

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

School budget has awareness of arts

The Vernonia School District budget for 1998-99 is a mixed bag—which is an improvement on prior years. For the first time in many years, a couple thousand dollars have been earmarked for expansion of music and art, possibly even in extracurricular activities. It may not be much, but it's a move in the right direction.

To put this in perspective, the budget for high school extracurricular athletics is \$159,000.

It is policy in the Vernonia district that students involved in extracurricular athletics should not have to make any financial contribution. True, they buy their own baseball and softball caps, their own required undergarments and their own shoes. Sometimes they also raise a little money for special activities or supplies involved with their sport, but it isn't required.

The district pays for uniforms, travel, officiating, coaches (sometimes one, usually two and occasionally three for each sport), even lodging and some meals on overnight trips.

In return for this, the only academic requirement student athletes must maintain is that they may not be failing any class. If they maintain this minimum standard, they receive awards, certificates, letters and lots of adulation.

Keep that in mind, and contrast it with another extracurricular activity.

National Honor Society students have a paid advisor. That's all. For anything beyond that, they must raise the money and pay for all associated activities. The minimum academic standard for the honor society is difficult to maintain but, if they do it—they get a plaque.

Whoopee.

Another activity, the International Club, has a paid advisor. They must raise the money and pay for all activities involved with the club, with or without travel. Recognition? Naah.

It's easy to say that students turn out for sports and not other activities, but that's ignoring the fact that it is the only fully sponsored activity and the only one that has had support from the district and the community.

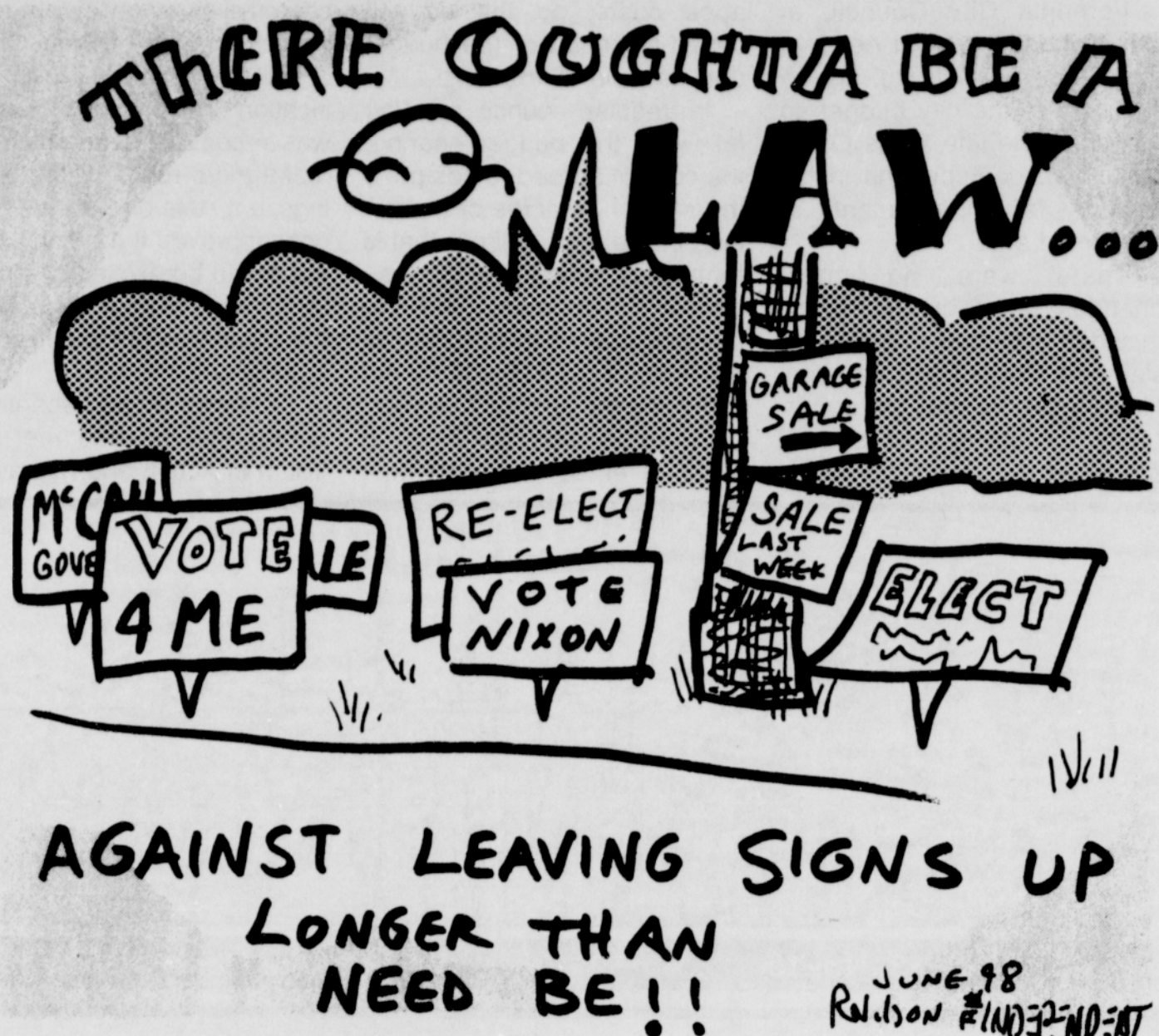
We should not lose sight of the purpose of public schools, which is to provide an education. There's nothing wrong with fun in the process, but we shouldn't let the tail wag the dog.

