

VERNONIA'S voice

reflecting the spirit of our community

volume6 issue5

Logger Pride! VHS Takes 4th Place at Pendleton

The Vernonia High School Loggers won their final two games at the 2A Boys Basketball State Championship in Pendleton on March 1-3, 2012, bringing home the fourth place trophy.

After a heartbreaking defeat to Regis by a score of 38-36 in the State Quarterfinals, the Logger boys bounced back to defeat Central Linn 34-32 and then Weston-McEwen 46-37 to win the Consolation Bracket and finish fourth out of the sixteen teams that qualified for the tournament.



The VHS Boys Basketball team brought home the 4th place trophy from the 2A State Championship in Pendleton. Photo courtesy of Sue Blair

"After that first loss to Regis the guys were pretty upset with themselves," said first year head coach David Weller. "It would have been easy for us to fold up. So I was really impressed with how they bounced back."

It is the first time in seventeen years Vernonia has won a trophy at the State Championship. The Loggers were 2A State Champions in 1977 and 1978 and finished second in 1995.

Logger Paul Jiranek was named the Most Valuable Player in the Regis game; Austin Cutright was named MVP of the final two games. Jiranek was named First Team All-Tour-

namment and Cutright was named Second Team All-Tournament.

Hundreds of Vernonia fans made the trip to Pendleton to support the Loggers, including the VHS Pep Band, who received several comments about their performance from the radio announcers and other fans. "I talked with some of the organizers of the tournament and they were very impressed that so many of our fans were in attendance," said coach Weller. "They said our fans really added to the atmosphere of the tournament."

Against Regis, the Loggers lead the entire game until the final minute and a half. "After the way we played in the first three quarters, I really thought we were off to a great start for the tournament," said Coach Weller. "But that's what happens in a tournament like this—you are playing the best teams, they all play really good defense and we've all been well scouted."

Paul Jiranek led the Loggers in scoring in the loss to Regis with 11 points and had 9 rebounds. Austin Cutright added 10 points and 11 rebounds and Austin Edgar had 8 points, 7 rebounds and 4 blocked shots.

The Loggers only had fourteen hours before they had to be back on the court for their second game after a very disappointing loss. "The team knew how much effort the commu-

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Vernonia Awarded \$4 Million for School

The Oregon Legislature has voted to include \$4 million in their recently approved budget to help complete construction of the new Vernonia K-12 campus.

Details of how the funds will be provided to the Vernonia School District are still being worked out. It will be the final decision of Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber whether those funds will be in the form of a loan or a grant.

Oregon State Senator Betsy Johnson was in Vernonia for a School Town Hall Meeting on March 8, 2012 and another Town Hall on March 10, to discuss the school project and the decision by the Legislature to include the funds for Vernonia in the budget.

"I had started out asking for a loan," explained Johnson, who has been part of the Oregon Solutions process working to help Vernonia rebuild after the 2007 flood. "We needed a little bit of bridge financing to bring us to an opening in September of 2012, which is what we promised this community. But we were lacking two things to get a conventional loan. We had no collateral and no cash flow."

Johnson explained that, through hard work, personal visits to several key legislators and some creative thinking, a framework was created which will allow funds to be used by Vernonia for its school, based

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St. Patrick's Day Parade!

March 17th
1:00 PM



everyone welcome
starts at Pat Knight's House
(across from the school)

inside



10
lions
honored



11
band
champs



11
loggers
in pendleton

City of Vernonia Considers Changes to Water Rates

The City of Vernonia City Council is considering changes to the way it charges customers for water usage and has scheduled a Public Hearing for March 19 at 6:00 PM to hear Public Testimony before making any proposed changes.

The changes under consideration are based on rate schedule adjustments prepared by Tim Tice, a consultant and city project manager from Oregon Association of Water Utilities (OAWU).

At their March 5, 2012 City Council meeting, the Council accepted a recommendation for proposed changes from the Vernonia Public Works Committee. Council later discussed the recommendation, made modifications to it and asked for more information from Tice and OAWU to be considered at a special meeting that has been scheduled for March 12 at 7:00 PM. At that meeting Council hopes to finalize a proposal and new

rate structure to present at the Public Hearing on March 19th.

(Because Council is waiting for additional detailed information concerning the proposed rates they will be considering, the scheduled meetings are subject to change. Please watch the City of Vernonia webpage or the Vernonia's Voice Facebook page for any changes to the schedule of meetings.)

The Public Works Committee has been meeting and discussing this issue for several months as they have worked to develop an acceptable proposal. Their meetings have included several workshops with the City Council.

The recommendation from the Public Works Committee included a tiered rate schedule that would grow progressively higher as water consumption by an individual customer increased. Council instead is choosing to consider a flat rate for

consumption.

The current water rate structure consists of two components: demand charge or base rate, and a commodity charge per 1000 gallons used.

The current base rate the City charges is \$35.00, plus \$1.25 per 1000 gallons used after the first 2000. For customers outside the city limits the base rate is \$34.38, plus \$2.50 per 1000 gallons of water used. The base rate for commercial and out-of-town customers did not include any water in the base rate.

The City is considering changes to both the base rate and the commodity charge. At the March 5th City Council Meeting, Council agreed that they wanted to consider changes to the base rate starting at \$35 and going up to \$39. Changes to the commodity charge would then be structured to allow the City to meet their water fund budget demands.

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