

Garrison awarded 3M grant to improve library security efforts

Whitman students volunteer in library to give back to community

Books and other learning materials are better protected at the Garrison Middle School library thanks to a grant funded high-tech detection system and some good old-fashioned volunteer help.

Earlier this school year Garrison received the *3M Salute to Schools* grant which funded more than \$19,000 in equipment and supplies.

The security system, which sets off an alarm if materials aren't properly checked out, relies on magnetic detection strips to be placed in the books. Volunteer students from Whitman College stepped in to help with this task. All materials now have the protective detection strips in place.

"The Whitman volunteers were highly competent and fun to have around," Garrison Librarian **Jackie George** said. "They were a big help to us and a joy to work with."

3M Salute to Schools Grant - Funding Summary

• Equipment and supplies	More than \$19,000
- Single door equipment	\$7,499.99
- Double door equipment	\$9,099.99
- Desensitizer	\$229.99
- Resensitizer	\$849.99
- 13,000 security strips	\$2,079.87

"Volunteering at Garrison provides us an opportunity to give back to the Walla Walla community and show its children we value their education."

Bethany Klasser
Whitman College Junior - English Major



Whitman College Juniors **Becky Burand (R)** and **Bethany Klasser** volunteer to place magnetic strips in books at the Garrison Middle School.

Walla Walla Public Schools

Focus on Education

Your School District Newsletter | Winter 2005 | Volume 6 | Issue 2

Wa-Hi Resource Officer makes remarkable recovery after serious motorcycle crash

As **Scott Brashear** and his wife Jan strapped on their riding chaps and helmets and zipped up heavy leather jackets for day three of their annual road trip to the Sturgis motorcycle rally, all they could think about were the sites and scenes of the South Dakota two-wheel spectacle.

Two hours east of Billings, Montana, everything changed as the couple found themselves flying over the handlebars of Scott's Harley Electra Glide at 70 m.p.h.

See **Crash** - page 7



High speed crash halts annual ride to Sturgis

Scott Brashear's Injuries

- Shattered left elbow
- Fractured right shoulder
- Sprained right ankle
- Broken left toe
- Multiple facial abrasions
- Bruised entire back side

Jan Brashear's Injuries

- Fractured orbit of left eye
- Deep facial lacerations
- Fractured left hand

"I would definitely say this has been a life changing experience. It's made Jan and I realize how important we are to each other, how important we are to others, and how nice it is to have good friends."

Sheriff Deputy Scott Brashear

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Citizens rally for Garrison track

The spirit of community giving is alive and well in Walla Walla as witnessed by the recent formation of a citizens group with aspirations of donating an all-weather track to Garrison Middle School.

Led by community members **Craig Nelson, Ed Nelson, and Steve Gerling**, *Citizens for the Garrison Track Project* plan to raise money through private donations and grants.

Several local businesses and contractors have already pledged their support for the \$150,000 project according to Nelson.

"We don't know exactly how we are going to raise all the money, but we know we are going to get the job done."

Craig Nelson

The group plans to secure enough funding for the track for a summer construction timeline. Design work and fund raising efforts have started.

Contact the Blue Mountain Community Foundation regarding pledge opportunities, 529-4371.

Walla Walla Public Schools

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Walla Walla, WA 99362
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website: www.wwps.org



Online School Closure Announcements

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Focus on Education community newsletter is published tri-annually by Walla Walla Public Schools.

For more information about the school district contact Communications Director Mark Higgins at: 509.526.6716 or by e-mail mhiggins@wwps.org

District eyes April completion date for new Strategic Plan

The district is closer to charting its vision for the future after a draft Strategic Plan was submitted to school board members in December.

The Strategic Planning process has involved community members, students, staff, administrators, school board members and parents.

See **Strategic Plan** - page 5

"This plan puts student achievement and their well being first."

Superintendent Rich Carter

Strategic Plan Core Areas

- Teaching and Learning
- Facilities and Technology
- Communication

Our Core Values are more than mere words; they're our business!

Quality | Integrity | Accountability | Respect | Courtesy



Rich Carter
Superintendent

529-7713 (FAX)
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rcarter@wwps.org
www.wwps.org

"The goal of education is the advancement of knowledge and the dissemination of truth."

John F. Kennedy

Community involvement helps shape vision for the future

Look around and it's fairly safe to say, most of us feel the pressures of life's demanding schedule. From taking kids to sports practices or music lessons, to being asked to do more with less at work, all of us are going, going and going.

