

On discharging firearms near a school

County discusses gun law

by MICHAEL P. JONES

An incident concerning the shooting of a deer in front of 150 children at a fund-raising jog-a-thon at Holcomb Grade School in Oregon City, was brought before the Clackamas County Commissioners by representatives of the Parent Teacher Commission (PTC) last Thursday. The PTC requested that the Commissioners write an ordinance making it a crime to discharge firearms near a school.

Joe Lawrence, president of the PTC, told the commissioners that at 3 p.m. on Oct. 8, a group of hunters opened fire on three deer

with a 30-06 rifle, just 50 yards from a track where children were running.

Lawrence said that it had just been announced over the microphone that there were just 12 minutes left to run when one of the hunters fired a shot and struck a five-point deer. The deer stumbled and he fired again.

In an interview after the hearing, Lawrence said that when the first shots were fired, parents attending the jog-a-thon thought it was a sniper.

"People hit the ground," he said, "thinking that a sniper was shooting into the crowd of children. It was amazing no one was hit

by a ricocheting bullet."

Lawrence said that the hunters were on private property in a wheat field separated from the school by a fence. He said that according to current law, the hunters are not in violation because endangerment had to be proven, and could only be proven if someone is struck.

Lawrence said that the Clackamas County Sheriff's Department was notified of the shooting and quickly responded to the scene, but could not make any arrests and could not cite any of the hunters.

"We defend the right for people to hunt, particularly on private property," said Loraine Bass, a member of the PTC. "But it was not a comfort for us to know that they could do this near a school with children present, and (it) not be against the law."

Bass said the deer that was killed is part of a herd that lived in the area. She said that they were a common sight and that it was tame enough for people to

feed.

Lawrence agreed and said that the deer was so tame that "They (the hunters) could of just walked up and shot the deer in the face. They wouldn't of moved."

"They were jumping on opportunity," said Lawrence, "and not thinking."

Bass said that another aspect of the shooting was that the children had to watch the deer die "right in front of them." She said that it wasn't like they were on a hunting trip, but were at school and the area's pet deer was gunned down.

"The stupidity of killing a deer in front of 150 small kids, is an issue in itself," said Bass.

Dan Wilson, the principal

at the school, said that the shooting occurred in the direction of a housing development.

The commissioners agreed to draft an ordinance prohibiting the use of firearms near public schools, but said before such an ordinance could be drafted, further research needed to be done. One concern expressed by Commissioner Stan Skoko was the proper distance to be included in the ordinance. He said that the 30-06 used to kill the deer in this incident, "can kill up to a distance of four miles."

The office of the Clackamas County Counsel has been instructed to draft the ordinance after researching the concerns expressed by the PTC.

County rejects ECOS plan

Clackamas County Commissioners rejected a plan by the Environmental Committee on Suitability (ECOS) to recognize them as the official Community Planning Organization for the Mt. Hood Corridor.

The denial was made after questions of improper notification were raised during the meeting last week.

Ardis Stevenson, assistant director of the Department of Environmental Services, told the commissioners that ECOS "did all the things that are required by county ordinance." However, Commissioner Ralph Groener, after hearing complaints from John Thompson, executive secretary of the Hoodland Chamber of Commerce, said that the notification efforts made by the group were not adequate.

Thompson told the board that he and others had no idea ECOS was seeking CPO status.

Carolyn Smith, ECOS vice president, told the board that the organization placed notices in post offices, on community bulletin boards, and in Portland newspapers. She questioned the rationale behind not granting the group CPO status.

Groener told her that he personally "didn't read the notices in the post offices," nor did he "look at telephone polls" for notices.

He told her that he would require a direct mailing to all property owners, at county expense, to properly notify them of a public meeting where a community vote will take place.

Groener said, "Frankly, I question whether a CPO could operate out of the Mt. Hood area."

Thompson told the commissioners that at the last ECOS meeting, when new officers were elected, that he and others in the community had no knowledge that the election was taking place. He questioned whether the 17 people present at that meeting represented the majority of the people on the mountain.

"Now that isn't even enough people to play football," Thompson said.

He said that he has an alternative plan to the mailing proposed by Groener. He said that the Chamber is prepared to pay for the necessary advertisements in the newspapers and want a planning committee set up with a representative of the Lion's Club, the Chamber, the Women's Club, and ECOS.

"I'm not talking sides on any damn issue on that mountain. I still want a mailing," Groener said.

The commissioners appointed Stevenson as the facilitator for the public meeting where a vote is to be taken of the community. No date has been set.

Boring open house was 'quite positive'

The open house last week at Boring School was "quite positive," according to Joe Taylor, superintendent.

Nearly 75 percent of the parents attended the annual event.

The evening began with a performance by the Boring band, led by Dave Pharis, music instructor.

The performance by the

ECOS

sues county

The Environmental Committee on Suitability (ECOS) has filed two lawsuits against Clackamas County totaling \$15,000 for damages relating to improper notification for two hearings.

The ECOS suits were filed after property owners within 250 feet of proposed developments were either not notified or did not receive proper notification.

Edward Sullivan, ECOS attorney from Portland, said that the county and its officials were negligent in following Notice of Public Hearing regulations as specified by Clackamas County zoning and development ordinances, statewide planning goals, and Oregon Revised Statutes.

The ECOS suit reads: "As a direct and proximate result of the county's negligence, the claimants incurred substantial costs in attorney and consulting fees, travel expenses and lost wages."

65-member band, comprised of seventh and eighth graders, was well received. Taylor said that the group has had only a month to prepare and that most of the students are new to the band.

After the band's performance students, parents and teachers went through the Naes and upper grade school building, where student displays and holiday decorations were up.

Essays, math problems, spelling tests, and life-sized stuffed dolls were just a few of the things on display.

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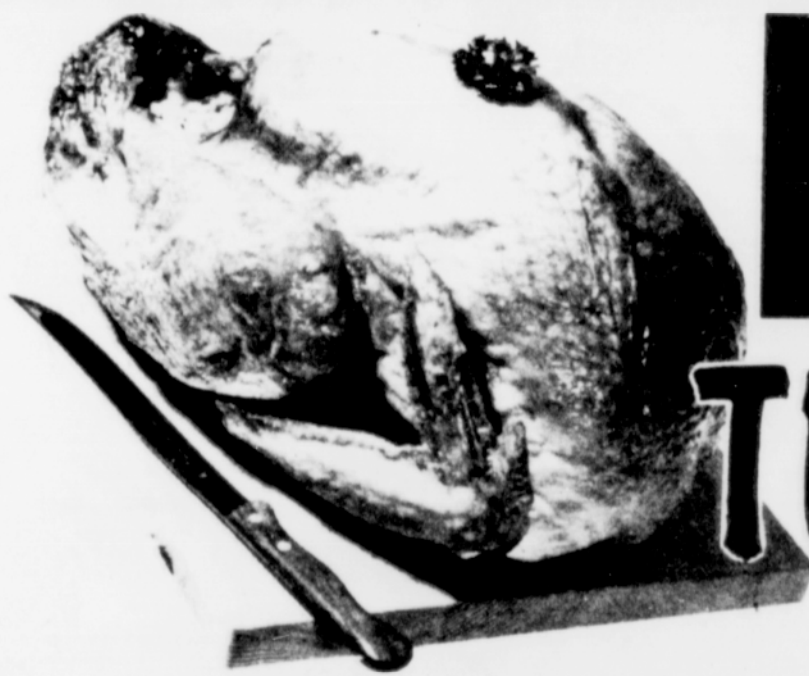
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