

Schools Update: Making the Most of the Future

By Aaron Miller

Opportunities can be squandered or taken. As another school year ends it is the perfect time to discuss some of these opportunities.

At this time of year we celebrate the graduating class (Congratulations to the VHS Class of 2015!) and speak of the opportunities their futures may bring. We look ahead to what they might become, and hope they seize the opportunities that lie in front of them to make the most of their futures and their lives.

We are able to celebrate because

our graduating students are making the most of their opportunity to learn, grow and become. Education, like life, is what you make of it. Many opportunities for success are presented to students by adults in their life each and every day. These adults want to see children seize their futures, and make something productive of their lives. They want to help ensure that our communities and our society will be vital and productive. They want to provide opportunities for students to become.

To all of you who make this happen each and every day, each and every year.....Thank You!!!

Celebrating those adults who provide opportunities for our children to learn and become is just as vital as celebrating our students' achievements. Parents, teachers, other school staff, community members and mentors all play a part in helping students set and reach their goals.

At the recent Vernonia High School (VHS) Senior Dessert and Scholarship night there were 25 businesses, organizations and individuals who provided VHS graduates with over \$47,000 in scholarship opportunities. This amazing act of generosity and investment takes place each year in

Vernonia, as community members recognize those students who have seized the opportunity that school has presented them, in order to take charge of their futures.

Congratulations and thank you to our graduating seniors and scholarship recipients for taking these opportunities to make the most of YOUR FUTURES! Congratulations and thank you to our businesses, organizations and individuals who recognize these students each year in hopes of making the most of ALL OUR FUTURES.

Chance To Become Scholarships

The Columbia Learning Center is pleased to announce the annual "Chance to Become Scholarship" winners for 2015. The scholarship proceeds were presented at five countywide school districts --- St. Helens, Scappoose, Clatskanie, Vernonia and Rainier at high school graduation ceremonies.

The winners were: Vernonia - Reed Jones; St. Helens - Mikalah Ball, Krysten Baryo, Robin Cutshall, Alyssa Giesbers, Tristan Johnson; Clatskanie - Claire Jones, Cecelia Nelson, Micah McLeod; Rainier - Jeffrey Tripp; Scappoose - Jacob Wendelschafer, Devin Crowder.

The "Chance to Become" scholarship program has been in existence for 15 years and has offered 186 scholarships to students totaling \$935,000. Each scholarship is \$5,000 payable in two annual instalments of \$2,500. The program is very unique in that students do not apply for it but are selected by high school

administrators/counselors.

"This program is designed to identify students who might not be eligible to receive a typical academic scholarship," said Marion Christensen, CLC board member. "In most cases these students are average students who have demonstrated an interest in continuing their education beyond high school. They may be students whose families cannot or will not pay for their continuing education, students with a special talent or they may have overcome behavioral or other personal problems. This program can offer them the start they need to be successful in life."

The funds are given by private anonymous donors as well as proceeds from the Columbia Learning Center's bi-annual fundraiser, Black Tie and Blue Jeans held at the Deer Island Stock Ranch. This year's event will take place Saturday, August 1. For more information contact Marcia Hansen at 503-438-5252.

NW Oregon Declares Fire Season June 16

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) announced that all of its districts in the Northwest Oregon Fire Protection Association will enter wildfire season on Tuesday, June 16.

"With the current and predicted weather, summer is here," said Columbia Unit Protection Unit Forester Malcolm Hiatt. "We want to get out in front of the situation, since fire danger is increasing." Many of the indices that determine fire danger are already at or above the levels that were observed at the time of the Scoggins Creek Fire last year that started on September 19, 2014.

ODF already had their first fire of the season on Saturday, June 13, with a little help from humans, with a fire off of Highway 26 at mile post 35 in the extreme Southwest corner of Columbia County. The fire rapidly went from 10 acres at the initial reports around 11:00 am, to 67 acres at the final fire size around 8:00 pm when the fire was 100% lined. No increase in fire size was observed overnight and the lines continued to hold the next day as crews continued aggressively mopping up. The fire was pushing hard with the winds and it required a helicopter, two dozers, three South Fork ODF crews, ODF engines from Columbia City, Forest Grove, Astoria, Tillamook, and West Oregon, and engines and tenders from Forest Grove Rural Fire Department and Banks fire department.

Entry into fire season chiefly addresses industrial forest operators. Logging operations, for example, are required to have a fire watch present after work activity ceases for the day, and fire suppression equipment must be positioned on site.

If the warm, dry weather continues, additional restrictions may be added on recreation and other activities.

The ODF districts entering fire season on Wednesday include: Astoria, Forest Grove, and Tillamook.

For more information on the restrictions imposed by the fire season declaration, contact the nearest Oregon Department of Forestry office. Contact information for the Astoria, Forest Grove and Tillamook district offices can be found at: www.oregon.gov/ODF/offices.shtml.

An Opinion: Here Comes Marijuana

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we've made more accessible for adults to use, either to enhance their lives or potentially abuse.

When marijuana becomes legal on July 1, most of us won't see any real change. Those who were already smoking it in the privacy of their own homes will continue to do so. Some people may be more open about their habits. Hopefully the police don't see an increase in DUII arrests and parents are

responsible around their children. I think we'll probably see a medical marijuana dispensary in downtown Vernonia soon. When the state finally figures out how they are going to regulate retail sales, we may see that as well.

Whether you're for or against marijuana, the reality is that in a few weeks, Oregon will experience a significant change, both legally and culturally. You might as well get ready for it.

Columbia Humane Society Featured Pet



Meet Cooper. This gentle, sweet boy just made his arrival in Oregon from Hawaii. Coming in at 12 years old, Cooper is one of the older residents we currently have here at the Humane Society. He seems to not mind other dogs and likes everyone that he meets. We are looking for a home where this big guy can retire in dignity and enjoy his "grey" years. Perhaps a home with a fenced yard and maybe a kiddie pool he could lounge around. If you are looking for a great companion don't let Cooper pass you by. Remember, dogs are just like people, with age comes wisdom. If you

have any more questions please don't hesitate to call or email us.

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Vernonia School Board Report

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Service Award, and Reed Jones was awarded the Chance to Become Scholarship. 8th Grade Promotion was held on June 2. Tyler Wolf and Kate Frederik-

sen received the Paul Gordon Memorial Award, Elizabeth Brewer was the recipient of the James T. Johns Award, Jenna Watson was named the Debbie Johnston Most Inspirational Student, and Jana Titus was named the Debbie Johnston Most Inspirational Staff Member.

Volunteer Report – The Board received a detailed written report from Volunteer Coordinator Amanda Wolf. The District finished the school year with 371 approved volunteers; 60 actively volunteered on a weekly or daily basis. Volunteers logged a remarkable 2,203 hours in numerous and varied activities.

Board Recesses to Executive Session

– The Board recessed to Executive Session under ORS 192.6660(2)(b) "to consider the dismissal or disciplining of, or hear complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member or agent..." Upon return to Open Session, the Board took no further action.