Despite these pressures, a group of talented and generous community members said yes to one more task being added to their schedules by participating on the district's Strategic Planning Committee.

Twice a month last fall Strategic Planning Committee members gave up two hours of their precious evening time to help shape a vision for the future of Walla Walla Public Schools. We were all tired, yet the energy displayed during these sessions inspired us all to do whatever was necessary to put kids first.

Thanks to this group, the district now has the framework for a new strategic plan designed to address the needs of Walla Walla Public Schools. We will continue to shape this plan in the coming weeks and hope to take it to the School Board in April for approval consideration. Please take time to join me in saluting these dedicated community members.

Richard B. Carter

Strategic Planning Team Members

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| • Doug Barram | • Janis Barton |
| • Linda Boggs | • George Burgess |
| • Rich Carter | • Laura Droke |
| • Jane Eacker | • Mira Gobel |
| • Anne Golden | • Mark Higgins |
| • Barbara Hoffman | • Kirk Jameson |
| • Dana Jones | • Bill Jordan |
| • Lawson Knight | • Mike Lambert |
| • Russ Martin | • Roseann Martinez |
| • Jackie Martinez | • Mary Matau |
| • Cindy Meyer | • Carol Morgan |
| • Carolina Padilla | • Brian Pendleton |
| • Erica Prins | • Aron Rausch |
| • Judy Reault | • Lori Reid |
| • Toni Rudnick | • Jim Russo |
| • Lowell Schneider | • Jody Schneidmiller |
| • Dick Simon | • Spike Teal |
| • Jeffrey Townsend | • A. Valencia-Garcia |
| • Tom Vicari | • Dave Warkentin |
| • Jeffrey Weeks | • Margaret Yount |

Superintendent Carter starts school coffee chats to discuss school issues

This is your chance to get to know Superintendent Rich Carter. He will discuss issues facing Walla Walla Public Schools and talk about ways you can support efforts to improve district schools.

This will be a very informal setting, so please drop in and join us. For more information contact Communications Director Mark Higgins at 526-6716 or mhiggins@wwps.org.

Upcoming Coffee Chats...

Please mark your calendars

Friday, February 11

• Sharpstein Elementary
7:50 to 8:30 a.m.
Cafeteria

Friday, March 18

• Prospect Point Elementary
8:15 to 9:00 a.m.
Cafeteria

Friday, April 22

• Blue Ridge Elementary
7:45 to 9:00 a.m.
Cafeteria

Friday, May 20

• Wa-Hi, Paine High School,
Opportunity Program
7:30 to 8:30 a.m.
Wa-Hi Commons

Pioneer students warm the hearts of sick children



21st Century Grant Site Director **John Carter** helps Pioneer 6th grade student **Christina Smith** make a blanket for very sick Walla Walla children as part of a *Wishing Star Foundation* cooperative project.

Pioneer students participating in the *After School Club* donated 20 blankets to area children. Community member **Mary Sasser** donated fleece to make the blankets and provided training to the students.

Students participating in the *After School Club* receive extra help with reading and math and do a variety of arts and crafts and other enrichment projects.

Wa-Hi Music Program receives state and national honors for excellence

Wa-Hi Junior **Lindsey Bruner** and Senior **Sarah Parnicky** were selected to the National High School Honor Choir and will be featured in the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) National Conference in Los Angeles in February.

Parnicky and Bruner were selected to this prestigious group from a nationwide pool of singers who submitted audition tapes. Sarah was also named one of just 28 national Merit Award winners in the soprano voice division (17-18 year old category).

Also for the first-time in school history, the Wa-Hi Chamber Singers elite vocal group has been selected to perform at the Northwest Music Educators Association Conference in Bellevue in February.



"I'm extremely excited to have this opportunity with others my age who have also made singing such a huge part of their life. I think I'm mostly looking forward to meeting people from all over the country who share a passion for singing."

Sarah Parnicky



"I've been singing ever since I can remember, so going to nationals with the best in the country is such an incredible blessing."

Lindsey Bruner

Crash continued from page 1

The July 2004 trip to Sturgis would have been Scott's third and the second for Jan -- a claim they won't be able to make.

The Highway 212 accident, which kept them from making their destination, caused extensive injuries to Scott and Jan and a complete total of the bike, all started with mechanical failure of a fellow rider's motorcycle.

Brashear was traveling the posted Interstate speed limit in a pack of six bikes when one of the bike's rear axle broke and smoke started pouring off the back tire.

