

Readers Lend Their Voices...

Dear Customers

As of June 30, 2012, Grammy's Used Books in St. Helens will be going out of business. As valued customers we wanted to inform you that we will be holding closing sales starting June 1st. In an effort to clear out the inventory we will be offering ongoing discounts on books, continuing until June 30th. All sales are final.

We also wanted to take the time to thank you for all of your past business and support.

Please check in often to take advantage of our sales through closing day.

If you have any comments or questions regarding the sale or business closure, please feel free to contact me by phone (503-366-3517) or via e-mail grammysbooks@comcast.net.

Darcy Vandehey
Owner and Sole Proprietor

To the Editor,

It is amazing to me the amount of parents that sit quietly because they are afraid of being ostracized. I am guilty as well. It is sad we live in a community that chases out its members because of issues at the school with staff. So many families move out of town, choose to send their children to Jewell, Banks, Mist, do online or home school.

Do you really think that this shiny, new school is going to bring people to our town? I think you will be sorely disappointed if you do. I am not saying what hasn't already been said by so many of our citizens. I am just saying it a little louder because no one is listening. The damaging words and complaints are so powerful that it doesn't matter how pretty the school is. Wake up! People are leaving and their words are being taken with them to spread to the outside world. No one is going to move here if things don't change. If you want to blame me because you are a staff member that got in trouble, then fine, blame me. I'm guilty for sticking up for the very children that will some day make up this community. Do my complaints mean I hate the school? Absolutely not. I was a student at the school, played many sports, belonged to many clubs, came back to volunteer and was employed as a coach after graduating and currently drive a school bus. Am I saying that all the staff is horrible? Absolutely not. I've had the opportunity to work with some brilliant, loving staff members. But on the flip side, there have been some horrible ones that have left us doing damage control.

I know this is a mutual feeling of many K-12 parents. Am I perfect? Nope. Do I make mistakes? I wouldn't be human if I didn't. But the staff members that are making the same mistakes over and over are not being held accountable and it's affecting our children. If you choose to live in the "everything is perfect" world, then you really aren't seeing the whole picture.

There are real issues here people. I know it's everywhere, but why do we choose to allow it to continue? We're not just raising kids, but husbands, wives, fathers and mothers. If people choose to beat them down at a young age, what is that doing for their future? I don't gripe about my situation to upset anyone. I do it because I'm not the only one griping. It's time that the staff hears what we are saying and stop sweeping the issues under the rug. I have worked with them for 5 years. I've sat in on countless meetings, not opening my mouth the way I should have. Why? I didn't want to hurt anyone's feelings. How many parents are doing the same? How many children are suffering, feeling worthless, being set up to fail? Who is responsible? I am 100% responsible. And if I don't hold the others that work with my child 100% responsible, how am I being responsible?

I hope that this letter shows others who remain quiet that it is OK to come forward. We've gone to the teachers and principals and now it's time to go higher. If you don't, my words mean nothing. Please speak up for our kids and their future. Document your issues, frustrations, suggestions, why you moved away, why you pulled your kid and send your e-mails and letters to the district superintendent (ken.cox@vernonia.k12.or.us) (Dr. Kenneth Cox-475 Bridge Street, Vernonia, OR 97064) so something can be done. If he doesn't listen, we go higher.

Do we have what it takes to be one of the best districts? Absolutely! With a little more compassion, communication and consistency we can bring people to our town. But if nothing changes, nothing changes.

Thank you for your help!

Amy Barton
Vernonia

To the Editor

I have had children in this school district actively since March of 2001. I could and still might possibly put down on paper some events that have happened involving my daughters but for now I am going to focus on the events concerning

my son and the reasons I feel he has been treated unfairly in this school district and why I feel that he is not the only one.

My son is now 12 years old and has been in this school district from the beginning of his education. His first couple of years he had great teachers with my only complaint being his teacher saying just how cute he was in front of my boy. He was pretty cute though!

His 3rd year was really rough and seemed to be the beginning of the end.

His 4th year I had no real complaints for his teacher who stood strong against the wrong and did not neglect praising the good.

His following years have been real rough but this year seemed to be better until some bumps towards the end.

My son has been labeled a mean, angry, unmanageable child.

Here's my story!

My son has learned that the school staff will not help him. He has to fight his battles himself.

Not one staff member has seemed to look at Trevor for Trevor!

This is what other kids see.

He has always been either the shortest or second shortest boy in his grade and this makes him smaller than many other girls also which makes him an easy target for both boys and girls. The boys try to knock him around to make them feel more tough and strong as boys do and the girls knock him down because it's fun knowing a girl can knock down a boy.

For Trevor's 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades I had a parent come to where I work and tell me how their daughter was shoving Trevor down to the ground at school very regularly. This parent thought it was funny and since I was at work I could not really say much. Trevor struggled with this for a long time obviously because he has been taught not to hit girls and so he would try to stay clear of her as much as possible. Why none of the staff ever saw this happening I do not know!!

This size issue also gets the names attached like shorty, shrimp, tiny, etc. None being ego boosters for a boy.

Trevor has red hair that makes him stand out in a crowd and the eye naturally goes to him first just for the difference in color. This also brings on the names like Leprechaun, Ginger, Cone Head, Carrot Top, etc.

Then Trevor had to have on glasses so bring on the classic Four Eyes name and the boy is overwhelmed.

So now here is Trevor wearing

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reflecting the spirit of our community

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glasses being knocked down to the ground by girls regularly and being called Tiny Leprechaun repeatedly and when he would go to a staff member for help he was told to quit complaining and figure out how to handle it on his own.

Over time he would get so fed up that he would be overly angry for good reason and frustrated and then his behavior was so bad that he stood out and would get into lots of trouble. The other kids began to see how they could tease Trevor and not get caught and get him in trouble when he got so angry and they thought it was funny. Where was his help??

At no point in time have I felt that a staff member has looked at Trevor and tried to figure out what has made him angry. Why wouldn't he be? He sits

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