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District Stories

Replacement levy ballots mail out today

Ballots for the district's Educational Programs and Operations Replacement Levy will be mailed out to voters today and must be returned and postmarked by Tuesday, February 14.

The replacement levy funds about 20 percent of the district's operating budget and pays for programs not funded by state and federal dollars. The proposed taxpayer levy rates are similar to those currently being collected. Visit the school district web site for additional information and please remember to vote.

In Walla Walla, the replacement levy helps support educational programs and school operations such as:

- approximately 100 staff
- elementary music specialists
- health clinicians
- library-media specialists
- elementary physical education specialists
- school supplies
- school safety staff
- building maintenance and grounds
- technology
- gifted and talented learning programs (Explorers and Advanced Placement Courses)
- extra-curricular programs (athletics, music, drama, FFA and more)
- additional classes for students grades 6-12
- transportation for school activities

For more information, visit the district's web site at: www.wwps.org

City support helps improve school zone safety

City offers extra patrols and grant support

Walla Walla Public Schools continues to collaborate with parent volunteers and city and county officials to improve school zone safety. The effort began last school year with the formation of the *Safe Travels Alliance* led by volunteers Katie Christianson and Kathryn Southwick Hess.

This year the team was strengthened with the addition of Ki Bealey - City Public Works Director, Dennis McKee - City Police Traffic Patrol Captain, Dan Johnson - Facilities Support and Operations Director, Steve Olson - Transportation Director and district principals. The project falls under the umbrella of the district's Safe Schools program chaired by Communications Director Mark Higgins.

The School Zone Safety Team focused on Berney Elementary this fall. Changes include parking lot revisions, relocation of all school buses to a designated lane, designating the front of the school for parent drop-off and pick-up, and tree trimming to improve visibility. Bealey also secured a \$15,000 grant to install two flashing school zone signs near Berney. The signs will be installed this school year on School Avenue and Pleasant Street.

The team is now studying Pioneer Middle School and Edison Elementary. All district schools will be reviewed this school year. Transportation Director Steve Olson will use this team to develop safe pedestrian travel routes for each school and help make walking to school safer.

Whitman College to host Middle School Science Fair April 22

In an effort to provide an opportunity for local students to learn more about the scientific process, Whitman College announces that it will host a Middle School Science Fair Sunday, April 22, from 1-3:30 p.m. Projects may range from chemistry to biology to zoology, but must adhere to the science fair guidelines.

Students should choose a specific question that they can seek to answer through their own investigation, rather than an internet search. After developing a hypothesis, students will collect data and report their results in a journal. No experimenting on animals or contact with pathogenic organisms is allowed. Any safety concerns should be addressed BEFORE the start of the project.

This event is open to individual students in grades six through eight (no group projects). The deadline to register is Friday, March 30. Due to space constraints, only the first 50 registrants will be accepted.

Contact: Mary Burt, Whitman College HHMI Science Outreach Coordinator
(509) 522-4441 / burtmb@whitman.edu

Parents encouraged to update contact information (data used for delay and closure messages)

School closures and delays due to poor weather conditions are a good reminder for the need to update contact information with school secretaries. Parents are encouraged to contact their school secretary to ensure their telephone numbers and email addresses are accurate and complete. The district relies on data within the student record system for notifying parents on school closures and delays. Thank you for taking a few moments to review and update your records.

School Stories

High School students attend Peer Mentor Training to support special needs students - by Cyndy Knight

“With A Little Help From My Friends”

On Saturday, January 7, 18 high school students volunteered six hours of their weekend to learn more about becoming Parent to Parent Peer Mentors. The program, “With a Little Help from My Friends,” included a Power Point, a video, hands on activities, group activities (in groups of 5, they put together a poster board on a particular disability and then presented it in front of the group) and a free pizza lunch. Angela Potts, Recreation Coordinator with Walla Walla Parks and Recreation also came and shared the importance and responsibility of the roles they will have as a Recreation Volunteer.

Comments from the day include; “I learned that to really help people with disabilities you must understand what they are going through and how it feels”, and how important it is “to put the person before the disability.” When asked what they liked about the training they responded; “I learned a lot about how to act around kids with disabilities and what to say to them. I understand why some kids are more quiet and alone.” “I learned about many things that people with disabilities encounter daily.”

The 18 young adults went through activities that made them temporarily disabled (blindfolded, tied to chairs, mute), they experienced what it might be like to have Autism, Down syndrome, visual and hearing impairments, Cerebral Palsy and learning disabilities. They went on a wheelchair scavenger hunt to see how some spaces were inaccessible, or difficult to maneuver. I was personally very impressed with the group that attended. The students were very interested in learning more and were eager to participate in activities that brought them closer to understanding how to look at the abilities, not the disabilities of a person.

Parent to Parent would like to extend a special thank you to Angela Potts and Angie Witt for their help at the training, Claircy Boggess, Career Information Specialist, WWPS, and Chris Blackman, Special Education Chair, WWPS for advertising this volunteer opportunity to their students, and First Presbyterian Church (Mary, Bill, and Session) for the free use of their facility. To become a Parent to Parent Peer Mentor the students must complete “With A Little Help From My Friends” training, an application and the national background check through Walla Walla Parks and Recreation.

If you, or someone you know is interested in becoming a Peer Mentor (middle school or high school) please e-mail Cyndy Knight, cknight@co.walla-walla.wa.us.

