

Schools Update ~ Our Building

By Dr. Ken Cox

The time between Thanksgiving and Christmas seems like the quickest month in the calendar. During this very busy time of year, with all the extra exercise (to get rid of all the extra food we ate over Thanksgiving) and the shopping for Christmas I hope you can find some time on December 12th to join us for a very special event.

At 3:00 PM that day we will be dedicating the Jacob Levenseller Memorial Swing Set. Representative Brad Witt has graciously agree to attend and even emcee to event. Jacob graduated from Vernonia High School in June of 2012 and always loved to swing. Because of this a fund was set up to purchase the swing set. The Vernonia Education Foundation (VEF) and the Vernonia Community Parent Teacher

Association (VCPTA) also contributed to the purchase.

The swing set was assembled and installed with help from many community volunteers. This effort was coordinated by Susan Ely of the VCPTA, with professional expertise provided by Casey Hunter, a construction superintendent for J. E. Dunn Construction. This is the first playground equipment at our new schools, though there is a group of parents and community members who are working with VCPTA on plans for additional equipment and the requisite fundraising to provide them in the future.

One of my most enjoyable duties is giving tours of our new building. I often point out that though our new school is impressive when you first see it coming down Missouri, it is far more amazing once you get inside. I usually show them the classroom wings and talk

about the radiant flooring and bio-mass boiler before I take them into our library, with its amazing views and the panels from the old Washington Grade School. I show off the first and only elevators in Vernonia as we walk past the VHS/VMS office and they see the commons from the top of the stairs. It is truly amazing when you see it for the first time.

From that vantage point I talk about our roof waterfall and point out the cafeteria, stage and gyms before we head down the stairs. They are always impressed as we look in the elementary gym and I point out the floor that we used for five years at the old high school and the climbing wall that the VCPTA provided for our students. Then as we move toward the window overlooking the ‘big’ gym the most often word I hear when they see it is “Wow!”

We have a beautiful building

that we can be proud of and thankful for. Once again I express my thanks to the patrons of the Vernonia School District who make annual payments toward our new school in their tax payments. The bond that was passed in 2009 was the catalyst that helped inspire others to assist our community in completing our new school. We still have \$5 million in construction debt to retire, but even so, building a \$40+ million school starting with a \$13 million bond is an amazing accomplishment. An accomplishment that took not only the dedication of so many individuals from our community, but our elected county, state and federal representatives, and so many others from the greater Portland area. All of whom contributed so much of their time and effort to make our new schools a reality. To all of you, and to all of them I say, once again, THANK YOU!

VHS Sports Preview *continued from page 15*

from his daughter Nicole along with School Board member Jim Krahn, who coached girls’ varsity basketball for seventeen years. Whiteman is also thrilled with the facility where his teams get to practice and play. “We are so blessed,” says Whiteman. “We have this magnificent gym. With four coaches and ten baskets we can spread things out and do drills quickly. These kids are getting the very best training that we can provide.”

Boys Basketball- After two straight season of earning a trip to Pendleton and the State Championship, this looks like it will be a rebuilding year for third year head coach David Weller and his staff. With virtually no returning players with varsity experience and a couple of talented exchange students, the Loggers look to be short of the depth and talent from the previous two years.

Senior and team captain Ronnie Maldonado was on the varsity last season until he broke his arm after seeing action in just one game. Weller is looking for Maldonado to be a leader this season and to be one of the key offensive weapons in the Loggers offense. “He’s real physical and has a knack for getting around the basketball and creating extra possessions,” says Weller. Adonis Hopkins is also a senior, who knows the system and will fill in as a role player at all the guard positions.

Weller expects to have five foreign exchange students on the varsity squad. Alejandro Rubiera from Spain will be the starting point guard. “He can handle the ball and loves the up-tempo,” says Weller. “When he’s running the floor he’s always looking to set other players up and he can drive to the basket.” Emil Hardenberg from Denmark will be the main offensive weapon on this season. According to Weller, Hardenberg has some real good natural talent and is a good shooter, but is having to adjust to the American style of basketball.

A natural guard at 6’4”, Hardenberg should create some real problems for defenders around the league this season. Julius Haake is a 6’7” German who can be a real presence in the middle, especially on defense. Dominique Woods, also a German, is a young player who hustles, plays tough defense and plays a scrappy game. Alex Thuet is a hard worker from France who has earned a spot on the varsity.

Weller has a group of freshman players that he is also keeping an eye on. “They have a lot of potential if they are willing to put in the work and continue to improve their game,” says Weller. “There will probably be some freshman that will see varsity time this season. We want to see them prove themselves on the JV team first.”

In addition to returning assistant coach Matt Blair, Weller has a new JV coach. Byron Schorzman was a First Team All-League player in both his junior and senior years at VHS and brings a lot of enthusiasm and knowledge. “The addition of coach Schorzman is huge,” says Weller. “He just fits in so perfectly. He loves our style of play and he’s helping implement it much more than I expected so early; he’s caught on

so fast.”

The Loggers host a tournament at home on December 6 and 7 and then open league play against Nestucca at home on December 13.

VHS Wrestling 2013-14

Date	Day	Opponent	Location	Time
Dec. 6	Fri.	Harrisburg Tournament	Harrisburg	
Dec. 11	Wed.	Banks Invitational	Banks	4:00
Dec. 14	Sat.	Warrenton Tournament	Warrenton	10:00
Dec. 18	Wed.	Warrenton, Clatskanie	Vernonia	5:00
Dec. 21	Sat.	Haggerty Invitational	Nestucca	
Dec. 28	Sat.	Clatskanie Tournament	Clatskanie	10:00
Jan. 4	Sat.	Bob Bishop Invitational	Willamina	
Jan. 10-11	Fri.-Sat.	Pac Rim Tournament	Seaside	TBD
Jan. 17-18	Fri.-Sat.	Oregon Classic	Redmond	TBD
Jan. 24	Fri.	League Meet	Nestucca	4:00
Jan. 25	Sat.	Gervais Tournament	Gervais	
Jan. 30	Thur.	League Meet	Knappa	4:00
Feb. 1	Sat.	Dayton Tournament	Dayton	
Feb. 12	Wed.	Seaside, ?	Vernonia	5:00
Feb. 21/22	Fri.-Sat.	District Tournament	NKN	4:00
Feb. 28-Mar. 1	Fri.-Sat.	State Tournament	Memorial Coliseum	TBD

Head Coach: Chris Barnes
Assistant: Jake Barnes



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