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District Stories

Prospect Point Elementary named state School of Distinction for second consecutive year

Prospect Point Elementary 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. 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).

ESD 123 will honor Prospect Point and Parkway Elementary of Clarkston at an awards reception in Walla Walla Friday, December 14 at 10 a.m. at the Walla Walla School Board Room. This announcement represents the 6th annual School of Distinction award recognition in Washington state.

“I am fortunate to be part of a staff that is committed to student learning,” said Prospect Point Principal Chris Gardea. “The Prospect Point community continues to strive for improvement that directly benefits our students. I am so proud of their accomplishment and feel privileged to be part of such a dedicated group of parents and educators that continually put students first.”

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.

Winter Break Schedule

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

Wa-Hi Science teacher says classroom limits opportunities

“There are several activities we do in our freshman curriculum that require Bunsen burners and there are no Bunsen burners in my classroom. My students don't get the benefit of participating in those activities.

The other class I teach is Advanced Placement Biology. This is a college level class and my room is not a college level classroom, it's not even a high school science level classroom.

We have great students at Wa-Hi who deserve the best. Many of the careers are going to require biotechnology skills that they could be exposed to in high school; but the Wa-Hi facility is not suited for this curriculum.”

Peggy Payne, *Wa-Hi Science Teacher*

Learn more about the district's proposal to address these needs at Wa-Hi: www.wwps.org

Voter Registration Deadlines for Feb. 12 bond

The registration deadlines for the February 12, 2013 Special Election are as follows:

- By mail or online registrations and address updates (transfers) is Monday, January 14
- In-person registrations (not currently registered in Washington) by 4 p.m. on February 4
- Voter registration forms are available at all schools and at the Walla Walla County Auditor's Office.

Additional Information:

Debbie Benavides/Elections Supervisor

Walla Walla County Auditor

310 W. Poplar St./PO Box 2176

Walla Walla, WA 99362

(509) 524-2534

dbenavides@co.walla-walla.us

Transportation Department to have school bus “float” in parade

Look for employees from the district’s Transportation Department Saturday night in the Macy’s Parade as they join in the festivities with a decorated school bus.

Saturday night’s message will be: HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM WALLA WALLA SCHOOL DISTRICT! The mission of the Transportation Department is to safely transport America’s future Monday through Friday. We transport 2600 kids each day. Our fleet of busses is now at 42! Have a safe and special holiday season!

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!

Superintendent’s Patron Tour program takes community members to Edison, Wa-Hi and Lincoln High School

Superintendent Mick Miller is continuing his Superintendent’s Patron Tour program Wednesday, December 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Guests will visit Edison Elementary, Walla Walla and Lincoln High Schools as part of the program.

Miller’s goal with the program is to build relationships, learn about each other and listen. Please ask your friends, family, neighbors and parents of students to participate. They will value the experience and learn a lot along the way. Patron Tour guests will meet with Superintendent Miller, tour schools 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.

Winter weather is on the way! School closure and delay procedures

At Walla Walla Public Schools, we make every effort to post up-to-the-minute school closure information due to inclement weather or any circumstance that would delay or cancel the normal school schedule. Decisions to delay or close school usually are made by 5:30 a.m. or earlier. This triggers the district’s comprehensive school closure/delay announcement plan. The district makes every effort to begin announcements by 6 a.m.

Announcements include:

- Regional Media release
- Telephone automated message
- Web posting
- Staff e-mail
- E-news message (sign up on the district web site: www.wwps.org)
- Twitter message
- Facebook page message
- Orange signs posted in front of schools

School Stories

Lincoln High School plans Annual Student Art Show

Lincoln High School will be holding its annual student Art Show Thursday, December 6 from 6 to 8 p.m. Paintings, sculpture, and pottery will be on display in the school’s main hallway. Holiday decorations will be provided by Lincoln’s floraculture class. Student’s will serenade visitors with piano and guitar solos. Fresh food will be provided by Castilleja’s Bakery.

Walla Walla High School plans Scholarship Fair

The first annual Scholarship Fair is Tuesday, Jan. 15 at the Walla Walla High School Commons from 4 to 6 p.m. This is an opportunity to learn about scholarship opportunities.

For more information contact: Becky Waggoner bwaggoner@wwps.org phone: 509-526-8621 or Claircy Clizer (after Dec. 3rd) cclizer@wwps.org phone: 509-526-8680.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid workshops scheduled

Attention Senior Parents:

FAFSA or Free Application for Federal Student Aid must be filled out to qualify for Federal Grants, Loans and Scholarships. GEAR UP and Walla Walla High School will be hosting FAFSA Workshops throughout the month of January.

Please plan on attending one of these three open library times with your student to receive professional help filling out and filing your student's FAFSA.

- January 15: 5:30-7 p.m.
- January 22: 5:30-7 p.m.
- January 29: 5:30-7 p.m.

* All workshops will be held at the Wa-Hi Library.
Secure your student's Financial Aid by filing early!

