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District Stories

Snow day make-up date May 11

School board members voted to have May 11 serve as the snow make-up date as a result of the crippling ice storms which forced the district to cancel school January 19. All schools will be in session for a full day Friday, May 11.

Host families needed for Sasayama Japan student visit

Sasayama Sister City Affiliation Committee is looking for host families for students arriving from Sasayama, Japan on March 24, 2012. Eleven girls and four boys will visit Walla Walla from Mar 24 through April 3. Host families provide room and board and transport their student to the daily drop off and pick up point. An informational meeting will be announced after we receive the student profiles from Japan and have the required host family commitments. If your family would like to experience hosting a student from our sister city, Sasayama, please contact Robert Keatts by email; robert_wwscc@yahoo.com or phone 525-0049.

Energy Management Program saves \$315,000 for year

Savings support district's bottom line

The trend of cutting energy usage and saving on utility costs continues in year 12 of the district's Energy Management Program, according to a report to school board members Tuesday night from program manager John Butenhoff.

Despite witnessing more than 80 percent increases in electricity, gas and water fees since the program began in 1999, the district managed to save \$315,450 based on cost avoidance formulas due to conservative use of these resources. The district has trimmed usage 24 percent since the program was implemented in October of 1999.

Butenhoff said over the course of the program the district has saved \$3.3 million dollars. Many of these dollars have been reinvested in district equipment and operations to maximize future savings. Improved water meters, lighting, HVAC control units and irrigation systems are just a few examples of how the dollars generated from savings have been put to use.

Walla Walla High School continues to be the district's most inefficient school when it comes to utility usage. Butenhoff refers to the school as "the beast" due to its consumption. He said Wa-Hi's HVAC systems, lighting and type of construction are outdated and not efficient. He thanked staff for their support of the program and attention to detail in energy conservation practices.

Personnel Report (from Feb. 6, 2012 school board meeting)

Employment

(Certificated) NONE TO REPORT

(Classified) Jazmin Lopez, Assistant Secretary, Walla Walla High School
Simmon Palomino, Para-Educator (Temp), Blue Ridge

Resignation/Retirement - NONE TO REPORT

Levy ballots coming in to Walla Walla County Auditor

Superintendent Mick Miller reported more than 5500 ballots have been cast thus far according to records from the Walla Walla County Auditor. Ballots must be postmarked by Tuesday, Feb. 14. Miller encouraged voters to visit the district website for levy facts and to watch his video detailing the measure. Please remember to vote.

Explorer Nomination/Referral Period Now Open

Nomination/referral materials are now available in all district elementary and middle schools for the 2012-13 Explorer (Gifted Education) Program. Parents with students in grades 2 through 7 may contact their child's teacher or school learning specialist/middle school counselor for more information. Program information is also available on the district website, using the following link: <http://www.wwps.org/programs/explorers.htm>

Walla Walla School District's Explorer Program provides students of high academic and intellectual ability with designated time to explore concepts in greater depth. Classes are currently offered for students in grade 3 through 8.

The goal of the Explorer Program is to encourage the development of higher level thinking skills. Students learn to become responsible for their own learning, to develop their creative thinking and critical reasoning power and to strive to reach their potential. The Explorer curriculum for third through fifth grades focuses primarily on mathematics, science, oral and written communication and critical thinking skills. Elementary students are bussed to Sharpstein Elementary School for two half-days per week. At each middle school, curriculum focuses on the humanities, drawn from the areas of language arts and social studies, and offers advanced, but parallel, learning opportunities.

The nomination/referral deadline this year is March 14, 2012. All referred students will take a norm-referenced standardized test and those who qualify for further testing will participate in cognitive abilities testing, also at their home schools. In all cases, parents will be notified of the results of the process, and a child not selected one year may be referred again in subsequent years. For more information, please contact the Walla Walla School District Curriculum and Instruction office: 509-526-6735.

