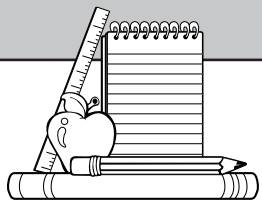


## Chalk Talk

Chalk Talk is a column of information about Vernonia schools. This column was provided by Superintendent Dr. Ken Cox.



Welcome 2012! It's going to be a great year!

In my last article I mentioned making sure that you make some memories with your children over the break and take lots of pictures. I hope some of you were able to do so. I know that Carol and I had a great time visiting our children and grandchildren.

Now that children are back in school, we can get back to our normal weekly routine. I received an email over the break from a company that is trying to get our business. While we are not interested in their program I was interested in the following quote "A study found that the most common trait of high school National Merit Scholars was that they grew up eating dinner together as a family." They did point me to some interesting research. That research (the 2010 CASA family dinners report) states that 72% of teens think that eating dinner frequently with their parents is very or fairly important. It goes on to state that, compared to teens who have frequent family dinners, those who have infrequent family dinners are:

- Twice as likely to have used tobacco;
- Almost twice as likely to have used alcohol; and
- One and half times likelier to have used marijuana.

Now these are statistics and we all know that you can use statistics to 'stretch' the truth, but this is one that just makes sense. If we, as parents, spend quality time with our children around the dinner table instead of in front of the television, we will end up asking them about their school experiences and be better able to tell when things change in their lives. As parents, we are responsible for now keeping our children fed and warm, and we must take notice of and strive to meet their social and emotional needs as well. Most often this means taking the time to listen, or more accurately, making the time and providing the opportunity, so we can listen to our children.

Now that we are beginning to get back into our normal routine, let's not forget that it is a new year and that we can change. How many times did you eat dinner together as a family this week? Is next week going to be the same, or are you going to do better? We can always do better, at everything we do. All we have to do, is try our best.

## WIC staff plans January clinic schedule

The Public Health WIC staff will hold travel clinics in Columbia County January 10-13 with the education focus on Vitamins and Minerals. All clinics are from 9:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. for recertification of clients and new applicants for the Women, Infants and Children's (WIC) Federal food program.

The travel date for Vernonia is Friday, January 13.

WIC sees clients throughout the month by appointment in the St. Helens office. The class schedule in St. Helens has expanded to include new sessions for age-level feeding.

WIC program manager Jana Mann said that the new classes will give WIC parents more variety, along with the focus classes each month.

Clients may opt to attend one of these new feeding classes: Feeding at 3-6 months Jan. 6; 9-12 months, Jan. 19; 15-18 months, Jan. 20; 21-24 months Jan. 27; 3-5 years, Jan. 24.

Those wishing an appointment can call the WIC Clerk at 503-397-4651 ext 2015.

To accommodate clients, the WIC clinic will extend to 7 p.m. on January 25. Late clinic is on

the last Wednesday of each month.

The Public Health office at 2370 Gable Road in St. Helens, will be closed on Monday, January 16 for Martin Luther King Day.

Women who are expecting babies or who are nursing infants may receive vouchers for nutritious foods, if eligible by income, health risks and nutritional needs. Infants who are not breastfeeding may receive formula vouchers. Children 5 years old or younger may receive food vouchers quarterly.

## Student Anthology submissions wanted

Honoring Our Rivers: A Student Anthology, announced a final call for submissions for the 2012 publication of the anthology. A project of the Willamette Partnership, Honoring Our Rivers is intended to stimulate awareness of Oregon's fragile watersheds – including the waters, land, plants, animals, and habitats – as well as celebrate and inspire student works. The anthology includes original student art, poems, essays, photographs, and drawings focusing on the relationship between people and watersheds.

"We were overwhelmed by the number and quality of submissions we received in 2011, and are looking forward to increasing the geographic and ethnic diversity of the voices represented in 2012," says

Bobby Cochran, executive director of the Willamette Partnership.

With its combination of art and literature, diverse range of voices, and central focus on environmental connections, the Honoring Our Rivers anthology represents a uniquely Oregon publication. The Anthology was first published in 1999 as a collaboration between Salem educators and Willamette River enthusiasts. Each year, a panel of judges selects the most whimsical, charming and thought provoking submissions to publish in the anthology with invited writers such as Ursula LeGuin, Barry Lopez, and Kathleen Dean Moore.

Sponsors of the anthology have included The Eugene Water & Electric Board, Wild-

wood/Mahonia, Clean Water Services, and the City of Portland. Partners include: SOLV, The Freshwater Trust, the Oregon Environmental Council, and Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative.

How to Submit an Entry for the 2012 Anthology: All students, K-college, are eligible to submit their original works (literary or artwork) between now and January 31, 2012. Literary works can include fiction, poetry or essays. Artwork, including black and white photography, sketches or drawings, is encouraged either as a separate submission or as an aid in clarifying and supporting written work. Applications can be found at [www.honoringourrivers.org](http://www.honoringourrivers.org) or by calling Sarah Schra at 503-585-8789.

## VHS wrestling team takes first at Dec. 28 tourney

The Vernonia wrestling team took first place at the Clatskanie Winter Wrestling Classic tournament on December 28.

Vernonia won with 169 points. Cascade JV took second place with 163.5 points, followed by Wahkiakum in third

with 159 points. Twelve teams competed in the tournament.

## Gilbertson is on OSU honor roll

Names of students who have made the Scholastic Honor Roll Fall term have been announced by Oregon State University. A total of 674 students earned straight-A (4.0). Another 3,283 earned a B-plus (3.5) or better to make the listing. To be on the Honor Roll, students must carry at least 12 graded hours of course work.

Students on the Honor Roll included Brandon Gilbertson of Vernonia with a 3.5 or better. Gilbertson is a Freshman, studying Athletic Training.

### Pet of the Month

Find the pet that's right for you at the Columbia Humane Society  
2084 Oregon Street, St. Helens. Phone 503-397-4353  
Open Mon - Fri 1 pm to 5 pm & Saturday, 11 am to 5 pm

Orange, gray & white Tabby mix



Heaven was picked up as a stray and we have no history about her past. We estimate she is about 5 years old. She is friendly and enjoys attention. She is also quite independent and can entertain herself by watching birds and squirrels from her window and taking naps. She would be a good indoor/outdoor cat. Heaven likes to give love nibbles, therefore it's recommended that her new home has no small children. Come and visit Heaven soon, she has been waiting for a long time.

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**

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