

# Voices From the Crowd: The Pursuit of Higher Education

By Quentin Skanes

Vernonia High School just celebrated the end of the first semester of online college classes offered through Portland Community College (PCC). While this was a great feat, the pilot program itself fell far short of what was promised.

The program joined together Vernonia High School and PCC to offer college classes for eligible high school students. To enroll in the program, a student had to demonstrate proficiency in the COMPASS college placement test, register him/herself, as well as discuss a graduation plan with the guidance counselor and the principal. Sixteen academically-motivated students applied and were accepted.

There were promises of multiple classes for each student for both semesters that would be paid for by the school. The class that was offered was Writing 121. The students were split into six different classes to help increase student exposure to college. While there was the normal bell curve to a fast-paced style of learning, the students excelled with a vast majority receiving A's or B's.

The students were led to believe that more classes were going to be offered by the school since the guidance counselor insisted that the school would offer more classes for the 2015-2016 school year. It was a big shock to everyone, including staff, to learn that absolutely no college classes were going to be offered by the school for second semester for those who had just taken the Writing 121 course. Students were enraged to find that they were ineligible for the next semester of college classes.

Banks, Hillsboro, Forest Grove, and many others have similar

college programs. Some even offer dual graduation where a student receives a high school diploma and an associate degree. It is normal now to have high school kids in college, and a vast majority of them have their "freshman" year completed. Students now come out of high school with 30, 60, or even 90 credits while this year's senior class will graduate with about eight students having four credits; a very sad disparity.

While enrollment at Vernonia School District is increasing, funding for the increased number of students doesn't kick in until the following fiscal year. To fund this program means a two year commitment at the very least to let the school district make its money back. Many students in the area not going to Vernonia get their schooling in other districts, often driving to Banks or even Hillsboro for a more diversified education.

If we were to offer these college classes, we would bring in more students to study here because we increased the diversity in classes offered. This in turn increases the revenue the school receives to keep funding this program. It is a win-win situation. The school district receives more funding and provides better or more challenging classes. This way, we could finally be on par or near what Banks has to offer in terms of receiving college credit.

*Quentin Skanes is a junior at Vernonia High School.*



## DEADLINE 2015 DOG LICENSE

Elizabeth E. Huser, Columbia County Clerk, reports that the deadline for licensing dogs in Columbia County for 2015 will be:

**MARCH 1, 2015**

You may mail your rabies vaccination certificate (if not on file in our office) along with the appropriate fees to Columbia County Clerk's office, 230 Strand St., St. Helens, OR 97051. Kennel licenses are available, contact Clerk's Office for information, 503-397-3796.

**To All Columbia County Dog Owners**  
**\$25.00 Penalty after March 1, 2015**  
**Dog License Fees are due on all dogs with permanent teeth or six months of age for year of 2015**  
**FEES ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

License Fees	One year	Two Year	Three year
Spayed / neutered	\$15.00	\$30.00	\$40.00
Unfixed dog	\$30.00	\$60.00	\$85.00
Senior(65)spayed/neutered	\$5.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
Senior (65) unfixed	\$15.00	\$30.00	\$40.00

(Note: If requesting a 2 or 3 year license, the rabies must be valid through those respective years.)

*2015 Application for Dog License*

Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Residential Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

License No. \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Dogs Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Breed: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one: Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_

Neutered: \_\_\_\_\_ Spayed: \_\_\_\_\_

A valid (good through Oct. 31, 2015) Rabies Vaccination Certificate MUST accompany this application or be ON FILE in the Courthouse, along with a spayed/neutered certificate if applicable.

# PTA PRESS EXTRA!! EXTRA!! READ ALL ABOUT IT

By Melissa Zavales

PTA is a great way to become involved in your school today. We have many activities from candy grams to Easter egg hunts, to fall carnivals and haunted houses, to fundraising and scholarships, to bring your parents to school, to milk and cookies too!

Our goal is to ensure that our children's school career is a successful and fun all at the same time. We work very hard to make things possible for our students of our small community. Whether students are homeschooled, attend Mist, Jewell, or Banks Christian Academy they are a part of our community and we work for all of them. Please join our team and share your thoughts, ideas, and concerns. Help us make a better tomorrow!

We are still working very diligently to raise enough funds to complete the playground. We have explored avenues such as a Nike grant that we have applied for. Our hopes are high and we will find out if we have been selected to receive the grant in April. We have so graciously been offered from Randall Harvey of the Lions club to help advocate fundraising for the completion. We have also asked the Vernonia Boosters to help us make this possible. We are working towards completing this goal and our hopes are to make it happen as soon as possible.

Spring time is just around the corner and PTA activities are coming up. We have Bring Your Family to

School Week coming February 23-27. Bed time stories will be on Thursday the 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. Milk and cookies will be provided by the PTA. We encourage parents to jammy up with kids and come for the evening. Details about parent/student lunch will be sent out soon. Watch for a new addition to the week added by your local PTA. A family movie night! More details to come.

Last but in very high demand is our Annual Easter Egg Hunt. We love the community turnout and look forward to hosting this event every year. This year we, and the Easter Bunny, are asking for your assistance in donating your plastic eggs, big or small. We will take them all. We have recycled many in the years gone by, but now it's time to replenish our stock as many eggs have seen better days. Please help us to continue to provide this "EGGTASTIC" event. With your help the Easter bunny will be here with BIG SMILES, and FLOPPY EARS for pictures. Make these memories last a lifetime! If you would like to donate eggs, time, money etc., please contact your local PTA!

President Melissa Zavales 503-858-8221  
Vice President Brett Costley 503-307-3343  
Treasurer Stacy Adams 503-429-0317  
Fundraising Chair Susan Ely 503-429-5907  
Member Chair Camrin Eyrrick 971-258-9994  
Community Relations Lacy Rylands



**SAVE THE DATE**

**SUNDAY**  
**AUGUST 16TH, 2015**

**VERNONIAS**

**2ND BIGGEST REUNION**

**Please visit us on Facebook at Vernonia's BIGGEST Class Reunion. We are searching for address/contact information for Friends/Alumni of Vernonia Schools. To be added to our mailing list please email us: VernoniaReunion@hotmail.com, private message us on Facebook or mail to: Vernonia's Biggest Reunion c/o Ronda Lennen, 1000 Missouri Ave. Vernonia, OR 97064**

## Addiction Recovery Program

**Ready for a new start?  
Come and Join us.**

**Everyone is Welcome  
Gospel Centered  
Confidential Meetings  
Thursday Evenings, 7 pm  
Vernonia LDS Church Building  
1350 Knott Street**

**Enter the Northwest Door - Follow the signs**  
Program is free to everyone 18 and older