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Vernonia Logger Stadium Campaign

BLEACHER REPORT

June 2021



Logger Stadium Campaign Passed \$100,000 Goal

Momentum is growing for the school sports complex project which would build a concession stand/restroom, covered seating, and team rooms

By: Scott Laird

The campaign to raise funds to build a covered seating area for Vernonia Logger football, and track and field fans is starting to take shape and just passed its first landmark goal.

The Logger Stadium Steering Committee was excited to announce they have raised over \$100,000 towards the construction of a covered seating area and concession stand at the Vernonia Schools Campus. The project was organized this past October and is quickly gaining traction.

A very generous donation of \$35,000 from a local alumnus, received in April, along with continued donations from businesses, citizens, and other alumni, has pushed the total fundraising effort to \$103,190 and helped energize the campaign.

“Thus far, donations have ranged from \$25 to \$35,000 from 130 donors, with 75% of our donated funds coming from the Vernonia community,” said alumni Jim Eckland, who, along with his wife Kathy have been instrumental in organizing and promoting the effort to complete the school’s sports complex.

The Ecklands, who live in Keizer, Oregon but still have a close attachment to Vernonia, were part of the Vernonia Education Foundation’s efforts to raise funds to build the school, and the softball and baseball fields, by rallying alumni from across the country to get involved; the Alumni Field softball field is named in honor of those efforts.

The total Logger Stadium project, with a 900 seat covered stadium as the centerpiece, is expected to cost over \$1 million, and the committee acknowledges the campaign will likely be a multi-year effort. The committee is currently considering constructing the project in several separate phases that could include the concession stand/restroom facility that would serve the entire outdoor sports complex, the covered seating area, and team rooms for athletes. The committee is staying connected to donors and updating them on the progress of the project through a regular newsletter.

The Logger Stadium Committee, with 22 current members, is made up of mostly local citizens and is co-chaired by Vernonia Schools Athletic Director Gordon Jarman and Jim Eckland. Also participating is Vernonia Boosters President Jason Busch, several VHS sports coaches and teachers, and other interested citizens. Former County Commissioner Tony Hyde has taken an active role in the efforts and has recruited John Donovan to consult with the effort and provide professional knowledge and experience; Donovan worked with the Vernonia School District to organize the successful campaign to raise \$28 million to construct the school campus following the 2007 flood. At the committee’s March 31 meeting, Donovan facilitated a lively brainstorming session that discussed potential themes and strategies for the campaign.

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The campaign will look to emphasize:

- Vernonia's commitment to youth
- continuous recruitment of local donations and involvement in the campaign along with outreach to alumni
- past community accomplishments and resilience
- the community's logging history and tradition
- multi-generational family connections
- the opportunity to host regional sporting events and activities and help boost the local economy
- messaging to attract large corporate and foundation donors
- donor recognition.

At their April 28 meeting the committee announced they are working to finalize an agreement with the Vernonia Boosters to serve as fiscal agent for the fundraising effort, which would give the project non-profit status. The Committee also announced the formation of a Board of Directors made up of Jarman, Eckland, and Teresa Williams.

"When the committee started this project we were not sure of what kind of support we would get from our community and friends of Vernonia," said Jarman. "I am ecstatic about the involvement we have had from people in town and out of town. They have donated their time and money to make this project a reality and erect a covered stadium for our athletes and fans."

Tax Breaks for Donors in 2021

By: Jim Eckland

Taxpayers who do not itemize their tax deductions – meaning they instead take the standard deduction, a flat amount - can take a deduction of up to \$300 for monetary donations made to qualifying nonprofit organizations in 2021.

Married couples who file a joint tax return can take a \$600 deduction.

For those donors who are still able to itemize their deductions, and therefore directly write off gifts to charity, the current deduction cap is now 100% of their adjusted gross income.

The Logger Stadium Campaign is now under the fiscal umbrella of the Vernonia Boosters, a 501c3 non-profit organization.

