

# Guess it isn't banned from schools after all

In days of banning tag from the playground because some kids "get too rough" it seems only natural that dodge-ball is so far banned, it is even anathema to mention it. Perhaps that is really only valid in the elementary school though. Or maybe the ones making the rules don't like the attitude of middle schoolers so they say to go ahead and bash each others' brains out with round throwable objects. In any event dodge ball is definitely allowed in middle school, or at least some middle schools. It was probably banned a while ago before the advent of soft foam balls more commonly known as gatorskin, or rhinoskin balls, though something tells me no alligators or rhinoceroses were hurt in the making of these balls. Softer even than Nerf™ balls ever were, it would take a pretty thin head to actually get hurt by one of these balls, but yet they can still be thrown across the room or even used in a pinch for kickball.

If you haven't figured it out by now I subbed for a PE teacher today. I actually wanted to get up a 6AM to see what was available, but I woke up at 5:30 instead, and this was the only job on the systems so it's the one I took. Of course I didn't mind at all since it was only a mile away too. □ I probably mentioned earlier that middle school PE is one of the easier positions to sub for as the other teachers usually run the show with me helping out. Not always, but most of the time. Because there was another teacher out as well, and the field was still wet from yesterday's two downpours, they mixed up thing a little and instead of doing softball and whatever one of the other teachers was supposed to do (health?) we all played dodge-ball instead. We divided them up into six teams and they played three-minute games, rotating between games to keep things fresh. Three grades, six PE periods, all dodge-

ball. There was one period where a girl came up to me and asked if she could take attendance. I had to do a double-take as she clearly had some hormonal problem. There were patches of hair on her face. Growth that would take a guy weeks to grow, so it wasn't just peach fuzz like on many eighth-grade boys. I just took a look at Wikipedia and it looks like it could be either [androgen](#) excess or a rare disorder called [hypertrichosis](#) (werewolf syndrome). I tried very hard not to stare at her, and felt guilty every time I so much as glanced in her direction. Of course I let her take attendance even though I was really just playing at it since I was told I didn't need to take attendance and didn't have a record book to take it in in any event. I just didn't want the kids to feel they could blow off gym sometime and not be missed.

The end of the day was kind of interesting. This school schedules homeroom at the end of the day, so I was on my way up to the 8th grade classroom I was supposed to be in when I found out all the eighth-graders were on their way to the multipurpose room for an assembly. Okay then, I went there instead. They had a presentation from some Japanese-American people about World War II. I'm guessing it was put together by a teacher from one of the middle schools as she was there and she teaches world history. And she is Japanese-American. They had a video of shots taken in the WWII internment camps and then two elderly people who lived through it talked to them. It was interesting, especially as one of them after going through this decided to join a special Japanese-American infantry that was formed some time after Pearl Harbor. He did this even though he like the rest of the Japanese-Americans were treated so shabbily. He had a few reasons for doing this though other Japanese-Americans understandably refused to have any part of the not-so-good 'ol US of A at this point in history. One reason was he had very good childhood growing up under the tutelage of several teachers who left good impressions on him. Alo he wanted to prove that not all Japanese-Americans were on the side of Japan. In reality, I

think very few were on Japan's side in this war making this whole internment camp thing a ridiculous waste of time in addition to being reprehensible. This man became a teacher himself, apparently well-regarded in the circle of Chicago's school system. It would be eye-opening for me if I didn't already think the whole thing was wrong. In fact, when 9/11 happened we didn't do anything even close to this to Middle-Easterners in this country and it looks like we're still here. I still don't trust Islam, and many others don't either, but there have been no more terrorist bombings in this country since so it was clearly the right choice to leave them be.

