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District Stories

Air Quality in Walla Walla County remains compromised and is Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups

Students without known health risks are allowed to go outside today

Friday, Walla Walla Public Schools students without known health risks associated with poor air quality were permitted to go outside for physical education classes and recess. All students were held inside on Thursday and afterschool activities were canceled.

Walla Walla County Health Director Harvey Crowder reports air quality in Walla Walla County remains compromised and is unhealthy for sensitive groups.

Walla Walla County Health Department recommends:

People with lung and heart disease, stroke, diabetes or a current respiratory infection, infants, children, and older adults should limit outdoor activities.

“Based on the information we received from the Walla Walla County Health Department, we believe it is safe for kids without health risks to be outside today, but we will be keeping children with asthma and known respiratory issues inside,” Superintendent Mick Miller said.

For additional information, contact Mark Higgins: 509.526.6716 or mhiggins@wwps.org.

Friday’s athletic games and afterschool activities will take place

Athletic contests, including Walla Walla High School varsity football, and afterschool activities planned for Friday, Sept. 21 in Walla Walla will take place as scheduled. There are no changes to the middle school and high school sports schedules or practice schedules for Friday, Sept. 21. Tri-Cities schools also report tonight’s athletic contests and activities will take place as scheduled.

School board position finalists named

Tuesday night, school board members named Conrado Cavazos, Jr., Christopher Jenkins and Ruth Ladderud as finalists for the vacant school board position which came available when Jim Lehmann resigned to move closer to his family on the east coast.

Cavazos, Jr. lists himself as semi-retired. He is Gonzaga Law School graduate and current City of Walla Walla Council member. He has been active on the Walla Walla County Housing Authority Board and a member of several clubs which address Hispanic issues.

Jenkins is emergency room physician for Walla Walla General Hospital. He is a Wa-Hi graduate and Eagle Scout. He has five children and recently moved from rural Idaho to return to his home town.

Ladderud, a Whitman College employee and Wa-Hi graduate, is a member of the district Community Facilities Task Force. She has served on the Explorer Parent Organization and Citizens for Schools. She is a co-recipient of the Art Regier Volunteer of the Year award through her work with a local 4-H Club. She is also active in AAUW.

Superintendent Mick Miller reported the school board will interview the finalists during a public meeting Tuesday, Sept. 25 at 4 p.m. at the district office board room. A decision is expected to follow with the new board member sworn in Tuesday, Oct. 2. The new board member stands for election November 2013 to fill the remainder of the term through 2015.

High School Skill Center bids come in over budget

Superintendent Mick Miller reported to school board members general contractor bids for the \$7.7 million High School Skill Center are approximately \$1.1 million over cost estimations. Miller said the district is committed to seeing the project go forward. District options include rejecting all bids and rebidding after scaling back the facility and equipment. Miller will also work with OSPI to receive additional funding. The district has 45 days to respond to the bids.

Enrollment down to start year

Elementary grades see greatest drop

Chief Financial Officer Pat Johnston provided an update to school board members Tuesday on the district's enrollment figures following last week's submittal of the first official count of the year.

Johnston reported the district is 48 students below General Fund budget targets. She said the most significant enrollment counts dropped in elementary grade levels. She reported the district built in contingency funds of \$200,000 to protect the district in the event of an enrollment decline. Johnston projected a nearly \$245,000 drop in state revenue through apportionment based on September's enrollment count. The district receives approximately \$5,118 per Full-Time Equivalent student.

Johnston says her office, working closely with Superintendent Mick Miller, will track enrollment figures each month to see if this declining trend continues. She said the district will also closely monitor spending to determine if mid-year reductions are necessary.

State School Board to visit Walla Walla

The Washington State Board of Directors will conduct a meeting in Walla Walla this month. State school board members will tour Blue Ridge, Wa-Hi and Lincoln HS Thursday, Sept. 27 as part of their stay. They are interested in learning how WWPS uses data to drive instruction.

