

Stories this week include:

District Stories

- No school Monday, Jan. 16 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- Providence St. Mary Medical Center presents \$50,000 donation to the Health Center at Lincoln
- Superintendent Miller's video simplifies levy information
- Citizens for Schools plan community rally
- Grant renewal ensures GEAR UP programs continue in Walla Walla
- College students become Civil Rights era teachers in innovative partnership program
- State Superintendent Randy Dorn addresses state's failing grade on school funding

School Stories

- Prospect Point students organize blanket drive for community families
- Sharpstein students penny drive supports animals at Blue Mountain Humane Society
- Walla Walla High School Cadets to host regional drill meet Saturday
- Walla Walla High School Debate team competes at the University of Puget Sound - By Coach Jean Tobin

Community Stories

- Expert on Poverty Issues Presents for Martin Luther King, Jr. Event
- Popular elementary school art education program is renamed as Carnegie Picture Lab
- Power House Theatre Opens 2012 Season with *Four Tenors*
- City of Walla Walla Public Library features new digital attraction
- Library to host community forum on street improvement plan
- Walla Walla Dance Company presents "The Adventures of Alice"

District Stories

No school Monday, Jan. 16 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

Classes resume Tuesday, Jan. 16. Have a safe and happy holiday break.

Providence St. Mary Medical Center presents \$50,000 donation to the Health Center at Lincoln

Tuesday Kathie Oreb from Providence St. Mary Medical Center presented a \$50,000 check to Executive Director Holly Howard to support operations at The Health Center at Lincoln High School. The Health Center at Lincoln provides primary medical care, mental health counseling and referral support to other medical agencies. Last year the clinic had more than 2000 visits from Lincoln High School students.

“We continue to be grateful and honored and will continue to positively impact the students at The Health Center at Lincoln,” Howard said. “Without these funds we are not able to continue to operate.”

Superintendent Miller’s video simplifies levy information

Superintendent Mick Miller recently produced an informational video on the district’s *Replacement Educational Programs and Operations Levy*. Visit www.wwps.org to watch this informative, five minute video.

Miller uses easy to understand language and examples to clearly explain the levy and how the funding is used. Levy dollars fund learning programs, activities and operations and the staff to support them. Ballots will be mailed out to voters Friday, Jan. 27 and must be returned and postmarked Tuesday, Feb. 14. Click on the district website at www.wwps.org for additional levy information.

Citizens for Schools plan community rally

- Sunday, Jan. 15
- 1 to 4 p.m.
- YMCA
- Student musical performances and acts
- Levy information and materials
- Free and open to the public
- For additional information, contact Coordinators Kurt and Barbara Hoffman at: 525-2632

Grant renewal ensures GEAR UP programs continue in Walla Walla

Washington State University ‘Harvest of Hope’ III GEAR UP grant was awarded in July 2011 from the United States Department of Education. GEAR UP is an acronym for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs with the goal of significantly increasing the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Options for postsecondary education are inclusive of two and four year higher education institutions and career preparatory training.

The GEAR UP grant will serve current 6th and 7th grade cohort students from Walla Walla and College Place through year 2017. GEAR UP will provide information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education; encourage student enrollment in rigorous or challenging curricula and coursework, in order to reduce the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level; and improve the number of students who obtain a secondary school diploma, complete postsecondary applications, and enroll in a postsecondary educational program.

College students become Civil Rights era teachers in innovative partnership program

Whitman College, in partnership with the Southern Poverty Law Center and Walla Walla Public Schools, is coordinating the Whitman Teaches the Movement initiative to enhance civil rights education for Walla Walla students in grades 2, 5, 7 and 11 to coincide with Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Whitman College students, working in small groups, will travel to all 10 local schools Jan. 19-20 and 23-24 to lead 45 minute lessons on civil rights education. The lessons are age-appropriate and based on curriculum developed by the Southern Poverty Law Center, history teachers and organizations which specialize in teaching history.

The participating college students hail from 17 states and two foreign nations. They have volunteered their time and efforts, which included training sessions held in December by Kate Shuster an education researcher for the Southern Poverty Law Center.

“When students learn about the civil rights movement they learn what it is like to be American,” said Shuster. “It shows students it is possible to struggle against great injustices and emerge victorious.”

