

Stories this week include:

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Community Stories

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District Stories

District invests \$1 million in maintenance and school projects

Maintenance efforts help provide quality learning spaces and extend life of facilities

Pioneer Middle School was repainted this summer to improve its appearance and help preserve the building. Pioneer also received HVAC and lighting improvements as part of the summer work load.

The district invested more than \$1 million in maintenance and new projects across the district last school year and over the summer months, according to a report to the school board Sept. 20 from Facilities Support Director Dan Johnson. Johnson said some of the work was completed by district staff while other work was contracted out.

Project Highlights

(Funding: General & Capital Funds, Grants and Maintenance Budget)

- New Garrison backstop and fencing (funding support from donations)
- New Blue Ridge playground (funding support from donations)
- Blue Ridge HVAC control systems, lighting improvements, carpet
- Lincoln asphalt driveway and new kitchen
- New Green Park classroom and cafeteria floor finishing
- New Prospect Point driveway, lighting & exterior paint
- New Berney playground and hub room improvements
- Wa-Hi portable installations, HVAC install in Music Bldg., Auto Shop floor refinished, rifle range and classroom improvements, Murr Sports complex parking lot repairs, Reser Road support and fencing

Superintendent Mick Miller forms Calendar Committee

Superintendent Mick Miller briefed the school board on his plans for organizing the district Calendar Committee. The group will meet Wednesday, October 12 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. This group will meet again Wednesday, November 2 to continue the process. The Calendar Committee will make recommendations for the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school year calendars. Miller would like to take a recommendation to the school board in November or December.

Calendar Committee Membership

- Superintendent Mick Miller, Chair
- WWVEA president, Co-Chair, Margo Piver
- PSE president, Co-Chair, Bill Heiser
- School board member, Jim Lehmann and Anne Golden (Alternate)
- Administrators, Dr. Linda Boggs, Laure Quaresma, Mark Higgins
- Principals, Donna Painter and Mira Gobel
- Teachers, Margaret Yount, Lynn Junke, Lance Longmire
- Parents representatives, Staci Simmelink-Johnson, Dana Hood, Heidi Leinweber, Nancy Klicker, Kirk Klicker, Susan Brick, Phillip Brick, Federico Diaz, Sara Paine, Charlotte Bouta, Shannon Kruegar, Peter Swant, Shauna Bogley and Jonathan Bailey
- High School student, Julia Cosma
- College Place Superintendent, Tim Payne
- Dixie Superintendent, Mark Wegner
- Whitman College, Ruth Wardell
- Walla Walla University, Jodi Wagner
- Walla Walla Community College, Jim Peterson
- Washington State Penitentiary, Don Holbrook
- Walla Walla Fair and Frontier Days Representative, Cory Hewitt
- Future Farmers of America Representative, Arch McHie

Patron Tours offer inside look at Walla Walla schools

Superintendent Mick Miller conducted his first Superintendent's Patron Tour of the school year Thursday morning to help bring more community members into district schools. The 12 guests visited Walla Walla High School and Lincoln High School during their stay.

The program began with a message from Miller and time for guests to ask questions and have a discussion. Participants then boarded a school bus and toured the schools. Following the tour, Miller debriefed with participants to get input and answer questions.

"However you can get there, do it" said J. Andrew Rodriguez. "Come and get involved and see how our future is getting educated."

The district has scheduled its next Patron Tour for Thursday, Oct. 20 from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Guests will once again visit Walla Walla High School and Lincoln High School. Contact Communications Director Mark Higgins to sign up: 526-6716 or mhiggins@wwps.org

September 22 - Patron Tour Guests

- J Andrew Rodriguez
- Kris Harrison
- Federico and Erendira Diaz
- Brenda Williams
- Scott Williams
- Gabriel and Josephine Sanchez
- Jonathan Bailey
- Wendy Hernandez
- Peter Swant
- Hilda Gonzalez

Board to visit Lincoln Health Center

- October 4, 2011
- 6:30 p.m. (regular board meeting)
- Location: Lincoln High School
- Tour of Lincoln Health Center prior to the school board meeting
- Meeting & tour open to the public

Swant and Bogley plan Citizens for Schools Meeting - Wednesday, Sept. 28

Citizens for Schools chairs Peter Swant and Shauna Bogley are scheduling a Walla Walla Citizens for Schools meeting Wednesday, Sept. 28 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Whitman College in Memorial Room 328. This meeting is open to the public.

