



VHS students get, and give, a practical lesson in government

State legislators, in Salem for a special budget session, were targets of a hands-on lesson in government and current events...taught by a bus-load of Vernonia High School students.

Accompanied by teachers Steve Calhoun and Patty Dickens, the students attended the budget-balancing session to deliver a message to state senators and representatives about the negative effects of further reductions in educational support.

The special session ended in a stalemate, with no agreement between the governor and the legislature. Hearings have started and another session will be convened to resume negotiations.

Three Vernonia teams tackle competition in BPA Science Bowl

Leaving Vernonia at 5:30 a.m., seventeen junior high school students from Washington Grade School accompanied junior high science teacher Chris McNeill to the Annual Middle School Science Bowl, where they joined more than 150 middle school students from Washington and Oregon on February 9 at the Vancouver, Wash., campus of Washington State University. This event is sponsored by Bonneville Power, among others, and is run by volunteer employees of Bonneville.

The top two teams from the regional event will travel to Washington, D.C. in March to vie with teams from throughout the nation in the first national middle school championship.

Like their athletic peers, Science Bowl participants have

been in training, building their skills, sharpening their wits and perfecting their team strategies. The BPA Science Bowl is one of the few events in which students can meet their academic counterparts from other schools, flex their intellectual brawn and be acknowledged for their achievement.

The tournament-style academic competition challenges and recognizes students' knowledge of science, math, computer technology and scientific current events. Teams of students engage in a round robin competition in the morning. Usually, four rounds are played and teams winning the most rounds advance into the afternoon double elimination.

Each match consists of a timed session in which a moderator asks questions which

may be answered by any student on either team. The question-and-answer format competition is modeled after television game shows, using a lock-out buzzer system. Students are recognized then given the opportunity to respond. With a correct answer, the team is awarded four points and the opportunity to answer a bonus question for an additional ten points with another correct an-

swer. The team with the most points at the end of the session is the winner of that match.

Each participating school builds its own teams consisting of four student contestants and two alternates each. Washington Junior High entered three teams this year. The A and B teams both qualified for the double elimination, winning three and four rounds, respectively. The C team didn't do as well and was eliminated in the morning competition. However, the C team was all seventh graders, whose competition was entirely A teams composed of eighth graders.

Afternoon matches proved to be difficult, as WGS's A and B teams were both eliminated after three rounds, winning one and losing two. This resulted in a finish tied for twelfth place.

Participating in the competition for Vernonia were Ben

Schorzman, Damon McNeill, Kevin Johnston, Sam Thornton, Jacob Hales and Alex Bittinger on the A team. The B team consisted of John Fitch, Zach Serafin, Paul Ogden, Dalen Lee, Seth Brock and Jessica Tarrence. On the C team were Amber Abney, Sam Sears, Brent Thompson, Ryan Peets and Nick Hammons. Only Schorzman and Thornton are in the eighth grade, all of the others are in seventh grade.

Receiving individual honors was John Fitch for answering 25 questions. Ben Schorzman answered 16 and missed an individual award by one answer.

McNeill was very pleased with the students' performance and looks forward to next year, when most of the students will be eighth graders.

The BPA Science Bowl is the largest and oldest regional competition in the nation.

Mist School schedules "Mad Science Read-A-Thon for science program

It is not too late to sponsor a reader for the first ever Mist Grade School Mad Science Read-A-Thon Fundraiser! The event kicks off March 2 (Dr. Seuss' birthday) and ends March 10. During this nine day period, students will be given credit for each hour they read outside of regular classroom time. They will be reading to raise money for Mad Science,

an eight week, hands-on science program that will begin at Mist Grade School after spring break.

Sponsor an individual Mist Grade School student reader by signing their pledge sheet or by phoning Mist Grade School at 503-755-2486. Pledge an amount per hour or a fixed amount.

Here are some sample questions:

PHYSICS, Multiple Choice: The random movement of dust particles in a room is an example of

- (W) Inelastic collisions.
- (X) Elastic collisions.
- (Y) Brownian motion.
- (Z) Vortexes.

ANSWER: (Y) Brownian Motion

CHEMISTRY, Multiple Choice: Crystals of ice are

- (W) isometric.
- (X) tetragonal.
- (Y) hexagonal.
- (Z) orthorhombic

ANSWER: (Y) hexagonal

EARTH SCIENCES, Multiple Choice: Approximately how many known minerals are there on Earth?

- (W) 400
- (X) 2,000
- (Y) 4,000
- (Z) 10,000

ANSWER: (Y) 4000

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