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## **I Never Thought About the Crate Being Square and the Turnstile Being Round...**

In case you've missed my previous posts about animals and Jack Hanna, let me explain that Jack Hanna is my favorite celebrity and how much I really enjoy following his adventures through zoo life. In case you don't know who Jack is, he is the man who gave Columbus, Ohio a zoo. They did have one before, even though many residents weren't even aware of it, but with Jack's brilliance in zoo management and marketing, the [Columbus Zoo](#) has become one of the most renowned zoos in the world today. These days, Jack spends his time filming tv shows of his own, and also bringing animals around the country for appearances in theaters and on other tv shows, such as David Letterman, Maury Povich, and Good Morning America in order to educate people about respecting animals. Whenever animals are involved, situations can easily become unpredictable. Throw Jack into the mix, and these situations

now become hilariously entertaining *and* unpredictable. Things seem to happen to Jack, and if you'd like an example of what I mean, check out the following article detailing an animal mishap Jack encountered at the airport last September:

**COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)** – Animal expert Jack Hanna and an 11-month-old flamingo became trapped while trying to squeeze through an airport security turnstile. It took firefighters to finally get the flamingo out. Animal expert Jack Hanna had a close encounter with a flamingo Sunday. Hanna, the director emeritus of the Columbus Zoo and a frequent guest on nationally televised talk shows, was returning from a zoo fundraiser with a mongoose, a small leopard and the flamingo. Three other people were with them. The entourage arrived at the Ohio State University Airport just after midnight Sunday to find the terminal closed. The only way to leave the tarmac was through a 10-foot-tall metal turnstile with several horizontal bars – not the easiest exit to squeeze through when you're traveling with boxed-up animals, Hanna said. **"I never thought about the crate being square and the turnstile being round,"** he said. Hanna, 60, pushed the flamingo's 2-foot-by-3-foot compartment into the turnstile, then continued pushing while straddling the crate. "I was stuck like a worm. My eyes were as big as grapefruits," he said. "I can't describe the feeling in my stomach. I can't move up or down. The bars are on your face." Hanna said he eventually squirmed free, leaving the flamingo still wedged inside and everyone else trapped on the tarmac. He then walked to a nearby fire station for help. It took three firefighters to hoist the flamingo's crate up and out of the turnstile, he said. Columbus fire department logs show the firefighters arrived at the airport at 12:30 a.m. for a "flamingo rescue," spokeswoman Kelly McGuire said. Hanna joked that the next time he flies through the airport, the biggest animal he'll bring is a gerbil.

If you were entertained by the preceding article, I highly

recommend Jack's book [Monkeys on the Interstate](#) which details his life before and during his days at the Columbus Zoo – it's a VERY entertaining and funny read, especially for animal lovers and zoo enthusiasts. I really hope I can schedule some time to catch Jack at one of his appearances soon, but until then, I will keep checking for him on Letterman and will probably check out the book for a fourth time!

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## **In the computer store...**

I was in my favorite computer store today and had a weird thing happen. I'm a very good customer at this place, and I've been going to it since it opened. I tend to buy most of my computer stuff from that store. They treat me very well and have always given me a good deal. I went in today to turn in a video card that I borrowed to check out a system problem I was having. I walked in on a complaint session. It seems that a person did not get their computer in time. Now this is a small shop that does not keep a large inventory in stock. They order all the parts and custom build each machine. All this and a good price too. A problem they do have is being help up by delivery back orders. For a custom built machine, this could set the time you get the machine back a few days. Apparently that is exactly what happened.

I've had that happen once or twice myself. I never gave it another thought. If I had needed the computer or part by a specific day, I would have been able have the shop overnight the parts. I never thought it necessary. I never complained about the time of delivery. It is part of doing business in a small town locally owned shop.

Now back to our complainer. I needed to talk to the owner of

the shop to check on an order I wanted to make. I stopped in during the time my daughter had voice lessons. Apparently the complaint session had been going on for a while. After 20 minutes, I had to leave and pick up my daughter. I planned on stopping back after that. 5 minutes later they were still there. I did some other shopping, 30 minutes later they were still there. I stopped for dinner. 45 minutes later, the shop was now empty of customers. I went in and carried out my business. The owner thanked me for being such a good customer. Normally he charges 1/2 down on orders. Today I didn't have to put anything down. It was his way of thanking me for being the person I normally am. Strange that common courtesy is so uncommon these days. We deal with people that have to have it their way, and no other way will do. The "I want it now" mentality is everywhere. Too bad.