Police activity near schools prompts emergency procedures

City of Walla Walla Police officers were involved in a standoff Thursday afternoon with a person near the 100 block of W. Maple St. Police closed Maple St. from 3rd to 4th Ave. as a result of this incident. This high level police activity prompted the school district to take action. Lincoln High School and Garrison Middle School were temporarily placed in lockdown until the police took control of the scene and isolated the incident.

Students riding school buses near this police crime scene were held at the school for pick up by parents. Students walking home near this area were re-directed away from the police scene. District staff members were positioned near corners surrounding this area to divert students away.

Walla Walla Public Schools worked closely with law enforcement officials throughout this situation to ensure communication and emergency procedures were followed. The situation ended at approximately 3 p.m. and then police began clearing the area of law enforcement staff and equipment.

We take school safety seriously and have plans in place to keep students, staff and visitors safe.

Superintendent's Patron Tour program invites community members to visit schools

Superintendent Mick Miller is continuing his Superintendent's Patron Tour program Wednesday, Oct. 24 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Guests will visit Green Park Elementary, Walla Walla and Lincoln High Schools as part of the program.

Miller's goal with the program is to build relationships, learn about each other and listen. Please ask your friends, family, neighbors and parents of students to participate. They will value the experience and learn a lot along the way. Patron Tour guests will meet with Superintendent Miller, tour schools and conclude with lunch and a debriefing. If you are interested in participating in a Patron Tour, contact Communications Director Mark Higgins: 509.526.6716 or by email: mhiggins@wwps.org

Nutrition Services strives to bring more fresh fruit and vegetables into area schools

Farm-to-School program takes hold in Walla Walla. Nutrition Services Director Pam Milleson shows off fresh peppers being served in area schools through the Farm-to-School program. Milleson says this year her department is striving to bring more fresh fruit and vegetables into Walla Walla schools.

They have added a harvest of the month program which features a different locally grown fruit or vegetable each month. This month the district is serving fresh whole peaches from Edwards Farms. On Sept 26, Nutrition Services will be serving a special menu to promote "Taste Washington." Some of the items include local corn, carrots, peppers, tomatoes, and pluots.

These are just a few of the exciting programs this year in Nutrition Services. Special thanks to Beth Thiel for helping coordinate and advocate for this program.

"Taste Washington Day" features locally grown food for lunch - By Beth Thiel

A budding Farm to School Program is taking a big step forward next week for "Taste Washington Day". Wednesday September 26, all 10 WW public schools will be serving a roast chicken lunch with locally grown fruits and vegetables including corn on the cob from Walla Walla Produce Company, John Zerba and Taruscio Farm, pluots from Key Farm, pears from Taruscio Farm, tomatoes from Edwards Farm, carrots from Welcome Table Farm and a pasta salad made with bell peppers from Walla Walla Produce Company. There are many positive reasons to eat locally grown food. Produce is picked ripe so it tastes great and provides maximum nutrient content, and purchasing local food supports local families.

In addition to this lunch, locally produced foods will be featured throughout the year in a "Harvest of the Month" program. Peaches have been highlighted this week. Students have been eating them so fast that extra boxes were ordered to get through the week! These peaches come from Edwards Farm, where a large variety of fruits and vegetables are grown and sold to local restaurants and through Edwards produce stand on the Old Milton Highway.

Through school gardens, field trips and farmer visits to schools, the Farm to School Program will strive to educate students about our local food system. Look for information about the farmers that supply our school district posted in the cafeterias.

As of July 2012, every school participating in the national school lunch program must serve a portion of fruit or vegetable to every student joining in school lunch each day. Serving this delicious local produce may help students consume the extra fruits and veggies they are now required to take on their tray.

The Nutrition Services staff has been working hard to apply the new lunch standards in addition to implementing the Farm to School program. Please show your support for these changes by ensuring your student is eating school lunch on September 26 and joining them in the cafeteria. While there, let the staff know how much you appreciate their work. If you'd like to know more about the new school lunch standards, please visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/healthierschoolday/>

School board members honor Mark Harvey

Tuesday night, school board members extended their thoughts and prayers to the Harvey family with the passing of longtime WWPS carpenter Mark Harvey. A memorial service was held last Saturday in Mark's honor. Mark fought a courageous battle with cancer. Board members said he will always be remembered for his love of the district and his job.

