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## District Stories

### **Superintendent's Patron Tour offers behind the scenes look at schools**

Superintendent Mick Miller continued his Superintendent's Patron Tour program Thursday. Guests visited Sharpstein Elementary, Walla Walla and Lincoln High Schools and concluded with lunch and a debriefing. Miller's goal with the program is to build relationships, learn about each other and listen.

#### March 22 Patron Tour Guests:

Sgt. Sean Mulford  
Sgt. Jonathan Wyatt  
Phil Johanson  
Kathern Barron  
Susanne Davis  
Kyle Bradbury  
Claudia Garcia  
Gricelda Justice  
Shari Howard  
Steve Davidson  
Maria Gonzalez  
Scott Caldwell  
Randy Grant  
Bill Bieloh

### **Former Pioneer Middle School teacher receives Washington State Middle Level Principal of the Year Award**

Kenny Renner-Singer, principal at Icicle River Middle and Beaver Valley Elementary schools in Leavenworth (Cascade SD), is this year's Washington State Middle Level Principal of the Year. Renner-Singer began his career as a language arts and social studies teacher at Pioneer Middle School in 2000. In addition to his teaching duties, in 2003 he also took on the role of administrative intern and spent time as acting assistant principal at Pioneer.

Renner-Singer was named this year's Middle Level Principal of the Year by the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP). A panel of principals representing the Association of Washington Middle Level Principals, a component of AWSP, selected him from a pool of regional finalists.

The selection committee said it was Renner-Singer's work producing "significant student achievement gains" that tipped the award in his favor. Renner-Singer, who has served as principal of Icicle River and Beaver Valley schools since 2005, encouraged his staff to question everything. They pored over reams of student achievement data and determined focus areas. He helped teacher teams develop content-area learning targets, benchmark assessments and interventions for struggling and accelerated students. As a result of adding new enrichment programs for accelerated students, 8th-grade math scores skyrocketed from 63.5 percent in 2005-2006 to 90.4 percent in 2009-2010.

Another area Renner-Singer focuses on is hiring. He carefully selects new hires to fit grade-level and content-area teams and the overall culture of the school. He also places a strong emphasis on national board certification and teacher participation in leadership roles at the local, regional and national levels. As a result of this focus, Renner-Singer has seen direct gains in student achievement:

**Personnel Report (from March 20, 2012 school board meeting)**

Employment - NONE TO REPORT

Resignation/Retirement

(Certificated)

Jennifer Nicholson, Library Media Specialist, Prospect Pt., 4 years

*(resignation effective April 11, 2012)*

Sue Parrish, Science, Garrison Middle School, 22 years

*(resignation effective at the end of the 2011-2012 school year)*

(Classified)

Janice Long, Para-Educator, Berney, 3 years

*(resignation effective at the end of the 2011-2012 school year)*

Leave of Absence

(Certificated)

Annie Boyd, School Psychologist, Special Programs, 6 years

*(for the 2012-2013 school year)*

(Classified)

Mike Lorang, Custodian, Pioneer Middle School, 8 years

*(For March through May 2012)*

**ACEs expert Felitti headlines 2nd Annual Walla Walla Valley Violence Prevention Coalition Conference**

- Registration Now Open: [www.wvviolenceprevention.com](http://www.wvviolenceprevention.com)

March 26

Dr. Vincent Felitti

- "ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences): Understanding the Links Between Violence and Illness"

- 7 to 8 p.m., Maxey Hall, Whitman College Campus

- Free

March 27

Free daytime workshops

- 8:45 a.m.-5 p.m. at Whitman College

- Topics include:

Teen drug use

School and internet bullying

Children's resilience

Strategies for raising boys

Gang violence

Anger management

Youth health (including nutrition, exercise, and meditation)

Family Night - "Surviving parenting and enjoying it"

*(Featuring former NFL linebacker Allyn Griffin)*

- 5 to 7:45 p.m. at St. Patrick Church

- Free dinner & child care

- Spanish interpretation available

Topics include: Raising healthy boys, cyber-bullying & sexting, fitness, nutrition, and health tips for you and your family and calming strategies

**Family Fun Night! *How to Survive Parenting – And Enjoy It!***

- Tuesday, March 27 @ 5:15 to 7:45 p.m.
- St. Patrick Church - 408 W. Poplar St.
- Door prizes, free dinner, bring your children (free childcare)
- Transportation\* and Spanish interpretation available
- Information & to reserve transportation: Call 509.540.0807

**FREE Dinner!** 5:15 to 6:15 p.m.

*Resilience: The Key Ingredient:* Teri Barila and Mark Brown offer tips on how to help kids survive their stressful world by building personal strength.

