



Darwin Holm of Vernonia bested Bret Simmons in this match.

Fun Afield

by Richard O. Catching

Accidents always happen to someone else - unless that someone else is you!

The new year is now a month old so we won't dwell on "New Year's Resolutions." Instead, we will look at trying to keep all of you around for another year.

Early in January a boat with three men aboard capsized in the Columbia River. Two of the men were rescued, one, unfortunately, was lost. This brings to mind the deaths brought about by taking unnecessary chances, neglect, or not having proper safety equipment.

Due to changes in weather, tides and water releases from hydro-electric dams in many fishing and hunting areas of the state, you just cannot take for granted things will be the same each time you return to your favorite haunts. Remember, in nature, there are no absolutes.

Those of you who hunt in tide flat areas such as Nehalem Bay or Tillamook for water fowl, will find the inclusion of a tide table,

available free at many stores, can make your trip much more enjoyable. A friend of mine relates the story of hunting behind a snag at Nehalem Bay when he was stranded for the entire flood tide. Not only was his stay wet, cold and dangerous, but he had quite a time explaining why he got home from a hunting trip at midnight!! You must pay attention.

The addition of a belt snugly fastened around your armpit waders will allow you to regain your balance if you fall in the water. The air trapped inside will help you float, enabling you to get to a safe area. A float coat costs about \$48, but a water skier's safety vest, usually made of one inch foam rubber, worn under or over your clothing accomplishes the same thing at a cost of only \$12 to \$20.

Before wading into a lake or stream, take time to check the size and amount of floating debris, and the course it takes down the current. Get a stout stick and use it as a support while you check the bottom of water



you're going to wade in. Know your footing. You don't need a surprise that could cost you your life or, at the very least, your expensive fishing tackle or hunting gear.

Tell everyone who goes boating with you where all emergency gear is located in the event of any problem. Instruct those who are not familiar in the proper use of such gear.

A little planning, a little time, a little effort, and a little money spent can mean the difference between a pleasant outing and tragedy.

Have fun in the field.

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Wahtonka wins league meet

Vernonia High School was host to a district wrestling meet on January 10, with visiting teams from Wahtonka, Warrenton and Neah-Kah-Nie.

Wahtonka, last year's champ, is favored to win again this year according to Vernonia Coach Ron Svenson. Wahtonka scored 65 points at this meet, with Vernonia in second place with 63 points. Warrenton and Neah-

Kah-Nie scored 44 and 43, respectively.

Vernonia still has a chance to win this year, according to Svenson.

"I'm very proud of our kids," he said, "they have worked very hard to achieve a 13-3 season."

The District Tournament will be on February 20-21 and the State Tournament will be on February 27-28.

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