



# Where do we go from here?



Mariah Nilson



Jacob Mears



Alyssa Bryan



Kyle Beam



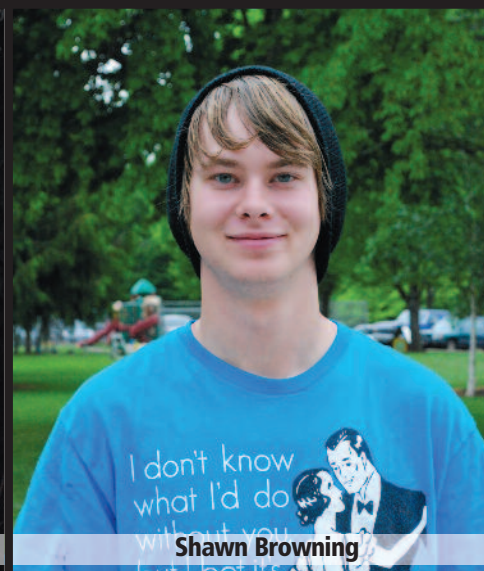
Hallie Curtis



Eduardo Santa Cruz



Ciena Brittle



Shawn Browning



Maribel Rios

## Seniors heading in all directions after graduation

Spring is a special and exciting time for high school seniors. With graduation on the horizon, these young adults are about to close one chapter of their lives and begin the next.

But before they toss their caps to the wind and go their separate ways, we checked in with seven Hood River Valley High School and two Horizon Christian School seniors to get a glimpse into the heart and soul of the class of 2013.

Interviews and photos by  
**JULIE RAEFIELD-GOBBO**  
News staff writer

### Shawn Browning

When Shawn Browning talks about welding, his eyes light up, much like the shower of sparks he sees each time he cuts into a pristine piece of metal. And, it is that piercing light which figures prominently in Browning's future.

After consistently producing one of the more difficult weld techniques required in his shop class, HRV teacher Don Schmidt singled Browning out for some serious praise.

"He told me he hadn't been able to do an overhead weld as good as I did at his age," said Browning. That encouragement helped guide him toward his intended future as a welder.

Browning will be seeking a two-year welding degree at Mt. Hood Community College when fall term begins.

As to why the potential career appeals to him, Browning said, "The fact that I can create so many things with simple objects is really great. If you think about it, everything we have has something to do with welding: planes, cars, appliances, getting our food. Without welding, there'd be nothing much left."

Hoping his career will take him traveling,

Browning has looked into working for a large construction firm when he graduates. He hopes to "make enough money to be comfortable plus a little extra for 'just in case' situations."

Although Browning says he won't miss the everyday drama at the high school, he will miss a lot of friends and the way in which high school has allowed him to connect with people who are interested in learning.

### Ciena Brittle

Being a three-year MVP on the HRV bowling team has taught Ciena Brittle a few things. First off, bowling requires two throws to gain a single score. She's following that model as she plans a two-phase approach toward her life goals.

First, she plans to attend Columbia Gorge Community College to complete her prerequisites. She then hopes to transfer to Wichita State College to complete her college career. Wichita State has a great bowling team and will also offer Brittle the chance to continue her cheerleading. She's been on the HRV squad all four years.

Though neither sport yet feels like a career choice, Brittle wants to have the option to pursue both. She hasn't decided on a major yet, but becoming a dental hygienist is a possibility, according to Brittle.

On what lessons she will bring with her from high school, Brittle has found that her sports have helped her focus on what she needs to do in order to help herself improve — including taking suggestions from others. She has learned to push herself toward goals that she has identified.

"Cheerleading made me more confident in myself and improved my self-esteem," said Brittle. "It also helped me open up and talk to others more. Without it, I would have stayed more closed into myself."

Brittle will be saving money while staying close to home and will continue to work her part-time job. She can be found keeping up her bowling skills at Orchard Lanes while she powers through her undergraduate requirements here at home.

### Jacob Mears

The call of the big city has been reaching out to Jacob Mears ever since his family took him on a trip to New York City when he was in eighth grade. He is about to answer that call.

Mears will be joining the incoming class of The Steinhardt School of New York University. He hopes to pursue a Bachelor of Music degree with an emphasis in business.

"I always thought that the music business was fascinating and really exciting," said Mears. "I never knew there was a program to study that but I found that program at NYU."

Mears has been a singer and performer himself through out his time at HRV but started that performing as a child when he took Rebekah Meyer's drama classes through Community Education. While at HRV, Mears has participated in musicals every year as well as in choir groups.

He'll be putting his advanced math and accounting skills to work alongside his love of music as he prepares for a planned career in music promotion, record producing or artist management.

"This seems like a really good fit for me," he said. "Music is really important to me. I think when I go through this program, I'll find out about so many other types of careers that combine these things together."