**Parent Sessions:** (following dinner)

- Healthy Family, Happy Home: Low-Cost Fitness and Nutrition Tips to Healthy Living: Mark Higgins, Beth Swanson, Christy Druffel and Abel Hernandez offer an interactive workshop on the relationship between health and happiness, with activities.

- Being an Xbox Parent in a PlayStation World Full of Nintendos and Wiis: Allyn Griffin, former NFL linebacker and development director at Jubilee Youth Ranch, offers tips on how parents can stop competing with the distractions in their children's lives and bring family interests and children's demands closer together.

- Finding Peace in the Present: Chris Howard leads a workshop on meditation and relaxation techniques that can help you stay calm and strong in a turbulent world.

- Sexting and Cyber-Bullying: Officer Mike Boettcher discusses how to protect your child from the dangers of cyberspace.

This event is in conjunction with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Walla Walla Valley Violence Prevention Conference: [www.wwviolenceprevention.com](http://www.wwviolenceprevention.com)

**Debate coach praises students**

Walla Walla High School Debate Coach Jean Tobin (Green Park teacher) reported to the school board Tuesday night on the team's successful season. The meeting was also an opportunity to celebrate Junior Hope Grant-Herriot's state championship.

Hundreds of students from around the state packed the University of Puget Sound campus for the state tournament. Hope placed first in Oratory becoming Wa-Hi's first State Champion in Speech and Debate. Hope's speech was centered on the issue of obesity and its physical and emotional impacts.

Tobin praised all the students on the Debate Team for their efforts. She also thanked the district. She said the debate students are talented and put in the effort and hard work necessary to be successful. Hope will now advance to the national debate tournament.

### **District's Response to Intervention practices receive national praise**

The U.S. Department of Education has approved Walla Walla Public Schools's participation in the Evaluation of Response to Intervention Practices for Elementary School Reading. To be eligible for the study, schools experienced in implementing RtI practices in early reading were nominated by national experts as a possible site for this study. The following schools have been approved for participation in the study:

- Sharpstein Elementary
- Prospect Point Elementary
- Edison Elementary
- Blue Ridge Elementary
- Berney Elementary

The evaluation study will address the following questions:

1. What are the effects of intensive secondary reading interventions on academic achievement for children in elementary school who have been identified as being at risk for reading difficulties?
2. How do academic outcomes, including reading achievement and special education identification, vary with elementary schools' adoption of RtI practices for early grade reading?
3. How do RtI practices for early grade reading vary across schools?

These practices must have been in place in first grade no later than 2009-10 and include:

- universal screening (benchmarking) administered in reading at least two times a year to all students;
- at least three levels (tiers) of instruction, comprising a system of increasingly intensive interventions;
- monitoring the progress of students who do not meet benchmark;
- evaluating student's performance and response to interventions using these data; and
- making decisions based on these data for tier placements.

Information gathered during the site selection process and any subsequent data collection is confidential and will be used only for broadly descriptive and statistical purposes. The reports prepared for the study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific district or individual.

## School Stories

### **Middle School students have strong showing at Odyssey of the Mind**

Teams of students from Garrison and Pioneer Middle School made the long trek to Garibaldi, Ore. last weekend to participate in the Odyssey of the Mind competition. One hundred thirteen students from Pioneer and Garrison attended the competition. The bus trip was seven hours.

Odyssey of the Mind is an international educational program that provides creative problem-solving opportunities for students from kindergarten through college. Team members apply their creativity to solve problems that range from building mechanical devices to presenting their own interpretation of literary classics. They then bring their solutions to competition on the local, state, and world level. Thousands of teams from throughout the U.S. and from about 25 other countries participate in the program.

“The kids had a great time and the adults survived!” Pioneer Explorer teacher Dan Calzaretta said. “In addition, we received numerous compliments from the camp director, Odyssey coordinator, and competition volunteers about the attitude, behavior, and friendliness of our students.”

Pioneer results (nine teams competed):

- Four 1st place
- Two 2nd place
- Two 3rd place
- One 4th place

One of the Pioneer teams (the Cheese Ooh-Motional vehicle team) won the “OMER” award. This award recognizes the spirit of the competition for creativity. All of the first place teams qualify for the World competition.

Garrison results:

- One First place
- Two Second place
- One Third place

Thanks to the chaperons and coaches!:

- Thom Bolduc (who, in addition to being a cabin chaperon, helped load and unload the truck)
- Martha Roberts
- Katie Christianson
- Carl Christianson
- Kathryn Southwick-Hess
- Dawn Moore

Coaches:

- James Winchel
- Jennifer Northam
- Jeff Adams
- Stephanie Kytola
- Annette Matlock
- Katie Christianson
- Kathryn Southwick-Hess
- Thom Bolduc

### **Prospect Point preparing Safe Routes to Schools education plan**

Prospect Point Principal Chris Gardea reported to school board members Tuesday night on the education plan he is developing to meet the requirements of the Safe Routes to Schools grant.

