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## District Stories

### **Superintendent Miller summarizes this week's legislative action**

It took two full special sessions, a 60-day regular session and a one-day special session, but we do have a budget. Thankfully, it is a no new cut budget for K-12 education. The revenue that we received from the state in this school year will remain the same next year. While I would have preferred an increase, this is the first time in a number of years that we did not receive any cuts. Also, construction money was authorized in the capital budget for the Southeast Area Skills Center.

However, the legislature did enact a few bills at the last minute that have some impact on us. First, I-728 was repealed. We have not received I-728 funding in four years, but over the years it did provide significant income for our District. I am discouraged that a voter approved initiative (69% voted yes) would be repealed. But, there is not immediate financial impact.

Secondly, SB 5940 was passed. This is the compromise version of the Consolidated K-12 Health Benefits bill and a watered down version of SB 6442. According to WASA Legislative Director Dan Steele, "... there is no "consolidation" piece included. The main focus is on transparency and equity. It retains current collective bargaining for benefits and the present pooling arrangements. School districts are required to make progress toward a 3-to-1 premium ratio between families and the single payer and at least one plan in the district must have premiums comparable to plans available to state employees." I am still learning more about the bill and will have more information soon.

Lastly, employees hired after May 1, 2013 will not have the 2000 and 2007 early retirement provisions available to them, but that does not impact any current employee.

### **State funds Southeast Area Technical Skills Center in Walla Walla**

*Construction expected to begin Fall 2012*

This week the Washington state legislature approved an additional \$10,350,000 to fund the construction and equipment for the Southeast Area Technical Skills Center in Walla Walla. The legislature has funded a total of \$11,519,000 during the 2011-13 biennium for this project. This funding marks the final step needed to put the facility into operation in Walla Walla.

"This skills center will provide us more options for students throughout the Walla Walla Valley and help us better coordinate programs with Walla Walla Community College," said Superintendent Mick Miller. "Thanks so much to Senator Mike Hewitt and Representatives Maureen Walsh and Terry Nealey for their support representing this project in Olympia."

During the 2011 legislative session, the district received \$1,169,000 for design development. Architectural designs are nearly completed for the 36,000 square foot facility located at Walla Walla Community College off of Isaacs Ave.

With funding now secured, the district expects to break ground on the project in the Fall 2012 and open the new skills center for the start of the 2014-15 school year. The district initially believed the skills center could be open for the start of the 2013-14 school year, but construction is expected to take longer than originally planned. The skills center will initially offer construction trades, welding, renewable resources and health occupation programs. The building will have space for future growth which may also be used for other skills center needs. The Walla Walla skills center will be a branch campus of the Kennewick School District's Tri-Tech Skills Center.

Technology Director Kirk Jameson and District Consultant Sergio Hernandez are taking the lead on organizing the project and coordinating programs. The skills center will serve regional high schools, including Dayton, Waitsburg, Touchet, Prescott and possibly local private schools. An agreement could also be reached with the Milton Freewater School District to serve Oregon students.

Students from Walla Walla High School and Lincoln High School are expected to take the majority of slots. Walla Walla Public Schools anticipates the skills center will serve 60 Full-Time Equivalent students when it opens and grow to 160 FTE in future years. Students will attend for a three period block in either the morning or afternoon. Career and Technical Education courses at Walla Walla High School will still be offered.

**School board meeting Tuesday, April 17**

- 6:30 p.m.
- District Board Room (364 S. Park St.)
- Meeting open to the public

**Kindergarten and Open Enrollment registration dates set for the 2012-13 School Year**

Walla Walla Public Schools kindergarten and Open Enrollment registration period is Monday, April 23 to Friday, May 4, 2012.

Kindergarten registration will be conducted at the student's attendance area elementary school. Parents wishing to pick up the kindergarten registration information may do so at your child's school beginning April 16. However, the completed registration forms will not be accepted until April 23.