IMPORTANT DEADLINES TO NOTE:

- College Bound Scholars must file their FAFSA by 2/1/13
- Washington State public Universities FAFSA deadlines begin 2/1/13

Wa-Hi Cadet of the Month earns on-the-spot promotion

The Walla Walla High School JROTC "Blue Devils" Cadet Battalion has selected its "Cadet of the Month" for November 2012 and rewarded his achievement with an immediate promotion.

Cadet Private First Class Mason Christopher, a 14-year-old freshman, was promoted to this new rank after he won the top spot with a total score of 83 points, according to the presiding official on the board. The top Cadet was selected from three candidates who were inspected and examined in oral interviews by a board of four advanced Cadets, according to Lt. Col. Bill Bialozor, Senior Army Instructor for the Walla Walla High School's Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program.

Christopher said that he joined JROTC because he wanted to carry on his family's military tradition. He plans to enter the US Naval Academy and join the Marine Corps as an officer. He enjoys playing football.

"His strongest competitive category was his knowledge of the military," said Cadet Command Sgt. Maj. Brandon Webster. "This Cadet of the Month was a close match, since the Cadets' performances were outstanding."

First runner-up was Cadet Private. Nick Groom, a 16-year-old sophomore, whose strongest suit was his regard to Army regulations on wear and appearance of the uniform. He came in second with 80 points. Second runner-up was Cadet Private Jordan Hayes, a 14-year-old freshman, whose strongest suit was his personal appearance. He came in third with 60 points.

"After the board tallied the points and the winner was clear, we held a ceremony to promote the winning Cadet one rank higher, to recognize him for his hard work and personal success," said Bialozor.

Wa-Hi JROTC Cadets participate in the program to develop leadership skills and to strive to be better citizens in society. Many Cadets compete with drill, marksmanship, and physical training teams as well as attend the class. These Cadets get to travel to and compete in drill meets at 16 other schools in the Cascade Division that include Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Navy Cadet programs.

Wa-Hi Debate Team takes first at Yakima regional event

Walla Walla High School placed 1st in Individual Events and 1st Overall in the "Ike Invite" Debate Tournament in Yakima. The team competed against nine other schools from District 5/6. The Wa-Hi Debate Team placed 2nd in the debate to Pasco High School. Thanks to the following parent volunteers for serving as judges: Vanessa Prull, Annie Capestany, Mary Bialozor and Heidi Brigham

The next debate tournament is December 8 in Walla Walla. It will be a smaller tournament, with only half of the District 5/6 teams competing.

Explorer students plan fund-raiser to purchase bench for bus waiting area

The Explorer classes are planning a fundraiser Saturday and Sunday to raise money to purchase a bench in the school bus waiting area.

The students plan sell unique, hand made and high quality Snow Leopard Trust items. The Snow Leopard Trust is an organization based in Seattle that promotes wildlife protection and habitat preservation. They partner with rural communities in the mountains of Asia to design conservation programs and provide a market for sustainable & hand crafted products.

Explorer Program Community Sale:

- Saturday December 1 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Sunday December 2 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Host families needed for Japanese exchange students

Walla Walla High School has been exchanging students with Yamate Gakuin High School in Yokohama, Japan every three years since 1972. This year, 44 young ladies and 32 young men will visit Wa-Hi from April 12-26. Several Wa-Hi students will visit Yokohama in July for a two week stay. Walla Walla host families are needed to provide a home for pairs of Japanese students during the upcoming April visit.

“Ideally visiting Japanese students should live with a family with a current Wa-Hi student although this is not strictly necessary,” said Rob Ahrens. “This exchange has been one of the most meaningful high school experiences for over four generations of Wa-Hi families.”

If you are interested in hosting a pair of Japanese students or know of someone who may be interested please contact Ahrens. He hopes to have all of the host families identified by January 18.

Rob Ahrens
rahrens @wwps.org
526-8622

Walla Walla Chapter of American Association of Women in Community Colleges donates coats to Blue Ridge

The Walla Walla Chapter of American Association of Women in Community Colleges (AAWCC) is sponsoring a coat drive and has adopted Blue Ridge Elementary School to receive the coats.

President-elect Kim Cassetto was informed by Blue Ridge staff that they purchase coats for many of their students each year and took the idea to the Board for AAWCC to help raise coats for this year’s fall fundraiser. The AAWCC Board unanimously voted to increase efforts for the cause and join the Christian Aid Center’s local coat drive. The Christian Aid Center already delivered approximately 200 coats from their own community coat drive campaign to Blue Ridge. The AAWCC specifically worked with Blue Ridge Intervention Specialist Yaneth Hernandez to obtain coat sizes and a target goal of a remaining estimated 200 coats for Blue Ridge’s 3rd-5th grades.

The Walla Walla AAWCC have received 35 coats to date and will continue taking coats through the month of December. Community members are welcome and are encouraged to participate in AAWCC’s efforts. Coats may be dropped off at one of three locations around town:

1. Walla Walla Community College with AAWCC President Cheryl Bloom in the Office of Admissions, President-Elect Kim Cassetto in Office 15, or Scholarship Co-Chair Stacy Prest in the library
2. Walla Walla School District reception with Veronica Esparza
3. Blue Ridge Elementary with Yaneth Hernandez

Wa-Hi Journal students showcase skills at national convention - By the Wa-Hi Journal staff

Seven Wa-Hi Journal students competed at the National High School Journalism Convention in San Antonio on Nov. 15-17. Senior Melissa Nelsen placed third with an Honorable Mention in the Computer Design: Logo event on Nov. 16.

