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District Stories

Superintendent Miller addresses school shooting in Connecticut

As I read of the horrible event in Newtown, CT, my thoughts and prayers are for those who lost loved ones today and for the community as a whole. I cannot image the horror and loss.

When a tragedy occurs somewhere else in a school, or in a mall, or a cinema, my thoughts immediately turn to home. While with 100% certainty, we cannot prevent such an occurrence here, we are fortunate to have an outstanding partnership with local law enforcement and our staff will remain diligent in our efforts to keep our schools safe.

We have many procedures in place to help provide the same safe school environment and we have to rely upon those procedures, as well as continued diligence. Our staff efforts to build relationships with students and parents, as well as reporting anything that is out of the normal are our best defense.

Again, I am sorry for the need to post this message and I want to reiterate my thoughts and prayers for those suffering in Connecticut.

Mick Miller, Superintendent

ESD 123 Superintendent visits Walla Walla to present Prospect Point Elementary with distinction award

This morning, ESD 123 Superintendent Bruce Hawkins presented Prospect Point Elementary with a School of Distinction award. Prospect Point was one of six schools in the Educational Service District (ESD) 123 region and 97 in the state to be recognized as 2012 Schools of Distinction. This is the second consecutive year Prospect Point Elementary has earned this distinction.

“It’s an affirmation of all the hard work we have put in on a regular basis,” said Prospect Point teacher David Parodi. “This award motivates us to continue to do all the things that have made a difference.”

The annual award is given by The Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE), the Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD), the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP), Phi Delta Kappa-Washington Chapter (PDK-WA), Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA), Washington State ASCD and Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA). Hawkins also honored Parkway Elementary of Clarkston at the awards reception

Detailed information on the methodology for selection of the Schools of Distinction, as well as a complete listing of all state winners can be found on the CEE website at www.effectiveness.org.

Board plans work session to discuss Wa-Hi Bond potential excess funds issue Tuesday, Dec. 18

- 6 p.m. (School board members will discuss whether potential excess funds from the Wa-Hi Bond proposal should be used for district facility improvement purposes or returned to taxpayers)
- 6:30 p.m.(Regularly scheduled board meeting)
- District Office Board Room (364 S. Park St.)
- Both meetings are open to the public

The Pulse video features Berney Elementary

Superintendent Miller's latest Pulse video is now posted on the district YouTube page and web site. Click on the link below to learn more about Berney Elementary. Superintendent Miller speaks with Principal Donna Painter, Music Teacher Elizabeth Jagelski, and 5th grader Ethan Naftzger.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16_msfV7_kQ

Winter Break Schedule

- No School: Thursday, Dec. 20 to Wednesday, Jan. 2
- Classes resume Thursday, January 3

Holiday Concert series online

Visit the district website at www.wwps.org to see a complete listing of the school district's holiday concert series. All school concerts and special events are listed. Please join us this holiday season!

Patron Tour guests learn more about Walla Walla schools during recent visit

Superintendent Mick Miller conducted a Patron Tour Wednesday morning of Edison Elementary, Wa-Hi and Lincoln High School. Miller's goal with the program is to build relationships, learn about each other and listen. The district is proposing a bond measure February 12 to improve Wa-Hi. Patron Tour guest and district parent Natalie Scrivens was taken by what she saw at Wa-Hi.

"I had no idea the classrooms were so small and full of backpacks and kids," said Natalie Scrivens. "They don't have enough computers in the classrooms or access to technology. They need desks and chairs that are comfortable and speakers in the classrooms so the teachers can be heard. It would help a lot for the kids to have these as part of their education. I had no idea what was there and how much better it could be."

The district is planning its next Patron Tour Wednesday, Jan. 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Patron Tour guests will meet with Superintendent Miller, tour Blue Ridge Elementary, Wa-Hi and Lincoln High School and conclude with lunch and a debriefing. If you are interested in participating in a Patron Tour, contact Communications Director Mark Higgins: 509.526.6716 or by email: mhiggins@wwps.org.