Walla Walla County received nearly \$400,000 through this grant to help fund improvements to Reser Road. One component of the grant is to create an education plan to raise awareness on safety issues and encourage more students to walk or ride their bikes to school. Gardea has a \$16,000 budget via the grant to complete the plan. The education plan features tv and radio public service announcements, posters, web enhancements and a bike rodeo scheduled for Saturday, April 28 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at the Prospect Point parking lot.

Gardea will also introduce the *Boltage* program to the school which helps track the frequency of students walking and riding bikes to school. Safe Travels Alliance Co-Chair Katie Christianson is working with Gardea to establish a “walking school bus” program. This concept features a parent volunteer escorting children to school on a routine basis. The timeline for the education plan is mid-April to mid-September. .

### **World War II concentration camp survivor meets with Lincoln High School students**

This week World War II concentration camp survivor Willem Houwink was the keynote speaker at the Lincoln High School assembly. Houwink was a political prisoner at Dachau for three years. He entered the camp at the age of 22. Opened 22 March, 1933 (51 days after Adolf Hitler took power), Dachau was the first regular concentration camp established by the coalition government of National Socialist Party (Nazi Party) and the German National People’s Party (dissolved on 6 July 1933).

Heinrich Himmler, Chief of Police of Munich, officially described the camp as “the first concentration camp for political prisoners.” Dachau concentration camp was located on the grounds of an abandoned munitions factory near the medieval town of Dachau, about 9.9 miles northwest of Munich in the state of Bavaria, which is located in southern Germany.

Houwink was a spy for the Dutch. He was turned into authorities by female of the NAZI party. He is considered one of the top 29 expert economists in the world with expertise on China. Lincoln High School students were moved by the presentation.

“It was very educational and eye opening,” said Joel Galan. “I am not sure how we, as human beings, can do those things to someone else. It was horrible!”

“It was very touching to the heart to hear his story,” said Ashley Mace. “It is amazing to me that someone can live through that.”

### **Walla Walla High School ranks in top 10 for financial aid applications submitted**

Walla Walla High School currently ranks in the top six among all high schools in the state of Washington for submitted Free Applications for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the 2012 graduating class.

“This ranking reflects the hard work, dedication and importance that Wa-Hi administrators, staff and teachers have made to post-secondary education among all of its grade levels, but especially the support given to the senior class,” said Max Weber, Walla Walla Community College Special Programs Advisor-Outreach Specialist. “I have tracked this number each of the past four years and each year Wa-Hi helps and educates more and more seniors to complete their FAFSA’s in preparation for post-secondary education.”

### **Walla Walla Public Schools Music Program presents The Rhapsody Trio**

The Rhapsody Trio will be performing in concert March 23 at 7 p.m. at the Walla Walla High School Auditorium. The Trio is composed of Tim Brown, retired music teacher, Laura Curtis, faculty member Whitman College, and Roger Garcia, band director at Garrison Middle School. They will perform *Trio A Minor Opus 114* by Johannes Brahms, and *Trio Bb Major Opus 11* by Ludwig van Beethoven. The event is free to the public.

### **Big Cheese Pizza discount coupons help fund student trip to Europe**

Pioneer Middle School teacher Dan Calzaretta and a group of parents are planning a trip to Ireland and England in June of 2013.

“In order for this to work we need your help...by eating pizza,” Calzaretta said.

Calzaretta and parents associated with the trip are selling Big Cheese gourmet pizza certificates available for \$10. This is a \$9 savings. If you would like to purchase a certificate, send Calzaretta an email at: [dcalzaretta@wwps.org](mailto:dcalzaretta@wwps.org)

### **Community Stories**

#### **Junior Club of Walla Walla hosts annual Bunco Fundraiser event**

Blow on those dice and get ready to roll! It's time to play the latest dice game craze where fabulous prizes are won simply by the luck of the roll!

Junior Club's annual Bunco Fundraiser is April 20 at the Assumption Parish Hall (2098 E. Alder). Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. and play will begin at 7 p.m.

Junior Club has pulled together some fantastic prizes for this event from sponsors such as Salumiere Cesario, L'Ecole No. 41, Beehive Salon, Mary Kay cosmetics and others! There will also be raffle drawings throughout the evening and a great selection of food and treats for attendees.

“The appeal of the game lies in the social time it provides for people—it's a lot of fun and easy to learn, and by the end you've mingled with almost everyone in the room,” said Colby Burke, president of Junior Club.

Tickets are \$20 per person and include desserts, cheeses and one glass of wine (ages 21 and over) or other beverage. Tickets may be purchased from any Junior Club member, or at Salumiere Cesario (20 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave.) or by calling Sara Wutzke (503) 830-0088.

