

# Former VHS Student Composes, Conducts *Vernonia Overture*

A former Vernonia High School student has composed a piece of orchestral music, dedicated to the community of Vernonia and his classmates at VHS.

Nate McCroskey-Izzett, a senior at Mazama High School in Klamath Falls, Oregon, directed the world premiere performance of *Vernonia Overture*, which he composed, at the Klamath Falls Community Band concert on April 12, 2015. The composition was inspired by the devastation and recovery that the community experienced during and following the December 3, 2007 flood.

McCroskey-Izzett is the son of former Vernonia Band Instructor Rob Izzett, who now teaches at Mazama High School. Izzett led the Vernonia Band when they won the State Championship in 2012.

McCroskey-Izzett began composing the musical piece while he was a sophomore at Vernonia High School. He and his family moved to Klamath Falls in 2013, and McCroskey-Izzett com-

pleted the seven minute composition as his Senior Project. He worked with noted American composer Robert Sheldon as his mentor for the project. McCroskey-Izzett and Sheldon became acquainted following the flood when Sheldon, the head of instrumental music for Alfred Publishing, donated sixty music titles to the Vernonia School when he heard about the devastation and the loss of Rob Izzett's music library in the flood. Sheldon provided guidance and instruction to McCroskey-Izzett via email during the composition of the piece.

McCroskey-Izzett was a student in Vernonia when the new school campus was opened in 2012 and was inspired by the resiliency and perseverance shown by the residents of Vernonia in not giving up and their willingness to invest in each other and move forward.

Rob Izzett read the following

description of the music, penned by McCroskey-Izzett, before introducing his son, who then conducted the band in the first ever performance of his composition.

where Vernonia is nestled. Tension and chaos build as the storm rages and the waters rise. From there it slows down again and the town grieves as they view the aftermath of the flood. From that note springs the march like section, wood block hammering out the construction of the new building. Defiance and determination are depicted by the brass as they hint at the school's fight song. The march section builds until it collates in a massive fanfare symbolizing not only the opening of the new school but also the heroic perseverance that made me so proud to be part of that community."

McCroskey-Izzett says he plans to attend the University of Oregon next year.

A video of the world premiere performance of *Vernonia Overture* by the Klamath Falls Community Band can be found on YouTube by searching *Vernonia Overture*; the video is titled "VTS 01 1."



"In this piece you will notice it starts out slowly, portraying the grandeur and spectacular beauty I soaked in daily riding along the winding and twisting roads of the majestic, forested hills

## Medley's Custom Printing Opens

Medley's Custom Printing celebrated their grand opening in Vernonia on Saturday, May 16th.

The business will be family run. Ed Medley and his wife, from Mist, purchased the former Kaptain's Kraft operation, and will run the business with the help of son Tony and twin daughters Elaine and Elise Farren and Elise's husband Eli Farren. Eli has twenty years' experience in the screen print business and says the business will look to expand into embroidery shortly.

Elise, who also has experience in

the screen printing industry, says the family is looking to work closely with the community to meet their printing needs. She says they are especially looking forward to working with the school and hope to offer internships or work training opportunities for students.

The business already has their first customers: the Vernonia Cheer Squad used them to print tee shirts and were so pleased with the product they volunteered to come out and support the business during their opening day celebration.



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