Student Lessons by Grade Level:

- Second Grade: Greensboro lunch counter sit-ins
- Fifth Grade: Jackie Robinson
- Seventh Grade: Women in the civil rights movement
- Eleventh Grade: Dr. King’s Letter from Birmingham Jail

The Southern Poverty Law Center reports its research has discovered two-thirds of all states, including Washington, fail at teaching a milestone period in American history – the civil rights movement.

Walla Walla Public Schools Superintendent Mick Miller says collaborating with Whitman College on this project allows the district to enhance learning opportunities and better utilize a valued and trusted community asset.

“We chose to participate in the Whitman Teaches the Movement project because we wanted our students to learn more about the civil rights movement, have strong role models in our classrooms, and to strengthen our ties to Whitman College,” Miller said.

Noah Leavitt, Whitman assistant dean for student engagement, is managing the college’s involvement in the program and says this is “an extraordinary opportunity for Whitman students to address real world issues of non-discrimination, justice and citizenship in a way that enables them to serve and engage with our community.”

Walla Walla Public Schools Assistant Superintendent Dr. Linda Boggs says the project supports the district’s curriculum and provides a venue for Walla Walla students to interact with college role models.

“I am especially excited about the custom-designed grade-level lessons and materials,” said Boggs. “Additionally, having college students as guest teachers provides an opportunity for our students to get a real life glimpse into ‘college,’ as many students, especially younger ones, may know college as a word but not have a clear picture of what it might look like.”

State Superintendent Randy Dorn addresses state's failing grade on school funding

This week Education Week released Quality Counts, an annual report on how states compare in education. Below is a statement from State Superintendent Randy Dorn on the report.

OSPI - The new Quality Counts report is another indicator of just how inadequate education funding is. Our overall grade, based on six categories, was a C, and we ranked 38th in the nation. That's not where we should be. In one of those categories – funding – we received a C. But that grade is deceiving: it's based on a B+ and an F. The B+ came in funding equity. Compared to other states, the difference in funding between rich and poor districts is minor. The F came in education spending. In its analysis of all states, Education Week ranked Washington 42nd in per-pupil spending and 44th in state expenditures as a percent of state taxable resources.

This is not a surprise. It underscores the Supreme Court's Jan. 5 *McCleary v. State* ruling, which held that Washington is failing to provide ample funding for education. Inadequate funding accounts for other low grades as well. Among the reasons Washington received a D- for teacher professional development are the state's failure to finance professional development for all districts, the lack of a formal teacher induction and the lack of a mentoring program for all new teachers.

The report does include a few bright spots. Washington received one A grade: Economy and Workforce. Our K-12 system was deemed to be very successful in work readiness, offering career-tech diplomas, industry certification and pathways to earn career-tech credits for post-secondary opportunities.

Despite the negative grades, every day I am impressed at the effort that our teachers and other school staff make. I worry, though, that continued cuts to education funding will hurt that effort. Certainly our Supreme Court has weighed in on the subject. I hope the Legislature responds by fully funding education. Randy Dorn, State Superintendent.

School Stories

Prospect Point students organize blanket drive for community families

The Prospect Point Elementary students are doing their part to keep people warm this winter by organizing a school blanket drive. Fifth grade students in the Peer and Leadership Support or PALS program, under the direction of Kate VanCleve, are coordinating the project. All donations will go to Helpline for distribution to help families in need. Those wishing to donate a blanket may drop them off at Prospect Point during school hours.

Students created fliers, designed posters and made school announcements to let people know how to get involved. The project also helps the students enhance their math skills. The PALS students have measured the gym floor and made a graph paper scale model to hang in the library. This chart will be used to track the drive's progress.

"As blankets come in, the kids have measured them and colored in the arrays for the blankets on the graph paper," said VanCleve. "This is the tool we are using to see if we have reached our school goal."

Sharpstein students penny drive supports animals at Blue Mountain Humane Society

A raided piggy bank here and a handful of spare change there added up to a sizeable donation made to the Blue Mountain Humane Society by students of Sharpstein Elementary last month. In the spirit of holiday giving, students brought in their spare coins during a week-long "Change for Good" drive, filling six giant water-cooler bottles, one per class grade. They also nominated local charities to receive the donation, with the Humane Society winning a school-wide vote. "Change for Good" is an initiative of the Sharpstein PTA's Stompers in Service program, which encourages students to participate in community service.