Junior Club of Walla Walla serves the needs of several local non-profit organizations such as Books for Babes, Habitat for Humanity, Friends of Children of Walla Walla, the YWCA, Walla Walla Community Hospice, and the Herring House, and provides scholarships for deserving local women.

#### **Altrusa and the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce Present the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Spelling Bee**

- Event is at the Balloon Stampede
- Saturday, May 12
- 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Walla Walla County Fairgrounds (Community Center)

Altrusa International of Walla Walla and the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce will host the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Spelling Bee, Saturday, May 12, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Walla Walla County Fairgrounds (Community Center) during this year's Balloon Stampede presented by Gesa Credit Union. Students in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades will spell their way to a Spell-Off by grade. The top four students from each grade will be awarded prizes for their spelling proficiency.

Altrusa International of Walla Walla is a group of women working together to provide service to our community through leadership and service, promoting education and literacy. A complete listing of rules and additional information is online: <http://www.wwps.org/community/spellingbee.htm>

For further information regarding the Spelling Bee, please contact Linda Thorson at 509-522-0812, [thorson@bmi.net](mailto:thorson@bmi.net).

### **Fort Walla Walla Museum again to offer Free School Tours**

Connecting children with their heritage promotes a stronger sense of place and belonging. Learning about the contributions and accomplishments of kids who grew up in their community helps develop a “can do” attitude. These feelings help produce community minded citizens. This is the 45th year Fort Walla Walla Museum has been an educational partner with regional schools.

Museum staff has worked hard to obtain sponsorships and grants to cover the admission cost of the school tour programs. In order to show the funders this program is worthy of their continued support, the Museum needs schools to use the service. To date during the 2011-2012 academic year, both Wa-Hi and Green Park have sent students to the Museum. This Free School Admission Program is supported by the Stubblefield Trust, Boise Inc., Pacific Power Foundation, Mary Garner Esary Trust, and AmericanWest Bank. For questions, special requests, or to book a tour, contact Anne Stotler at 525-7703 or [programs@fortwallawallamuseum.org](mailto:programs@fortwallawallamuseum.org).

### **Walla Walla Kids Read 2012 welcomes best selling authors**

Walla Walla Kids Read is excited to welcome best selling authors Tony DiTerlizzi and Andrea Davis Pinkney to Cordiner Hall April 16 and 17. Edison Elementary will be hosting the community event for book signings and author activities, April 17, 6-8 p.m. For full details, please refer to [wallawallakidsread.com](http://wallawallakidsread.com)

### **Shakespeare Walla Walla plans student matinees**

Shakespeare Walla Walla is offering student matinees at the Power House Theater in May. The student matinees are full-length productions of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* followed by a 15-minute Q&A session with the actors. The production is geared towards middle and high-school students, but appropriate for all ages.

- May 1, 2 & 3
- 10:30 a.m.
- Power House Theatre
- Tickets \$10 for students (chaperones are free)
- A limited number of scholarship tickets available for students who are in need of financial assistance.

#### Information:

Leah Bailey, Education & Development Coordinator

[leah@shakespearewallawalla.org](mailto:leah@shakespearewallawalla.org)

509.529.7278

**Whitman College public lecture: “The Promises and Perils of Journalism in the 21st Century”**

- Thursday, March 29
- 7 p.m.
- Maxey Auditorium

Through the prism of *The Seattle Times*, and illustrated by the Pulitzer Prize award-winning work he managed, David Boardman will discuss what the act of professional journalism requires and marrying the use of modern tools and “citizen journalism” with traditional values.

Boardman serves as Executive Editor of The Seattle Times and [seattletimes.com](http://seattletimes.com). He has oversight and responsibility for the news department of Washington State’s largest newspaper and for its website, [seattletimes.com](http://seattletimes.com). As an editor for The Times, David has directed three Pulitzer Prize-winning team projects and edited six other stories that were Pulitzer finalists. As a member of the company’s senior executive team, David contributes to overall company operations, strategy and long-term planning. Before joining The Times in 1983, David was a reporter and editor at several papers in the Northwest, and worked on a construction project in Liberia, West Africa. He is a graduate of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University and has a graduate degree from the University of Washington.

*About The Hosokawa Lecture Series:* In 2000, an endowed lectureship was established at Whitman College by David and Beverly Hosokawa, and the Hosokawa Family Foundation. Intended to be a celebration of journalistic excellence, the lectureship honors Robert R. Hosokawa, David’s father, by bringing a noted journalist to campus. The endowment also established the Hosokawa Prize to be awarded each year in recognition of outstanding achievement and excellence as demonstrated by student journalists and photojournalists of The Pioneer. A Whitman Alumnus of Merit, Class of 1940, Robert Hosokawa was a reporter for several papers in Missouri, New York, Iowa and Minnesota. He held journalism professorships at the University of Missouri and the University of Central Florida and has been a mentor to many young journalists.