

Chalk Talk

Chalk Talk presents a variety of information about Vernonia schools. It is written by a variety of staff members and will appear monthly. This month's Chalk Talk was written by Curt Scholl, Principal of VHS.

The start of the 2003-2004 school year at the high school has been filled with changes. We have several new faces in the Vernonia School District this year to call VHS home: Sally Davidson, Language Arts/Social Studies teacher; Jean Riley, Science teacher; Doran Lower, Business/Alternative Education teacher; Robert Shannon, Music/Drama/Speech teacher; Virginia Rose, Counselor; Dawn Titus, Secretary; and myself as the Principal. Byron Brown, Social Studies teacher and Kathi Fetsch, Head Secretary are also new to VHS, but not to the Vernonia School District. They both come to us from WGS. There have been a lot of new faces to get to know and the students and staff responded very well to the challenges of the new school year.

Along with the new faces, there is a new schedule at VHS. We are on a seven-period modified block, and like any new schedule, it is taking both students and staff some time to adjust. Everybody seems to be settling in at this point, and as VHS student Eric Schmidlin reported at the last school board meeting, "it gives us an extra day to do our homework."

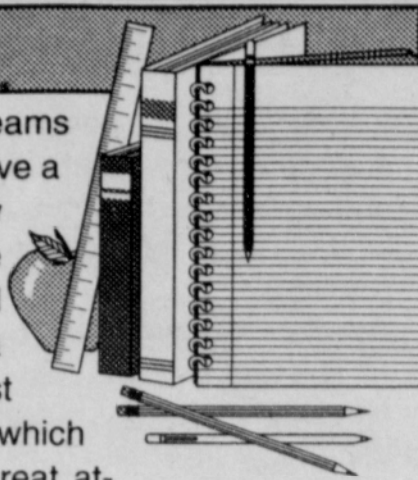
Our students are very active. We have had a higher than average turnout for both our volley-

ball and football teams this year. We also have a club cross country team that is active this year. Our band program provided a "pep" band for our last home football game, which helped to create a great atmosphere for our student athletes and the fans who were there to support the team. Currently, we are in the middle of homecoming week and our students are active in the various homecoming activities.

As fall is turning to winter, there are several events/dates that both parents and students should put on their calendars. The end of the first nine-week grading period is on October 31st. There is no school on this day so teachers can get their grades into the system and we can get them out to the parents and our students. The grades should be to the parents by Wednesday, November 5th. There is a half-day of school on Thursday, November 6th and no school on Friday, November 7th, while parent-teacher conferences are taking place.

Other up-coming events include the Fall Sports Dessert on Tuesday, November 18th and the Fall Band and Choir Concert on Thursday, November 20th.

This is what is going on at VHS. I would like to thank both the students and staff for their hard work so far this year and the community for all of their support.



Student behavior is improving

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an effort to improve. He told the board that the staff has presented a united front, clearly and uniformly enforcing rules. Scholl said that he believes that the climate has started to change in a positive direction.

Anne Kingsley, now principal for the grades K-3 and Mist, brought materials used by students as part of the new math curriculum. She told the board that these hands-on manipulatives are very popular with students, who use them for math activities. An added bonus is that, because they are actually doing something, students can practice language skills by writing about their experience after they complete an activity. Parents at Lincoln have asked a PTA representative to come and discuss re-joining the group. Kingsley told the board that she will be beginning a First Friday Coffee as an opportunity for parents to come in and meet with her and the teachers in an informal way. Kingsley told the board that Randal Aultman has been substituting at Mist while Joanie Jones is recovering from emergency surgery. Jones is expected back soon to teach the 17 students enrolled at Mist in grades K-5.

Enrollment trends

District enrollment is slightly higher than last year, Funderburg reported, as projected. State school funds are based on adjusted daily membership, so increasing or decreasing enrollment affects the amount received. However, he told the board that class sizes are continuing to get smaller. Randy Hansen asked Funderburg about the future implications of declining enrollment. Funderburg told the board that if the trend continues, less money would be received from the state over time. He said that the board might want to consider developing a biennial budget, rather than the annual format currently used.

In other business, the board:

- Approved a job description for the activities director.
- Awarded assistant coach contracts to Ted Aubin (JH Football), Deborah Aeh (JH Volleyball), and Kelly Roberts (HS Volleyball).
- Thanked Coca-Cola for funds to install an electronic reader board at no cost to the district.

Cruiser club sets Vernonia run

The Tualatin Valley Cruiser Club (TVCC) will hold a PT Cruiser Cruise-In to Vernonia on Saturday, October 25. Participants will begin the trip from Cornelius, leaving at 9:00 a.m. to cruise to Vernonia.

TVCC is the largest PT club in the Northwest, with over 280 members. The club is all about having fun, meeting new people and creating great memories. TVCC sponsors numerous PT events and cruises, year around, and supports all the communities in the metro and surrounding area. The club participates in numerous parades throughout the year, including St. Patrick's Day and 4th of July Parades in Hillsboro, Christmas Parade in Portland and many others.

Volunteers encouraged

Funderburg told the board that the district encourages people to volunteer at the school and has instituted an application process that allows the district to conduct background checks on prospective volunteers. All volunteers must be approved through the process even if they have previously worked for the district. About 40 people have been approved, to date, according to Funderburg.

Parent/Teacher Association starts

The first meeting of the Vernonia Parent Teacher Community Association was held Monday, October 13, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was informational, as well as the official start of the Vernonia PTCA.

Meetings will be on the second Monday of each month at Washington Grade School.

For more information, call Camrin Eyrrick at 503-429-0470.

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**Treat yourself
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PARENTS: Be sure your child's costume allows freedom of movement and good visibility. It should be a light color or have reflective strips on it. If possible, have children trick or treat before dark. If you will not be with your children, insist on an agreed route.

KIDS: Stay where you know people. Go only to houses with lights on. Eat your treats ONLY after your parents have checked them. Watch for cars. Tell your parents about anything that scares you or makes you feel uncomfortable.

We offer these Halloween Safety Tips for parents and children so your holiday can be safe and fun.

Vernonia Police Department
503-429-7335



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