

47J responds to letter

To the Editor:

The August 13 issue of the *Vernonia Freedom* contained a letter to the editor from Ms. Roberta Williams. The content of that letter included a number of inaccurate statements that do need correction.

Ms. Williams contends that the state has only cut Vernonia School District 47J Basic School Support by a mere two percent. Actual Basic School Support Fund receipts during the 1980-81 school year were exactly \$683,590.29. The best estimate, as supplied to the school district as of August 12 by the State Department of Education, for the 1981-82 school year is \$477,724.73. This is a decrease of \$205,865.56, or by any arithmetic, a decrease of over 30 percent - not two percent. That, however, only represents the tip of the iceberg. Last year the district received \$24,592.60 in revenue sharing funds, this year's

Newspaper accused of false assumptions

To the Editor:

In response to your editorial of August 13, concerning the school levy failure, you made one assumption that is obviously incorrect. You equated a well rounded education with the expenditure of large amounts of money. If one looks at the results of spending large amounts of money on education in Vernonia, one must conclude that in the past, those large amounts of money have been misspent. I am not against spending money for education. However, I am opposed to throwing money away. If one looks at the quality of education in Vernonia, one will find that there are many high school graduates who cannot read, write, or make change for a dollar. I am opposed to spending tax dollars for that sort of education. Apparently, the school board suffers from the same misconception as yourself, as there seems to be little thought put into how those tax dollars are spent. I suggest that prior to giving our students a "well rounded" education, we should spend our tax dollars by teaching them to read, write and count.

Richard D. Self
Vernonia

amount is zero - a decrease of 100 percent. The County School Fund receipts of \$4,855.59 last year are anticipated to be \$3,585 this year - a decrease of over 35 percent. Federal funding in special education and lunch subsidies will also suffer drastic cut-backs. Total revenues received by the district last year from all sources other than local property taxes were \$971,151.81. Total revenues anticipated this year are \$536,231.00, a decrease of \$434,920.81. If you add even a modest amount for cost increases because of inflation you can readily see why this district must ask for a special levy to offset those losses. The amount of \$242,195.00 on the ballot for the September 15 election was only achieved by cutting school programs such as homemaking, forestry, driver education as well as athletics and other activities.

Another glaring misconception in the letter by Ms. Williams is that the state is funding 40 percent of all school costs. Basic School Support payments for next year will represent only 23 percent of District 47J's total operating budget.

Ms. Williams did make one correct statement which was headlined. She says, "the school district is running scared." I frankly admit that personally I am scared. I am very much scared that the district will not be able to operate a reasonable educational program for a full term this year. This last chance for voters to approve the reduced tax levy is September 15. Failure to secure voter approval at that time would mean that the district would be forced to cut an additional \$242,195 from school programs and services.

Ms. Williams also was critical of the amount of water being used at Washington Grade School on the lawns. Experts tell me that it is much more effective to soak a lawn area thoroughly once a week than it is to sprinkle lightly on a more frequent basis. We are fortunate to live in a city where water is plentiful and a real bargain. Our total water bill for Washington School for the month of July was \$52.98. Vernonia citizens and the school staff have always exhibited a great deal of pride in well maintained schools. Please leave us a little green grass to be proud of, there may not be too much else left.

Arthur M. Parrow
Superintendent
Vernonia School District 47J

More Public Forum

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47J rents shop

SCHOOL LUNCH PRICE SCHEDULE. Grades 1-4 will now pay 75¢ for their lunches while grades 5-8 will pay 85¢, grades 9-12 will pay 95¢ and reduced price students will pay 40¢. Under the new price list adult lunches will cost \$1.35 each while Special Milk in Vernonia will cost 16¢ and 10¢ in Mist where the state government picks up 9¢ on each carton.

In other action, the board voted to rescind extra duty contracts at the high school with Karen Alvstad, Ilene Grady, Mark Pettijohn, Ron Remsen, Kathy Sevig, Jeff Smith and Steve Calhoun. Board members say these cutbacks were necessary. They also voted, upon recommendation from VHS Principal Randall Aultman, to keep a third football coach for safety and efficiency reasons. Ron Svenson has been awarded the position.

The next school board meeting is scheduled for 9 pm on August 27, at the District 47J offices.

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'71 grads plan reunion

The Vernonia High School graduating class of 1971 will hold it's 10 year class reunion August 22, 1981, at the home of Rick and Shelly Curl. It will be a potluck affair from 3 pm to 8 pm. The class will also be inviting classmates from previous years and teachers. For more information, contact Marilyn Landers at 429-4543.

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Gas well

county, that the interest earned on mineral royalties be paid out under the same formula used to disburse principal payments rather than have the interest go directly into the county general fund.

The county now receives three-sixteenths of the money realized on any gas discovered within the county and a flat \$10 per year per acre rental fee. Last year county revenue from royalties and land rental exceeded \$3.5 million.

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