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District Stories

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.

Walla Walla High School and Prospect Point placed in lockdown following police activity near school

Walla Walla High School and Prospect Point Elementary were placed in Yellow, or modified, Lockdown this morning after reports of potentially dangerous police activity near the schools. The district followed the recommendation of the Walla Walla County Sheriff and went into the lockdown per district safety procedures. This lockdown has been lifted per the recommendation of Sheriff John Turner. The lockdown was in effect from approximately 9 to 9:30 a.m.

The police activity involved a vehicle driving on Reser Road traveling east bound. The Sheriff Department received reports of possible shots being fired from the vehicle. The district took all necessary steps to keep staff and students safe. The district strives to work cooperatively with law enforcement.

Sheriff Turner reports they are continuing to investigate the area and look for a vehicle based on the description reported to his office.

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 Public Schools Board Room (364 S. Park St.). 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 who 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

Federal Farm-to-School Grant Program plows the way for more local produce in Walla Walla schools

Walla Walla Public Schools was awarded a \$96,000 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Grant to increase local foods and education in district schools. The funding will also enhance educational opportunities for students, staff and the community about food and agriculture.

Longtime school garden advocate, parent volunteer and nutrition specialist Beth Thiel has been contracted to serve as the Farm-to-School grant coordinator for the school district.

“The goals of this grant will benefit students and the entire community by increasing the purchase of locally grown food for our school cafeterias,” said Thiel. “It will also help us expand the utilization of school gardens, better educate young students about food and farming and teach district staff and parents about cooking healthy meals.”

This fall Walla Walla students saw an increase in the amount and variety of fruits, vegetables and legumes served in school lunches; a requirement of the National School Lunch Program’s Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010. Walla Walla students in grades K-12 are required to have at least a half a cup of fruits or vegetables on their tray at every meal.

“This is a positive change for student health,” said Thiel. “The Farm-to-School program aims to ensure students are eating those extra fruits and vegetables daily.”

One strategy Thiel is introducing in Walla Walla is working with area farmers to bring in more locally grown produce. Thiel says this move and others will entice students to make healthier food choices.

“By providing the freshest, most flavorful local produce, we can influence student preference for healthy foods,” said Thiel. “School gardens and cooking activities, as well as farm field trips and farmer visits to schools, also play critical roles in educating students.”

District Nutrition Services Department staff also benefit from the grant. These staff will participate in culinary classes, take tours to local farms and meet with area chefs to enhance the meals they are serving.

“The Nutrition Services Department is excited for the opportunity and now has the resources to build an excellent Farm-to-School program that will fit the needs of school children in Walla Walla,” said Pamela Milleson, Director of Nutrition Services. “We live in a unique area which can provide a variety of produce and educational experience for our students.”

Thiel also seeks volunteers to help support the program and farmers and chefs who are interested in learning how to get involved. Contact Beth Thiel for more information: 509.386.2037 or wolcott.thiel@gmail.com

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

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 will take 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.

School Stories

Lincoln High School and Transportation take first at Macy's Parade of Lights

Congratulations to Lincoln High School and the Transportation Department for their successful entries in the Macy's Parade of Lights. Both entries earned first place honors for their categories. The Transportation entry featured a lighted school bus.

The Lincoln High School parade float was designed by the ASB class as a tribute to Charlie Brown. The students worked on the project for about three weeks in class, making all the heads for the characters. Lori Finn is the ASB advisor. Teacher Terry Olson's stage production class made the dog house, Snoopy and Woodstock.

Students who helped: Eternity Biegel (Peppermint Patty), Esli Espinoza (Marci), Doreen Aguayo (Lucy), Aron Wulf Martin (Schroeder), Samuel Marquez (Charlie Brown), Ambir Paul (Sally), Donavin Hull (Pigpen), Jose Luis Lara (Linus), Precelia Clay, Jasmine Gonzalez, Yvonne Miranda, Ashley Vinup, Kelsey Cobb.

Staff who helped: Lori Finn, Jayne Eacker, Terry Olson, Jesse Briones, Erik Gordon, Patrick Kofler, Maggie Yount, Jim Sporleder (driver), and Linda Barker.

It has become a tradition at Lincoln to have as many staff and students walk in the parade along with the float. We started participating 4 years ago and have won "Best High School Float" each year.

