

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

County should look seriously at trail

Columbia County has the opportunity to obtain, without cost, about 7-1/2 miles of the Columbia Forest mainline from Scappoose to Chapman by trading with Cavenham Forest Products, for county roads the county doesn't maintain within Cavenham's tree farm.

A former county commissioner started negotiations with Cavenham for the potential trail, but the board of commissioners, the parks superintendent and the parks commission have turned their backs on the opportunity. Why?

Chuck Ashcroft, superintendent of county parks, said one reason he wasn't interested is because other timber companies had agreements to move their timber along the mainline. This is not true.

Columbia Forest superintendent Bill Marré said the only agreement that affects the mainline is one allowing Longview Fibre to access a small rock pit near the Spitzenberg junction. There are no agreements to move timber on the mainline.

Another objection, Ashcroft said, is that Cavenham wants the right to use the mainline if the Scappoose-Vernonia Highway is closed because of a thaw. Again, not true.

There had been no discussion of that possibility, Marré said, because Cavenham's traffic pattern has changed. Logs no longer go to Scappoose, they go to Longview.

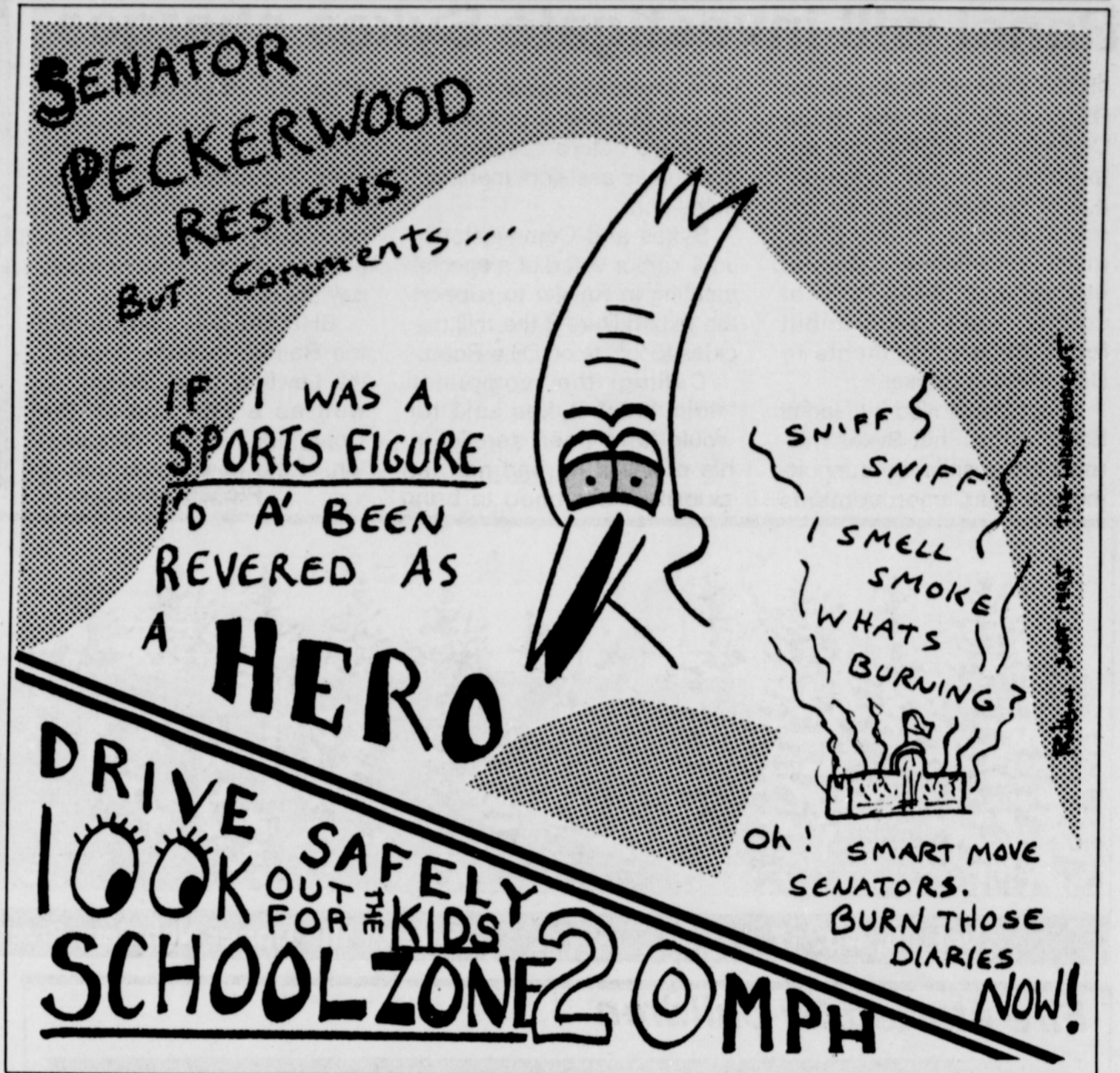
Ashcroft also said the Scappoose area needs parks with baseball fields or other specific uses, not a trail. If hiking, biking and horseback riding are not specific uses, then what is? The county is certainly not obligated to create a neighborhood park for Scappoose; that is the responsibility of the people in the Scappoose Parks & Recreation District.