Sara Archer, director of the Blue Mountain Humane Society, surprised students on Monday, December 12 when she came to accept the students' donation by bringing a special friend with her, a chocolate-colored, Labrador-mix puppy. Students got to name the dog, cheering loudest for "Lucy." First-grade students filled their water bottle with the most change, garnering a special "meet-and-pet" session with Lucy after the morning assembly.

"We are so honored that the students at Sharpstein chose BMHS to support," said Archer. "The animals in our care depend on the generosity of our community."

Walla Walla High School Cadets to host regional drill meet Saturday

The Walla Walla High School Blue Devil cadet battalion will host a JROTC drill and rifle meet Saturday (Jan. 14) at Walla Walla High School. Cadets from Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps units will participate in the Cascade Mountains League Drill and Rifle Competition. Teams decked out in their full-color, service dress uniforms from 11 schools from Eastern Washington and Oregon will go head-to-head in unarmed drill, armed drill, and color guard categories. The event also features physical fitness and rifle marksmanship competition.

This meet will be the first time the public will get to see the new electronic target scoring system in use that the JROTC department installed last summer. In the past, observers would watch the shooters on the firing line and then waited for scoring information till each marksmanship rotation was over and paper targets checked. With the new system, attendees will be able to watch in real time, right along with the competitors in precision and sporter levels, on a 60-inch screen, as each trigger squeeze of the .177 caliber air rifles

JROTC cadets from all the military services learn a broad range of subjects including military history, leadership, precision drill and ceremony skills, and marksmanship. The Wa-Hi "Blue Devil" cadets invite the community to come out beginning at 8 a.m., and observe this all-day event in the main gymnasium. The competition is open to the public and there is no charge to attend and parking is free.

Saturday's meet to feature new, high tech rifle range

Walla Walla High School Rifle Range was renovated this summer and Saturday (Jan. 14) Walla Walla High School will host its first competitive shoot on the new electronic range. In May, Rifle Marksmanship students began to move everything out of the old classroom and shooting areas and into storage for the work that would be done. During July and August the entire room was painted and rewired for new lights and technology equipment.

The range also received new tables, chairs, gun safes, computers and a Brightlink projector to create a better classroom environment for teaching JROTC Rifle Marksmanship and coaching the High School Rifle Team.

"Possibly the most significant change is the installation of Megalink electronic targets," said JROTC instructor Mark Mebes. "Unlike paper targets, Megalink targets register each shot immediately and show it on a monitor next to the shooter, as well as on the instructor's computer at his desk."

The system scores the shot automatically, down to a tenth of a point. Also recently installed is a large flat screened monitor hanging from the ceiling that projects a graphic of the shots of all the shooters, along with their score. These are the same targets used at the National Rifle Championships at Camp Perry, Ohio and the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Currently, Walla Walla High School has two competitive rifle marksmanship teams. A "Sporter" category team, and a "Precision" category team. Sporter shooters must shoot with rifles made in the United States, cannot adjust their rifles to specifically "fit" them, and are not allowed to shoot with any special clothing. In the Precision category, most of the rifles are manufactured in Germany, are fully adjustable to the individual shooter and shooters utilize special coats, pants and boots for greater stability, identical to what is seen in Olympic shooting events. Precision shooters are generally the most experienced shooters on the team.

On December 10th, the Precision Team traveled to Spokane to compete in the Washington State Junior Olympics match, placing 3rd in the state out of 18 precision teams. One shooter, Sarah Jameson was the state champion in the J2 age class and will likely receive an invitation to shoot in the Junior Olympics National Championship in Colorado this spring.

This year, Walla Walla High School has qualified both their Sporter Team and their Precision Team to compete in the Army JROTC National Championship Match in Camp Perry. National Championship invitations are decided by "Postal" matches. Teams from across the country are mailed a set of targets to shoot. Once they have shot the targets, they are mailed back to the Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) at Camp Perry, Ohio. The top scoring shooters in the postal, are invited to the National Championship. On February 8th, 10 Walla Walla shooters will fly to Ohio to test their skills against some of the best shooters in the nation.

Walla Walla High School Debate team competes at the University of Puget Sound - By Coach Jean Tobin

The Walla Walla HS Debate team had an incredible experience this weekend at the University of Puget Sound. The students' successes exceeded my expectations and our varsity students were wonderful role models for our newer competitors.