“I created three logos which were used as the featured image on the Journal’s website, wahijournal.org,” Nelsen said. “I’m shocked that I received third. During these competitions everyone is so talented. I’m just proud I got to represent my school,” Nelsen said.

Seniors Quinn Anderson, Julia Cosma, Emma Opsal and Nelsen, juniors Bryson Gobel, and Madeline Brooks, and sophomore Madyson Gabriel represented Washington state and Wa-Hi, participating in write-off contests and attending workshops to learn the latest trends in journalism, including hot topics in social media. Wa-Hi Journal students also took advantage of the history of the area by visiting the Alamo and experiencing the Riverwalk.

“I had watched the tour boats that looked like oversized floating lunchboxes, which made it perfectly obvious that you were a tourist, and they seemed to be a boring tourist trap. So, as you can imagine, I was quite upset when I found out that the tour was the subject for my review write off,” Gobel said about his competitive event, which included a timed one-hour write, using a pen, a paper, the AP Stylebook and a dictionary.

A two-time veteran at Nationals, Cosma, who is the newspaper’s editor-in-chief this year, entered in the Editing and Headline Writing event, which included current events, geography, writing two headlines, and editing two news articles while identifying libelous statements.

“The current events section was a bit outlandish, but I was proud to get a perfect score on my headlines. The test really taught me where my strengths and weaknesses lie as an editor,” Cosma said.

Over 4,000 student journalists attended this annual convention, and 1,734 competed in the write offs.

“Events at Nationals are always very competitive, and our students performed well, even though we had only one student in the top three of an event,” adviser Gay Buissink said. “Our community can be very proud of the professional way these students conducted themselves throughout the entire trip.”

Buissink attended workshops on aligning the English Language Arts Common Core with journalism courses and met with other advisers at the Northwest Region meeting

Community Stories

Public invited to German Christmas Sing-a-longs

- Saturday, December 1
- Saturday, December 8
- 10 a.m.
- Walla Walla University Fine Arts Center Room 208
- There were also be munchies and people from Deutschland!
- Questions? Email Curt Schafer or call 527-3116

It’s A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play comes to the Power House Theatre

The Beloved Holiday Film Comes to Life - Enacted as a Live 1940’s Radio Broadcast. Stephanie Shine, Shakespeare Walla Walla Artistic Director, brings the classic film story to the stage, with ensemble cast of professional actors including local favorites Brad Wilcutts and Kevin Loomer.

Full details and pricing information is on the theatre website at www.PHTWW.com or by calling the box office at 509-529-6500.

Free Child Passenger Safety Training

Do you work with kids and/or families? Do you have an interest in child passenger safety? Do you want to make sure your own child or grandchild is safely secured?

Four-hour Child Passenger Safety Training

- Tuesday, December 4
- 9 a.m.
- Walla Walla County Human Services
- 1520 Kelly Place (across from the Hampton Hotel off Dalles Military Road)
- Pre-registration is required
- No charge

To register: contact Nancy at 524-2936 or at nmccleenny-walters@co.walla-walla.wa.us

Concert and dance benefit Silent Auction for Elias Hegdal

Community members and loved ones are planning a concert and dance benefit for Elias Hegdal, who was injured in a car accident after colliding with a deer. He suffered severe brain trauma. Hegdal is a close friend of Pioneer Middle School teacher Dennis Bennett's family.

Elias wife, Jenny, teaches at Central Middle School and he is a cabinet maker in Weston. They were in the process of moving from College Place to Athena when the accident occurred. Dennis Bennett's daughter organized a team to get the family moved to Athena.

His daughter is also organizing a fund raiser in support of the Hegdal family.

Concert/Dance Benefit Silent Auction

- Salsa Music (Eddie Manzanares)
- Saturday, December 1
- 7 to 10 p.m.
- Milton Freewater Community Center
- \$5 per person, \$10 per family

All proceeds to Hegdal Family

See more at: <http://tinyurl.com/Hegdal>

Whitman READS plans public library event

Whitman READS will be hosting its final program of 2012 Wednesday, December 5, from 3 to 3:45 p.m. at the Walla Walla Public Library - 238 E. Alder St. Erin Pahlke, assistant professor of psychology, will present on "All the Colors that We Are". K-5 children can participate in a hands-on activity involving mixing colors with various mediums. Event is free and open to the public.

Save the date for Great Explorations!

Great Explorations is a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Adventure for 5th through 8th grade girls. This year's event features Jody Wolf, Assistant Crime Lab Administrator - Phoenix Police. CSI comes to Walla Walla!

- Saturday, March 23
- Whitman College
- Information: Sue Parrish (529.3956 or wallawallannan@gmail.com)