The mission of this non-profit, community organization is to ensure Walla Walla Public Schools have the resources and support necessary to provide essential educational programs and activities to Walla Walla children.

Bogley and Swant will focus their attention on the district's 2012 Replacement Levy coming February 14, 2012. Their efforts will help educate the community on the levy which funds nearly 20 percent of the district's general fund budget.

Citizens for Schools Meeting:

- Wednesday, Sept. 28
- Whitman College Memorial Building
- Room 328 - 6:30 to 8 p.m.
- Front door will be open
- Those wishing to volunteer are welcome

Levy Advisory Committee meets to discuss rates

Thursday night Superintendent Mick Miller held his second Levy Community Advisory Committee meeting to get input on the levy rate and how many years it should span. The levy funds approximately 20 percent of the district's operating budget. The district is planning its levy for February 14, 2012.

Miller established the Levy Community Advisory Committee to educate this group on the M&O Levy and provide historical data on past M&O Levy rates. This effort is part of Miller's desire to get more input on district decisions. Superintendent Miller is expected to take this recommendation to the school board for consideration during the Oct. 18 school board meeting.

Levy Community Advisory Committee:

Mick Miller
Max Carrera
Pat Johnston
Mark Higgins
Ana Andrade
Shauna Bogley
Peter Swant
Margo Piver
Bill Heiser
Albert Gillin
Saul Reyna
Todd Bauman
Roger Esparza
Steve Moss
Anne Golden
Ruth Ladderud

Personnel Report (from Sept. 20, 2011 school board meeting)

Employment

(Certificated) NONE TO REPORT

(Classified) Teri Turner, Food Services Assistant, Blue Ridge Elementary
Christopher Zink, Custodian, Walla Walla High School

Resignation/Retirement

(Classified) Laure Jordan, SLP Para-Educator, Special Programs (6 years)

Leave of Absence

(Classified) Tom Arland, Custodian, Walla Walla High School (3 years)

- Tom will be on a leave until further notice

Transportation Department plans bus evacuation drills

The Transportation Department will be conducting its first School Bus Evacuations of the new school year Tuesday, Sept. 27. This is a mandated training exercise for all students riding school buses. Students will be excused for late arrivals on this date. The training is conducted at district schools prior to students being released from the buses.

Upcoming Early Dismissal dates

- Friday, Sept. 30 (K-5 only)

(Report card preparation)

- Thursday, Oct. 6 (K-12)

- Thursday, Oct. 7 (K-12)

(Parent/Teacher Conferences - both days)

Reser Road construction project update (September 19-23)

Progress this week on the Reser Road construction project focused on the underground storm drain system, sidewalks and retaining walls.

“We are expecting to see a lot more observable progress on the roadway and sidewalks over the next two weeks,” said Aaron Grimm, Walla Walla County project manager. “They will mobilize a scraper next week which will change the shape of everything by the end of the week.”

The goal is to have gravel delivered to the site by September 30 and continue into the first week of October. Don Smith of Culbert Construction is meeting with Facilities Support Director Dan Johnson today to review the fencing and irrigation work near Walla Walla High School and Prospect Point.

“I would like to compliment the bus drivers for being good natured about the conditions yesterday as they picked kids up for sporting events,” Grimm said.

Additional Information: Aaron Grimm - Project Engineer
509.524.2728 - Direct / 509.520.0548 - Cell

Enrollment stable to start year

Chief Financial Officer Pat Johnston reported to school board members Sept. 20 the district is on sound footing regarding enrollment to start the school year. Johnston said the district is at 6102.03 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) students. These figures include the Alternative Education Program and Running Start Program at Walla Walla Community College.

The district set its budget figure at 6013 FTE to fund the 2011-2012 school year. The school district is funded from the state based on enrollment figures from Full-Time Equivalent students. Johnston said elementary enrollment numbers are above projections, while middle and high school enrollment has taken a slight dip.

Johnston also suggested state law changes to homeschool funding have impacted the district’s Homelink program which is serving fewer students to start the year. The district’s 2011-2012 General Fund budget is \$62,091,263. District enrollment counts will be tallied each month throughout the school year and averaged out to determine state funding levels for the 2011-2012 school year.

