

Meet The Exchange Students

Patricia Garcia is from Madrid, Spain. She played volleyball this fall, will try out for basketball this winter and try track and field in the spring. A junior, she is staying with Nikki Whiteman. Patricia says she likes that everyone knows each other in Vernonia. She says she also loves living in the forest with all the trees. This is her first visit to the United States. She says she loves to travel and has spent some summers in Ireland and England, and visited Portugal, France and Italy. Patricia says she plans to study medicine after she completes her final year of high school in Spain.



L-R: Patricia Garcia, Leire Valladares, Josefine Lassen, Andrea Castano, and Loic Patigny.

Leire Valladares is from the Basque Country in Spain from the city of Bilbao. A junior, she is staying with the Lindauer family this year. This is her first time in the United States, although she has traveled to Portugal, France and London. "For me, the best part about Vernonia is the people," says Leire. "The people are very nice with us right from the beginning. They come and speak with us and are nice. I think that is something really good about Vernonia." Leire was the top runner on the VHS girls cross country team, taking second in the Northwest League Championship, even though she had never run before. She said she expects to continue running in the spring on the track team and will probably continue running when she returns to Spain. She will also try out for basketball this winter.

Leire says she hopes to study neurosurgery when she finishes high school.

Josefine Lassen is a sophomore from the capital city of Copenhagen, Denmark. She is living with the Shipley family. She says she really likes that everyone is so friendly and that they smile, wave and talk with the exchange students. Josefine says she enjoyed the camaraderie of the cross country team this fall. She will try out for basketball this winter and run track in the spring. She says her home family really likes to travel and she has visited over twenty countries, including Japan, Dubai, parts of Africa and all around Europe. This is her first trip to the U.S. Josefine has three more years of school to complete when she returns to Denmark, and says she would like to travel even

more.

Andrea Castano is a junior from Galicia in the northwest of Spain and is staying with Kim and Jim Tierney. A first time runner, Andrea took fifth in the league in cross country this fall and says she plans to continue running when she returns to Spain. She will try out for basketball and plans to run track in the spring. Andrea says the people in Vernonia are very friendly which is different than in her home country. She says she doesn't like all the rain in Oregon. She has traveled often to Portugal, France, London and has also visited New York. Andrea says she hopes to travel more and someday become a pediatrician.

Loic Patigny is living with the Landers family. He is from the small town of Ventabren in France, about one hour from Marseille. A sophomore, he tried running cross country this fall but had several small injuries that kept him from competing. He said he will try out for basketball this winter and may try baseball or run track in the spring. This is his first trip to the U.S., but he has traveled extensively in Europe, including Spain, Italy, Germany, and Belgium. Loic says he likes all the activities for exchange students in Vernonia. Loic says he has two more years of school when he returns to France and then plans to study either engineering or medicine.

Keep it Local Columbia County

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businesses survive and prosper, the best thing you can do is go the extra mile—or more accurately, stay close to home—to shop there. There are some great advantages to staying in the local area as it helps keep more money in your pocket with savings on gas costs and your time to drive further. Take time to identify some of the local businesses that provide goods and services that you may travel outside of Columbia County for now, and then make shopping at the local ones part of your usual routine instead.

Shopping local for the Holidays is a great choice for gifts, because the present feels more special when it comes from your own hometown and may even be hand crafted by a local artist. Each year American Express sponsors an event called "Small Business Saturday" that is held the Saturday after Thanksgiving to encourage people to start their holiday shopping at local businesses. Many independent businesses offer special sales on this day and it can be a welcome alternative to fighting the big crowds at major retailers on "Black Friday." Why get up really early, when you can sleep in and then shop locally on Saturday.

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