Dec. 12 Patron Tour Guests:

- John Hibbitts
- Deirdre Bealey
- Claudia Ford
- Ramon Ruiz
- Troi Coran
- Kanet Turner
- Connie Bosley
- Natalie Scrivens
- Rick Eskil
- Rob Blethen
- Patti Grant
- Joan McPherson
- Nicole Gonzales
- Mary Ellen Larsen
- Becci Lund

Superintendent Miller takes viewers on a walking tour of Wa-Hi

Walla Walla Public Schools will seek a \$48 million bond on the February 12, 2013 Special Election to fund a \$69.6 million modernization of Walla Walla High School. A new video has been added to the district web site and YouTube page featuring Superintendent Mick Miller taking viewers on a walking tour of the campus. Staff and students describe the facility and its needs. View the video and learn more about the bond proposal at: www.wwps.org

Per the bond proposal, all of the existing 1963 buildings will be remodeled and upgraded in the design to reduce costs. The project is eligible for \$21.6 million in State Matching dollars which will be used on the Wa-Hi project.

Cost is an increase of 68 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. The recently approved College Place School District bond was \$2.67 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

School Stories

Walla Walla High School Chamber Theater Class Presents: The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

- Sunday, Dec. 16
- 6 p.m.
- Blue Mountain Community Church (928 Sturm)
- Fee: A can of food for the food drive

Synopsis: “The Herdmans were the worst kids in the whole history of the world!”

The play begins in a small town of the not-too-distant past, when Mrs. Bradley is informed that she must direct the local Christmas Pageant. What would normally be a fairly simple task is transformed into a nightmare when the neighborhood misfits, a group of siblings by the last name of Herdman intrude upon the rehearsals and take the main roles, horrifying the small group of church kids who usually claim the stage. What is expected to be a disaster changes into a whole new story before their eyes, making it effectively, The Best Christmas Pageant Ever.

Attendance doubles at Lincoln High School Art Show

The Lincoln Art Show was an amazing success in its second year. Art Teacher Jayne Eacker organized the public event which featured student work from the first half of the school year. Attendance was up significantly from the first year as community members, staff and students packed into the school.

“Because this was our second on campus art show, there were a few students who had attended the opening last year and knew what to expect,” Eacker said. “A few pupils, who are ordinarily very shy, were happy to play guitars and the keyboard during the event. We were extremely happy to have a number of community members in attendance.”

Eacker says the art show will help motivate and excite the students for better artwork entrances for the next art show.

National Junior Honor Society to collect toys Saturday

The Pioneer Middle School National Junior Honor Society will be at Land Title Plaza Saturday, Dec. 15 from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. collecting new, unwrapped toys. Cash donations are welcomed.

NJHS is having a Winter Wonderland Middle School Dance at the YMCA on Dec. 15th. from 7-9 p.m. (Student ID card required - \$3 entry fee to benefit Toys for Tots). NJHS is plans a shopping spree at Walmart with money raised at Sunday, Dec. 16 from 9 to 11 a.m.

Wa-Hi Debate Team takes first place overall - By Coach Jean Tobin

The tournament went very well and we had a lot of parent and community support. Community members (including Damien Sinnott of the Chamber and George Burgess from WWCC) came in to help judge and parents also judged and provided a lot of food (Keven Peck, Kristi Entrop, Katie Christianson, Annie Capestany, Martin Telstad & Kami Kuhlmann, Jennifer Northam, Bruce Cole, Heidi Brigham, Nancy Forsthoefel, Mary Bialozor, Christian Cosma, Lucy & Norrie Gregoire, Vanessa Prull). We could not have done this without them!

Walla Walla High School again placed 1st Overall and 1st in Individual Events. We placed 2nd to Pasco in Debate.

