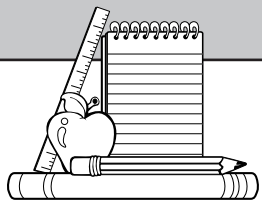


Chalk Talk

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



We have occupancy! As of 9:15 Monday morning (August 13th) we received a Temporary Occupancy Permit. We still have some final items to get checked off before we can use the kitchen, and the big gym and wrestling room are still under construction, but by the time you read this some of our staff will be in the building getting their rooms ready. It has begun!

To help us get ready for the Grand Opening at 10:00 a.m. on the 21st, Lisa Edgar (owner of Vernonia Florist), is organizing an "Adopt-a-Teacher" day on Friday, August 17th, giving the community an opportunity to help our teachers organize their classrooms prior to the big day next Tuesday. Setting up a classroom prior to school starting is always a task for any teacher but this year it is especially challenging for our staff. With the help of Lisa's endeavors we are hoping that it will make things a little easier on them. If you are interested in helping out please contact Lisa at Vernonia Florist at 503 429-2000. Updates can be found on the Vernonia Community Bulletin Facebook page. Children 12 and older are also welcome to help, if they come with an adult.

We look forward to meeting with everyone on the 21st, either at the ribbon cutting ceremony at 10:00 a.m. or at the first Town Hall in our new building from 5:30 – 7:30 that same evening. See you there!

Drive carefully once school starts after Labor Day

Be prepared for a longer commute due to the addition of school buses being out and about, and increased vehicular driving to school. In Vernonia, all of this will be further complicated by the new school location and the change in traffic patterns on O-A hill.

Expect the unexpected, watch for children darting out into the street or riding their bicycles, especially during the dark hours of the morning.

Be patient and observe the law when approaching or following a school bus that activates its stop arm for loading and unloading children.

Be very mindful of intersections where children are prone to gather for the bus or at designated bus stops.

When traveling in or around areas where schools are located, be aware that the speed limit is 20 mph.

School Board approves a locker fee

The new school project manager, Steve Effros, gave the Vernonia School Board good news at their August 9 meeting, telling them that the final inspection on the new school was scheduled for August 10 (see Chalk Talk for more information on the occupancy permit).

Shelley Cota gave a transportation report, telling the board that Curl's Transportation would have five large buses (one more than last year) so they could run a Scappoose/Vernonia Hwy. route, then through Stoney Pt. Rd. with courtesy stops on State Ave. There are nine drivers and five substitutes, none of whom are

new or in training. As followup to Cota's report, Superintendent Ken Cox reported that the district will have only morning kindergarten. The kindergartners will be in two blended classrooms with first grade students. In the afternoons, after the kindergartners go home, the first grade class size will be smaller.

The board approved a \$5.00 locker fee for all middle school and high school students for the 2012-2013 school year, then approved surplusings any fire extinguishers from the old

school buildings that are not needed at the new school.

After returning from an executive session (closed to the public), the board unanimously passed a motion to award an extra duty contract to Superintendent Cox, for the next school year, in the amount of \$4,000.

The first day of school for the 2012-2013 school year will be September 4.

The next school board meeting will be held September 13, starting at 6:00 p.m. in the district office.

Come help cheerleaders clean up at Greenman Field on August 30

VHS Cheerleaders will be hosting a clean up day, August 30 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., at Greenman Field to get ready for the 2012 Football Season.

A grant from True Value Hardware has enabled the group to get paint and supplies.

The cheerleaders have already cleaned up and prepped

the field and stadium, and are now looking for community help in finishing up the project.

Please gather in the stands at 6:00 p.m. if you are able to help. For additional information, contact Cheer Coach Denise Way at cheercoach dee@gmail.com or Betsy Miller at bmillervsd.k12.or.us

— CORRECTION —

In the last issue, it was incorrectly reported that Cari Levenseller would be the Vice-chair of the Vernonia School Board. The correct information is that Bill Langmaid was voted in as Vice-chair.

The Independent apologizes for this error.

New CCO named for Columbia County

Five new Coordinated Care Organizations will begin serving Oregon Health Plan members in September, the Oregon Health Authority announced recently.

The new CCOs will provide services for OHP members in 22 counties. In total, there are 13 Coordinated Care Organizations serving 33 counties in the state. By September 1 nearly 500,000 adults and children – the majority of Oregon Health Plan members – will have access to a CCO.

"In Oregon we are showing that it is possible to build a health care system around patients and their providers for better health and reduced costs," said Governor John Kitzhaber. "These new Coordinated Care Organizations will be leading the way for everyone in our state."

Oregon Coordinated Care Organizations to start September 1:

- Columbia Pacific Coordinated Care Organization, LLC – All of Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties. Parts of Coos and Douglas counties.

- Tri-County Medicaid Collaborative – Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties.

To see the full list of Coordinated Care Organizations, go to www.health.oregon.gov.

Under Coordinated Care Organizations, benefits for Oregon Health Plan clients will not change. The vision of CCOs is to allow providers better ways to address health care problems.

Through a waiver from the federal government, Oregon has flexibility to provide more preventive care and disease management than has been possible under traditional Medicaid guidelines. Research shows that 80 percent of health care costs are driven by 20 percent of patients, many with chronic conditions such as

heart disease, diabetes and serious mental illness. CCOs will have the ability to hire community-based health workers to help people manage their conditions, ensure they are taking appropriate medications, and avoid unnecessary acute or emergency care. Oregon has agreed to reduce Medicaid inflation by 2 percentage points within two years by focusing on improving the health of clients to reduce waste, inefficiency, and unnecessary expenditures.

OHP members will receive personal notification of their new Coordinated Care Organization, and they do not need to take any action. More information for members and providers can be found at health.oregon.gov.

Watershed Council to meet Aug. 23

The Upper Nehalem Watershed Council Steering Committee will meet on August 23, 6:30 p.m. at the Vernonia Grange Hall, 375 North St. The public is welcome to attend.

For more information see unwc.nehalem.org or call the UNWC at 503-429-0869, or email steve@nehalem.org.

Vernonia Veterinary Clinic

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