Mears looks forward to being in classes that are focused specifically on his interests and on sharing those classes with like-minded students. He credits HRV for providing him with many, many opportunities to high quality experience music performance and for his family's support in finding his dream school.

### Eduardo Santa Cruz

When not working on a local cattle ranch, you might find Eduardo Santa Cruz working at the "land lab" behind HRV where sheep, goats and other farm animals provide a hands-on learning experience for students. And, while tending animals is important to Santa Cruz, his commitment doesn't stop there. He is planning on becoming a veterinarian.

Come this fall, Santa Cruz will be attend-

ing OSU and majoring in animal science. That is a first step toward becoming a licensed vet, which will take additional graduate study to complete.

"I've been around animals my entire life through 4-H and FFA. I like working with them and want to continue this for my career," he said.

Breeding goats and sheep, along with managing other large animal duties, has been fascinating for Santa Cruz. He has even helped deliver several newborn goats and a calf. And it is those larger animals that he hopes to continue to treat.

"I don't want to be working so much with dogs and cats. I want to be out in the field with the larger animals," he said. "My dream is to have my own practice and maybe to work on a feed lot for a time on one of the really big ranches."

Having served as president and treasurer in his time on 4-H and FFA, Santa Cruz has been adding to his business savvy. He feels both organizations have helped him become a better leader and a better public speaker. And being bilingual means he can help even more people.

It may take eight to 10 years for Santa Cruz to reach his final goal, but he will have some help along the way. He just received word this week of being chosen as a Ford Family Foundation Scholar (see Saturday edition for more details).

### Maribel Rios

A true native of Hood River, Maribel Rios was born and raised here. She plans to take full advantage of her hometown college, Columbia Gorge Community College, in preparation for her goal to become a history teacher. She will attend Western Oregon University after receiving her associate degree through CGCC.

"I love government and history," said Rios. "I like seeing students succeed and go farther. That is what teachers did for me here and I want to do the same for others."

She smiles and recounts how HRV teachers Evelyn Charity and Dave Fults have in-

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**‘A lot of people misunderstand Little League’ in 1963**

**1913 — 100 years ago**

An event of importance to the East Side will occur next Tuesday when the bond election will be held for the purpose of voting an issue of \$175,000 worth of bonds. All property owners within the East Fork Irrigation District will be entitled to vote. The board of directors feel that it is highly important that the bond issue be carried by as nearly a unanimous vote as possible, otherwise the future of the irrigation system would be very uncertain.

Plans for the erection of the new Carnegie Library are being prosecuted by the recently appointed building committee and it is hope to have work started without any unnecessary delay in order that the building may be roofed before the Fall rains.

**1923 — 90 years ago**

Under the auspices of the Hood River County Teachers association, a banquet was held Saturday evening at the Columbia Gorge hotel in honor of the teachers of Wasco county. A very delicious repast was served under the supervision of Manager Kaufman, and this in connection with a brief introductory speech by J.W. Crites, put all in a genial and happy mood.

At the Rialto: May 21-22, Reginald Denny in “The Kentucky Derby,” and Larry Semon in “The Stage Hand,” plus “Where do Clouds Come From — A Scenic.” Adults 50 cents, children 30 cents.

**1933 — 80 years ago**

As a result of the city council, through its attorney Ernest J. Smith, recently securing title to a block of city lots, many of these are now offered to anyone interested at a low price. About forty tracks are now available in nearly all residential sections within the city limits, and it is stated that some of these lots are excellent buys even in these times of depressed values.

Existing tolerances that have been established for arsenic and lead make it extremely difficult to recommend a satisfactory and efficient spray program for apples. The lead tolerance particularly is a source of great worry and it is event at this time growers should exercise much care and judgment throughout the coming season.

**1943 — 70 years ago**

A real improvement to the state secondary highway on the west side — Tucker Road — is nearing completion. A state highway crew has widened, rocked and surfaced the shoulders on each side of this concrete highway has, in effect, made this highway about half as wide again as it has been for many years.

Harold Kreger, owner of the O.K. Tire Shop, is offering the use of the lot to the west of his plant for free parking for the benefit of downtown shoppers. He has asked if the city council will assist in the plan by leveling the dirt and depositing some gravel, and if the request is granted, space for about 30 cars will be available for free parking to legitimate shoppers.

**1953 — 60 years ago**

Soon to open on Tucker road is Hood River's first outdoor theater, the Trail Drive-in, located three miles south of Hood River on the secondary highway. The new drive-in will have parking for 400 cars with individual in-the-car speakers for each vehicle. The screen is one of the largest in the northwest and will present pictures 60 feet in width.

State highway workman by Wednesday of this week had the Mount Hood Loop highway cleared of snow, preparatory of the annual spring open of this section of the route around Oregon's most famous mountain.