Personnel Report (from 9/18/12 school board meeting)

Employment

(Certificated)

Candice Tan, Special Education (temp), Blue Ridge Preschool
(Classified)

Bethany Brown, Para-Educator, Green Park

Traci Eckley, Para-Educator (temp), Pioneer Middle School

Julie Fletcher, Para-Educator (temp), Blue Ridge

Jeffrey Givens, Carpenter, Facilities & Operations

Yesenia Gutierrez, Para-Educator, Prospect Point

Cindy Ramirez, Para-Educator, Blue Ridge Preschool

Resignations/Retirements

(Classified)

Tom Arland, Custodian, Walla Walla High School, 4 years

Shelly Watson, Kitchen Assistant, Walla Walla High School, 14 years

Tony Ongers, Painter, Facilities Support, 11 years

District “focus schools” complete school improvement plans

Washington secures ESEA waiver to provide more local flexibility

In July, the U.S. Department of Education granted Washington’s waiver request from Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requirements. Washington is one of 26 states that have received waivers from ESEA to date.

Tuesday night, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Linda Boggs reported to school board members how the waiver impacts Walla Walla Public Schools. She said the waiver features a growth model so schools can track their progress over a three year span. The 2012-13 school year is the baseline year. She also said the district will no longer need to set aside Title I dollars for supplemental educational services. She said these funds, approximately \$300,000 annually, may now be used per the district’s discretion to improve student learning. She said this will be a more effective use of these dollars.

The waiver request rested on three principles:

- Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- Accountability System and Index
- Teacher/Principal New Evaluation System

Another part of the waiver agreement requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to annually identify “priority schools,” “focus schools” and “reward schools”:

- Priority schools are among the lowest 5 percent of Title I schools in the state.
- Focus schools are among the lowest 10 percent of Title I schools in the state.
- Reward schools are classified either as “highest-performing schools” or “high-progress schools.”

Currently, Garrison Middle School is a “focus school” for the subgroups English Language Learners and Special Education. Lincoln High School is a “focus school” for graduation rates. Blue Ridge and Sharpstein are emerging schools. Each of these schools developed school improvement plans per the waiver requirements.

One component of ESEA, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), requires that all students pass both the reading and math assessments by 2014. The waiver agreement replaces that provision with a focus on opportunity gaps. Subgroups of students (such as black, Hispanic, Asian, special education, students receiving free or reduced-price meals) will need to have the difference between their scores in 2011 and 100 percent cut in half by 2018.

School Stories

Walla Walla High School Choirs reschedule car wash for Oct. 6

- "Suds-a-thon" car wash postponed for tomorrow
- Rescheduled for Saturday, Oct. 6
- O'Reilly's Auto Store on 9th and Poplar
- 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Car Wash is free
- Donations are accepted (Funds support Choir Scholarships to help students pay for outfits and trip fees)

Instruments needed for 5th grade orchestra students

There has been an amazing turn out for 5th grade Orchestra this year. Music teacher Nichole Riggs reports she is lacking instruments for the students who can not afford to supply their own.

"If you or someone you know happens to have a spare violin, viola, cello or double bass around, I would greatly appreciate any loaners or donations -- even if it needs repaired," Riggs said. "Between Blue Ridge, Prospect Point and Sharpstein, I have over 65 students attending class."

Riggs said her average number of students last year was 28.

"This growing program wasn't prepared for the growth spurt but I'd like to embrace these students wanting to learn to play a string instrument," Riggs said. "They are volunteering to attend class three days a week from 7:20 a.m. - 8:05 a.m., which is quite a commitment and practice after school for at least an hour each week."

Please email or call Riggs to make a donation:

Nichole Riggs

Garrison Orchestra and Choir

527-3040 ext 4926

nriggs@wwps.org

Graduate music student pursues passion by singing for President Obama

Walla Walla High School Class of 2007 graduate Sydney Gabbard recently sang the National Anthem to approximately 3000 people at a rally for President Barack Obama at Eden Park Seasongood Pavilion in Cincinnati, OH. Sydney is the daughter of former Edison Music teacher Ronda Gabbard. Sydney was chosen from a pool of about 20 people after a former colleague recommended her to the head of the President's Columbus, Ohio office.