Wa-Hi Winter Sports Tournament Schedule

Dance

- Competition—1-28 @ Moses Lake, 2-25 @ Quincy and 2-18 @ Kamiakin
- District at Pasco - March 10
- State at Yakima—March 23

Wrestling

- Season ends Saturday vs. Wenatchee @ WW - starting at noon
- Districts at Chiawana - February 3-4
- Regionals at Moses Lake - February 10-11
- State at Tacoma - February 17-18

Basketball

- Season ends February 4 with boys and girls vs. Chiawana @WW
- Districts (four rounds)2-10, 2-11, 2-17, and 2-18
- Big Nine/GSL play-in game (Sub-Regional) 2-21 @ GSL site
- Regional (first two rounds of State) 2-24 and 2-25
- State (final eight) in Tacoma - March 1-3

Swimming

- Season ends Saturday vs. Hanford and Richland @ Whitman - starting at 11 a.m.
- Districts at Ellensburg (CWU) - February 3-4
- State at Federal Way - February 10-11

Volleyball program raises more than \$3000 for Breast Cancer support

This year's Walla Walla High School Varsity volleyball team raised \$3180.15 during its annual Breast Cancer Awareness Fundraiser. Proceeds were donated to Providence St. Mary Medical Center's Cancer Center. Congratulations to the team on a great effort!

Volunteers needed to serve on Walla Walla High School Senior Presentation panel

Volunteers are needed to serve on the Walla Walla High School Senior Presentation panel for the Class of 2012. Volunteers will listen to graduates as they share their personal stories, successes and struggles, academic accomplishments, community volunteer experiences, and future plans.

Volunteers may sign up for multiple panel dates, but they will only need to attend the training session on the first day they have selected to participate. This is a graduation requirement for seniors. Community support is appreciated and needed.

Senior Presentation Panel Dates:

- Wednesday, February 15
- Thursday, February 16
- Wednesday, March 21
- Thursday, March 22

Time commitment:

- Approximately 3:30 to 7:30 p.m.

To sign up, contact Walla Walla High School Assistant Principal Mark Pickel at: 509.527.3020 ext. 8602 or by email at: mpickel@wwps.org.

Bieloh leads renovation of Fletcher Team Room

Nearly 20 years ago, former Walla Walla Athletic Director Bill Bieloh organized the creation of the Fletcher Team Room and Blue Devil Athletic Hall of Fame in honor of legendary football coach Felix Fletcher. Tucked away on the second floor of Walla Walla High School's main gym, the Fletcher Team Room is a place to honor the past and help today's athletes excel through team meetings and film study sessions.

Two decades of use and ever changing technology pushed Bieloh to help modernize the room to meet today's needs. Bieloh reached out to his alumni contacts, including Mike Murr, to help fund the \$35,000 renovation. This space will be used by coaches and student-athletes for game preparations and special events. Upgrades funded by alumni donations include a 60" video screen, new chairs for film reviewing sessions and new tables for note taking and electronic equipment.

The original Blue Devil Athletic Hall of Fame plaques were also returned to the Fletcher Team Room and replicas will be featured in the main gym lobby.

Fletcher coached at Wa-Hi from 1947 to 1970. His win/loss record at Wa-Hi was 162-45-10. He had undefeated seasons in 1952, 1956 and 1963. His teams had seven seasons with only one loss. Fletcher taught physical education and was the school's athletic director for more than 20 years

"Felix Fletcher was our mentor. He taught all of us so much about the psychology of coaching and the importance of maintaining athletic traditions and history. We want to pass on his passion for the game to today's coaches and athletes," said Bieloh.

Athletic Hall of Fame welcomes new members February 4

Walla Walla High School *Athletic Hall of Fame* is inducting seven new members Saturday, February 4 during the Chiawana basketball game. The ceremony will be held between the girls' and boys' double header basketball game at approximately 7:15 p.m. A reception will follow the induction ceremony in the Fletcher Athletic Team Room for the new inductees, former inductees, family, friends and Big Blue Boosters.

2012 Athletic Hall of Fame inductees:

- Patrick O'Rourke • Class of 1922
- David Bateman • Class of 1971
- Phil Girsberger • Class of 1984
- Jill (Melia) Watkins • Class of 1996
- Jason Grove • Class of 1997
- Lindsay (Chutas) Morgan • Class of 2000
- Thomas Kelati • Class of 2001

Community Stories

The Moms' Network Announces Free Parenting Workshops for Busy Parents

The Moms' Network is excited to announce three new workshops for local parents to help strengthen families. Each workshop will provide invaluable information and ideas plus create an open dialogue for parents.

“Our hope with the upcoming parenting series is to educate our local parents and give them tools to make their family stronger. During each session there will be an open forum to discuss parenting issues and realistic solutions” says Beth Swanson, President of The Moms' Network.

The first of the series is Thursday, February 9 at 7 p.m. at the YMCA. The topic is “Resilience Trumps Trauma” with Mark Brown and Teri Barila of the Children's Resilience Initiative. They will discuss how parents can foster resilience in their own children to make them stronger individuals. They will also discuss what local resources are available to families and how to access them.

Workshops are open to all families in the community. There will also be Spanish language translation services provided at each event. Free childcare is also available during the workshop. The event is free thanks to the support of The Moms' Network, Walla Walla Public Schools and the YMCA.

To register for this event or for more information contact Beth Swanson at 301-7471 or beth@themomsnetworkww.com.

The Parent Workshop Series schedule is:

- February 9: “Resilience Trumps Trauma” with Mark Brown and Teri Barila of the Children's Resilience Initiative
- March 21: “Mom to Mom” with local mom Terri Neal
- April 16: “Yoga Stretches for Moms” with yoga instructor Rebecca Thorpe

All workshops take place at the YMCA. The schedule (plus other family-friendly events) is online at www.themomsnetworkww.com.