School Stories

Dohe leads students to WordMasters honors

Two teams of students representing Walla Walla High School recently won highest honors in this year's WordMasters Challenge, a national competition for high school students requiring close reading and analysis of many different kinds of prose and poetry. Participating with 548 school teams from all across the country, the school's ninth graders tied for fourteenth place in the nation in the year's first meet held in October, while its eleventh graders placed third in the nation. The teams were supervised by Walla Walla High School English teacher Lori Dohe.

Several of the school's students won high honors for individual achievement, as well: Freshman Amanda Skurski, sophomore Alex Akins-Helford, and junior Kera Parsons, all of whom earned near-perfect scores, placed among the 65 highest-scoring ninth graders, the 108 highest-scoring tenth graders, and the 32 highest-scoring eleventh graders nationwide, while juniors Julia Cosma, Mary Beth Jones, Jaslyn Lacombe, Melissa Nelson, Michaela Nordheim, Sydney Randall, Peter Rucker, and Andrew Zahl all placed among the 105 highest-ranked eleventh graders. Freshman Nathan Brewer, Riley Gannon, and Kate Kuhlmann, and senior Gregory Heller all earned honorable mention. More than 54,000 students from across the country (and from four foreign nations) participated in the meet.

Berney parent joins firefighter stairclimb event fundraiser

Berney Elementary parent volunteer Tania Nelson will be participating in the 21st Annual Scott Firefighter Stairclimb event March 11 at the Columbia Center in Seattle, WA. Nelson will be joining more than 1,500 firefighters from over 200 different departments in racing up 69 flights of stairs, or 1,311 steps, in full fire gear to help raise money for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS). She participated in the Stairclimb event last year for the first time.

"Although it was a challenge, it was very rewarding and an unforgettable experience!" Nelson said.

Nelson is seeking support for this cause and has set a goal to raise \$1500. This money will go to LLS for research, patient services, advocacy and education. If you would like to contribute, please go to www.firefighterstairclimb.org and click on donate -- type in Tania Nelson. Once on the page, click on donate to Tania.

"I thank you in advance for supporting me in my efforts and for your generosity in supporting the mission of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society," Nelson said.

Walla Walla High School Athletic Winter Tournament update

Dance

- District at Pasco: March 10
- State at Yakima: March 23

Wrestling

- Regionals at Moses Lake: February 11 @ 10 a.m.
- State at Tacoma: February 17-18

Basketball

Boys District Round #1

- @Moses Lake Friday, Feb. 10 @ 6 p.m.
- @Davis or Richland Saturday, Feb. 11 @ 7 p.m. (if we win on Friday)

Girls Basketball Districts Round #2 (Wa-Hi has a Round #1 bye on Friday)

- @Walla Walla 7 p.m. vs. (Moses Lake, Wenatchee, Richland or Davis)
- Big Nine/GSL play-in game (Sub-Regional) Feb. 21
- Regional (first two rounds of State) Feb. 24 and 25
- State (final eight) in Tacoma: March 1-3

Swimming

- State at Federal Way: February 17-18

Walla Walla High School swim coach earns conference Coach of the Year honors

Walla Walla High School first year swim coach Katherine Curles was named the Big Nine Conference 4A Swim Coach of the Year. Curles worked as the assistant coach to Head Coach Brad Daly in 2008 and 2009.

The Walla Walla High School boys swim team finished in second place in the Big Nine Conference and then went on to win the boys 4A District Championship at Central Washington University. This season more than 30 student-athletes participated on the boys team. Walla Walla High School student Austin Garrett was named Big Nine Conference Male Swimmer of the Year. Curles was a competitive swimmer at Whitman College during her college years.

“She’s done a fantastic job this season,” District Athletic Director Don Wilkins said. “She relates well with the students and does a great job getting them ready to compete.”

For more information, contact Communications Director Mark Higgins at 509.526.6716 or mhiggins@wwps.org.

Walla Walla High School students advance to National Merit Scholar Finalists lists

Walla Walla High School seniors Kyle Jameson and Emily Schueller were both National Merit Scholar Finalists. The NMSC will announce in March whether they are scholarship winners. The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships that began in 1955. High school students enter the National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, which serves as an initial screen of more than 1.5 million entrants each year, and by meeting published program entry/participation requirements.

