

The Boys and Girls of Summer



It's Not Easy Being Green



Baseball's not the easiest game to learn, especially when you're just starting out. These rookies are working hard to stay focused.

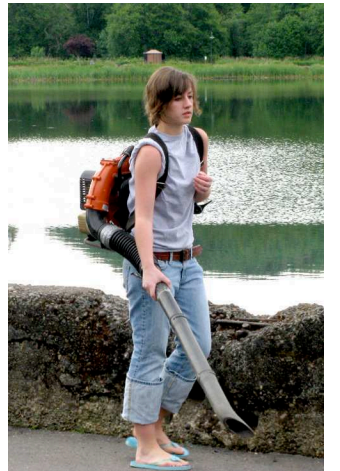


Take Me Out To the Ballpark

Vernonia Baseball recognized their coaches and players with their annual Appreciation Ceremony and fundraiser in June. Each player is honored with a trip around the bases and the money raised will be used to take the player to a Portland Beavers game later this summer.

Big Hits

Vernonia's Senior, Junior, Midget and Junior Midget Baseball Teams were all having good seasons---three of the clubs were undefeated at the end of June and looked to be headed for the state playoffs



Students Help

Clean Up Vernonia Lake

At a recent City Parks Committee Meeting, the public was asked what they would like to see our parks look like. Three VHS students in attendance, Bonnie Birkmeyer, Katie Wilson and Genesis Castro spoke up, and volunteered to organize a Parks clean-up day. Well, the girls came through and in mid June a group of ten students spent the morning, scrubbing, painting, weed wacking and sprucing up around Vernonia Lake. The students were then treated to a BBQ lunch provided by Larry Smethen and Sentry Market. The hope is to continue with more parks clean up projects with students again next year.



Vernonia School District Makes Cuts

By Scott Laird

The long expected and highly dreaded cuts to the Vernonia School District Budget for next year have become a reality. With a shortage in state funding and reductions to school districts all over the state, the Vernonia School Board was forced to make cuts in staff, staff support, student services and supplies. The cuts didn't appear to be quite as drastic as originally expected and creative personnel and budget moves helped reduce the number of staff cuts and program cuts.

Superintendent Ken Cox, in an interview with *Vernonia's Voice* spoke about the difficulty of putting together this budget, and the tough choices he and the school board had to make. It's been a real challenge," said Cox. "We notified some of these people around Christmas. Some of these changes we weren't sure how they were going to work out until just a few weeks ago."

In the Budget Message for 2009-2010 Fiscal Year, Superintendent Cox notes that losses in student population as a direct result of the flood, and a deteriorating economy, have led to a projected 11% decrease in revenue.

Significant cuts that were made to the budget include:

At Washington Grade School- The music teacher position was eliminated and Kindergarten will be half day mornings and

afternoons, Monday through Thursday and alternate Fridays.

At Vernonia Middle School- The Principal and Councilor positions have been eliminated.

At Vernonia High School- The Athletic Director was cut from .6 to .4 time, with no assistant principal duties and Golf and Equestrian sports reduced to club status.

Other reductions include: the current Special Education director changed from .5 to .25 time and the Special Education secretary position was eliminated. A number of other personnel have been reassigned. 1.6 teachers positions at Washington Grade School who retired will not be replaced. Calendar days for all staff have been reduced by at least ten days. The number of student contact days will be 170.

"We've had to be innovative," said Superintendent Cox.

Cox noted in the Budget Message that the decisions about where to make cuts were not made just by district staff but included input from a Budget Assistance Team that included principals, teachers, a business manager, a budget committee member and community members, before being sent to staff for final preparation.

In the Budget Message Cox states that this budget "...does not meet the current needs of the district but it does fulfill our fiscal responsibility to the patrons of the Vernonia School District."

VHS Spring Sports Wrap-Up

By Gordon Jarman

Equestrian Team- Four girls made the all league team and the team was represented at state by the same four girls. The Vernonia High School drill team participated in the state meet this year which was held in Southern Oregon. The all league and state participants were Mackenzie Tarkalson, Jamie Benes Ashley Paleck and Briana Carr, who was also the team MVP award winner for this year. There were eight participants on the team with the previous mentioned ladies leading the way in competition and positive contributions.

At the spring sports dessert, the following athletes earned the top honors. In track and field Blake Moellar was selected as the most valuable athlete for the year while Justin Caputo was selected as the best all around athlete and Timothy Pillow was selected as the most inspirational athlete. Katy Stevens earned the honors of most improved athlete.

On the Equestrian team Brianna Carr earned the most valuable award while Jamie Benes was selected as the most inspirational athlete and Brett Benes was selected as the most improved equestrian athlete.

In baseball Chris Dass was selected as the most improved while Caleb Rice was selected as the most inspirational and Alex Lende was selected as the most valuable student athlete.

In Golf Jacob Alf was selected as the most improved and Paul Whiteman was selected as the most valuable golfer.

In Softball Kelsey Brown was named the most improved player and Chelsea Patton was named the most inspirational player while Souvanny Miller earned the most valuable award.

That winds up the spring sports season as well as the year for the loggers for 2008-2009. There are several teams and coaches working hard to help prepare the athletes for the upcoming year. Regular fall practices start August 24th. Both boys and girls basketball teams are working hard on summer league programs while football has started weightlifting as well as spring/summer workouts and the volleyball team is set to start their summer program in July. Although it may seem like we are just finishing the year, and we are, it is time to think about next years seniors and teams and the legacy they want to leave VHS. It is never too early to start preparing for next years competition. There is a direct correlation to the amount of time and work you put into preparing yourself for competition in the off season and the amount of success you will achieve next season.

One final note as we wrap up the VHS sports year: Recently Byron Schorzman and Jason Weller from VHS were selected to play in the 3A Oregon All Star basketball series. They will be playing with and against the best 3A basketball seniors in the state. This is a great honor. I can't remember the last time when a Vernonia player was selected to play in this game let alone two. If you see them around town, please congratulate them.

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