**1963 — 50 years ago**

“A lot of people misunderstand Little League,” said Bruce Erickson in a mildly complaining tone. “They think it’s just for a few of the best athletes, and they’re wrong.” He was talking about a newly acquired league franchise for the county that might not get off the ground because of lack of enthusiasm. A meeting set tonight could determine whether league plans go ahead, or if they die.

Mosier high school will graduate its last, and largest, high school class — 17 members — on May 24 at 8 p.m. Next year Mosier becomes a part of ta new high school in the Chenoweth district.

**1973 — 40 years ago**

For the second weekend in a row, rescuers were called out to locate persons missing or injured on hikes. Sheriff



**Hood River's first drive-in theater, The Trail Drive-in, on Tucker road, is rapidly taking shape. Workmen (above) are putting finishing touches on the roof of a building which will serve jointly as a projection room, restroom facilities and snack bar. The outdoor theater will be opened early in June.**

**MAY 22, 1953:** The Trail Drive-in Theater, here nearing completion, also boasted an indoor theater. The building housed the projection booth, office, restroom facilities and snack bar — which even offered baby bottle warmers.

Bob Lynch said four youths were reported missing early Monday on a hike at Starvation Creek, and Alpines and Crag Rats were called to help with the search, but the four hiked out unaided.

The Oak Grove community may have lost its school to consolidation, but not its spirit. They proved it when a community picnic was held in the mini-park near the “city center.” The picnic is an annual event, and it was aimed this year toward promoting development with help of the county. The community hopes to build a new park and has visions of a tennis court and an expansion of the baseball area.

**1983 — 30 years ago**

Two Hood River Valley tracksters earned district championship and two others finished runner-up during the weekend, giving HRV four representatives to send to the state 2-A meet this Friday and Saturday at Mt. Hood Community College. Allison Raymond won the girls 100 meter hurdles and Russ Collie the triple jump. Joey Winchell finished second in the 100-meter high hurdles and Shawn Meyle second in the pole vault.

Ernie and Rachel Smith,

operators of the Lost Lake Resort for the past 10 years, have been selected as successful bidders to take over campground management at the lake. In the past, the Smiths have operated the resort and boat rentals, but the Forest Service has managed the camp and picnicking area. Camping fees will be \$6 for a single space and \$10 for a double.

**1993 — 20 years ago**

Hood River showcased its Urban Renewal District Saturday for Gov. Barbara Roberts and three staff members. Hood River Mayor Glenn Taylor and City Manager Charlie Warren led Roberts on a walking tour of the city's Urban Renewal District, which included Cascade and Columbia avenues plus a walk by the Waucoma Center and an impromptu tour of Dill Sailboards' operations. The tour ended with a stop at the Children's Park.

Monies to maintain three programs originally scheduled for the funding ax were approved by the Hood River County School Budget Committee Wednesday. The committee recommended that a budget that includes funds for elementary music, at-risk and skills for success special-

ists. Money is also set aside to bolster library technology and curriculum work. The budget does not include funds for Middle School sports, a big point for local students.

**2003 — 10 years ago**

FISH food bank, located on Pine Street in the Heights, has lost its lease and must move out of the familiar blue house by June 1. FISH steering committee president Marianne Durkan said the organization is earnestly seeking a new place to store food and distribute it to the needy. FISH has already rented storage space for its dry, non-perishable food, but volunteers face the prospect of giving away all frozen food during its last week of operation in May.

Hood River County's special districts election wrapped up Tuesday night, and at press-time the voter turnout was a bit grim. According to Lee Shissler, Hood River County elections supervisor, turnout was 21 percent, with approximately 2,247 ballots counted out of 10,425 ballots issued for the all-mail election.

**FUTURE**

*Continued from Page B1*

spired her. She also credits Lisa Roberts in the ASPIRE program for helping to guide her school career.

Rios also carries with her a sense of community connection. She noted that while living here, she learned “when something bad happens, the community comes together to help you.”

Rios hopes as a teacher she “will be funny” and set high expectations for her students — “not being too strict or too laid-back.”

She also credits her parents for helping her achieve her dreams. After years of working in local orchards for the benefit of their family, both she and her parents look forward to her future as a teacher.

She advises that anyone thinking about college should plan early, start saving money and “think about what you really want to do.”

**Kyle Beam**

With a nod to his years of great coaching at HRV, Kyle Beam is about to head out to the ball field — of Campbellsville University in Kentucky.

Beam, who is an HRV varsity catcher, will wield his glove at the NAIA Division I college beginning this fall, after he spends the summer in Bend playing for the Central Oregon Bucks.

“CU is a Division I school in the top 25,” said Beam. A scouting coach spotted Beam and invited him to try out in Portland this last year. He was recruited and received a generous scholarship.