Important Dates

June 30th @ 6PM

- *Logger Stadium Meeting, TBA*

August 6th – 8th

- **Vernonia Friendship Jamboree*

August 15th

- *Old Timers Picnic @ Senior Center 547 Weed Ave. Registration begins at 10am.*

Memorial Gifts

By: Jim Eckland

During the past eight months, we have received donations in memory of a classmate, friend, relative or loved one. Below are those who have been remembered with a donation to the Logger Stadium Campaign:

Steve Hanson, Class of 1970
Bill Pringle, Class of 1965
Bryan McLeod
Joe Taylor, Class of 1956
Bob Crowston, Class of 1957

If you wish to designate your past or future contributions in memory of someone, please let us know. You may contact:

gjarman@vernoniak12.org or twilliams@vernoniak12.org.



Lady Logger Basketball currently 7-0, photos courtesy of VHS Yearbook

*Brooklynn Walters, Kortnie Adams, Audrey Hill, & Jayden Hartman

Athletics and COVID

Overcoming adversity and trying to find “normal”

By: Gordon Jarman

This has been a roller coaster year in dealing with Athletics at the Middle and High School level; ups, downs, possibilities, sure things and cancelations, we have had them all while amidst this pandemic. We started the Fall of 2020 following state guidelines that only allowed conditioning, and depending on what level our county was in, some competition. Vernonia, sitting in Western Columbia county, was shifting between the extreme to high levels of cases during the fall season. This limited our contact with athletes, and postponed contact sports.

Winter sports were set to start in December but COVID 19 had its own agenda. Basketball and wrestling fell under the category of “contact sports”, and with numbers continuing to rise, winter sports were again pushed out. The OSAA finally made the decision to condense all seasons and move the “contact sports” further out with the thought that COVID numbers would start declining and the we could safely engage in competition.

In February the county moved into a level that was deemed safe, allowing our fall sports to begin.

Prior to participation however, all athletes had to sign waivers acknowledging that participation in sports would break the 6ft. guideline, potentially exposing them to someone with COVID.

Volleyball

With volleyball season underway, head coach Teresa Williams started working on building a competitive season. She had 5 starters graduate last year, leaving her with 3 experienced varsity players and 6 underclassmen, and one with no volleyball experience at all. This definitely presented a challenge to develop a competitive team. In the end their hard work paid off, they finished 2nd in the West Division and entered into the league playoffs. In the first round they dominated the Faith Bible Falcons but fell to the number one seed from the East, Columbia Christian. The Lady Loggers finished with an 8-5 record and 3 player’s named All-League. 1st Team, Brooklynn Walters & Nita Cook, and 3rd Team, Kortnie Adams.

Football

After the district filed its *Outdoor Contact Sports Plan*, football was

cleared to play. Head coach Bret Bunke worked very hard this year developing this team that was small in numbers but definitely not short of heart. The Loggers played a total of five games this year—all but one was home. The Loggers had not won a game in two years when they went up against their first opponent, the Colton Vikings. The game went down to the wire, Wyatt Jones caught an apparent touchdown pass. The Loggers thought that they were catching that elusive win but their cheers were silenced when the officials ruled Wyatt down before he crossed the goal line. It wasn’t until they faced Neah-kah-nie that victory was captured with a 34-30 win. After that the Loggers did what they could to stay competitive but were just over powered by the rest of the league.

Cross Country

Cross Country was in full swing with outstanding runners on both the girls and boy’s teams despite having to wear a mask. Senior Nick Costley led the way for boys to help the team take 1st in districts and place 5th at the state meet.

Athletics and COVID continued..

meet. The girls squad that made it to the state meet was led by a talented freshman, Delaney Draeger, and Junior Sadie Gump

Baseball

After having the spring season eliminated last year due to the pandemic they were able to hit the field/track on April 12th and were ready to go to work. The baseball team has a lot of potential for the next few years as they only had one senior. Much like the football team, the baseball team was ready to break a yearlong losing streak, two weeks into the season they captured a win, followed by a second the next week. There were a trio of athletes that led the team this year and were also awarded for their competitive skill by being named to All-League. 1st Team, Shayne Lardy & Samson Gentry, 2nd Team, Trevor Wolf.

