

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

OJ in the classroom; what is the purpose?

Many classrooms at Washington Grade School and some at Vernonia High School used their television sets to show the verdict in the O.J. Simpson trial. Initially because of complaints from parents, then out of plain old curiosity, we talked with the principals at both schools to find out why that tawdry display of sex and violence was considered appropriate for the classroom, even down to one third grade class.

Their individual responses were that the trial and verdict were "news" and, therefore, of interest in the classroom. Neither knew how many teachers had shown it, nor did they address the educational basis for watching such a show, or how it was used.

Principal Randy Aultman later called back with information on how many classrooms showed the verdict. He said the seventh-eighth grade classes were studying law and trials and the fifth-sixth grades were studying government, adding that those teachers were prepared to use the lessons of the trial and/or verdict, and spent only a brief time on it. We appreciate his following up on the questions and providing a response.

Other than the information that a shop class was brought in to the library to watch the verdict, and an offer to provide a "rationale," no information has been forthcoming from the high school, though it seems reasonable that both government and history classes could develop good lesson plans around the subject. The question, after all, was what was the educational basis for watching the program?

Curiosity now leads to more questions: What values are utilized in determining whether to watch commercial television at school? Would the Heidi Fleiss trial have been appropriate? It was also "news", though not on the level of a space shuttle launch.

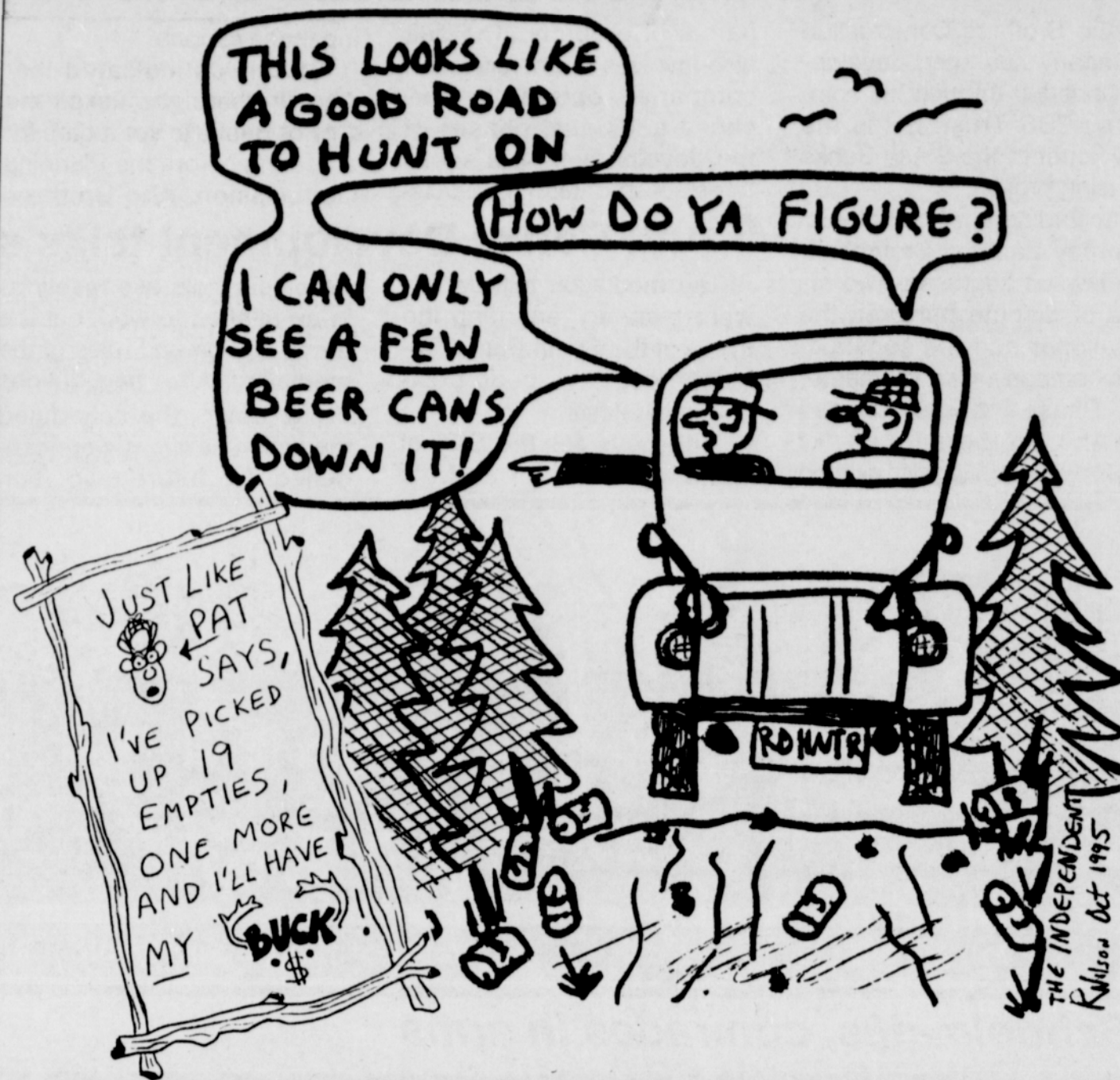
Schools could, and probably should, leave the more lurid examples of daily life for parents to explain to young children. Aside from that, there are better ways to utilize the time available to teachers and students.