The UPS tournament is one of the largest in the state and draws competitors from as far away as California and Canada. Fifty-three schools competed and over 500 students. At this tournament students had to be ready to debate new topics in all three forms of debate: Congressional, Public Forum and Lincoln-Douglas. WWHS students spent many hours over the break researching, writing and practicing.

RESULTS:

In Speech:

Hope Grant-Herriot, 2nd place Open Original Oratory

Maggie Grant and Kurt Funk, 1st place Novice Duo interpretation

Anna Apostolidis-Morefield, 1st place Novice Expository

Ben Parsons, 4th place Novice Expository

Kate Kuhlmann, Finalist Novice Expository (Kate was the only student to break out into Finals in both debate and speech from out team)

Lupe Beck, Finalist Novice Oral Interpretation

In Debate:

Lincoln-Douglas Debate, students debated the topic: Resolved: It is morally permissible for victims to use deadly force as a deliberate response to repeated domestic violence.

In Open LD Rosa Tobin went 3-3 and missed breaking by one round.

In Junior LD Kendall Dunovant went 5-1 in preliminary rounds and placed 1st overall.

In Novice LD Tristan Moore went 5-1 in preliminary rounds and was a Quarter Finalist.

Public-Forum Debate, students debated the topic: Resolved: The costs of a college education outweigh the benefits.

In Open PF the team of Kera Parsons and Julia Cosma went 4-2 and broke to Octa-Finals.

In Open PF the team of Bryan Preston and Sean Hamilton went 3-3 and missed breaking by 1 round.

In Novice PF the team of Malcolm Gabbard and Emily Prull went 5-1 in preliminary rounds and placed 2nd overall.

In Congressional Debate students debated 25 different bills. The bills included discussion of the Keystone pipeline, legalizing marijuana, extending the Bush tax cuts, amending the 14th amendment and many other topics.

In Open Congress, Machado Mijiga was a Finalist. He was also invited (but could not attend) to participate in a select tournament at Eastside Catholic as one of the top Congressional Debaters in the State.

In Junior Congress, Nathen Myers and Kate Kuhlmann were Finalists.

Community Stories

Expert on Poverty Issues Presents for Martin Luther King, Jr. Event

What does it mean to live in poverty? This year's Martin Luther King, Jr. Day events at Walla Walla University will provide a personal view of this experience. Donna Beegle, a prominent scholar and speaker on poverty, will share her life story and perspectives at two Jan. 16 events.

The university is presenting two events scheduled for Monday, Jan. 16. The first event, titled "War on Poverty: The Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr." will be held at 11 a.m. in the University Church.

At 7 p.m., Beegle will speak in Village Hall on the university campus. Her evening presentation is titled "Where Do We Go From Here? Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Final Advice for Breaking Poverty Barriers."

Beegle is a prominent scholar, speaker, and writer. She is the author of "See Poverty, Be the Difference" and "An Action Approach to Educating Students Who Live in the Crisis of Poverty." Beegle has studied the social and cultural effects of poverty for the last 20 years. Her life and work have been featured in newspapers and television documentaries.

Beegle's perspective is drawn from personal experience. She grew up in generational migrant labor poverty, and is the only member of her family who has not been incarcerated. She left school for marriage at age 15. After having two children, she found herself, at age 25, with no husband, little education, and no job skills. Eventually, she earned a G.E.D., an associate degree in journalism, a bachelor's degree in communications, a master's degree in communication and a doctoral degree.

Traditionally, the university's Martin Luther King, Jr. Day event focused on the issues of racism. For this year's events, program organizers are expanding the focus to include another lesser-known legacy of the civil rights leader.

Emily Tillotson, assistant professor in the William Hepker School of Social Work, explains that much of the work of the late civil rights leader included helping end not just racial injustice, but economic injustice too.

"Dr. King worked throughout his life with members of many faith groups including Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Muslims, and others to combat social injustices," Tillotson says.

"He is most famous for his work to end segregation; however, he also worked to fight poverty," she continues. "The more a person knows about Dr. King, the more the social justice focus makes sense."

Pedrito Maynard-Reid, professor of biblical studies and missiology and assistant to the president for diversity, explains that "when [Dr. King] died he was in Memphis fighting for fair wages for garbage collectors. Martin Luther King Day is about the struggle that he stood for. There are many dimensions to that. This year we will focus on the struggle for the rights of the poor."