Softball

Softball finished with a 5-5 record, leaving them one game shy of a state playoff berth, designated for the top two teams from each district. The Lady Loggers ended the season with a three way tie for 3rd with Neah-kah-nie and Knappa.

Leading the team this year were two outstanding junior athletes, at short stop, Nita Cook and pitcher, Brooklynn Walters—both receiving 1st Team All-League awards. Another contributor to the squad that received recognition was 2nd Team catcher, Averie Hough.

Track

Track dominated the spring sports this year. The boys finished with a league championship, and John Roady was awarded coach of the year. 12 athletes qualified for the state meet that was held in Union. Highlights from the boy's side, Nick Costley qualified in three events and received 2nd in the 100m hurdles, 8th in the triple jump, as well as 5th in the 300 m hurdles. From the girl's side, Delaney Draeger placed 3rd in the 3000 and 8th in the 1500, while Sadie Gump took 5th in the 800m and 8th in the 3000m.

Winter Sports

Winter sports were able to start in May, and will conclude even after school lets out on the 14th of June. The late season start has presented many challenges for all winter sports teams. Both basketball teams only have enough players

to field one team each, and with only limited experience the boys had to concede to only playing a JV schedule. Wrestling also had a record low turnout but the athletes are gaining some valuable experience from the assistant coach, and former Pacific University wrestler, Chuck Calhoun. Chuck is filling in for the new head coach who is currently on military leave.

Middle School Sports

All middle school sports have had some decent numbers on the girl's side, where the boys are fewer. All teams have been getting some good opportunities to participate. There were a few modifications and setbacks this year at the middle school level. The football team could only play flag football, they also had to take a two week COVID quarantine due to potential exposure. The middle school track team also fell victim to a quarantine which ended their season. The middle school coaches that played a role in making these seasons come together; Justin ward, Iwalani Leininger, Bret Bunke, Jenn Rau, Thomas Jones, and John Murray.

Needs and Fundraising

What's missing? What do we need?



A Covered Stadium for students and fans:

- ✓ It rains once in a while in Vernonia; our students, local fans and visitors need to stay warm and dry during home games and meets;
- ✓ Community members and students need a gathering place to support their teams;
- ✓ For track meets: Safety and control issue: our fans need to sit in one place and not interfere with track and field events;
- ✓ Big enough to share with visitors – 900 seat capacity – large enough to host playoff games and regional meets
- ✓ Seating and access for all fans – young, old and disabled.
- ✓ Estimated Price Tag: \$650K

Concession Stand and Restrooms:

- ✓ Students and Fans may wish to eat and drink during games and meets;
- ✓ Students and Fans may need to use adequate clean facilities during games and meets; (instead of the current, rented Port-a-Potties).
- ✓ Vernonia Boosters need to provide fundraising opportunities for student and local groups to support youth sports in the community;
- ✓ Centrally located to accommodate all outdoor sports at Vernonia schools.
- ✓ Estimated Price Tag: \$250K

Extra Enhancements:

- ✓ Restroom facilities closer to the seating at Stadium;
- ✓ Teams and Coaches can gather during halftime under the seating;
- ✓ Secure Storage Facilities under seating.
- ✓ Estimated Price Tag: \$150K



Logger Basketball JV boys, photos courtesy of VHS Yearbook. *David McCallum, Logan Wolf, Garrett Jones, & Lyness Ota



If you wish to receive this newsletter electronically please email gjarman@vernoniak12.org or jkeckland@msn.com

Yes, we can help build Vernonia Logger Stadium

_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$250 _____ \$500 _____ \$1,000

§ Other, please accept my donation of: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email address for receipt: _____



Make checks payable to: Vernonia Boosters, Memo line: Stadium
Mail to: Vernonia Boosters, PO Box 73, Vernonia, Or 97064

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Thank you for your continued support!
