

Cell phones may have classroom potential

MARY WOOD

Virtually everyone has a cell phone, and their presence in classrooms is obvious. Looking around in any classroom throughout the day, one can see many students using their phones to text their friends.

This is probably why most teachers don't allow cell phone use in class; it distracts from lesson material. But with all the new technology developing for smart phones, the school district is raising a question: is there room for phones in class?

"We need to make better use of available technology," Roger Woehl, superintendent, said.

Last year, the website youtube.com was made available at school, and this

year facebook.com followed. Cell phones seem to be the next step. Woehl believes phones should be made visible in class, and agreements should be made within each class about their use.

Glenn Krake, English teacher, also believes phone use is important, and something inevitable in today's world.

"Students use them every day, and are going to use them every day in the real world," Krake said. "I already use them in my class. To pretend they are irrelevant is silly."

The district is encouraging this issue to be addressed. Although phones can be used to fool around in class, they can also make a positive contribution to the classroom

as an organizational tool.

Gary Eppelsheimer, photography teacher, recalled an instance two years ago when he was giving an assignment and saw a student on their phone while he was talking. When he went to take it away, the student was flustered; they had been entering the due date for the assignment onto their phone.

Although a regular school planner works fine for many students, others prefer to follow that student's lead and use their phones, and these varying preferences can be taken into account.

In addition to help with organization, new technology on smart phones creates opportunities for in-school use on research projects.

"Some students have the internet right in their pocket," Eppelsheimer said.

Of course the extent to which major research can be done on a cell phone is limited, but it can act as a valuable resource. There are numerous applications on phones that provide helpful tools at the touch of a button.

"(My phone) has instant access to all kinds of things for me," Woehl said.

The main issue that goes along with cell phone use in school is how to ensure that phones are being used for the right reasons. Woehl suggests that in each class, students and teachers discuss the situation and set up rules together about how phones should be used.

"When you make agreements with people, they tend to keep them," Woehl said.

Krake also believes the benefits of cell phones

outweigh the struggles that go along with them, like students texting when they shouldn't be.

"How is it any different than passing notes?" Krake said. "Students will find ways to be dishonest. To throw out the baby with the bath water is irresponsible on our part as educators."

Though no policy has been made allowing phone use in class, the district has provided something to think about. Although cell phones can be distracting, they can also provide new tools for academics. With technology ever-expanding, it seems important to find a way to provide some balance with phones and school, something students can play a huge role in.

"My challenge to students is to help teachers think about this," Woehl said. "You can help."

FROM THE VAULT

Located in the basement, through a series of storage rooms and locked doors lies the Vault. The Vault holds school records going back decades, including Amplifiers from as far back as 1921. Our editors have sorted through the papers to reprint past articles, bringing you an interesting view of life from students of another generation.

"From the Vault" articles will appear in the corresponding section in which they were originally printed. Check each issue of the Amplifier to find more treasures from the Vault.



Problem-plagued lounge serves purpose

MARC WHITTAKER

DECEMBER 22, 1982

The condition of the place changes periodically. One day the smoking lounge can be a litter-strewn mess, the next day it can be spotless, save the cigarette butts that invariably cover the ground.

The problems are numerous. Some are the result of

the non-student visitors that often inhabit the area. Others involve the issue of class time use of the lounge. Administrative Vice Principal Dan Rollins explains, "Some kids will cut class to go out to the lounge."

The problems don't stop there, however. Recently, a fire was started in the wooden grandstand. Other instances

of vandalism accompany the class-cutting issue and the non-student user dilemma at the top of the lounge problems list.

One of the most serious problems with the lounge is the association between it and the drug traffic at West Linn.

Counselor Bob Sweet believes for such reasons the lounge should be relocated in an area more easily monitored by the administration. Rollins, on the other hand, associates the parking lot with most of the drug problems and expresses no wish to relocate the smoking lounge.

According to Rollins the present list of problems hasn't been so long since the lounge was started 13 years ago. He attributes the increase of difficulties with the area and its occupants to the lack of a "lounge committee."

The "lounge committee" was originally formed at the same time as the lounge to prevent the type of problems which now plague the area. The committee consisted of a few student members who reported problems with the lounge or violations of the "lounge constitution," the governing document of the lounge.



Photo by Dan Avila

Chris Dailey and Bubba Ek relax in smoking lounge. Although controversial, the lounge has alleviated many problems of 13 years ago.

Continued on Page 6

Sophomores excel at Thespian Improv Festival

JULIA VANWINKLE

Sophomores Emily Axelrod, second place in State, and Jennifer Warmack, State Finalist, prevailed at this year's Thespian Improv Festival which was held Oct. 3 at Roosevelt High School in Portland. Ashley Welp, sophomore, Rachel Metzler, junior, and Lucy Walker, senior, advanced, performing with their groups in front of participants.

"Our students represented West Linn well, not only in competition, but by their character," Jessica Murray, Theatre Arts Director, said.

Forty actors competed against students from 31

different schools from around the state. Participants were divided into randomly chosen groups of six or seven, comprised of students from different schools.

"It was fun and challenging," Welp said. "I met so many creative people who could work with prompts."

The groups were provided a picture and a word for inspiration. They then had an hour to craft a creative scene. Once the hour was up, they performed their scene for a panel of two judges in two rounds. The judges included professional actors and

improv specialists.

They were judged on idea and plot, acting, staging and the overall feeling of the scene. The eight best scenes were performed for everyone and a panel of three judges. The judges then scored the scenes and added up the scores. While the scores were being added up, the host school provided entertainment. Afterward, the winner was announced.

Ailish Duff, sophomore, Hannah Bradford, senior and Caitlyn Olson, Class of 2009, placed last year in the festival. Bradford went to the festival for the first time last year. She was pleased with her effort and was happy with the way



Photo by Elise Brown

Jennifer Warmack, sophomore, was named as a finalist and Emily Axelrod, sophomore, won second place in the state at the Thespian Improv Festival. According to Jessica Murray, Theatre Arts Director, the 40 WLHS actors not only represented the school well in the competition but also in the character they demonstrated.

that it went. She went in wanting to go with the flow and be a friendly person.

"I loved being able to interact with so many different people whose passion was theater," Bradford, said.