"I thought he was going down right in front of us, so I stepped on the rear brake and lost control of the bike," Brashear recalls. "It threw both my wife and me off. We landed at the side

"Without the helmets, which were totaled, we likely would not have had to worry about the other injuries."

Scott Brashear

of the road and watched the bike go skidding and bouncing past us. Whew!"

Scott hit the ground head first before being flipped on his back. Jan landed on her front side as her face thumped the ground. Scott says he's thankful they were wearing protective gear.

"Without the helmets, which were totaled, we likely would not have had to worry about the other injuries," Brashear said. "When we traveled that road last year it was very warm and we wore only t-shirts, jeans, and sun

"The thing I have continually learned from Chamber Singers is about commitment and sacrifice. Talent is not enough in this world to be successful. They demonstrate what commitment to the task and to each other is all about; year in and year out. It is a rare gift to get to make music with them."

Norb Rossi

Wa-Hi Choral Director

Wa-Hi students named to All-Northwest groups

Congratulations to four outstanding Wa-Hi music students for being named to All-Northwest Honor Groups. The students are:

- **Lyn Beckett**, 2nd alto, All-Northwest Mixed Choir. Lyn is the daughter of Bonnie Anderson-Beckett.
- **Tim Davis**, tenor saxophone, All-Northwest Band. Tim is the son of Eileen and Steven Davis.
- **Jeremy Ueckert**, percussion, All-Northwest Band. Jeremy is the son of Andrew and Vicki Ueckert.
- **Alex Bernstein**, pianist, All-Northwest Jazz Choir. Alex is the son of Julie Rose and Michael Bernstein.

More than 3,600 music students auditioned for these honor groups. The students will perform at the Northwest Music Educators Conference.

glasses."

The Brashears were treated in Billings where Scott had his elbow reconstructed and Jan had her face stitched up.

"Most of our injuries are healing," Brashear said. "Jan will need some more surgery on her face and I may need another surgery on my elbow. I have been through physical therapy and continue to gain mobility in the elbow. When the healing is done I can work on regaining strength in the arm."

Brashear's duties at Wa-Hi include supervision of students, campus security, and investigation of crimes that occur on the campus.

He says he may ride again, but not until his children are older and never again with a passenger on back.

Bowhunting provides escape for Berney teacher

Fifth generation Montanan inspired by outdoor adventures

Walk into Berney 5th grade teacher **Joe Gribnau's** classroom and the room comes to life with wildlife drawings and an animal display that would make any taxidermist proud.

Gribnau's love for the outdoors started as a child in Missoula, Montana, where he attended Hellgate High School and was a 'Griz' at the University of Montana.

He's an accomplished rock climber and bowhunter, loves to pencil draw wildlife scenes and is now authoring a Christmas book about his Montana experiences.

Gribnau uses his passion for writing to connect with bowhunters from all over the world. His hunting articles have been published in *Instinctive Archery* and *Traditional Archery* magazines.

"My first published article was a poem titled, *A Montana Night Before Christmas*, which *Western Horseman Magazine* used as a Christmas poem to their readers," Gribnau said. "Later, Pelican Publishing sent me a contract for a book based on the poem. The book should be out next year, hopefully."

"In the woods or mountains there are no deadlines, no phones, or any good reason to hurry."

Joe Gribnau



Gribnau uses his love for art to teach student Lorena Gutierrez how to draw.



Berney 5th grade teacher Joe Gribnau has been bowhunting for 20 years.

Gribnau, who has been bowhunting for 20 years, says he loves the environments where wild animals are found, the challenge of hunting with traditional archery equipment and the aesthetics of the equipment itself.

"Spotting and stalking open-country mule deer is probably my favorite way to hunt," he said.

Gribnau has a four-year-old son, Riley, and a one-year-old daughter, Wesley, and is married to Mel, a Green Park kindergarten teacher. His family also loves numerous water sports.

No Child Left Behind Update

District in Step One of School Improvement

Walla Walla Public Schools has been identified for not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) during the 2003-2004 school year per the No Child Left Behind accountability mandates. Consequently, the district is considered in Step One of School Improvement.