Volunteers needed for Walla Walla High School senior presentation panel

- Class of 2013 Senior Presentations
- February 12 and 13, March 25
- Time: 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- Wa-Hi campus

To sign up or for more information, contact:
Mark Pickel, Assistant Principal
509-526-8602
mpickel@wwps.org

Pioneer Middle School students join the YMCA for a student dance

Pioneer's NJHS is teaming up with the YMCA Saturday, December 15 for a Saturday Night Live Dance from 7 to 9 p.m. The cost is \$3 per person. All middle school students are welcome to attend with school I.D..

Community Stories

Peer mentors needed to help students with disabilities

High school or middle school students are needed to serve as Peer Mentors for students with disabilities. Parent-to-Parent is hosting a Peer Mentor Training at the YMCA. This 4 hour interactive training, will include information on five specific disabilities, stereo types of a person with disabilities, how to interact with a person with disabilities, problem solving and much more.

The high school training is December 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Students will be able to count these hours towards their 40 hours of volunteering. The middle school training will be December 21 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Middle school students in need volunteer hours will be able to count these hours. After the training, there will be many Peer Mentor opportunities to choose from. For more information contact Cyndy Knight, Parent-to-Parent Coordinator @ 509-524-2940 or cknight@co.walla-walla.wa.us or Christy Druffel, YMCA Director of Youth Development @ 509-525-8863 or cdruffel@wwymca.org.

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.

Exchange Club President earns Pete and Hedda Reid Service Award

(By Whitman College Communications Department)

Brian Dohe, director of annual giving, is the 2012 recipient of the Pete and Hedda Reid Service to Walla Walla Award, presented Nov. 28 at the Walla Walla Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet.

Formerly called the Town-Gown Award, it recognizes Whitman staff and faculty who have made significant contributions to the community. The award is presented jointly by Whitman and the Chamber and comes with a \$1,000 stipend. Multiple members of the Whitman community contributed to nominating Dohe. Among comments written on his behalf:

“Always a quick smile and positive attitude makes being a colleague of Brian’s a privilege. Because he does not talk about what he does for others, one would never know the difference he has made in our community.”

“Brian is highly invested in the Walla Walla community and spends personal time and energy in making this a better place to live. His involvement in community service is genuine and heartfelt and Brian enjoys connecting with people and making a difference.”

Dohe has worked at Whitman for 21 years, in which time he has served on the fundraising committee for Friends and on the boards of the Blue Mountain Arts Alliance and Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce. Described in his nomination as the “consummate volunteer,” Dohe currently serves as president of Exchange Club and chairman of the Financial Development Committee and secretary of the board for the WW Community Council.

Per Whitman tradition, this award was presented in memory of a college staff or faculty member who has passed away – in this case, Dr. George Ball. Dr. Ball founded the religion department at Whitman 41 years ago and was a beloved teacher and mentor to generations of Whitman students. An ordained Methodist minister with a Ph.D. from Yale Divinity School, Dr. Ball was known for delivering flowers to Whitman staff and picking up litter along his bicycle routes across campus. In 2010, his legacy was honored by the creation of the George H. Ball Endowed Chair in the Humanities.

“I counted Dr. Ball as a colleague and mentor from the moment that I arrived in Housing and Residence Life in 1991, and through my time in Annual Giving when we were in adjacent offices,” Dohe says. “It deepens the significance of this award to receive it in the year that it’s given in memory of Dr. Ball.”

Dohe is married to Walla Walla High School English teacher Lori Dohe.

AAUW donation helps students access medical care

American Association of University Women kicked off the holiday season of giving by donating \$400 to The Health Center for its newly established *Caring for Co-pays*. This fund helps off-set the cost of prescriptions and follow up care with primary care providers for student patients seen at Lincoln High School and Blue Ridge Elementary. AAUW's mission is to break down barriers by promoting education and advocacy for women and girls.

"We see this *Caring for Co-pays* fund as a wonderful example of AAUW's mission," said Chris Blackman. "A good education can only happen if kids have access to quality medical care."

AAUW wants to do its part in the community and give back to an important service. AAUW's season of giving will continue through the holiday season with donations taken at other AAUW events. For more information, please contact Chris Blackman, AAUW President-Elect at bcblackman@msn.com

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.