Walla Walla High School students honored for achievement

WSU Regents Scholarship: Walla Walla High School seniors Drew Jepson and Kayla Leinweber have been awarded a \$4000 per year WSU Regents Scholarship.

Exchange Club of Walla Walla: Two outstanding seniors were recognized as Youth of the Month by the Exchange Club. Emily Schueller and Kyle Jameson were recognized at an Exchange Club luncheon in the fall; both were entered in competition for the Regional Exchange Club Scholarship.

Charter Media: Lexi Storm was recognized as Charter Media Student of the Month for January.

Art projects bring Prospect Point families together for a night of fun

Family Art Night at Prospect Point Elementary was Thursday evening. Prospect Point SuperStar students and their parents enjoyed the process of creating together. The gym was full of color and inspiration with art projects inspired by Henri Matisse, Mary Cassat, Rembrandt and Japanese Print Making. Ice cream helped fuel the creative process and raffle drawings for art supplies were held throughout the evening.

Several students won the grand finale raffle for a pizza luncheon at the Carnegie Art Center Pottery Studio with Principal Chris Gardea on Wednesday, February 15. This evening of the arts was made possible because of partnerships with the following supporters: Picture Lab who provided all art materials and project direction at no cost, Prospect Point staff, the Prospect Point PTA, parent volunteers, and Carnegie's Pottery Studio.

District music programs have strong showing at regional competition

Walla Walla High School students advance to state

Saturday, Feb. 4 the Columbia Basin Music Educators Association Solo and Ensemble contest was held at Richland High School Walla Walla High School Band had 21 students who participated in this event. Four band students placed and Kyli Hymphreys will advance to state in April in the French Horn Solo category. Special thanks to band teacher Andrew Ueckert for preparing the students for competition.

The Walla Walla High School Orchestra had six students participated in this event. Five orchestra students placed and freshman Jennifer Cho will advance to state in the violin category. Special thanks to orchestra teacher Julia Woods for her hard work.

Band Results:

- Sean Newcomb: Flute solo, 2nd Alternate
- Amy Ueckert: Clarinet Solo, 1st Alternate
- Machado Mijiga: Alto Sax Solo, 1st Alternate
- Kyli Hymphreys: French Horn, Solo Winner!

Orchestra Results:

- Jennifer Cho: violin, freshman, State qualifier & winner of the violin category
- Bryn Chacon, cello, freshman, 1st alternate
- Quinn Anderson, cello, junior, 2nd alternate

Walla Walla music students selling citrus

Walla Walla band, orchestra and choir students are taking orders for oranges, grapefruit and tangelos, as part of the 3rd Annual Music Boosters Citrus Sale. Fruit is sold by the 20 lbs. or 40 lbs. box at a cost of \$20 and \$35 respectively. This is the Music Boosters only fundraiser and helps provide the extras that make your Music Program a success.

The fruit is delicious and it is a great way to support our students participating in orchestra, band, choir and music at every level. The sale will run through February 21. For more information find us on Facebook at Walla Walla Public Schools Music Program or call 526-1916.

Berney Elementary News Highlights

Pet Food Drive: Berney Elementary Kindergarten teachers and students donated 185 cans of food to the Blue Mountain Humane Society. Special thanks to teachers Carrie Gonzales, Lori Thomas and Kim Kearbey for all their hard work!

Berney Christmas Card Sale supports Humane Society: The Berney Student Council raised money in December by selling Christmas cards. They raised \$97.75 and donated it to the Blue Mountain Humane Society. We were scheduled to deliver the donation during the week of the awful ice/snow and we finally made time this last Friday to deliver it. The kids got to meet the cats, dogs, and even 2 rats!

Movie night draws record crowd: More than 120 parents, students, family members and staff packed the Berney gym to watch the movie "Dolphin Tale." Principal Donna Painter says the attendance set a new record and that fun was had by all.