IEs:

Open Oratory: Emma Gregoire 1st, Marisol Beck tied for 2nd
Open Extemp: Emily Prull 1st, Malcolm Gabbard 2nd, Bryan Preston 3rd
Open Expos: Kate Kuhlmann 2nd, Hope Grant-Herriot 3rd
Novice Expos: Ricky Entrop 1st
Open H.I.: Anna Apostolidis-Morefield 1st
Novice H.I.: Gerrod Peck 2nd
Open Duo: Hope/Kurt Funk 3rd
Open Impromptu: Bryan Preston 1st, Emily Prull 2nd, Kendall Dunovant 3rd, Malcolm Gabbard 4th
Novice Impromptu: Mattie Bialozor 3rd
Open Interpretive Reading: Ben Parsons 2nd, Kera Parsons 3rd
Novice Interpretive Reading: Cora Cole 1st
Open Ed Com.: Marisol Beck 1st
Novice Ed Com.: Ben Northam 2nd
Open Tall Tales: Ben Parson 2nd, Hope Grant-Herriot 3rd
Novice Tall Tales: Gerrod Peck 1st, Ricky Entrop 3rd

IN DEBATE:

Open SPAR: Kera Parsons 1st, Sean Hamilton 4th
Novice SPAR: Gerrod Peck 2nd
SPAR is a humorous form of impromptu debate where students have a minute to prepare speeches on topics such as “My mother is scarier than a zombie.”

Open PF: Bryan Preston & Sean Hamilton 1st, Malcolm Gabbard & Emily Prull 2nd
In Public Forum the December topic (which students only debated at this tournament) was: Resolved: The US Government should prioritize tax increases over spending cuts.

Open LD: Kendall Dunovant 3rd
Novice LD: Mattie Bialozor 2nd
LD debaters continued to debate whether or not the US should guarantee Universal Healthcare for its citizens.

Open Congress: Emma Gregorie 2nd, Emily Prull 3rd
Novice Congress: Mary Adamski 3rd

Our next tournament is the second weekend in January at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington. We will have all new debate topics so we will be working over the break to prepare.

Community Stories

Citizens for Schools meeting Monday to focus on Wa-Hi bond planning

- Monday, Dec. 17
- 6:30 p.m.
- District Office Board Room (364 S. Park St.)

Contact Co-Chairs Craig Sievertsen or Shannon Bergevin for more information.

Craig Sievertsen

- 509.301.5205
- csievertsen@bannerbank.com

Shannon Bergevin

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The Moms' Network sponsors the Holiday Reading Room

The Moms' Network is excited to once again sponsor the Holiday Reading Room. As we all scurry to get our holiday shopping done, the Moms' Network is excited to provide a little family time at the Walla Walla City Library. On December 15 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. the children's area of the library will be filled with holiday cheer and reading. Come enjoy treats, hot chocolate, coffee, and holiday stories. Every child will also receive a new book. There are books for all ages and bilingual books.

Because of the support of the Downtown Walla Walla Foundation, Starbucks, City of Walla Walla, Book & Game and the Moms' Network we have an excuse to take a moment with our family at the Walla Walla City Library this holiday season. For more details, please contact Beth Swanson at 509-301-7471 or beth@themomsnetworkww.com.

District volunteer and mom plans book signing event to support the Humane Society

Kathryn Southwick Hess is planning a book signing Saturday, December 22 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Book and Game in downtown Walla Walla. Kathryn's book "Whitepaws Fabio Giorgio Don Gato Hess" is a story about their family cat.

This event will support her collaboration with Blue Mountain Humane Society. Kathryn will be there signing books and raising awareness on the issue of lost and homeless animals at the Blue Mountain Humane Society. She says there will be at least one cute cat for kids to visit with while they visit the book store. A portion of proceeds will be donated to the Blue Mountain Humane Society.

YMCA offers Holiday Break Day Camps

When school is out the Y is in! The Y will be hosting Day Camps for the holiday break December 20-21 and again on December 26-31. Day Camps will be filled with swimming, rock climbing, arts and crafts, cooking and games. Full or half day options are available. For more information or to register online, visit wwymca.org or call 525-8863.