

47J adds days to school schedule

The Vernonia School Board spent time at their January 8 meeting discussing the potential budget shortfall that was first brought up at their December meeting. Superintendent Ken Cox told the board that his recommendation, for now, is that any shortfall be made up from the capital reserve fund, if necessary. He said that staff pay-cuts are not needed and that no final decision needs to be made prior to June.

Cox told the board that seven days have now been missed due to weather. The board agreed to use February 13, May 22 and June 10-12 as class days (June 12 would not be a class day for seniors). If

more make-up time is needed they can add five minutes to each day and make up another 13 hours.

Columbia County Commissioner Tony Hyde spoke to the board about the possibility of the school district hiring a federal lobbyist to help move the school replacement project forward. The board unanimously approved up to \$50,000 for this expense, if needed.

The board accepted the resignation of Maintenance Supervisor John Lewis, with his last day of work scheduled to be March 31, 2009.

The next board meeting will be February 12, starting at 6:00 p.m., at the District Office.

Apply now for ag scholarships

The Oregon Agricultural Education Foundation (OAEF) is pleased to announce that applications are available for two scholarship programs for the upcoming 2009-2010 academic year.

Oregon Farm Bureau Memorial Scholarships are open to any Oregon high school graduate preparing for an agriculture or forestry-related career. Students attending institutions outside of Oregon are also eligible. The goal of the OFB Memorial Scholarship program is to "Support students that will have a positive impact on production agriculture and other agriculture-related fields". The deadline for ap-

plications is March 1, 2009.

The Willamette Valley Ag Association, in conjunction with the OAEF, also offers scholarships to college-level juniors, seniors, and graduate students seeking a degree in an agriculture-related field at an Oregon university. The deadline for applications is April 1, 2009.

Scholarship applications and additional information is available on the OAEF page of the Oregon Farm Bureau website at http://www.oregonfb.org/programs/oaef_mem_schol.shtml.

For more information, Contact Dana Eckfield, OAEF Scholarship Coordinator, at dana@oregonfb.org.

Is your baby's name on the top 10 list?

The St. John Medical Center Top 10 Baby Names list features some new names mixed with some old favorites.

"For boys, the number one name is Aidan, which also topped our list last year," said Veronica Hartley of St. John's Labor & Delivery Department in Longview, Washington. "The popularity of Aidan came on rapidly, as it didn't even make our top 10 list three years ago! Some people choose to spell it Aidan, while others prefer Aiden."

Research reveals that Emma has reclaimed the top spot on the list of favorite girl names. Emma was temporarily dethroned last year by Hailey, but Emma is riding high again.

Girls names gaining dramatically in popularity this year include Payton at number 2 and Sophia at number 6, neither of which appeared in last year's top 10.

Here are St. John's top baby names of 2008:

Boys	Girls
1) Aidan	Emma
2) Nathaniel	Payton
3) Alexander	Hailey
4) Braden	Madison
5) Landon	Lilly
6) Luke	Sophia
7) Hunter	Alexis
8) Brody	Addison
9) Conner	Allison
10) David	Alyssa

The list also reveals that some recently popular boy

Chalk Talk

Chalk Talk is a monthly column of information about Vernonia schools. It is written by various staff members. This column was provided by Superintendent Dr. Ken Cox.

We made it! 2008 is behind us and we have been able to dodge Mother Nature's mischief twice so far this year already. I would like to give a special thanks to those who helped us empty our freezers when high water came on New Year's Day and then helped us again on the 3rd to put it back, with a special thanks to Steve Weller who helped coordinate it both times.

Last week was particularly stressful on all of the District staff as we prepared for the worst. I would like to thank the Oregon State Department of Corrections and the inmates who came on Wednesday and helped us load two U-Hauls, a semi, a freezer truck, and sand bag the entire middle school. Then they came back on Thursday and helped put everything back. We of course had our own staff working right along side of them, who put in many extra hours, and I am sure, had some sore muscles to show for it.

We are gathering data about these two events to take to our elected officials and others to show them how important and urgent it is to get new

schools. We are now better prepared than we were a week ago in knowing how to protect our schools and our kids, but we cannot do this two or three times a year forever!

On a more official note, the District is required by law to report to the public on how well we are meeting the standards set by the State of Oregon in OAR 581-22. I shared with the School Board last week the fact that we are indeed meeting all of those standards, with one exception. That exception is our need for a documented library program under the direction of a certified librarian. We have great library assistants who help students and staff take advantage of our current libraries, and our deficiency is primarily a paperwork requirement.

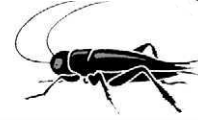
We are documenting how we meet all of the state standards and will have that information available for the public to review by the time we file the assurances with the state at the end of February. Please feel free to stop by the district office and visit about this or any other concerns you might have. Our normal business hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays.



Standing in back is Roger Whitton (on left) who, on January 13, presented a check for \$200 from the Vernonia American Legion to Jerry Butcher for the Vernonia Youth Basketball Association, whose members and coaches are seated.

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