While pursuing the big league dream, Beam also

plans to seek a degree in business, sports medicine or education. He has already been placed on CU's varsity team as catcher for his freshman year.

The school is about 45 minutes away from Louisville — not a bad omen, since Louisville is the home of the famous “slugger” bat manufacturing business — a sort of Mecca for baseball fans.

Perhaps “the show” is in Beam's future, but until then, he is thankful for the opportunities that he has had.

“I've been able to have workouts with pro teams. A lot of doors have opened up in different directions. I'm not sure what it all means but we'll see what happens,” he said.

Though he will miss his hometown, he is excited for the future. The hardest part for Beam, aside from leaving family, is leaving behind a tight group of friends and teammates. But he leaves with a sense of gratitude.

“I am grateful for my family and all the teams I've been a part of and the people who I've been surrounded by. Hood River is a great place to grow up and I realize that it will be different moving on.”

**Hallie Curtis**

An artist's life and a cosmopolitan city await Hallie Curtis at the Academy of Art in San Francisco. But she won't just reserve her energies for photography. She's got her eye on the school's softball team, as well.

“I'll be trying out this summer,” said Curtis, who has played softball for HRV as a shortstop. “The coach says I would have a good chance of getting on the team.”

For Curtis, the addition of sports to the arts curriculum

was a deciding factor in her college choice. She hopes to major in photography, but isn't sure just yet whether that will be toward a journalism, marketing or fashion application.

The attraction of living in San Francisco, with the college campus buildings spread throughout the downtown area, was also a draw — that and the freedom from having to take another math class.

“There isn't any math required!” smiles Curtis when reflecting on her college curriculum.

As for the future, she already has a picture for herself.

“I'd love to settle down near San Francisco. I could see myself traveling and doing photography as a career,” she said. “That's a long time away but I'm sure it will come along really fast.”

Curtis credits her parents for supporting her and teaching her to work hard toward her dreams and what would make her happy.

She knows she'll miss her hometown and the very active student life at HRV.

“I'll miss Homecoming ... all the activities ... Prom ... all the familiar faces,” she said. “I'm grateful to my family for all their support and that I have been given this opportunity to study something I am passionate about.”

**Mariah Nilson**

Living the life of a rodeo cowgirl is on the agenda for Mariah Nilson, who attends Horizon Christian School from her home in Lyle. She will serve as Miss Ketchum Kalf, representing the Glenwood Rodeo through February 2014. After that, she'll be off to Mt. Hood Community College and then, Texas A&M.

Nilson is a barrel racer and has been riding horses for years. She was elected as

rodeo queen in June 2012 and began her duties, appearing in rodeos across the Northwest in January 2013. Over the course of her year, she will visit over 25 rodeos for ride-outs and publicity appearances promoting Glenwood's event slated for June 15-16.



said with a big smile. But it's her athleticism with a horse that makes the work so much fun.

“My dream is to be a professional barrel racer and to go to the National Pro Rodeo Association finals,” she said. “I love riding! I get so excited; it's an adrenaline rush.”

After riding the pro circuit, Nilson hopes to build her own stable and work with Special Olympics. She sees riding as a great way to help disabled young people gain confidence and skills. Nilson has seen the results while working with her sister who has Down syndrome.

Nilson credits the teachers, counselors and staff at Horizon for helping her reach her dream.

“Everyone here was so welcoming. They all helped bring me here (HCS).”

Nilson has also experienced the generosity of the Gorge community as well and noted that many businesses and individuals have helped support her rodeo fundraising efforts with donations and yard sales in her honor.

As she advances in her racing career and her education, Nilson hopes to hold on to the values she found in abundance at Horizon: respect, manners and determination — all of which will serve her well as she pursues her dreams.

**Alyssa Bryan**

Not afraid to undertake a career path that still seems dominated by her male counterparts, Alyssa Bryan is heading into cyberspace, pursuing a degree in computer science.

“I'll be going to Lane Community College for my first two years,” she said, “then I'll transfer to University of Oregon.”

Because of Bryan's affiliation with the Baptist Church, she will have a special form of community to help her along the way.

“I'll be living in the Trinity House of the First Baptist Church in Eugene,” she said. “The house was given Christian girls housing while going to college.”

Luckily for Bryan, she has also already had some local support for the dream of owning her own computer-based business.

“I've had an internship at Beckman Legacy LLC in Hood River,” said Bryan, who has been learning about web design and development four days a week. She has been learning coding along with customer service skills.

“I'm excited and nervous about studying computer science,” she said. “I hope I will be making a big step for women in that field.”

Bryan feels that lessons from her time at Horizon will serve her on her path ahead.

“I have learned how to deal with the real world ... to function in a world that isn't nice and is big and scary. I feel that I've been shown how to find my way,” she said. “I will be able to be strong at school and that my faith will shine through me and others will notice that.”