District partners with The Moms’ Network for free Parent Workshop Series

Stability & Sustainability in the Home

- Tuesday, October 11 @ 7 p.m.
- YMCA
- Jenifer Clark
- Free child care available and translation services

Your Child’s Health

- Wednesday, November 9 @ 7 p.m.
- YMCA
- Dr. Trent Rodgers, Pediatrician, Walla Walla Clinic
- Free child care available and translation services

Reserve your spot by contacting Beth Swanson at 509.301.7471 or beth@themomsnetworkww.com

School Stories

Trip to Germany & Spain offers students summer to remember

Walla Walla High School teachers Gayle See and Curtis Schafer and Edison ESL staff member Elisabeth Entrena reported to school board members Tuesday night on a student trip they organized this summer to Germany and Spain. The 12 Walla Walla students spent one month overseas. Most students spent two weeks in Germany and two weeks in Spain, but a few spent the entire month in Germany. See showed a photo slideshow to school board members and stressed how much the students learned during their stay.

Schafer and Entrena wanted to visit a country which featured Spanish as the national language. They said the students represented their school and country well. They plan to return in the Summer of 2013. This time they want to spend an entire month in Spain with a separate group spending an entire month in Germany.

Walla Walla High School kids “Cheer Camp” next week

The Walla Walla High School Cheerleaders will be holding their annual “Cheer Camp.”

- Thursday September 29
- Small gym at Walla Walla High School
- 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. (Registration will start at 3:15 p.m.)
- Participants in the camp will cheer at the Wa-Hi football game Friday September 30
- Cost is \$20 (includes a tee-shirt and entrance to the game)
- Registration forms are available at all schools
- For more information contact Wa-Hi Cheer coach Cathy Rasley at 520-3887

Walla Walla High School Football team joins the Fight Against Muscular Dystrophy

Walla Walla High School Varsity Football Coach Eric Hisaw, along with over 500 universities and high schools around the country join Coach to Cure MD in the fight against Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Walla Walla High School is the first high school in the state of Washington to participate. Washington State University is also involved.

On Friday September 30, Walla Walla High School will be playing Davis High School at Borleske Stadium at 7:30 p.m. Coaches from both teams will be wearing armbands to show their support for Coach to Cure MD and the fight against this terrible disease. Donations will be gathered throughout the game.

Coach to Cure MD is a partnership between Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy and the American Football Coaches Association. The goal of Coach to Cure MD is to raise national awareness of Duchenne muscular dystrophy and to raise money to fund research for a cure.

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy is a progressive muscle disorder that causes loss of muscle function and independence which includes decline in respiratory and cardiac function. Boys with Duchenne face loss of mobility and wheelchair dependency. Duchenne primarily affects boys. One boy out of every 3500 live male births will be diagnosed with Duchenne. There is no cure but there is great hope and promising treatments on the horizon. There are boys right here in Walla Walla fighting this terrible disorder.

For more information, contact Amanda Hammond at (208) 284-6640.

Lincoln High School starts volleyball program

Lincoln High School started its own volleyball team this year with 14 girls participating on the team. They will play six games, 2 each against Mac-Hi, Walla Walla Valley Academy, and Waitsburg. Last Saturday, Lincoln High School played its first game against Mac-Hi and won the match, 2 games to 1 game.

“For the girls at Lincoln, they finally have an opportunity to participate in athletics,” said Coach Lori Finn. “Participating in athletics gives them a reason to keep their grades up, attend school every day, and to stay out of trouble. They are also learning life-long skills of communication, team work, problem solving, dedication, persistence, and conflict resolution.”

The girls are practicing every day from 3:15 to 5 p.m. The team is coached by Lori Finn with assistant volunteer coaches Jamie Sporleder and Sara Paine.

Game Schedule:

- Wednesday, Sept. 29 @ Mac-HI at 4 p.m.
- Tuesday, Oct. 4 @ WWVA at 5 p.m.
- Tuesday, Oct 11 @ WWVA at 5 p.m.
- Thursday, Oct 20 @ Waitsburg at 4 p.m.

Walla Walla High School College Visits fall schedule

Sessions held in the library unless otherwise noted. Students may sign-up now in the Career Center in the library to get a pass from class. Topics will include: application process and personal essay, scholarships and financial aid, successful first year, academic majors and minors, housing and meals.