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## Life as a sub in Florida

If C ever wants to sub, he'd better not do it in Florida... This sub was unceremoniously let go after doing a magic trick for the students. His sub supervisor (I guess they do thing differently over there- no sub supervisor here) called him in and accused him, of all things, *wizardry*. Seriously. Read the story at the link below:

[Teacher Fired for Magic Trick, County Calls It "Wizardry"](#)

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# Something's a-Foote

Okay, I really want to know who someone is. Really. When I work in one of the two middle schools in this one school district, I am constantly mistakenly called Mr. Foote. It's usually the students, but about a month ago a teacher called me by that name too. Yes, today I was mistaken for him **again**. No, that isn't my name even if I do supposedly look like him, or he like me, or- oh, you know what I mean. ☐ Will it really be like looking in a mirror when I finally corner him? You know, I will really be depressed if this guy turns out to be a retired, elderly gentleman as many of the guy subs are. Well, women too, but obviously the "gentleman" part doesn't apply to them. ☐

Today I re-subbed for a class. That is, I had subbed for this teacher before (apparently our mystery sub did as well, sometime since my last time). It was just simple 7th grade science with a literacy class thrown in. Oh, a tutorial class with **seven students**. I hope this means most students are in academic courses since tutorial is more of a study hall- no learning there. For literacy they just worked on a book ([S.E. Hinton's The Outsiders](#)) and group packet, while in science- drum roll please- a video. And a comic strip project where they are making a comic strip about the [states of matter](#). The video was about just that, the four states- solid, liquid, gas, plasma. There was a video quiz at the end that for some reason the kids thought was hilarious because it was fill-in-the-blank, but instead of saying "blank" when they read the question ("The *blank* state has both definite shape and definite volume") it played a long tone ("The **bee-e-e-e-e-e-ep** state has both definite shape and definite volume"). I gather they were imagining foul language being bleeped out.

By the way, they may say "there ain't no free lunch" but there was for me today. The PTO supplied sandwiches and sandwich sides for us because of teacher appreciation week. On Friday

they will have a baked potato bar. Yum. I will be there for 6th grade. Now I just have to worry about tomorrow.

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## One disk at a time.

I'm slowly going through a number of DVDs and CDs that I have recorded/created/burned over the years. There are stacks of them. Most not marked. I have been going through disk by disk trying to figure out what is on each. Right now I'm playing a recording that didn't turn out so well. Seems like I had a lot of dropped frames in it. One more for the junk heap.

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## Little Morat At The Office In Smallville

Finally after the casting issues have hopefully been taken care of, the rehearsal process for *Little Women* can finally get started. Apparently, one cast member (that I am aware of) decided that she would rather not be in the cast. Better to get that taken care of sooner than later. Hopefully, there will be no further predicaments to present themselves. Read through will be Thursday night from 7.30-10PM. Thank heaven for DVR so I can watch new episodes of Smallville and The Office at a later time. By the way, the second season episode "Booze Cruise" was absolutely tremendous. I just appreciate how much character development can be placed in one-half hour show involving most if not all of the ensemble.



Back to theatre (sorry to go off on a tangent). Today at work I had no less than 10 customers ask me when my next show is. **My next show?!** I told them all to keep June 20-29 open. Then I get the customary person who has seen me before but just can't place me. Well, I worked at a major retail chain for like 6 years. No... that's not it. Well, I have been doing a bit of theatre... **That's IT!!!!** Then, it is time for the character from Liswathistan to return. BTW, my boss keeps telling me to say that my former place of employment stinks instead of going into my 2 minute speech about why I am not there anymore. Always nice to have fans.

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## The Island of Dr. Moreau

No, I'm not talking about the movie [The Island of Dr. Moreau](#)... Many people thought it was awful, but I actually liked that movie, last time I saw it anyway over a decade ago. Scared the heck out of me though; I saw it in college and had to walk home from my friends' dorm all by myself late at night afterwards... I was so freaked out that I ran all the way home, prompting some other college-aged jerks to jeer at me, "Run Forrest, Run!" See what they did there? That's a reference to the great movie, [Forrest Gump](#). Clever kids, weren't they? I will have to try that Dr. Moreau movie again; even though I bet nowadays the special effects would appear outdated and it would just be dumb, but I'm not about to try it any time soon with all the nightmares I've been having...