"I felt very privileged to be singing in front of the community I support and where I've lived," Gabbard said. "I am in a committed, permanent relationship with music. It's my first and last love."

Gabbard is in the process of getting her Masters in Music at University of Tennessee, in Knoxville. She is preparing for an upcoming performance. In November, she will play the role of Musetta in the University of Tennessee Opera Theatre's production of La Boheme. In the spring, she will perform the role of Lucia, in Benjamin Britten's the Rape of Lucretia.

Sharpstein Carnival

- Thursday, September 27
- 4:30 to 7 p.m. at Sharpstein School
- Open to the public!
- Fun for the whole family!
- Four inflatables (bounce houses, slides, obstacle course), carnival-style games, dunk tank, style studio, and tasty treats!
- Most activities \$.50 or \$1 each or all-inclusive wristbands available for \$15 (excludes dunk tank and jail)
- All proceeds benefit the Sharpstein PTA

Wa-Hi Volleyball team plans Breast Cancer Awareness event

Walla Walla High School Volleyball is once again hosting "Get Your Pink On" during the Oct. 4 match against Pasco. Team members are hoping everyone will join in the "Pink Frenzy" and wear their pink T-shirts.

Walla Walla High School releases fall college visit schedule

Visit with a college representative! Sign-up in the Career Center. College representatives have the information you need to make your best choice. The visiting representatives are also admissions officers and are usually the first ones to read your application. It's to your benefit to meet them personally. They'll share valuable insight and advice on the application process, financial aid, student life, degree programs, internships, study abroad and more.

September, 2012

9/17 Lewis Clark State College 10:30 a.m.

9/18 Carroll College 9:30 a.m.

9/20 Boise State University 9:00 a.m.

9/26 Gonzaga University 10:30 a.m.

October, 2012

10/4 Seattle University 10:00 a.m.

10/8 Whitman College 9:30 a.m.

10/15 Corban University 9:30 a.m.

10/16 University of Idaho 10:30 a.m.

10/17 Linfield College 8:30 a.m.

10/17 Whitworth University 9:30 a.m.

10/24 University of Puget Sound 9:30 a.m.

November, 2012

11/8 Willamette University 8:00 a.m.

Career Center Scholarship Workshops

- 9/24 and 10/8 @ 2 to 4 p.m.

Drop in to pick up lists, web-sites and tools to help with your scholarship search.

Other College Events at Wa-Hi

- 10/16 College and Career Night in Commons 5:30-7:30 p.m.

- Arena style, pick-up information, special topic sessions

Pioneer Middle School student videos accepted to Citizen Jane festival

Former Pioneer Middle School student Gabby Frenzel and Amelia Mott had their films accepted into the Citizen Jane Film Festival. The students developed the films under the direction of Explorer teacher Dan Calzaretta. The Amazing Fuzz, by Gabby Frenzel, was made while she was an 8th grade student at Pioneer Middle School. This animated film is about a ball of fuzz who dreams of being a superhero.

Bump in the Night was made by Amelia Mott and Oriana Golden while they were in 7th grade at Pioneer. This documentary is about Eastern Washington Paranormal, a local "ghost hunting" group. This film was also accepted into the National Film Festival for Talented Youth (NFFTY) last April.

Citizen Jane's festival focuses on women film makers, and only films directed by women are accepted.

"The young women who made these films should be proud of their accomplishments," Calzaretta said. "There are not many kids their age who can say they had films accepted into film festivals such as Citizen Jane and NFFTY while they were in middle school."

Sign up forms now accepted for annual Big Blue Weekend event -- Scholarships available

Sign up for Big Blue Weekend in the Wa-Hi ASB Office today! The event is October 12-14 at Washington Family Ranch in Antelope, OR. More than 450 Wa-Hi students and staff will travel to Antelope, OR to build connections, listen to inspirational speakers and have fun. This program is specifically targeted to encourage freshmen and students who need extra support to attend. Visit the Wa-Hi website for more information online.