September 2011

- 9/20 Pacific Lutheran University 11:30 a.m.
- 9/21 University of Portland 1:00 p.m.
- 9/22 Boise State University 8:30 a.m.
- 9/22 Gonzaga University 9:30 a.m.
- 9/23 Washington State University 8:30 & 11:30 a.m.
- 9/26 Lewis Clark St. College (Lewiston, ID) 2:00 p.m.
- 9/28 Central Washington University 11:30 a.m.
- 9/29 Corban College (Salem, OR) 8:30 a.m.

October 2011

- 10/4 Linfield College 10:40 a.m.
- 10/5 Whitman College 9:30 a.m.
- 10/6 University of Washington- Bothell 8:30 a.m.
- 10/7 Northwest College of Art 8:00 a.m.
- 10/14 Montana Tech. 1:30 p.m.
- 10/21 George Fox 9:00 a.m.

November 2011

- 11/4 University of Puget Sound 11:30 a.m.
- 11/10 Willamette University 8:00 a.m.
- 11/10 Whitworth University 10:45 a.m.
- 11/10 Eastern Oregon University 2:00 p.m.
- 11/16 Whitman College 9:30 a.m.

“The Weekend” school retreat helps Lincoln High School students connect with staff

Lincoln High School hosted “The Weekend” trip to Camp Wooten on Sept. 15-16. Approximately 40 students and 15 staff members attended “The Weekend.” This event is a life coping skills camp with an emphasis on building trusting, lasting relationships with peers and teachers. Students go through a series of carefully planned activities that challenge them both physically and emotionally, including a challenge course.

Students who attend “The Weekend” each year, have better attendance at school and perform better academically. They say that getting to know the teachers and the peers helps make Lincoln a safer place for them to be themselves.

Mick Miller was able to attend “The Weekend” for a short time and lead an activity with the students called “Masks.” The focus of the activity was to take a look at what things we share with others about ourselves and what things we hide from others. Only when what we share with others and what we hide are close together are we able to be truly happy.

“The Weekend” was planned and organized by Lori Finn, Lincoln teacher and funded through a grant to Lincoln High School. The grant allows The Weekend to be available to everyone since all students are able to attend for free. If you would like to make a donation to The Weekend, please contact Lori Finn at 509-527-3083.

Green Park launches new website

This week Green Park Elementary launched a new web site. The site features upcoming events, PTA announcements, a principal’s section and much more. Visit Green Park online at: www.greenparkelementary.org

Walla Walla High School plans “Sudsathon” car wash

- Choir Sudsathon
- Saturday, September 24
- 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- NAPA (E. Isaacs)
- Information: Norbert Rossi, Director of Choral Activities (509-527-3020 / nrossi@wwps.org)

Community Stories

Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty hunger walk October 9

- CROP (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty) hunger walk
- Sunday, October 9
- Starts and ends at Walla Walla Community College
- Free registration begins at 1pm. with the walk at 2 p.m..
- Walkers can choose to walk a 1/2 mile, 3 mile or 5 mile route.

The purpose of the walk is to raise funds to alleviate local and world hunger with 25% of the funds staying here in Walla Walla. Walkers are encouraged to seek sponsors; funds can be collected by the walker or given online at www.cropwalkonline.org. This is an opportunity for a school group to challenge another group or a team spirit builder or a family activity. For further information call 525-1376.

Walla Walla Police Department organizes police Citizen's Academy

- November 2011 to January 2012
- Starts November 8
- Tuesdays 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., with holiday weeks off (Thanksgiving/Christmas)
- Register online at: www.ci.walla-walla.wa.us or at the police station (15 N 3rd)
- Limited to the first 30 people
- Application Deadline: November 3, 2011

Goals for Police Citizen's Academy

- Creating better understanding and communication between citizens and law enforcement through education.
- This is an opportunity for the citizens of our community to know more about the men and women who are protecting the community and why they make the decisions they do.
- The Citizens Academy also presents an opportunity for Citizens to “connect” with law enforcement on a continuing basis, to the benefit of both law enforcement and our community!

Additional Information: Vicki Ruley, Crime Prevention Coordinator/Crime Victim Advocate: 509-524-4409

Sheriff's “Round Table” Community Meeting September 29

Sheriff John Turner encourages staff, parents, students and community members to attend and learn what's new with the Walla Walla County Sheriff's Department.

Walla Walla & College Place Meeting

- Thursday, September 29
- Walla Walla High School Commons
- 5:30 p.m.