Anyway, I was just looking for a way to tie in my latest activities, that's why I called the post The Island of Dr. Moreau. I went to the Dr. today, and watched the movie called [The Island](#) last night. The Dr. visit was routine... but I do have to mention how I just sat there waiting for the Dr.

to come in with nothing to do but stare at the walls because after reading the CNN article called “Don’t Let a Hospital Kill You”, I was too afraid to touch any magazines in the Dr.’s office. See one of my previous posts of that title if you would like to experience the same paranoia. Dr. told me we’re going to induce me a week before my due date because I have large babies... thank goodness for that, except that I’m ready NOW – do we really have to wait until July?!?

Now for the movie... The Island is a sci-fi movie about a factory that manufactures humans. It is set in the future – but not too far in the future, 2015 or something like that – there are monorails, flying motorcycles, and human clones aplenty. It’s funny how in one scene, they thought they were being clever by showing gas prices to be over \$4 / gallon, but I guess our 2008 society is a bit ahead of them, not in a good way either ☐

So anyway, in The Island, the general public is under the impression that their “insurance policies” – as the clones are known – are simply organisms being grown for spare parts and will remain in a vegetative state. The “insurance policies” however, are living, breathing, thinking, feeling humans who are housed in a self-contained facility within the factory. They live from day to day with the hope of winning “the lottery”, which will send them to “the island” – supposedly a place of bliss where they will live happily ever after. [Ewan McGregor](#)’s character accidentally finds out however, that winning the lottery is fatal, and “the island” is really what happens when a customer needs their insurance policy – ie, the clone is killed for its spare parts. I’m not normally a fan of sci-fi, but this movie has a very interesting premise that doesn’t go too over the top, and I enjoyed it. Without giving too much away, I would trade a scene in the middle (too cheesy!) for 2 at the end – scenes I thought should be added with things I’d like to see in the movie... if you see or have seen the movie, I’ll tell you what I mean. But I did

like it, and like I said, I am not normally a fan of sci-fi, so I would recommend this one to sci-fi fans or action movie enthusiasts.

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## The Anti-Alice Wedding

While we're on the subject of politics, I was reading about Jenna Bush's upcoming nuptial's today, and I discovered an interesting article about the parallels of opposites between Bush's daughter and former President Roosevelt's daughter Alice, both of whom will be married while their fathers were Presidents of the United States; Jenna's wedding taking place over a century after Alice's.

From CNN.com:

*Doug Wead, a former aide to President George H.W. Bush and author of a book on presidents' kin, calls Jenna's ceremony "the anti-Alice Roosevelt wedding." Former President Theodore Roosevelt's daughter was married in 1906.*

*"That wedding took place during a time of prosperity and peace; this one at a time of economic struggle and war," Wead said. "The Roosevelt family was outgoing, flamboyant; this is a private family. That was one of the most popular presidencies in American history. Even John Adams didn't go on Mount Rushmore, but Teddy Roosevelt went on Mount Rushmore. This is an unpopular presidency. Alice had no bridesmaids. Jenna has 14."*

And one more little tidbit about Presidential offspring: Jenna is the 22nd child of a United States President to marry while their fathers were in office. Not that money is usually a problem for a president, but I wonder how many of those were daughters whose daddy's were expected to foot the wedding

bills?

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## Political Mishap

While I am a current events junkie, I am most reluctant to follow politics for some reason. Give me true-crime stories, entertainment news, or natural disaster tales any day – I can't get enough. But when it comes to politics, I have trouble even forcing myself to follow the news, even though they talk about it on one of my favorite channels (CNN) nonstop lately. You'd think it'd be enough motivation for me to follow politics just to be "in the loop", but it's a natural instinct of mine to tune out political news. How interesting then, that my husband is really ONLY interested in current events involving politics... I guess you could say we compliment each other that way. So while he had on CNN following some of the last of the primaries tonight, I heard an interesting story developing... it seems poor Hillary Clinton, who lost horribly in North Carolina today, couldn't even get a break today at her wrap-up party after the primary... They had 2 confetti machines ready to shoot confetti over the crowd, and they malfunctioned, only to shoot the confetti a pathetic 4 feet from the machine... just not Hillary's night, I guess...