The cost is \$90. Register by September 28 and save \$5. A limited number of scholarships are also available and you may pick up that application in the ASB Office. There are several ways for staff, parents and community members to help us make this a great experience for Wa-Hi students.

Donated items needed:

- a coat or thick sweatshirt
- a small suitcase or zippered bag
- \$60 student scholarships

Approximately 50 chaperones and 30 work crew members are also needed. Work crew members work behind the scenes to prepare and serve meals. Chaperones sleep in cabins with 10-14 students and are members of small student groups that meet approximately four times throughout the weekend.

Contact Carina Stillman cstillman@wwps.org or Kristina Duncan kduncan@wwps.org for more information 527-3020.

Community Stories

Providence St. Mary Medical Center School Supply Donation Drive a Success

Providence St. Mary Medical Center donated \$1150 of school supplies to Helpline Social Service Agency, Lincoln High School and Blue Ridge Elementary School. Lincoln received two large boxes of school supplies and 13 back packs loaded with everything a high school student needs for school.

The employees of Providence St. Mary Medical Center donated more than \$3,700 of school supplies for local schools. Thank you employees of Providence St. Mary Medical Center for making sure every child has the school supplies they need.

College Coaches Program Making Strides for 2012-2013

Renewed support from Whitman College and exciting collaboration with a variety of Walla Walla High School staff and educators is paving the way for the College Coaches volunteer program to impact the lives of more students than ever!

College Coaches, a Whitman College program founded in 2010, has been a valuable resource to connect college volunteers with individual WA-HI students. The program establishes one-on-one mentor relationships between the Coaches and their students to help them address academic challenges and goals, explore areas of interest, and tackle the college readiness process without breaking a sweat. As of last year, College Coaches have also been present in Guided Study classrooms, and we look forward to seeing them in other classrooms in the coming academic year.

Although College Coaches was started through GEAR-UP funding and continues to be supported by GEAR-UP, it is an independent program and as a result is able to work with any and all interested Wa-Hi students.

Any questions or interest in the program can be directed to Natalie Pond, Whitman Community Service Office Intern, at collegecoaches@whitman.edu. We look forward to hearing from you and fostering lasting and rewarding relationships between the Whitman and Wa-Hi communities!

Whitman READS program at public library promotes learning

Whitman READS will be held this fall at the Walla Walla Public Library in the Children's area from 3 to 3:45 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month. This outreach is an effort to provide local elementary students with a fun, educational and free outing on early release Wednesday once a month.

Whitman faculty, staff and students are invited to make an interesting presentation to local children (geared toward K-5 students specifically). On October 3, Assistant Professor Allison Calhoun will share about coral, coral reefs and diving. Please come out and join the learning and fun at Whitman Reads!

Free “Love and Logic Parenting” presentation Thursday, September 27

Foster W. Cline, M.D., a child psychiatrist and co-founder of ‘Love and Logic Parenting’ will be coming to Reid Center on the Whitman College campus for a “laugh and learn” presentation about parenting all children, and parenting children who struggle with illness or challenging behaviors. This FREE presentation will be held Thursday, September 27, from 7-9 p.m.

Love and Logic skills, tools and techniques are useful in reaching most children most of the time. Modifications may be made when a child’s emotional or physical illness raises the stress level in a family.

The presentation will include:

- General parenting and parenting children with health and behavior problems.
- Empowerment vs. Enabling – setting the stage for life.
- Using consequences with empathy to motivate children for success.

Dr. Cline, world-renowned adult and child psychiatrist, is the co-founder of the very popular ‘Love and Logic Parenting’ and author of over a dozen books.

This presentation is sponsored by Good Samaritan Ministries, Walla Walla School District and Whitman College Psychology Department. For more information call Good Samaritan Ministries at 529-2322.

Intercultural story teller comes to Whitman College

- Olga Loya, storyteller, artist and teacher
- Traditional tales from Latin America
- Sponsored by Club Latino and the Intercultural Center
- Tuesday, Sept. 25
- 7 p.m.
- Whitman College, Olin 130