

VHS Forestry Program in Third Year

The Vernonia High School Forestry Program is now in its third year under the direction of instructor Byron Brown.

The program has several hands-on projects that teach students real life skills:

- Students are learning compass and pacing skills; how to read a compass, take a bearing and learning your “pace” in order to measure distance. Students also learn how to set up a course and write directions, as well as how to take inventories and surveys.
- Students are learning to identify plants, trees and habitats using both outdoor experience and power point presentations indoors. They are also learning to identify invasive species and removal methods. In addition, students are learning seed collection and seed sowing that will be used in the greenhouse which is under construction and in their own restoration projects.
- Students continue to work on the “Old Mill Marsh” wetland restoration project where they have been planting native wetlands trees and shrubs and removing canary grass and scotch broom. The Forestry Class has now taken responsibility for this project and have been using “Sustainability Days” (three days set aside each school year that focus on outdoor education) as an opportunity to teach other VHS and VMS students about the purposes and methods of the project.
- Students are learning basic forest measurements using clinometers, increment borers and spencer tapes.
- Students are also working on a restoration project at Stub Stewart State Park.

The Park is thinning some stunted areas of the park from 700 trees per acre to 90; the class’s job is to develop and implement a plan to restore the understory and ground plants to create a more diversified and wildlife friendly environment. They plan to begin planting operations in the spring.

“We plan to continue to take advantage of our rural forestland loca-



tion as a great outdoor laboratory,” says Brown about the program.

In the classroom students are learning about forest ecology, species habitat and tolerances, tree and plant identification and chainsaw safety.

Third year students John Dass, Adonis Hopkins, and Cole Harbour are Teaching Assistants and function as group leaders, which is part of student learning model that involves teaching

others—you learn better when you teach something to someone else.

The direction of the program is shifting slightly to include:

- More science- Watershed studies that lead to restoration projects that the students will design, grow the plants they will use, plant them in accordance with their plan/strategy, maintain the sites, monitor and keep records of the results.

where the program can provide “hands-on” learning opportunities for students on projects that really matter.

The Forestry Program has a webpage connected to the Vernonia School District website, under the High School, with photos and articles written by students.

The program is also running several fundraisers this year including firewood- currently green maple at \$50 per ½ cord picked up at school or \$60 delivered (they are planning on having some other firewood options soon), and Christmas trees, any size for \$25—fresh cut and local beautiful noble fir—you can’t buy better trees anywhere! They are from Mark Deyer’s tree farm; Deyer has been helping students learn timber cruising, log scaling, compass and pacing and even tree falling since the beginning of the program.

Forestry students have tree planting equipment and are looking for some tree planting projects. If anyone has an area they need planted this winter or spring and has the trees, that isn’t too far away or too big, the class could be available as a tree planting crew.

The program has also formed a Logging Competition Team, with Brent Dass in charge. The team had a successful first season last year and has already done well again this season.

“This program is designed to train our students for future occupations that would allow them to continue to live and raise their kids in our community, have rewarding and satisfying jobs, and maintain and sustain our way of life,” says Brown.

Boosters Buzz

Soccer Club Vernonia’s teams have finished up this year with many successes. Congratulations on a great season to Teams – U6 (co-ed kids 6 & under), U8 (co-ed kids 8 & under), U10 Boys (boys 10 & under), U-11 Girls (11& under). All the players worked very hard this year for a successful season. Thank you to all Soccer Club coaches. The Booster Club appreciates your hard work and dedication.

Little Guy Football Coach Mike Snow and Assistant Winter Snow ‘made it happen’ for a Little Guy Football team. (right). Head coach Snow helped the kids play under the lights at least once this season. Coach Snow put a ton of heart into this season, and

we know that heart was passed down to these kids. Keep an eye out for info about The Little Guy Football Club and how to participate.

Basketball Vernonia has started a very active season. Many teams have been formed. Stay tuned with Booster Buzz for updates on our basketball teams.

The Booster Club We would like to hear from you! We help provide athletics for our youth in Vernonia and give support to our school athletic programs. You can Contact me, Booster Club President Allison McLeod allisonmcleod@me.com or 503-429-0734 for more information.



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