Smith voted for the best available candidate

Columbia County's new commissioner, Carole Smith, showed courage in voting for Jackie Taylor to replace Tony Federici in District 1. She is, of course, being criticized for that vote because Taylor is from Clatsop County instead of Columbia County.

Those who feel that a person should be judged solely on the basis of where they live, are missing some very important factors. Taylor has experience in the legislature and, with a special session scheduled for January, she will most likely be able to represent the county more effectively than an inexperienced person could; given the chaos that has besieged the legislature this session, that is even more important.

Beyond that, Taylor has already ably represented part of Columbia County—it just wasn't St. Helens. Parochialism is not a particularly admirable trait.



Ike Says

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

The bugle seemed to cut through the early morning fog—hang suspended for a moment in the billowing, ground-clinging clouds—then broke into the donkey-like braying at the end that identified the caller as an older bull elk. I knew instantly that I was hearing the bull I had been hunting for since the early part of bow season. Right place, right canyon, even sounded the same...only trouble was I was where the herd had been the day before and that bugle was a couple draws away.

By the time I made it over to where the bull had bugled, there was a regular conversation going...with another bull? The more I listened to the other caller (it was bugling way too much), the more I became sure it was another hunter. I have heard hundreds of Roosevelt Elk bugle while hunting and while photographing them around the Pacific Northwest and this bugler was just too "good" and too frequent. When I saw another hunter enter from the other side of the draw below me and not go into the bottom, I became convinced that there was another hunter in the bottom, so I walked out the way I came in and left the herd to them. The next morning the scene was the same except I couldn't see the other hunter and I stayed out of the canyon. You know, I hunted that herd all season off-and-on and never even got to see them. But next year I'll put to use what I learned this year and maybe I'll be the first one in the right place at the right time; although that isn't always a gimme.

Another place, another morning, another herd—the wind was perfect and I had an arrow knocked on my recurve waiting for things to feel "right". Sensing something, I turned my head and looking into the eyes of another bowhunter up behind me on the dirt road. Pointing down the hill I urgently put my finger to my lips and mimed a "ssssh". The hunter turned and crept away and I thought "Far out, he's not going to screw up my hunt." That "sportsman" returned with two others and they all ambled down the road that was covered with elk tracks. With the wind starting to swirl and three more stinkers in the area, I opted to go down into the herd. A spike made me

about forty yards into the salal and barked at me like a cow elk will—I was so flabbergasted that I just stood there. I have had bulls bugle at me, snort, bray, chuckle, and chirp and mew in my hearing, but never alarm bark like a herd cow. He barked a couple more times and the whole hillside erupted in running elk. The spike was broadside and an easy shot but he isn't legal in the Saddle Mountain Unit so I didn't draw my bow.

In fact the whole season went by without an arrow being released at an elk. I did finally get to call in a bull on the last Saturday of the season. Had him within twenty-twenty five feet, but he wouldn't take that last fatal step from behind some alders and, since he was able to get downwind of me faster than I was able to run through the fading evening light, he scented me and stopped. I pulled out my wind direction bottle, sent a small puff of powder into the air and saw that it was toward him. Using my grunt tube and Larry Jones (no relative) blue calf-call diaphragm, I made a small squeal into the tube and pointed it behind me to try to get him to come ahead a little. It was to no avail, the bull turned and headed back through the darkening alders toward his herd. Although it was still legal hunting time, I couldn't see well enough under the alders to see if there were any of those small dead limbs that could deflect an arrow and possibly wound this magnificent animal. It was legal to shoot, but it wasn't right. Anyway, I have some rifle hunting buddies, so I'll let them know where I saw some of the bulls this year and they can have a chance at them.

The salmon are in the upper Nehalem system now and they are spawning. Steve Thomas on Rock Creek called me and told me there were two pairs spawning behind his property within a few feet of where they spawned last year. He also saw a dead fish so you may want to keep your dogs away from the river to prevent them getting salmon poisoning.

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