Open Enrollment and Kindergarten registration hours:

Monday, April 23 - 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

April 24 to May 4 - 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Parents/guardians who wish to open enroll their child to a school outside of their attendance area may pick up Open Enrollment application forms at their attendance area school during normal business hours beginning April 16; however, forms will not be accepted in the receiving school until Monday, April 23.

If there is space available to accommodate open enrollment requests, then the priorities outlined in School Board Policy No. 3130 will be used to determine movement of a student. School Board Policy manuals are available for public viewing at all Walla Walla Public Schools and the Administration Office. School Board policies are also online at <http://www.wwps.org/leadership/board.htm#11>

Please contact your attendance area school for more information. District boundary maps are available at all schools, the Administration Office at 364 South Park Street, and online at [www.wwps.org](http://www.wwps.org). Click on the District A to Z link and then click on Boundary Map.

**District partners with City of Walla Walla for Bike to School Day**

The City of Walla Walla is proclaiming May as Bike Safety month. One of the activities in association with this month is the National Bike to School event Wednesday, May 9.

Walla Walla Public Schools encourages students and staff to participate in this activity. Register for this free event at <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org/>

**School Stories**

**Walla Walla High School hosts Cinco de mayo Celebration**

Saturday May 5, 2012

Walla Walla High School Commons

4:30 to 10 p.m.

On Saturday, May 5, the Walla Walla High School Latino Club, AVID and WSU Gear Up are sponsoring a Cinco de mayo celebration in the Walla Walla High School Commons area. The festival will feature a career and activity fair as part of the celebration. The expected fair will include many community partners, colleges, universities, and school clubs.

Dinner will be provided by El Sombrero for the first 500 people who come to the event. Music will feature music by Mariachi Huenachi and will include performances by local groups and school programs with additional music provided by Luz y Sonido Elegante. The activity fair will include information tables and activities that families or children would enjoy. Those activities will be from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.

### **Hoffman coordinates Green Park Science Celebration**

Green Park Elementary PTA organized a Science Celebration Tuesday, April 10. Whitman students from the Physics and Chemistry Department set up learnign stations for students. Activities included Magdeburg Hemispheres, the Bernoulli principle, a Semiconductor Demonstration, Light bulb generator and Lenz's Law Pendulum. Children were asked to participate with a science experiment and the various volcano demonstrations.

More than 100 parents and children filled the Green Park cafeteria. Parent, Kurt Hoffman, a Green Park PTA member for 13 years and Professor of Physics at Whitman College, led the organization and has coordinated the event for many years. This year is his last year coordinating the event as his youngest son, Peter, is a fifth grader. A big thank you to Kurt Hoffman, the Green Park students, and the Whitman Physics and Chemistry Departments for a successful event.

### **Local musicians to play Sweet Onion Jam Sunday at YMCA**

- Sweet Onion Jam
- Sunday, April 15
- 2 to 5 p.m.
- Back lawn of the YMCA
- Free (just bring some dollars to vote for your favorite groups)
- Musicians aging from 7-25 will perform for three hours
- This is a fundraiser for Walla Walla Public Schools Music Programs

### **Berney students celebrate Arbor Day**

This week the City of Walla Walla, under the direction of Mayor Jim Barrow, planted a new maple tree on the Berney campus as part of an Arbor Day celebration. Students learned about the importance of trees in our world and the need to care for them. Students also received oak saplings to take home and plant. Thanks to the City of Walla Walla for coordinating this wonderful learning opportunity and donating a beautiful tree to the school.

### **Rotary to plant trees at Berney Saturday**

The Walla Walla Rotary Club is planning a tree planting activity at Berney Elementary Saturday as part of a campus beautification program. The Rotary Club will plant maples, ash and other large trees. Berney parents, students and staff will assist with activity. Thanks to the Rotary Club for this generous gift.

