment. I replied, "Okay, but we have a water curtailment ordinance [that is applied] when we have an impact upon the river." That didn't totally satisfy some of the members, so I conducted further research.

The Rock Creek and Nehalem River basins are fairly close in the area of watershed, when measured at the mouth of Rock Creek and at the Nehalem water gauge at Clear Creek, but anybody who has spent time on these two systems knows that summertime flows on Rock Creek are considerably higher than on the Nehalem. This has to do with geological differences in the two basins.

Using the Nehalem River data as my source (discounting the higher flows in Rock Creek during the summer), I found the following: The Nehalem River at the Clear Creek gauge has recorded an annual daily mean of 245.36 cubic feet per second of water per day over the last nine years (USGS data). Ok, we know how

Please see page 3