Best Doggone Bulldogs December 2011

- Alejandro Northrop: Kindergarten
- Raven Staudenmaier: 1st Grade
- Aria Woodend: 2nd Grade
- Mia Klein: 3rd Grade
- Jaden Juhasz: 4th Grade
- Devin Drennen: 5th Grade
- Annette Matlock: Staff member of the month

Walla Walla High School students compete in Bonneville Power Administration Science Bowl

Ten Walla Walla High School students competed with students on more than 63 teams from around the region in the 21st annual Bonneville Power Administration Regional Science Bowl on Saturday, February 4th, in Portland. The students attending the event included Teresa Olivos, Paola Flores, Seth Hall, Cristina Sosa, Edwin Flores, Nadia Sierra, Erika Torres, Ana Andrade, Marcos Medina, and Marilyn Mendoza.

The Science Bowl is a quiz-style question-and-answer competition that challenges students on math and science concepts. The Regional Science Bowl event is the largest event of its kind in the United States.

The weekend competition marked the seventh year a team from Walla Walla has competed in the event. With support from the First Presbyterian Church in College Place, Pacific Power, and coaching from Bill Erickson and his wife, Diana, students from Wa-Hi's Latino Club and Exploring Post 311 have consistently represented Walla Walla in the competition.

A highlight of this year's trip was a visit to the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry's special exhibit of Gunther von Hagens' "Body Worlds & the Brain" which features over 200 anatomy specimens including whole human bodies which have been processed for presentation through a plastination process.

Exploring Post 311 is a Learning for Life program, a subsidiary of the Boy Scouts of America.

State director of student achievement keynote speaker for 3rd Annual AVID Academic Recognition Night

3rd Annual AVID Academic Recognition and Family Night

- Presenter: Erin Jones, OSPI Assistant Superintendent of Student Achievement
- Topic: Building bridges between schools, families and communities
- Date: Wednesday, Feb. 22
- Time: 5:30 to 7 p.m. - Free dinner @ 5:30 p.m. / Program begins @ 6 p.m.
- Location: Walla Walla High School Commons
- Spanish translation service available

Erin Jones, OSPI Assistant Superintendent of Student Achievement, returns to Walla Walla to lead a discussion on building bridges between schools, families and communities during the Third Annual AVID Academic Recognition and Family Night Wednesday, Feb. 22 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Walla Walla High School Commons.

Jones was hired in 2008 as the Director of the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning, where her focus is on creating a repository of best-practices for educators and building bridges between schools,

“The most powerful changes we can make are changes in our own attitudes about kids—all kids can be successful, no exceptions!” said Jones.

AVID, Advancement Via Individual Determination, is an elementary through postsecondary college readiness system that is designed to increase schoolwide learning and performance. AVID students are expected to access rigorous curriculum and the elective class is an avenue for students to acquire the skills in communication, critical thinking, note-taking, peer-tutoring, organization and time-management.

Walla Walla High School students involved in the AVID program will be recognized for academic achievement during the event. Last year, all fifteen of the seniors in the AVID program went on to higher education institutions after high school. The AVID project is a collaborative effort between Washington State University GEAR UP, Walla Walla Public Schools, and our community.

AVID Club announces scholarship opportunity

AVID Club is proud to announce the opening of their first annual Blue Devil College Cup Scholarship! As a result of the Blue Devil College Cup staff vs student soccer game last spring, three worthy Wa-Hi seniors will receive an award.

Awards:

- One first place award of \$500
- Two runner up awards of \$250

The scholarship is focused on leadership, both in school and out-of-school, and is open to any Walla Walla High School senior with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher. Scholarship applications will be accepted through March 1. Applications will be available in the library at both the GEAR UP resource counter and the Career Center.

Information:

Miriam Garber, GEAR UP
(503) 348-1608

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.

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.

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:

- 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.

Innovative Commuter Car Developer Is Featured Speaker for Engineering Dinner

Imagine a world without traffic and parking congestion. That dream is what motivated Rick Woodbury, founder and president of Commuter Cars in Spokane to start looking for an alternative to 4-plus-passenger, gasoline-powered cars and SUVs. His solution: the Tango, an electric vehicle that is about the size of a motorcycle while still offering the safety and comfort of a car. At just 39 inches wide, it can fit comfortably in half of a lane and park in as little as a quarter of a parallel parking space.

