

# Get kids shots before Feb. 18

The new year will be here before we know it, and the Oregon Immunization Program wants to remind parents that now is the time to make sure kids' vaccination records are complete. State law requires that all children in public and private schools, preschools, Head Start and certified child care facilities be up-to-date on their immunizations, or have a religious or medical exemption.

Parents or guardians will receive a letter in late January or early February, 2011, if their child's immunization record shows that he or she has not received the required vaccinations. Children will not be able to attend school or child care starting February 16, 2011, if their records on file show missing immunizations.

"The goal is to make sure children are fully protected against vaccine-preventable diseases. If school and child care shot records are not up-to-date, the child will be sent home," said Lorraine Duncan, Oregon Public Health Division immunization manager.

This year, parents should take note of some new information:

- Hib vaccine requirement: Hib is a severe bacterial disease that affects mostly young children. In recent years, there was a shortage of this vaccine, so children weren't required to

be up-to-date on Hib immunizations to stay in child care and preschool. Hib vaccine, which is now plentiful, is back on the required list for children through age 4.

- Tdap vaccine requirement: Tdap vaccine is required for seventh-, eighth- and ninth-graders. Tdap is a tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough) booster. Whooping cough is a serious health concern in Oregon with more than 255 cases recorded this year. In California, whooping cough is at epidemic levels; there have been about 6,800 cases reported this year, and 10 babies have died.

- Hepatitis A vaccine requirement: The hepatitis A vaccine, which protects against a communicable viral infection, is a two-dose series now required for children 18 months through second grade.

Parents seeking immunizations for their children should contact their health care provider or local health department, or call Oregon SafeNet at 1-800-SAFENET or 1-800-723-3638. No one can be turned away from a local health department because of the inability to pay for required vaccines. Additional information on school immunizations can be found at [www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/imm/school](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/imm/school).

# Live longer with healthy habits

Longevity appears to be more about healthy lifestyle than about genes. A study from the University of Cambridge in England followed middle-aged men and women for 11 years and found non-smokers with the healthiest eating and exercise habits lived longer than people with the worst habits. Another study at the Pacific Health Research Institute in Hawaii followed Japanese-American men for 40 years. This study found those who avoided health risk factors in midlife like smoking, being overweight, excessive drinking and high blood pressure were likely to live longer. Here are some tips for healthy lifestyle habits:

- Stay active and connected. Centenarians are usually active and interested in what's going on in the community and world. Staying connected and

involved keeps your brain working and increases your sense of purpose. Establish a support system and have a daily connection with close friends or family members.

- Exercise your brain and challenge your mind. Stay curious and mentally alert as you age. For instance, solve puzzles, take painting, art, computer or foreign language classes, play bridge, or play an instrument.

- Be positive – keep laughter and humor. Positive thinking helps people reduce stress and

**See Healthy on page 14**

# Chalk Talk

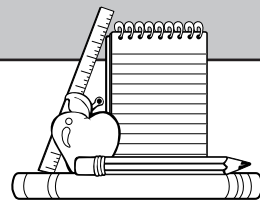
*Chalk Talk is a column of information about Vernonia schools. This column was provided by James Brookins, Special Education Director and Assistant Principal.*

Wow! 2011, and another school year is almost half gone. I hope that everyone was able to get a little rest and relaxation over the Holidays. It is hard for me to believe how fast time has been flying these years. When I arrived in Vernonia in the fall of '93 I was not sure what to expect. From my kids first day here, when they got lost on the Mainline, and what seemed like most of Birkenfeld and Fishhawk turned out to find them, I knew I was in a special place. Through the years I have had a myriad of wonderful experiences, and this coastal hamlet has become home.

Life in the Vernonia school district has not been boring, and will not be so for awhile. In fact, the excitement, anticipation and wonder at what is happening in our schools will only continue to grow. Our community has its challenges, but the bottom line is that it is a great place to raise and educate kids. I believe that our district's staff teaches kids to dream big, and how to plan to achieve those goals. There are hundreds of young adults I know who are successfully working, raising families, and giving back to their communities and nation. The foundation for those lives was built right here.

The foundation for the Vernonia School District's future is being laid right now. All you have to do to understand that is to drive by the new school site, or switch on the webcam, to see that rapid progress has begun. There is also intense work being done by staff right now to make what we do even better as we move into a superior facility. Like many of you I have been through two bouts of very high water. For a long time the schools have been a social center of this community. We are guaranteeing that for at least the next couple centuries that connection will not be threatened again. I cannot tell you how excited I

am to know that: a) There is an end to mod village – it will not have to be built again, and b) The building is now going to match the dreams.



I am honored that the Board and Superintendent have given me a new opportunity to grow and learn as a member of the Vernonia Schools Administration Team. For any who may not know, I now serve the District as Special Education Director, and an Assistant Principal. If you need to find me, I can be reached by calling either the middle or high school, and my office is located with Mrs. Fetherston and Mrs. Harbour in the mods.

I have a ton of new jobs now, and no day is boring. As I attend to special education, and serve Mr. Underwood and Mr. Miller as needed, I work on testing, am a member of the facilities committee, and retain my deep interest in activities and athletics. I thought I worked pretty hard before, but with every new job comes a new learning curve, and mine is pretty steep right now.

When I say to you "Do not hesitate to call or e-mail any staff member about any concern you might have," I know I will not hear an objection from any member of our team. Every single member of the Vernonia staff is here to do the best they can for Vernonia and her kids. There are exciting things happening at every level, far too many for me to list here. Every one of us in the schools is interested in your perspective, and in serving your family better. As we move forward into a very exciting second decade of the 21st century we need you, and we need your input. This is our school, our community, and our future. We need to work together as we refine our vision of exactly what that future will be.

Happy New Year to all of you...

# Bring cans and help senior trip

There will be a pop can drive on January 8, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to benefit the Vernonia High School senior class.

Bring your cans to the covered playshed on the school grounds, and help the VHS senior class raise funds for their class trip.

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# Pet of the Month

*Columbia Humane Society in St. Helens has a variety of wonderful pets available for adoption. Find the pet that's right for you in the shelter at 2084 Oregon Street. Phone 503-397-4353*

*Open Mon - Fri 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, 11 am. to 5 pm.*



Buttons was brought to CHS because his owner had health issues and could no longer take care of him. Buttons was kept inside only. He is very friendly and sweet, plus according to his previous owner Buttons is good with kids and other cats. Please consider adopting Buttons, he deserves a forever home!

*The Columbia Humane Society is a No-Kill non-profit shelter dedicated to helping friends find each other since 1985.*

**This Pet of the Month is Sponsored by:**

**Senator Betsy Johnson**