

Students will see many staff changes

Vernonia junior high and high school will see many changes this year, with the addition of several new teachers, the resignation of former principal Mike Durbin and a leave of absence for counselor Jill Griffin. Superintendent Mike Funderburg told the board that he expects all positions to be filled prior to the beginning of school. Several of the new hires are experienced teachers whose previous positions were eliminated due to the school-funding crisis.

Teachers Scott Finlay and Judy Benson, and middle school counselor Robyn Stein have left the district for positions closer to their homes, reluctantly, according to their letters of resignation. Byron Brown, who had been teaching seventh and eighth grade social studies, will transfer to the high school, which enabled the district to recall Justin Ward, the only district teacher laid off due to budget cuts. Ward will fill the position vacated by Benson.

New hires confirmed by the board at their August 14 meeting include the following:

— Doran Lower, HS Business Education, whose position was cut after 10 years at Central Catholic HS.

— Robert Shannon, HS Mu-

Vernonia woman earns place on UO Dean's List

Among the nearly 1,900 University of Oregon students named to the deans' lists for scholastic achievement during spring term of the 2002-2003 school year, is Hadassah Elizabeth Galey of Vernonia, a sophomore international studies major.

UO deans' lists are compiled for fall, winter and spring terms during each school year. All undergraduate and postbaccalaureate students, including National Student Exchange students, are eligible.

To qualify, students must have completed 12 or more graded credits for the term with a minimum grade-point average of 3.75 on a scale having 4.0 as a straight-A average.

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sic, a new teacher who has been a substitute in Beaverton with a wide variety of experience, including work with drama productions.

— Ted Aubin, JHS Social Studies, in his first teaching position, is a former student of Funderburg's in Sandy.

— Shanna Sexton, Elementary Special Education, comes to the district from Utah.

— Jean Riley, HS Science, another lay-off victim, is from Libby, Montana, and holds multiple certification in science, math and social studies.

Funderburg told the board that he was surprised at the number and quality of applicants for the middle school principal position vacated by Mike Durbin. (Durbin would have been middle school principal in 2003-2004, but has taken a position as principal at Gaston High School.) Nathan Underwood was selected from about 20 applicants. Underwood finished his administrative internship in Beaverton last year and, Funderburg said, when he called the school to check Underwood's references the school secretary gave him a glowing review. Funderburg laughingly told the board that, since the secretaries run the

school, her reference was good enough. Aside from that, all of Underwood's references were positive and at the interview he seemed the best candidate to pursue the goals of the district. Jim Krahn, board chair and part of the interview team, said he was excited about having a young, enthusiastic administrator.

Test Scores Reviewed

Funderburg briefly reviewed both state testing scores and the designations received by district schools under the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). He reminded the board that, last year, he predicted Vernonia schools would score poorly in the 2002-2003 school year, but that it was too late to make dramatic improvements in academics, especially in the midst of a funding crisis. He said that the district has great teachers, but that more time would have to be focused on academic achievement. "There is a lot we can do between now and January," Funderburg said, when state assessments begin, to improve test scores. There will be weekly in-service training for staff, with the focus on methods to

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In the Service

Levi H. Brown

Army Spec. Levi H. Brown is one of 250 soldiers assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division (Light) who returned to Schofield Barracks, Oahu, Hawaii, after being deployed to support the mission of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

While deployed, the soldiers served at various areas of responsibility locations and were assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division or the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). Some of the soldiers received Combat Infantryman Badges and combat patches from their adoptive units.

Brown is an infantryman and has been in the service for more than two years.

A 1997 graduate of Vernonia High School, he is the son of Grant C. Brown of Vernonia.

Ian D. Johnson

Army Pvt. Ian D. Johnson has graduated from basic combat military training at Fort Sill, Lawton, Oklahoma.

During the eight weeks of training, the soldier studied the Army mission and received instruction in drill and ceremonies, rifle marksmanship, weapons, map reading, tactics, armed and unarmed combat, military courtesy, military justice, physical fitness, first aid, Army history, core values and traditions, and special training in human relations.

Johnson is the son of Claire A. and George W. Schryer of Banks.

Sign-up time for Little Guy Football

Vernonia Little Guy Football is now taking sign-ups for youngsters in third through sixth grades.

Coaches and staff of any kind are also needed.

For more information, call 503-429-0314.

Message to the Community

Because of misconceptions regarding decisions and actions within the Vernonia School District, the district's board of directors is publishing the following statement to help make clear that the board sets policy and it is the responsibility of the staff to implement that policy.

During the past school year the Vernonia School District participated in a strategic planning process to identify our vision and guiding principles. The goal setting process will help us to develop a more positive direction, atmosphere, and environment for all students and staff. The 2003-04 school year will have many changes in personnel and policies. The board of education feels it is imperative that the district goals are a focus to create school and district improvement. With a set of unified guidelines, everyone will achieve and succeed.

The Vernonia School District Board of Directors requires the building and district administration to follow these guidelines:

1. All staff must work together as a team.
2. Every student and staff member will be held accountable for their actions and decisions.
3. All students and staff will demonstrate acceptable behavior. There will be consequences for unacceptable behavior. Staff, students, and visitors will be respectful of each other and school property.
4. Communication must occur between students, staff, parents, and the community.
5. All staff concerns will be handled at the lowest possible level.

The board goals will be implemented in a professional manner within the boundaries of state and federal laws, board policies, and employee contracts. It is the belief of the board that the implementation of these requirements will result in higher student academic achievement and an environment in which all can grow and succeed.

Vernonia School District Board of Directors
August 14, 2003

Adoptive, foster families needed

An informal meeting regarding adoption will be held September 9, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Sponsored by DHS Child Welfare, it will be held at the State Office Complex at 500 N Hwy 30, St. Helens, in Conference Room A.

An adoptive family and a foster family will be available to answer questions about their experiences.

Those interested in being adoptive or foster parents must attend pre-service training to learn more about the children being placed. The training will be held Tuesday evenings from Sept. 16 through October 14.

On any given day, there are between 300 and 350 children in Oregon waiting for an adoptive family. In Columbia County, alone, there are over 80 children in substitute care, some who will be returned to their parents or relatives and some who will need adoptive families.

Single, married or divorced people of all ages, lifestyles, religions, ethnicities and incomes, living in houses or

apartments, working in or out of the home, are eligible to adopt.

For more information regarding adoption, call Sandy McMillan at 800-428-2546, ext. 308. Call Gail Mitchell at 800-428-2546, ext. 317 for information regarding foster care.

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