from the editor....

Welcome to another edition of Vernonia's Voice.

Our community was witness to another tragedy this last month. We experienced the loss of another of our young people, and we grieve with all those involved in this tragic situation. In a small community like ours, it's amazing how an event like this affects so many of us. Almost everyone has some connection with the families involved. News travels fast in our small town, especially bad news, and by early Saturday morning almost everyone knew something terrible had happened here. Our hearts go out to the family of Kolton Graham for their loss.

As a reporter of community events, it is a difficult situation to find myself in- how to report the information of something newsworthy that has happened, yet respect the feelings and grief of the families involved, families who are our neighbors and acquaintances. It's hard to know what to say in a situation like this, so I can only say that our thoughts are with you, that we all care, and we are sorry for your loss.

As I was preparing the content for this issue I noticed that a general theme was evolving- and that theme was logging. Not having grown up around Vernonia, the logging industry is a somewhat new subject for me, one that I have been developing a curiosity about since moving here five years ago. Which is what I really like about my job as editor, writer, publisher, and dog wrangler at Vernonia's Voice- when I get interested in something, it usually means I'm going to learn at least a little bit about the subject.

Like most stories I write, a topic usually starts with a question like-"...hmm... wonder what that's all about?" and ends with, "...wish I had more time to spend on that subject." Logging is a complicated, multi-faceted topic, and this month I have looked at it from a number of different anglesfrom spending a day out in the woods with Paulson Logging, to visiting with Dean Schaumburg as he recovers from severe injuries he received in a logging accident last summer. I sat down and talked with County Commissioner Tony Hyde about the loss of timber revenues, and the failure of Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools program. I watched local tree trimmer Ron Dodge fall a tree, and I looked at a lot of photos from last year's Logging Show in Vernonia. It is a fascinating subject, one I still have a lot to learn about. One I intend to spend more time on.

I had a great visit to the Columbia County Fair this Year. I had a chance to watch some local 4-H kids with their livestock, saw some great crafts and baked goods at the Exhibit Hall, watched the ATV Rodeo, checked out the Master Gardeners Garden and the Grange Museum, and even got to meet some pirates! I ate curly fries and drank lemonade, and got to pet a goat. Couldn't ask for much more than that from our local County Fair.

Hope everyone has a fun and safe Jamboree!

Scott Laird Publisher and Editor

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