Hear more about the Tango and its production from Woodbury at a dinner event sponsored by Walla Walla University's Edward F. Cross School of Engineering. Woodbury's presentation, titled, "Innovative Disruption in the World of Transportation" will be held Thursday, Feb. 23, at 6:30 p.m. at the Reid Campus Center on the Whitman College campus in Walla Walla.

Tickets for the event are \$30. For more information or to purchase tickets, call (509) 527-2765. Tickets must be purchased by Friday, Feb. 17. During the presentation, Woodbury will also discuss the simple engineering principles that make this car possible despite the initial reactions of safety and rollover stability. His presentation will be followed by a brief Q&A session.

Woodbury's story begins in about 1982 when he was stuck in traffic, commuting from Hermosa Beach to Beverly Hills California, where he was a sales manager for a high-end car dealer, Beverly Hills Porsche-Audi. He noted that all of the cars around him had a single occupant.

Woodbury says, "I heard a quote once: To innovate, don't ask people what they want, but rather watch what they do. That is the key to innovation. It has nothing to do with the past, comparing with other products. It has everything to do with the present and future. If there is a problem that is causing suffering, and a solution exists to remove that suffering that is obvious to potential purchasers of that solution and it has a value in relation to its benefits, there is a market."

"Disruption must make a major improvement, and in the case of electric cars, must have huge benefits to make up for the drawbacks," says Woodbury.

Using his extensive mechanical and electrical engineering experience, he started building a prototype with his son, Bryan, in a garage in 1998. The Tango has been in constant development since then, with 11 produced to date. Tangos have been sold to the Google founders, George Clooney, and a number of others. While the Tango is expensive at present, Woodbury says it is only because it is in extremely low production. There is no reason that it couldn't be manufactured as inexpensively as any other car, of the same quality, if produced in the same volume, he says.

Anti-bullying film focuses on competition, jealousy and disrespect among girls

- "Find Kind" (an anti-bullying film focusing on competition, jealousy and disrespect among girls)
- Free
- Thursday, Feb. 23 from 6 to 8:30 p.m.
- Walla Walla Valley Academy Auditorium (300 SW Academy Way in College Place)

Parents are encouraged to attend the film *Finding Kind*, an anti-bullying film addressing the issues of competition, jealousy and disrespect among girls. This is a documentary produced by two young ladies who graduated from Pepperdine University and felt a need to discuss these issues.

They traveled the country visiting 60 schools and interviewed girls and women who have been bullied, participated in bullying, or just stood by while watching it happen. The questions posed in the documentary are: Why do we accept this as the norm for our lives? Why not take the KIND pledge? Why not write a KIND apology?

This event is free of charge. Visit their site online to watch the trailer at www.kindcampaign.com.

LOVE ME TENOR: A Special Valentine's Day Event with the Four Tenors at the Power House Theatre

- Tuesday, February 14
- Catering by Olive
- Doors Open – 6 p.m.
- Show Time – 7:00 p.m.

Four Tenors: Directed and arranged by Sunny Thompson, star of Marilyn: Forever Blonde!

Show dates:

February 10 – 26, 2012
Power House Theatre
Walla Walla, WA

7 p.m. Evening Performances (Feb. 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26)

3 p.m. Matinee Performances (Feb 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26)

Staring Brian Damson, Michael Scott Brooks, Morgan James and Ken Nielson. THE BEST OF BROADWAY, CLASSICAL, COUNTRY, POP & ROCK. The Four Tenors perform the music of Josh Groban, Michael Bubl , The Sons of the Pioneers, Elvis, Maroon 5, Bon Jovi and more!

Ticket prices range from \$50 - \$9 with FLEX Ticket options. Valentine's Day Dinner–Theatre Event special pricing at \$85 per person. For pricing and seating chart details, visit us at www.PHTWW.com or call Box Office at 509-529-6500. Box Office is open Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 3:00 pm – 5:30pm.

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