Popular elementary school art education program is renamed as Carnegie Picture Lab

The Carnegie Picture Lab, formerly known as the Carnegie Art Center's Picture Lady Program, is a non-profit volunteer-led organization founded in the early 1970's providing art education to Walla Walla Valley schools serving children in Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Over the past several years, major changes have occurred to the original Carnegie Art Center and its Picture Lady Program. For the better part of a year the current board has worked to provide the necessary infrastructure to the organization to insure the sustainability of the program. The program now has a new and expanded board of directors with member expertise in education, community outreach, communications, grant writing, finance and leadership skills.

The services of Jan McGowan, a non-profit business consultant, nationally recognized artist advisors inclusive of Walla Walla based artists Squire Broel and Leslie Cain, and a dedicated AmeriCorps staff member bolster the organization. Most excitedly, the group has received a new name, logo and mission/vision statement along with renewed enthusiasm by the 100% volunteer-led organization to ensure Carnegie Picture Lab will provide art enrichment to elementary school children throughout the valley to participating schools for many years to come.

For more information:

Phone: 509-526-6921

Email: info@CarnegiePictureLab.com

Studio: Main Post Office, Downtown Walla Walla, 2nd Floor, Suite 219

Mail: PO Box 3223, Walla Walla, WA 99362

Website: www.CarnegiePictureLab.com

Power House Theatre Opens 2012 Season with *Four Tenors*

Sunny Thompson Returns to Walla Walla with Four Amazing Voices!

The Power House Theatre opens its 2012 season with the *Four Tenors*, directed and arranged by Sunny Thompson, star of *Marilyn: Forever Blonde*. *Four Tenors* will showcase the best of Broadway, Classical, Country, Pop & Rock. Performed by four fabulous voices under the direction by Sunny Thompson, the show features the popular music of Josh Groban, Michael Bublé, The Sons of the Pioneers, Elvis, Maroon 5, Bon Jovi and more.

Four Tenors opens at 7:00 pm on February 10 and runs through February 26. The production run will include 3:00 pm matinee performances on February 11, 12, 18, 19, 25 and 26 and 7:00 pm evening performances on February 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26. Doors open one hour prior to showtime. Ticket prices range from \$50 to \$9 with special pricing available through FLEX ticket packages. Please visit www.phtww.com for FLEX Info.

Actress-Singer Sunny Thompson returns to Walla Walla and takes the director's chair for this fun and lively performance of audience favorites. Each singer presents amazing talent and Sunny, a highly accomplished songstress, knows how to add just the right touch to each arrangement.

Special to this production will be an opening number performed by a local, soon-to-be cast singer-guitarist as well as a fun jazz dance sequence performed with the Tenors themselves featuring a local dancer. Auditions for these two parts will be held at the Power House Theatre on Sunday, January 22, 1:00 - 4:00 pm. (For more information on the auditions please email denise@PHTWW.com)

Power House Theatre | 111 N. 6th Avenue, Walla Walla, WA 99362 | www.PHTWW.com

City of Walla Walla Public Library features new digital attraction

The City of Walla Walla Public Library has added a new resource to its digital collection. It is designed to build reading skills through games, puzzles, and other activities.

TumbleBook Library is an online collection of animated; talking picture books which teach kids the joy of reading in a format they'll love. Story Books: The TumbleBook Library has a selection of children's favorite story books. In the read-along format, stories come to life in an educational and interactive way. Language Learning: Our Language Learning Section includes a growing selection of books in Spanish and French. Many are bilingual titles which allow the user to read the book in two languages. Available with a Walla Walla Public Library card at www.wallawallapubliclibrary.org.

Library to host community forum on street improvement plan

Residents seeking more information on the City of Walla Walla street improvement plan are invited to the city public library Saturday, January 21 for a community forum.

"We are doing this family style," Librarian Liz George said. "There will be big trucks for kids to climb on in the parking lot while city representatives talk about the plan to continue large scale street improvements.

For more information, visit the Walla Walla Public Library website at: <http://www.wallawallapubliclibrary.org/>

Walla Walla Dance Company presents "The Adventures of Alice"

The Walla Walla Dance Company presents "The Adventures of Alice" on Saturday, January 28, 7:30 p.m. at Cordiner Hall. A delightful twist on a classic tale, this full scale production features over 100 local dancers from ages 3-20. Tickets will be on sale at Earthlight Books.