

## from the editor

As you page through this issue of *Vernonia's Voice* you may notice a few new features and items. I mentioned a few issues ago that we are taking this start of the New Year to re-evaluate some of the ways we are connecting to the community. We recently sat down with a group of our readers and asked them some pointed questions through a survey as well as a discussion to find out what we might do different to better serve you. We heard many great ideas and are already beginning to incorporate a few of them. This month we are adding a word puzzle as well as your monthly horoscopes. We are also adding a new feature as we recognize a volunteer of the month at the Vernonia School District. We have also added a new column,

"The Scuttlebutt" which will give you news and tidbits about the people, places and businesses around our community. And due to popular demand we have added a report from Vernonia City Administrator Bill Haack which will allow citizens to stay informed of the business and projects the City is currently engaged in. Over the next several months expect to see other new content that we plan to add. We hope you find these changes in our print edition helpful, fun, informative and entertaining.

Speaking of changes, we are also in the process of creating a completely new website for *Vernonia's Voice*. Although still a work in progress, what we are working to create is a site where all

Vernonians can go to get more current news, see more photos of events and keep up on what is happening around Vernonia. We are linking this new site to Facebook, which will allow folks who use that social media outlet to stay connected and interact with us. We have lots of ideas about how to use this new tool and we will be implementing them slowly as we transition to this additional way of presenting our product. Stop by [www.vernoniasvoice.com](http://www.vernoniasvoice.com) or checkout our Facebook page and like us. We are really excited about these changes and the new opportunities they provide and hope you will join us.

*Scott Laird*  
Editor and Publisher

## An Opinion: Becoming a Vegetarian

By Amanada Mikalow

I decided to become a vegetarian six months ago when I saw a PETA video. PETA stands for "People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals." The video showed me the horrible conditions of slaughterhouses and the life of the animals we eat on a daily basis. I was devastated to see how these poor animals lived. I immediately decided to keep meat off of my plate for good.

When time came for our senior year projects at Vernonia High School I was stuck deciding on a subject to pursue. I had to write a speech, make a poster board and spend time with a mentor who would help me with my project. Then it hit me; I could teach people about the vegetarian lifestyle and the positives of living it.

My project was a big success. I showed the sad and awful conditions of national slaughterhouses around our country. I also tried to influence people who do eat meat to choose organic farm raised animals and showed them the beautiful and healthy life of animals on farms. I know not everyone is going to be a vegetarian but I want people to enjoy their meat and have a clear conscience at the same time. Animals on farms have more room, better food and are not filled

up with hormones and chemicals like animals in slaughterhouses are. You can see on your meat label whether the animals are farm raised or not.



Many people have asked me if I would consider just eating organic meat instead of being a vegetarian. I have thought about it quite a bit but the thought of eating flesh, an animal that has eyes and a nose and mouth like me, made me sick.

I have influenced two people so far to try the vegetarian lifestyle and they have had great success. I will continue to teach people just as I taught them. I encourage people to try one vegetarian meal a week, whether it be soup, pasta or a grain. There are many great vegetarian recipes online, and they're not hard and don't require an abundance of ingredients but still are very delicious.

Not only is being a vegetarian good for the animals, it's also good for

you. According to the American Diabetes Association vegetarians on average live five years longer than a meat eater; we are also at a lower risk of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and high blood pressure. If not for the animals, do it for yourself and your family.

I personally feel great not eating meat and I love to see the people around me keeping meat off their plate. I plan on being a vegetarian my whole life and to keep spreading the word of my lifestyle.

I hope tonight you decide to have black bean soup instead of pork chops.

VERNONIA'S  
*voice*  
reflecting the spirit of our community

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# The Columbia & Theatre

Saint Helens, OR

**Presents:**

Thursday, February 21st, 2013  
212 S 1st St St Helens, OR 97051  
Doors open at 7pm, Concert at 7:30  
Tickets: \$12 available online or at The Ticket Booth.  
Food Bank donation envelopes and barrels will be available. The first Comedy Night will be March 7th.



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Lady's Night Wed 5-12

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Feb. 23  
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## Cedar Side Inn



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**Prime Rib**  
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*Check our Facebook page for daily specials and upcoming events*  
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