If you have budget questions, attend the Budget Hearing on Thursday, June 11 at 8:00 p.m.

Cowards steal at night

Four of the beautiful flower baskets, provided for the community at no public cost by Vernonia Pride, have been stolen from the Rock Creek bridge. They were taken at night, of course, because that's the only time cowards come out.

There is a \$100 reward for information leading to the arrest of the person(s) responsible. First it was "just" Easter eggs, now it is flower baskets. That sort of attitude contributes to bigger and better theft and vandalism. The sooner someone comes forward, the quicker this sort of thing will stop.



City Scene...

By Julius Dalzell and Cindy Ball
Vernonia City Councilors

The following article has been prepared by, Cindy Ball, the newest member of the Vernonia City Council. Outlined are Ball's plans to update information about Vernonia on the web by coordinating, planning and implementing a Vernonia Web Site. A search on the Network will reveal that individual pages, which provide various insights into what we are all about, have been prepared by members of our community. By interacting with those individuals and incorporating additional information, Ball is planning a more formal Home Page that will truly tell our story. Equally important to building the web site is, of course, the need to maintain the site to ensure that information is current.

Building Visibility on the Web

With help from members of our community, a Vernonia Web Site is being planned and built. We hope to build interest outside the immediate Vernonia area, encouraging an influx of tourist dollars. Information is being collected about the events, organizations and merchants in the Vernonia area.

If you are interested in exploring "cyber-space" but don't have access to a computer, our city library maintains a computer for public access. It is suggested that you call to reserve time for your use of the library computer. There are useful hints available, along with a list of rules for use. This is primarily a research tool, so E-mail is not available through the library. The phone number for the library is 429-1818.

For those unfamiliar with the Internet, a very short glossary of pertinent terms is provided.

Web site: Akin to a scrapbook, it provides a variety of information, depending on the creator's intention.

ISP: Internet Service Provider, the telephone connection through which you connect to the Internet. In Vernonia, the ISP is Cyberian Links, 429-4045.

Search Engine: A program designed to look for key words, people, companies or other subjects you wish to research.

URL: Universal Reference Locator (or your web site address in cyber-space).

WWW: World Wide Web (or cyberspace).

In web sites you may find:

- In-depth information about the company/organization.
- Phone numbers, addresses and other information to help you make contact.
- Product information.
- Photographs of staff members and local scenes.
- Job listings.
- Educational sites.
- Games

As you may have gathered, the possibilities for information on the Internet are limited only by our own imaginations. For Vernonia, we plan to develop a web site which has a polished, professional look to it. A web site which provides a broad overview of our town and it's beauty, and invites guests to come discover Vernonia for themselves.

Currently, we are in the information gathering stage. Information is being actively solicited. We will include local merchants, service organizations, schools and government. For this, we need the following:

- Your name
- Your organization name
- Address
- Phone number
- E-mail address and URL (if available)
- Calendar of events
- Mission statement

If your group is actively seeking new members or has upcoming activities, please give as much information as available. Photos of members/staff, group activities/past events may also be submitted, but will be used as space allows. Photos will be returned.

A calendar of events is planned to help coordinate the various activities held in Vernonia, and assist out of town guests in planning visits to our home. Please help the committee by providing as much information as possible such as dates of events, deadlines for participation and if additional participants are being sought.

We hope that you, our Community, will see the promise in this endeavor. The web site will be an ongoing, exciting project. To be included in this web site, or if you have any questions, write to:

Councilor Cindy Ball
c/o Vernonia City Hall
919 Bridge Street

Vernonia Friendship Jamboree
August 7, 8 & 9, 1998