### **Wa-Hi FFA Plant Sale**

- Monday, April 30 to Thursday, May 3
- 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Location: Lawn outside the CTE building at Wa-Hi
- Easy parking on Abbott Road
- Students will be available to help load
- Assorted metal and wood projects will also be available
- 2012 Greenhouse Coordinators: Libby Donaldson, Shanna Smith, Ryan Fogg and Ross Lake

### **Prospect Point plans Bike Rodeo to promote safe biking**

- Saturday, April 28
- 10 a.m. to 12 noon
- Free
- Prospect Point Elementary parking lot
- The Whitman Cycling Team will support the event
- Obstacle course with a Safety Station Pledge at the end
- Safe biking literature for parents and students

### **Public invited to annual Walla Walla High School Farm Day**

- Saturday, April 14
- 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Big Red Barn at Walla Walla High School
- Free admission
- Come see the farm animals and learn about agriculture
- Donations accepted to support the Blue Mountain Humane Society

### **Area students encouraged to submit films to local youth film festival**

Walla Walla Public Schools is sponsoring a youth film festival Saturday, May 19 at the Walla Walla High School Auditorium from 4 to 8 p.m. SPIFFY, Student Produced Independent Films For Youth, is accepting films from all local and regional students under the age of 19. The deadline for submission is April 20.

“This festival, the only one in the region, will give students a chance to showcase their video talents. When you put a kid behind a camera, amazing things happen,” said Dan Calzaretta, coordinator for the festival and teacher at Pioneer Middle School.

Films can be submitted in the following categories:

- Drama/suspense
- Comedy
- Animation
- Documentary
- Music video
- Experimental

Students interested in the SPIFFY, are encouraged to visit: <https://sites.google.com/site/pioneerexplorers/>

Information:

- Dan Calzaretta: [dcalzaretta@wwps.org](mailto:dcalzaretta@wwps.org) / 509.527.3050

## **Community Stories**

### **Speed Mentoring event planned**

Walla Walla Leader’s Network and Young Professionals of Walla Walla are hosting the first annual Walla Walla Speed Mentoring Event on Tuesday, April 17, from 11:30 to 1 p.m. in the Walla Walla School District Board Room. Speed mentoring is a way for individuals to meet and talk with a variety of community leaders in one setting. Participants meet for ten minute intervals, discussing topics such as career planning, managing employees, work/life balance, and professional development. For more information, or to reserve a spot, please e-mail [www.wwleaders.org](http://www.wwleaders.org). Support for this event is also provided by the Chamber of Commerce.

### **The Moms Network plans Parent Workshop: Tips on how to slow down and decompress**

- Monday the April 16
- 6:30 p.m.
- YMCA
- FREE

New YMCA Aquatics Director and TMN member Rebecca Thorpe will show parents important breathing techniques and stretches to help us feel stronger. With a little yoga mixed with some humor and fun, Rebecca will give parents tools to slow down and decompress. These tools will assist parents during stressful moments at home or at work.

The event is free and open to the public with free child care. There will be a Spanish translator at the event. If you have questions or would like to reserve your spot, please contact Beth Swanson at [beth@themomsnetworkww.com](mailto:beth@themomsnetworkww.com) or 509-301-7471.

**The Health Center at Lincoln plans Chocolate Journey Fundraiser at Dunham Cellars**

Join your friends for an exciting evening of chocolate, wine and more chocolate - A CHOCOLATE JOURNEY - Saturday, April 28 from 8 to 10 p.m. at Dunham Cellars Winery!

Bring your appetite to this “roaming dinner” and enjoy exotic chocolate “small plates” and desserts by Brasserie Four, T. Maccarone, Olive, Walla Walla Bread Company, Frosted, Arrowhead Chocolates and Whitehouse Crawford. Sip award winning Dunham Cellars wines as you discover hidden treasures in the silent auction; from a bottle of Washington’s first 100 point wine, to a basket of artisan bagels delivered hot and fresh to your door, there’s sure to be something for everyone!

