

Things To Ponder: A New Start

By Grant Williams

Every one loves the beginning of a "New Year." The start of a "New Year" gives us all the opportunity to make needed changes in our lives. It also helps us to reflect on the previous year and determine if we are headed in the right direction with our life. Sometimes it becomes quite obvious that we need to make radical changes or we could end up in big trouble, maybe even a certain disaster. Every year people make resolutions with great intentions, but they usually don't last very long because we lose our will power.

Fortunately for the Christian they are not left to sheer will power. When you become a child of God, by asking for forgiveness for your sins and putting your faith in Christ's redeeming power, some amazing things start to happen. The Bible tells us that we are no longer left to our own devices, but have

God's power available to help us. The Apostle Paul, in II Corinthians 5:17 said, "Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." Another translation renders the last phrase, "all things are becoming new." Doesn't that sound like great news? The thought of being able to start over with a clean slate should be the most wonderful news a person could hear. Sadly, many people are content to stay the same year after year with no thought of improving themselves or their life.

It is conceivable that many people don't realize that God offers a new life to anyone who discovers the path they have been on is leading nowhere. The seriousness of our flaws makes no difference to God. The Bible says in Romans 3:23, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." The verse continues with the best news of all, "and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by

Christ." In other words God does not hold the pardoned sinner guilty of their failed past. As a matter of fact God loves to give people a new start. There aren't many things a person can do that He is not willing to forgive. The one exception is, if a person refuses to accept God's promise of forgiveness and a new life, He will allow that person to go their own way.

Have you taken an honest inventory of your life lately? Whether you are a Christian or not there is certainly something you are sorry about or some bad habit you need to unload. Whatever your situation might be ask God to help you see how He can help you move toward a better life. God loves to help people realize a full and exciting life free from the burden of guilt and shame. Maybe you have never considered that you need God's help and don't know where to begin. It's easy, just ask Him!

Vernonia Ridge Riders Annual Banquet

The Vernonia Ridge Riders Annual Banquet will be held January 17, 2015 at the Grace Family Fellowship Church Gym on State Avenue. Social hour starts at 5:00 PM, dinner is at 6:00 PM.

All members and those who would like to become members are invited as Banquet night is also the first meeting of the year. New officers will be elected at this meeting for the year 2015.

The spaghetti and bread for the Banquet will be provided; anyone attending the dinner is asked to bring a salad, dessert, or veggies. Also, bring your own drinks (no alcohol), coffee provided. Dinner is free for members and non members who bring a side dish; \$5.00 for all others.

Membership dues can be paid for 2015: Single-\$15.00 Couple-\$20.00 Family-\$25.00 (Family includes any child who is living with you.)

After the Banquet dinner and club meeting, the silent auction will be held. You can view auction items during the social hour.

An Insider's Look at Robotics Program

continued from page 9

display of the values FIRST stands for. Those values are: Building and sustaining a team, helping others, spreading the message of FIRST, mentoring, 'Gracious Professionalism' and 'Coopetition.' "Coopetition" is simply a combination of the terms "cooperation" and "competition." "Gracious Professionalism" is in essence the idea of sportsmanship, the idea of winning with grace and losing with poise. The team that earns the Chairman's award gets to go to the world championship. I like this idea as it encourages people to stand for FIRST's values, and not for personal values.

All in all, the school robotics programs are great ways to both learn about engineering, and how to respect other teams. I wanted to give the community a reason to help the team, as this class of seniors enter our last season with 4127. I think I speak for all of the members of the team when I say the experience has been one of the best, and I will never forget doing this.

So, please consider helping us so we can have a season to remember. I thank you ahead of time for anything you do to help.

I leave you this final thought, which is what is always said before we are set free to think on what to do for the season: "Good luck, and we hope to see you at the competition."

Garrett Mullikin is a student at Vernonia High School who is exploring writing for his Senior Project.

Bridge Street Bits

Happy New Year 2015

from the Vernonia Senior Center

Senior Sign Off: Many of the senior population don't celebrate the arrival of the New Year... they celebrate the survival of the old one! Hope to see you around with our new happenings in 2015. Thanks to one and all for your support.

**Vernonia Senior Center • 446 Bridge Street
503-429-3912**

Legislative Update *continued from page 12*

have been arguing over it ever since. As some critics have pointed out, this is an issue with bipartisan support. Congress should step up and pass a federal law regulating data.

One of the more emotional moments that came up during legislative hearings on the subject of privacy was when a young woman testified about her stepfather secretly taking nude photos of her. Her two best friends were also photographed while undressing in private. These photos can live on indefinitely through the Internet. Currently, this crime is only a misdemeanor.

These young women rightfully believe it

should be a felony. While they received a sympathetic hearing, the reality is they are up against a continuing effort to cut sentencing and push for early release of convicted felons.

In 2013, the legislature passed a law (HB 3194) reducing sentences for certain crimes, including identity theft and robbery. Some lawmakers are hoping to expand early release to high-risk offenders.

It does no good to enact new legislation to create new offenders – whether for Big Data thieves or legal gun owners – if we are unwilling to attach appropriate penalties.

Church Directory (in alphabetical order)

Assembly of God

Sunday School: 9:45 AM
Morning Worship: 11:00 AM
Sunday Evening Prayer: 6:00 PM
Wayne Marr, Pastor
662 Jefferson Avenue
503-429-0373

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

Sunday Schedule:
Sacrament Meeting: 10:00 AM
Sunday School & Primary: 11:20 AM
Relief Society, Priesthood and Young Women: 12:10 PM
Roger Cook, Branch President
1350 E. Knott Street
503-429-7151

Grace Family Fellowship

Sunday School: 9:00 AM
Worship Service: 10:30 AM
Thursday Prayer: 6:00 PM
Greg "Mac" McCallum, Pastor
957 State Avenue
503-429-6790
www.GraceFamilyFellowship.org

Nehalem Valley Bible Church

Sunday School: 9:45 AM
Worship Service: 10:45 AM
Wed. Ladies Bible Study: 10:00 AM
Wednesday Service: 7:00 PM
Sat. Men's Prayer Meeting: 6:30 AM
Gary Taylor, Pastor
Grant & North Streets
503-429-5378

Open Door Gathering Place

Service: Sunday 6:00 PM
Grant Williams, Pastor
375 North Street
St. Mary's Catholic Church
Wednesday Religious Education:
3:15-4:30 PM
Sunday Mass: 12:00 PM
Rev. Luan Tran, Administrator
960 Missouri Avenue
503-429-8841

Vernonia Christian Church

Sunday School: 9:45 AM
Worship Service in Youth & Family Center: 11:00 AM
www.VernoniaChristianChurch.org
Sam Hough, Pastor

410 North Street
503-429-6522

Vernonia Foursquare Church

Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 AM
Children's Sunday School
Carl Pense, Pastor
850 Madison Avenue
503-429-1103

Vernonia Seventh-day Adventist Church

Sabbath (Saturday) Services
Sabbath School: 9:30 AM
Worship Service: 11:00 AM
www.VernoniaSDAC.org
Larry Gibson, Pastor
2nd Ave. and Nehalem St.
503-429-8301