

Parade, barbecue, music and fireworks for the 4th

Vernonia's traditional Independence Day celebration will include a children's parade, band music, hot dogs and hamburgers, and, of course, a rousing finale of fireworks.

The parade will start at 7:30 p.m., traveling along Bridge Street from Weed Avenue to



Washington Grade School. There are no entry fees and anyone who wants to join in with appropriately decorated bikes, horses, wagons or whatever, is invited to gather at Weed Ave and Bridge Street at 7:00 p.m. Parents may help, or accompany their children. In fact, children of all ages (0-80?), are welcome to celebrate Independence Day by joining the parade.

The Booster Barbecue will start at 6:00 p.m., in the back parking lot between Vernonia High School and WGS, and

continue until the fireworks start. All proceeds will go toward construction of a new concession stand at VHS and continued support of school activities.

Bring your blankets and lawn chairs to enjoy the Upper Nehalem Dixieland Band, which will entertain with lively music starting at 8:00 p.m. This group of local musicians will keep everyone happily moving until it's too dark to see the music—which will be near the time for fireworks.

The pyrotechnical display

will elicit oohs and aahs just as soon as it is dark enough. The whole show will be operated by certified local technicians who donate their services.

There is no cost for the great fireworks show, but members of Vernonia Pride will be passing through the crowd seeking donations to help pay the several thousand dollars needed for the display.

People are advised to leave their own fireworks at home because they will not be allowed to use them at the community gathering.

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Ready for Summer...



Jeff Burch and other Vernonia Public Works employees found lots of hands eagerly wanting to help install the dam on the city's Rock Creek Swimming Pool. This annual rite of summer was just in time for last week's hot weather.

Curriculum Council leads way to change

This is the first in a series on how the Vernonia School District is working to bring new state standards into the classrooms.

Oregon expects more of its students. It expects students to master not only the traditional basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, but also advanced mathematics, advanced science and the ability to apply academic knowledge in practical ways.

The Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century, passed by the state legislature in 1991, calls on schools to hold students accountable for higher academic standards. Students will be required to demonstrate what they know and can do through complex assignments and periodic tests.

Testing will occur to see whether students are meeting the benchmarks at each level because they must work toward a Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) in the tenth grade and a Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM) in order to graduate.

Now, it's up to each school district to help its students meet those standards.

Six Vernonia teachers and one administrator have been working on the curriculum that students will need to be successful. And because curriculum is the backbone of the program, it must provide continuity to support learning from kindergarten through high school.

The teachers who comprise the Curriculum Council cover all grade levels: Mary Miller teaches first grade; Rosemary Lardon has fourth grade; Eileen Grady, sixth grade; Robyn Cochran, junior high English; Kurt Victor, high school science; Sheri Boyd, high school math.

Working with the teachers is administrator Mike Durbin, who will be high school principal next year.

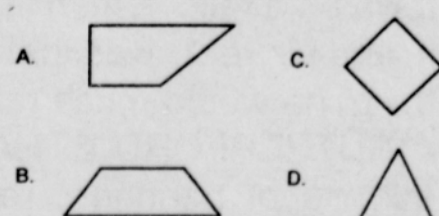
Using math as an example of curriculum continuity, what the curriculum council must do is develop a path that takes a primary student from understanding what a number is, to the level of a high school senior who can not only make accurate computations, but can apply basic knowledge of how math works and, at the same time, explain the process used.

That "explanation" component is another important part of the whole process called "Writing through the curriculum." No matter what the subject is, or at what grade level, Vernonia students will be writing.

They will write in composition, of course. But they will also write in math, in science, in health, in social studies...in every subject and at every level.

But, back to mathematics. Here is a sample third grade question provided by the Oregon Department of Education:

Three of the following figures could be folded in the middle, making two equal halves. One figure could not have two equal sides. Which one?



The goal is for students to identify properties of geometric figures and combinations of shapes as part of the basic understanding of mathematics.

Incidentally, if you don't know the answer, ask your kids. If they don't know, it's a good starting place.

City cracks down on violations

The City of Vernonia is serious about enforcing regulations regarding riparian setbacks, wetlands and earth fill, as Stop Work orders from both Columbia County and the Oregon Division of Lands have emphasized to at least one local resident.

Vernonia resident and businessman Rob Richards, who had been using earthfill to raise the level of low-lying commercial property that is bounded by Rose Avenue, Bridge Street and Bear Creek, ignored a verbal order from the city to stop work until he obtained permits to fill and grade.

State inspectors called in by the city determined that a fill permit was required; the state also ordered Richards to remove brushy debris he had

dumped in Bear Creek. Columbia County, which regulates commercial properties, also required him to obtain a grading permit.

Additional requirements include construction of a site-obscuring, six-foot fence running parallel to the creek, with a 50-foot setback, as well as between the commercial lot Richards is developing and adjacent residential property that he also owns.

When clearing trees from the property, Richards also removed trees on the city-owned right-of-way. So, in addition to a penalty that will double the cost of the approximately \$40.00 permit fee, he must plant replacement trees.

"Property owners need to be aware of requirements," said

Vernonia administrator Gordon Zimmerman, who explained that a 50-foot riparian setback is required along streams with a flow of less than 750 cubic feet per second (cfs), such as Bear Creek. Water flow greater than 750 cfs [Rock Creek and the Nehalem River] requires a 75-foot setback.

Wetlands delineation is also required in city regulations. In order to avoid possible financial penalties and any delay in development, property owners are advised to obtain copies of city regulations, which incorporate county and state requirements. Building requirements, permit information and city regulations are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Vernonia City Hall, 919 Bridge Street.