\$60 per person includes hearty chocolate “small plates”, desserts, wine and FUN! Please join us! Proceeds from A CHOCOLATE JOURNEY will help fund essential medical and mental health services for students at [The Health Center at Lincoln](#).

Call Deborah at (509) 529-5432 or email [Deborah@thehealthcenterww.org](mailto:Deborah@thehealthcenterww.org).

**Walla Walla Library seeks public input on services**

National Library week is April 8-14. Walla Walla Public Library wants to hear how you use or don’t use the library. The effort is designed to improve and expand services. This information is confidential and will help the Walla Walla Public Library plan, fund, and create the library to best fit the community. Survey site: [www.wallawallapubliclibrary.org](http://www.wallawallapubliclibrary.org) to participate.

**FREE SafeAssured ID program offered to help keep children safe**

- April 23
- 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Marcus Whitman Hotel & Conference Center

ID program is a turnkey safety program in which you will receive the SafeAssured privacy-protected mini-CD which offers a single repository of important information:

- All ten electronically imaged fingerprints
- Digital photograph
- Streaming video showing mannerisms and gait with linked audio file providing the individual’s voice inflection and accent
- Private information (general physical description, street address, date of birth, life-threatening medical conditions, identifying scars or marks, and tattoos.
- Ability to create missing person poster from the mini-CD

Families will also receive a full-color data cards and a Parent’s Guide with prevention tips written in conjunction with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.

If you have questions please contact:

Vicki Ruley, Crime Prevention Coordinator/Crime Victim Advocate  
Walla Walla Police Department  
54 Moore Steet  
Walla Walla, WA 99362  
509-524-4409

**FREE Seminar: LEARN TO SPOT and AVOID FRAUD**

- April 23
- 2 to 3:30 p.m.(registration is at 1:30 p.m.)
- Marcus Whitman Hotel and Conference Center
- FOR Seniors, Family and Care providers. REGISTRATION required for this event: [www.SaveAndInvest.org/events/walla walla](http://www.SaveAndInvest.org/events/walla%20walla)
- Call toll free: 866-862-0110

At this seminar you will interact with law enforcement and financial experts and learn critical skills, including how to:

- Protect yourself in these uncertain times
- Recognize red flags around financial scams
- Learn about the resources available to you at no charge
- Outsmart investment fraud

If you have questions please contact:

Vicki Ruley, Crime Prevention Coordinator/Crime Victim Advocate  
Walla Walla Police Department  
54 Moore Steet  
Walla Walla, WA 99362  
509-524-4409

**Compost sale helps raise funds for those in need**

A group of local families is hosting a compost sale to raise funds for local and international relief efforts. The PlantLife Compost Event is Saturday, April 14 from 8 am until 4 pm in the Trinity Baptist Church parking lot at 595 Abbott Road, near Walla Walla High School. Organically certified dairy compost will sell for \$40 per yard or \$5 for a one-person carry container.

The PlantLife fundraiser was conceived by five local families who recognize the relative affluence of Americans and want to do something to reach out to those who live in poverty around the world.

“If you are gainfully employed in the United States, you are rich! In fact, you are wealthier than 95% of the world!” says Russ Davis, one of the event organizers. “As families, we want to remember and share with our kids that we have been unbelievably blessed – by no choice of our own – to have been born and raised in the most affluent nation the world has ever seen.”

The mission of the PlantLife event is to recognize that there are local families who are hurting as well as thousands of people who die every day around the world from lack of basic necessities like clean water and food. Through selling compost, these families want to plant the seeds of life and make a difference to those in need.

