

## Bits & Bites

By Jacqueline Ramsay



Ahh – time to rest, reflect and relax with a cookie and a cup of hot chocolate. Christmas has come and gone. Only the trimmings and leftovers remain. Company's gone, too, so I'll wait till next year to clean house. The rain may hang around with its muddy feet a while longer. Did Santa find you? He blew through Portland a night early leaving trash cans, leaves and tree branches all over the place.

Have you ever played the parlor game (that's an old term) "Cranium"? I'm too old for it or completely out of the loop. I'd rather pay Rummikub or Scrabble.

Remember when you made "T.V. Scramble"? Now you buy Snack Mix. How long has it been since you made your own "Prune Cordial," or your own "Kahlua," "Hot Buttered Rum mix" or even your own "Russian Tea Mix"? Well – here's a Holiday Recipe for Happiness.

- 4 cups of Love
- 2 cups of Loyalty
- 3 cups of Forgiveness
- 5 spoons of Hope
- 2 spoons of Tenderness
- 4 quarts of Faith
- 1 barrel of Laughter

Take Love and Loyalty, mix thoroughly with Faith, blend with Tenderness, Kindness, and Understanding. Sprinkle with abundant Laughter. Bake it with Sunshine. Serve daily with generous helpings of Love.

The ducks at the Lake say "Thank You" to all that have provided them with cracked corn this winter. Larry says those who want to can bring the corn and he can store it in his shed. They need the cracked corn for body heat. Bread is good but does not produce the right nutrition. Are the birds and flowers confused or what? The Red-winged Blackbirds are acting and flitting like Spring is here. The Wild Carrot is coming up all over the place and the Dandelions are blooming.

A Happy New Year to all ex-Vernonians that have moved but keep up on the local goings-on by subscribing to The Independent. I appreciate hearing from all of you.

## Vernonia Sports Report

### Boys Basketball

It took the Loggers ten tries, but they finally won their first game. In the consolation game of the Santiam Tournament they beat the Monroe Dragons 61-50. Through the nine game losing streak, the Loggers fought hard, but always fell behind because of careless play. Coach Matt Blair told the team after one frustrating loss that the only way they were going to get better was by focusing on the positives, because you don't get better by thinking about the negatives.

December 9, they traveled to Gaston, and lost 73-62. They came back from 33 down, but could not pull it out. Senior Ben Schorzman led all scorers with 26 points. December 16-17, they played in the Cougar Classic, a four team tournament hosted by Gervais, with Clatskanie, Catlin Gabel, and the Loggers. In the first game Vernonia lost 65-50 to Gervais, with Schorzman and Tim Hein scoring 21 and 15 points, respectively. In the second match-up, they faced Catlin Gabel for the second time this season. The Eagles again prevailed, winning 53-37. Schorzman (15 points) and Hein (13 points) again led the team in scoring. Schorzman was also named a "Cougar Classic All-Star" for his efforts.

The last game before Christmas was played December 20,

at home against the Knappa Loggers, the first game of league play for either team. Though it was hard fought, Knappa won 77-44. Schorzman and Hein led the scoring with 17 and 14 points.

In the Santiam Tournament, December 26 and 27, the Loggers lost their first game to the Santiam Wolverines by 19. They won against Monroe, coming back from eight down in the third quarter to take their first lead of the game 43-40. Hein led Vernonia with a 20-point effort.

### Girls Basketball

Non-League games are a time for working out a team's problems so, when they hit league, they will be playing their best basketball. So far, the non-league season for the Lady Loggers has been a learning experience, with many ups and downs. After defeating Southwest Christian, they won two more games, defeating Gaston and Gervais. In their past four games, however, lackluster play has hurt them and they've lost to Clatskanie, Knappa, Santiam, and Monroe.

December 9 they dominated a weak Gaston team, not letting the Greyhounds score until late in the second quarter. The final score was 69-25. Senior Kristin Cota had 15 points, leading a balanced scoring day from the field. Four of the five starters scored in double figures.

At the Cougar Classic, they started off mediocre, but finished strong, defeating Gervais 49-41 to earn a chance at the tournament championship. In a league preview, the Lady Loggers matched up with the Clatskanie Tigers, who had defeated Catlin Gabel the day before. The Tigers won 44-39, but the Loggers face them twice more in league. Junior Joreigh Landers was selected to the All-tournament team for her play during the two days.

In the first game of league play, the girls could not overcome a hustling Knappa team, losing 68-39. Senior Laura Brookins led the team in scoring with 11 points. There will be at least one more match-up between these teams, January 21 at Knappa. At the Santiam tournament, the girls fell behind early and couldn't catch up with the Santiam Wolverines, losing by six. The next night was the

same story; they almost came back, but not quite. They battled the entire game, getting the Monroe Dragons' lead down to four, but lost.

### Wrestling

The wrestlers have been busy the past two weeks, competing in three tournaments and hosting a home meet. Coach Dominic Nardelli is very pleased with the way they've wrestled, too, saying that the way they are improving is very impressive.

December 10 the team traveled to Scio, where they placed fifth in an eight-team tournament. Junior Willie Hansen placed second in the 175-pound division. The Loggers were home the following week, on December 15, wrestling Warrenton and St. Helens' JV team in a dual format. In a disappointing showing, they lost both match ups.

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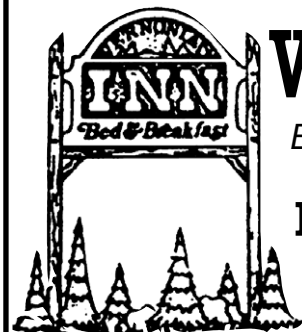
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