

Readers Lend Their Voices...

To the Editor,

I would like to take a moment to thank all who helped support this year's senior project presentations. Many of the judges were heard saying it was the best year ever!

In particular, I would like to thank the following (in no particular order) for going above and beyond to help make this year's event successful:

Dana Hyde, Mark Brown, Julie Ramsey, Carol Senn, The Boosters, Sentry Market, Teri Willard, Kathleen Jackson, Kathy Fetch, Nate Underwood, George Spaulding, Melissa Mulvey, Beylee Bowen-Provost, Nathan Davis, Kirsten Leaverton, Trevor Kent, Sue Whitton, Cherise Harbour, Tonia Clark, Susan Wagner, Stacy Pond, Trish Maldonado, Judi Gwin, Juliet Safier, Linda Allen, Beth Kintz, Glenda DeLemos, Kodee Kelso, Jaime Duyck, Zane Green, Scott Laird, High School Staff (for use of your classrooms plus)

All who helped mentor students

All who allowed students time out of their classes to work on senior projects

All who listen to and edited speeches,

All the judges!!

And the Class of 2014!! I am very proud of you!

If you do not see your name here, please know it is simply an over-sight and you are AMAZING too. If you would like information on judging next year's senior project presentations, please contact me at rwilcoxen@vernonia.k12.or.us. They are held annually in January.

Sincerely,
Rachel Wilcoxen
Vernonia High School

To the Editor,

As Relay for Life of Columbia County kicks off their fundraising this year at the Moose Lodge in St. Helens, I have found myself getting some lessons on what all of this is really about. In years past my family has participated, and as a stereotypical husband I have helped with set up and tear down, but mostly looked at this as a mini vacation from the wife and kids in August during the big relay event. Sure I have had many people in my family affected by cancer. Some have survived, some have not, and some survived multiple times. This year I decided to dive in and try to help and by getting involved I am getting a bigger picture of not only what goes on, but how others feel and relate to the event throughout the year.

I used to think that Relay for Life was just about breast cancer and supporting a cure for that, but I learned that it supports all kinds of cancer. I really didn't know that. I actually thought that when men were announced as survivors it meant that they had survived breast cancer. Relay for Life is all about cancer. No matter what kind of cancer it is. My wife wanted to include my uncle as part of Luminaria, which honors survivors and those that have passed. It is a beautiful event, but I had to remind myself that he didn't have to pass of breast cancer to be part of it.

Also, I used to think that it was just about fundraising for research, but over the years I have gotten an education. I learned that in Columbia County the Relay for Life organization helps with supporting those in the community currently battling this disease. Whether it is a visit, a phone call, or a ride to an appointment Relay for Life of Columbia County spends time all year long doing what they can to not only fight cancer, but to make sure that people know they don't have to fight it alone. A lot still goes to research. Over 4 million dollars in grants were shared in Oregon with places like Oregon Health Sciences University, Oregon State University, and University of Oregon getting some of those grants for major research programs.

Now you may think like I did, that all this relay stuff is just about fundraising and getting dollars into the hands of people who will do research. But this year I am learning that for those that are participating, especially at the big relay event, it is much more than that. For those that have survived I am told that it is a time to be thankful they have made it and appreciate the ones that supported them, spend time with others who have a deep understanding of what they went through it, and to hold up the people who are going through it now and show them that even in the darkest times that there are others to turn to. For the caregivers it is a time to celebrate and memorialize the family and/or friends that have had to fight, to let others know that they are there to help, and to spend some time with others who have had to walk alongside those in need. For many others it is a time to remember and support their loved ones both here and gone, and to celebrate with friends and family that they have made it past a very difficult time in their lives.

So as this year's celebration begins, I hope you will join Relay for Life of Columbia County for a carnival at the Moose Lodge in St. Helens on Saturday, February 8th from 5-7. It is much more than just fundraising for research. It is really about love and life.

Erik Linden
St. Helens

To the Editor,

On behalf of the Junior Class of 2015 we would like to thank a few generous people. First of all thank you Mike Phil Logging for donating wood for our wood raffle! We appreciate your willingness to help our class with fundraising! Also a huge thank you to Lanny and Judy Adams for the use of their time, property and wood splitter. We are so appreciative of your generosity! Thank you to all the community members who have purchased Sees candy. We are looking forward to a very memorable prom! Please watch for our upcoming fundraisers. We appreciate your continued support!

Melissa Zavales
VHS Junior Class Sdvisor

Fundraiser for David Spackman Texas Hold 'Em Tournament Sun, February 9 at 2 PM

at the All In Pub
50/50 Raffle
First Come - Limited Seating

David is having liver transplant surgery in San Francisco. Fundraising will go to help David and Sonia with living and medical expenses during this difficult time.

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