

WE ARE MT. VERNON

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MVTHS gaining ground in cleanup

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MT. VERNON — The Bethel Grade School City Wide Cleanup team maintained its first-place ranking for the number of volunteers and the number of bags collected during the event last week, but they are watching their tailfeathers next year, as the second-place team at Mt. Vernon Township High School in its first year made a big dent in the number of volunteers.



Neibert

"This is the first year we had more than 58 volunteers," Bethel Grade School Superintendent Matt Renaud said. "In their first year they had 78 volunteers, which is more than we mustered in the three years before this."

The two schools received their trophies Friday. MVTHS market-

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The first- and second-place teams for the Mt. Vernon City Wide Cleanup received trophies Friday which were earned last Saturday. The high school team was organized by the Future Business Leaders of America and the students in Cheri Boyd's marketing class. Some of those present for the award were Mayor Mary Jane Chesley; FLBA sponsors Julie Hays and Cheri Boyd; students Amanda Rohr, Ryan Wellmaker, Katie Hicks, Ansley Murphy, David Clifton, Brooke Payne and Manesha Long; City Manager Ron Neibert; and city inspector Derrick Quitsch. All the students who were in school Friday and participated in City Wide Cleanup were present to receive the 7-foot-tall first-place trophy for most volunteers and the first-place trophy for the most bags of trash collected.

TESA CULLI/REGISTER-NEWS

CLEANUP

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ing teacher Cheri Boyd said the cleanup coincided with a marketing project undertaken by her class, and then the Future Business Leaders of America club got involved as well.

"We were very happy we had such a good showing in our first year," Boyd said. "Our marketing class at the same time was going over marketing plans and strategies and came up with the litter control concept for our campus."

Accounting teacher Julie Hays, who is the co-sponsor of FBLA with Boyd, also took on the project.

"The whole thing was such a hit," Boyd said. "The T-shirts were a huge hit, and there were two rules to get one: You have to go to the event, or if

you can't go to the event, you have to tell everyone you know about the event and invite them to come."

In the week the students had to spread the word and enlist help for the team, they recruited 78 members.

"Students marketed the cleanup team," Boyd said. "They created posters, had the event on the daily announcements and spread the word. ... They are also conducting surveys and studying research to find out about the event. ... We might not get all the statistics completed and the project assessment completed before the end of school, but next year we'll do it better."

For Renaud, getting more adults involved with the Bethel team made all the difference.

"I am really excited," Renaud said. "I was amazed that the kids came through like that. Everyone says they want

to do it, but when it comes time to show up, sometimes they fall short. This time, they showed up. It's amazing."

Renaud said in addition, the kids brought their grandparents, friends of their families and parents.

"We had nine people from New Horizon School in Centralia come wanting to help out," Renaud said. "When you get the parents to show up, it's great. This time, it started with the kids coming for three years, and getting the parents interested in coming too."

Next year, city inspector Derrick Quitsch said the first-place team will be competing for an 8-foot-tall trophy. When Renaud told the students they would have to work harder to earn it and the high school would be stiff competition, one enthusiastic student called out that, "We're gonna beat them, though!"

OUR VIEW

City's youths securing the future of Mt. Vernon

When it comes to thinking about the future, the children in the community are doing it.

Friday, the first- and second-place teams for City Wide Cleanup received their trophies. It's not surprising the two teams with the most volunteers working to make a brighter city were from area schools.

Bethel Grade School has been the reigning champions for several years, with this year showing a big jump in volunteers. Superintendent Matt Renaud said the team had more adult volunteers than ever before, boosting its numbers past the 100 mark.

The second-place team at Mt. Vernon Township High School was participating for the first time and put a team together one week prior to the event. Spearheaded by the Future Business Leaders of America, the team was started after members of the marketing class had started a project to market an idea — and they had already chosen a cleaner campus as their idea.

In one week, using marketing skills being learned in their class, the FBLA group recruited 78 students who spent their Saturday working to clean up the city.

With children and young men and women who are already showing a willingness and the drive to make the community better, the future of Mt. Vernon is secure. 5/10/08 *[Signature]*