Compost is supplied by Organix, Inc. of Walla Walla and Skyridge Farms in Sunnyside. One hundred percent of the proceeds of PlantLife will go to the following organizations:

- World Vision; [www.worldvision.org](http://www.worldvision.org)
- One Day’s Wages; [www.onedayswages.org](http://www.onedayswages.org)
  - Christian Aid Center; [www.christianaidcenter.org](http://www.christianaidcenter.org)
  - Embracing Orphans; [www.embracingorphans.org](http://www.embracingorphans.org)
  - Trinity Baptist Church; [www.trinitywallawalla.org](http://www.trinitywallawalla.org)

A total of only 120 yards of compost will be available for sale. Organizers suggest people bring their pick-ups or trailers and come early. For more information, contact Russ Davis at 509-200-1160.

**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). Parents interested in greeting the busses at the Tuesday presentations are asked to contact volunteer Melissa Gardner at: [melissagardner@charter.net](mailto:melissagardner@charter.net).

**The Moms' Network celebrates with Mom Prom**

Pull out those old prom dresses, bridesmaid dresses, little black dresses or gowns and come to the 2nd Annual Mom Prom to support The Moms' Network. This year the event is Saturday, April 21 from 7 to 11p.m. at the Marcus Whitman Hotel and Conference Center.

"During April, women all over the country are celebrating National Mom Prom Day and we could not pass up on an opportunity to celebrate this event. It is a wonderful excuse for all women to put on a gown, dance and raise money for The Moms' Network" says Beth Swanson, President of The Moms' Network.

The evening will include dancing to the live disco/top 20 band Shanks Pony, a dessert bar and a no-host bar. As you are dressed in your finest there will be photos, a raffle and a grand prize for the best dress of the evening. Tickets are \$25 each and can be pre-purchased at Book & Game or Beehive Cut & Color Bar. Tickets are also available at any Moms' Network event or at the door.

So grab your girlfriends and husbands/boyfriends if they dare and join The Moms' Network at Mom Prom. For more detailed information visit [www.themomsnetworkww.com](http://www.themomsnetworkww.com) or call Beth Swanson at 509-301-7471.

**Whitman Institute for Scholastic Enrichment (WISE)**

Whitman College is recruiting students who are currently in grades 7 or 8 to apply to the WISE program. The dates for the 2012 program are August 5 – 7 The preliminary deadline for applications is May 11, but applications will continue to be accepted after that date if there are still spaces available.

WISE is an all-expenses paid program that aims to introduce local middle school students to college life in order to generate excitement for pursuing a college education. The students participating in the program are on campus for three days and stay in a college dorm for two nights. They attend classes taught by Whitman professors and college prep workshops. In addition, there are many opportunities to interact with current Whitman students who act as Resident Assistants and mentors and lead various activities such as art projects and college panels. The program also includes a workshop for parents, providing guidance for financial aid, academic choices at the high school level and addressing other concerns about preparing for college.

If you know students who would benefit from this opportunity, please encourage them to apply. Applications are available from Garrison and Pioneer school counselors or on the WISE website:

<http://www.whitman.edu/content/intercultural-center/wise>

For more information please contact:

Sonja Aikens

Whitman College WISE Program

[aikenssl@whitman.edu](mailto:aikenssl@whitman.edu)

509.527.5596

### **Race to Nowhere**

Walla Walla Valley Academy will be showing the documentary *Race to Nowhere* on May 9, at 7 p.m. in the WWVA Auditorium at 300 SW Academy Way in College Place, WA. Admission is free and we are welcoming the public to join us. The documentary is rated PG-13 for discussion about suicide. A trailer can be viewed at [www.racetonowhere.com](http://www.racetonowhere.com).

#### Here is the description provided:

A concerned mother turned filmmaker aims her camera at the high-stakes, high-pressure culture that has invaded our schools and our children's lives. This remarkable new film shines a light on the price young people pay for this "race to nowhere."

High-stakes testing has replaced meaningful teaching and learning. Cheating is commonplace. Stress-related illness, depression and burnout are rampant. Many young people arrive at college and the workplace unprepared and uninspired. Attend a screening and become part of the grassroots phenomenon that is feeding a groundswell for change.

### **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).