Some residents along the mainline have made the usual objections to a trail, claiming it would bring litter, vandalism, theft, etc., etc. The county park commission is derelict in its duty if it accepts these complaints without investigating their validity. They can easily check with the Vernonia Police Department and the Columbia County Sheriff's Office to see how many complaints there have been from the Banks-Vernonia Linear Trail.

A valid reason for the county to delay a decision on the trade is the uncertainty of funding for development and maintenance of the trail. However, that is not a valid reason to act as though parks are unimportant future needs.

Vernonia has six city-owned parks: Airport Park is for primitive camping; Anderson Park accommodates RVs, has a horse arena, a playground and picnic areas; Hawkins Park has a covered picnic area, barbecue pits, a playground, horseshoe pits, a summer swimming hole, and enough open space for a logging show or a circus; Ora Bolmeier Park is a neighborhood park with a playground and picnic area; Spencer Park has baseball fields; Vernonia Lake has fishing, bird watching and a trail. Nevertheless, the City of Vernonia has had positive economic benefits from the Banks-Vernonia Linear Trail.

The county should not ignore this opportunity.



Ike Says

By David Michael Jones, member Izaak Walton League, Nehalem Valley Chapter

Well the Jamboree has come and gone and so has our Ike's Fishing Derby. We had one of the largest turnouts, with over eighty boys and girls participating. We distributed close to thirty prizes to the young anglers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our sponsors and the contributors of prizes of fishing gear. As in the past, Noni and Dirk Andersen of *The INDEPENDENT* donated \$100 which was taken to Vernonia Hardware where we were able to buy fishing prizes at their cost. Vernonia Hardware also donated some smaller articles of fishing gear which were distributed to some of the children who didn't receive prizes. I would also like to thank Kaufmann Stream-born fly fishing shop in Tigard, Northwest Outfitters, and Cabela's (the mail order outfitter) for other fishing articles which were used as prizes. Thank you to you all and to all the Ikes and other volunteers who helped with counting the fish, registering the anglers, and policing the area. (A quick note to the lady who was concerned about the fish that were "released" back into the Lake in less than prime condition: As promised, I checked a day later and they were all gone, compliments of the Osprey, Bald Eagle, Possum Patrol or a local raccoon—which I guess is nature's way of cleaning up after us humans.)

I did manage to tie up a few flies and jigs to add to some of the tackle boxes that were prizes. Feathered jigs can be quite effective. My wife caught her first summer steelhead last summer on a feather jig and I caught the largest Coastal Cutthroat I have ever taken a couple of months ago on a small, barbless feathered jig I had tied up. My fishing partner said it was all of twenty inches but we will never know for sure since we slipped it back into the water to let it propagate its species. To fish these jigs the angler just has to slip a line through a cheap, clear plastic bobber and tie onto the jig. The distance between the bobber and the jig can be varied to keep the jig off the bottom. The type of bobber to use is the type

that can have water added to it. Good Luck, Tight Lines, and release Natives...Please!

A reminder for anglers: The upper Nehalem system, including Rock Creek and the tributaries, is closed to fishing, September 1 to October 15, to protect spawning salmon that are in the river system now. Please read the regulations.

With all the rain we've been having this summer I should have had my elk by now but that certainly hasn't been the case. Although I have been on a few herds I haven't had an opportunity for that perfect shot that fills the freezer. One of the hats I wear in our chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America has to do with hunting ethics and part of that is having respect for one's quarry, being good enough with your hunting tool to make the kill as quickly and mercifully as possible, and to not take shots that are out of range. As a hunting archer one thing I have found helpful is field practice with an old broadhead, judo point, or blunt and I often do that on the way back to my rig after the hunt, since one is definitely in the "field" then. It is also important to understand the influence that adrenaline has on our body and mind. This causes the buck or bull fever that we experience and can shut off the reasoning ability of our minds and influence our accuracy.

Another reminder: The Beneke Tract at Jewell Wildlife Meadows is closed to ALL public access during any Saddle Mountain Elk Season and that includes a photographer such as yours truly, the casual hiker, a rifle or bow hunter or anyone else. Please read the regulations.

The national chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America is on a membership drive and your local chapter here in Vernonia could use some help and new members. Feel free to drop in on our meetings.

Izaak Walton League meetings are the third Wednesday of each month, Vernonia Public Library at 7:00 p.m. The public is welcome

Cavenham to open forest roads for hunting season

Cavenham Forest Products will open some of their gates for hunting season, according to Bill Marré, superin-

tendent for Cavenham's Columbia and Mollala tree farms.

If fire danger returns, the

gates will be closed for safety reasons. Otherwise they will remain open for hunters.