

from the editor...

As I write this, my hometown Philadelphia Phillies are getting ready to start play in the World Series and defend their title against the New York Yankees. As you read this, the World Series may already be over, and the fate of the Phils may have already been decided. But I have to say this anyway-- Go Phillies!!

And, since this edition of *Vernonia's Voice* was scheduled to be printed on Tuesday, November 3, as you read this, the fate of the Vernonia School Bond Election will already have been decided.

As most of you know, I have been in full support of passing the school bond, for a number of reasons. For one, as a business owner in this community, it makes sense. But more importantly, as someone who cares about living in a vibrant and interesting place, I have learned over the last few years, and especially this past month, just how important our schools really are.

When I moved here almost seven years ago, I didn't pay much attention to the schools-- I didn't have any kids and I didn't really see how schools impacted me, personally. But since starting a newspaper here in town, I've had a chance to get more engaged in the day-to-day activities of our schools. I've developed relationships with teachers and administrators and coaches, gotten to know students and watched them participate in activities, had a chance to observe some of the programs like art and band, and had to follow and understand the politics and budget process that is part of the yearly school cycle. I've had a chance to see the important role our schools, and the people who work there and run them, play, not just in our children's lives, but in the lives of our community as a whole.

During October, I was around the schools a lot, covering Homecoming Week activities and I saw firsthand just how vital and important-- and fun-- our schools are-- for our students, for their parents and other adults, and for the teachers. It was fun to watch the kids get a little crazy and show their spirit during Air Jams; to watch the Lady Loggers, both JV and Varsity, win exciting volleyball matches during Pack the Gym Night; see Homecoming Queen Souvanny Miller wear her crown all week and see escort Levi Timmerman carry Princess Katy Stevens across that huge puddle as the court was introduced at half time of the football game; and watch the Loggers show so much heart in coming back to tie that Homecoming football game, only to lose in double overtime. Those are memories those kids will have for the rest of their lives-- and that adults in the community share with each other as well.

I also had a chance to meet and interview our six foreign exchange students, young adults who will be making Vernonia their home for the next year. These students come here each year from various countries and continents to live with us, sharing their lives and experiences and sharing in ours as well. What a great opportunity for all of us, and especially our students, to experience life in another culture and to make friends they could never have met any other way.

I have very fond memories of my high school years, of things my friends and I did. But I also don't remember much about the adults in my community. I only knew the parents of a few of my closest friends, and only then in passing. I don't ever remember thinking about my teachers as real people-- people with lives outside of school, people with families, with other interests.

Small rural communities are unique that way. Because our schools fill such a vital role as the cornerstone of so much that happens here, our students have an opportunity to be more engaged in the community. We have students engaged in our community and student leadership programs, students selling yearbook ads to local businesses, students and adults volunteering in our parks and watching sporting events together-- students getting

to know adults as real people. It was interesting for me, and eye-opening, to watch during homecoming as students and teachers interacted together.

We have many wonderful people working in and around our schools, people who are engaged in the lives of our students and engaged in our community-- people like Kathi Fetch, Teri Willard, James Brookins and Barb Carr-- wonderful people who really help make this community a special place.

Hopefully, Vernonia will find a way to build new schools, so our students can continue to have these meaningful experiences and create these wonderful memories right here in their hometown. I just can't imagine a Vernonia without Homecoming, art classes, exchange students and teachers.

*** **

I have recently had the chance to reconnect with some old friends through Facebook-- friends I haven't seen or talked to in almost thirty years. It's been fun to find out what they are up to and see photos of their families and activities. OK, nothing too earth-shattering there. What I do find interesting is, as much as we think we've changed, most of us are still very much the same. Thirty years later, the girl who was flirty in high school is still flirty. The guy who was confident and pushy is still a salesman. The guy who was really into music is still into music. The jocks are still jocks and the artsy types are still artsy-- for the most part. And the guy who used to root for the Phillies is still rooting for the Phillies.

Another thing about Facebook-- it's a great and safe place to have an ongoing debate. I recently joined in on a discussion about the Vernonia School Bond, and had a chance to go back and forth with some folks with an opposite point of view. It was great because I got to hear some interesting arguments against passing the school bond, and had a chance to tell my side-- all over the course of a week. I enjoyed being able to have that ongoing dialogue-- even if none of us convinced anyone to change their mind.

One last thing about Facebook: One of the things I really enjoy about publishing *Vernonia's Voice* is taking photographs of community events. The biggest problem I have each month is narrowing down the choices and deciding which ones to publish. I usually have six or eight or eighteen photos I really like, and space for only two or three. Well, I've found a solution. Last month, I started a *Vernonia's Voice* Facebook page where I can publish all the best photos I've taken from community events. A number of you have already found it and seem to be enjoying it. Hopefully, I will be able to update it soon after interesting Vernonia happenings like the Halloween Parade and Christmas Lighted Truck Parade, so you can see what you've been up to!

Scott Laird
Editor and Publisher

VERNONIA'S
voice
reflecting the spirit of our community

Publisher and Managing Editor
Scott Laird
503-367-0098
scott@vernoniasvoice.com

Contributors

April Bamburg
Nancy Burch
Kim Camarda
Mackenzie Carr
Brandy Fosdick
Ben Fousek
Jill Hult
Heather Lewis
PJ O'Leary
Erika Paleck
DeAnna Pearl
Randy Sanders
Sonia Spackman
Burt Tschache

News Editor
Scott Laird

Copy Editor
Dennis Nicks

Photography
Scott Laird
Maggie Peyton
April Bamburg

Want to advertise?
Contact: ads@vernoniasvoice.com
Have an article?
Contact: news@vernoniasvoice.com
PO Box 55
Vernonia, OR 97064
503-367-0098

www.VernoniasVoice.com

RESIDENTIAL RENTAL GROUP LLC

PROPERTIES AVAILABLE IN THE VERNONIA AREA



2 bed, 1 bath approx. 1335 sq. ft.
\$850 rent, \$800 deposit
191 B Street, Vernonia

Cozy cottage with beautiful updates throughout. Covered front porch. Custom paint, crown molding, laminate flooring. Spacious kitchen and dining nook. Lots of cabinet space, all appliances. Washer/Dryer hookup. Partially fenced back yard. Unfinished attic space for storage. Carport.

3 bed, 1 bath approx. 1100 sq.ft.
\$995 rent, \$800 deposit
378 Main Street, Banks
Single level home on large lot. Great floor plan. Slider leading to fenced back yard. New carpet, laminate floors and paint throughout. Washer/Dryer hookup. Single car garage. Banks Elementary, Middle and High Schools.



In Vernonia, more information available at 859 Bridge St. or contact:
Jeana Cole (503) 844-7480
www.ResidentialRentalGroup.com
855 NE 25th Ave, Hillsboro, OR 97124
jeana.cole@ResidentialRentalGroup.com

RESIDENTIAL
RENTAL
GROUP LLC