Here are the specific reasons AYP was not met:

- 44.8% of 4th grade Limited English students met the reading standard on the WASL (the target is 52.2%)
- 59.2% of all Walla Walla School District seniors graduated in 2003 (the target is either 63% or at least a 1% increase from the previous year)

(Note: Wa-Hi's graduation rate is 82.7%)

Step One of School Improvement mandates

Consequences include developing a district improvement plan and setting aside 10% of Title I funding* to address the professional development needs of teachers who work with the student groups who have not met AYP criteria.

* federal funding for students who come from low income families

Enrollment remains above projections

The district is serving more students this year than it did last year. Executive Director of Personnel **Bill Jordan** recently reported enrollment "head counts," the term used for all students served, are up 106 since the beginning of the year. He said Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) student counts, which represents the enrollment formula used for district budgeting, currently rest at 5786, up 175 students from beginning year projections.

"That's good news," Jordan exclaimed. "We are in a good position."

The district will continue to closely monitor enrollment trends throughout the school year. Enrollment counts are tallied each month and then averaged at the end of the year for a final figure.



Bill Jordan

American Education Week



Washington State Patrol Trooper **R.A. Nordman** helps Edison Elementary first grade student **Jack Dwyer** read during this year's American Education Week celebration.

Nearly 100 community members went back to school to Celebrate American Education Week.

Now in its third year, the Celebrate American Education Week event is an opportunity for community members to visit their local Walla Walla schools, listen to district success stories and challenges, ask questions, meet students and tour facilities.

Strategic Plan continued from page 1

"Symposium 2004 in September launched the visioning process and provided a solid core of expectations and recommendations for the Strategic Planning team to consider," Superintendent **Rich Carter** said. "This plan puts student achievement and their well being first."

Former Deputy Superintendent **Judy Reault**, now with ESD 123 in Pasco, served as the Strategic Planning Team facilitator.

A core team of Strategic Planning Committee members will now finalize the plan which is expected to be ready for board approval in April.

Strategic Plan Timeline

January

- Core Team forms work teams to address needs of core areas (see page 1)

February

- Work plans developed

March

- Final plans completed
- Strategic Planning Committee reconvenes for presentation of work plans

April

- Final strategic plan presented to Board

Staff Spotlight - News Briefs

Walla Walla teachers earn national certificates

Walla Walla Public Schools teachers **Dawn Jepson** (Pioneer Middle School), **Mindy Meyer** (Wa-Hi), **Anne Swant** (Wa-Hi), **Dan Ojcius** (Wa-Hi), **Natalie Allen-Tibbling** (Paine Alternative Campus), and **Kristen Harvey** (Garrison Middle School) received certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Requirements included authoring a detailed professional portfolio, video taping classroom instruction and passing a challenging assessment to test subject knowledge.

These teachers earned a 10-year certificate and will receive a \$3,500 annual stipend.

Hall selected to host Exchange teachers

Congratulations to Blue Ridge Bilingual First Grade Teacher **Brenda Hall** for being selected to host two teachers from Uruguay this winter. Hall says she will do all she can to welcome them and make sure that they have access to American education via Walla Walla.

Retired Employees Association names grant recipients

Prospect Point third grade teacher **Michele Briones** and Wa-Hi ESL teacher **Diana Erickson** were named recipients of the Walla Walla-Columbia School Retirees Association \$100 mini-grants.

Briones plans to purchase books for the Accelerated Reader program and Erickson wants to encourage her students to use English outside of the classroom by purchasing books written in both English and Spanish.

Business Manager forms Budget Committee

Business Manager **Aron Rausch** has formed a broad-based Budget Committee consisting of community members, parents, staff, administrators and a board member.

The committee has been formed to establish recommendations and budget priorities to be presented to Superintendent Rich Carter regarding the 2005-2006 budget. The committee will meet once or twice a month through March.

Clearman helps students create Civil War movie

Sixth grade students in **Beth Clearman's** Explorers gifted student program produced an 11 minute documentary film dramatizing the life of Abraham Lincoln.

The entire class researched the life of Lincoln through books and videos and each group wrote a section of his life for the film. All students had roles in the feature film.

Student **Matt Skorina** (Pioneer 6th grader) was the cameraman and director. The project was made possible in part thanks to the technical support and funding from the district's Technology Department.

Students raise money for Tsunami victims



Prospect Point Elementary School Principal **Rick Nebeker** helps kindergarten student **Leah Wik** pour her money she earned from her summer lemonade stand into the school's Tsunami Relief Fund. Leah said she wanted to help the kids who were hurt in the disaster.

Prospect Point students across the campus participated in the January fund-raising effort, raising nearly \$2,000 for the American Red Cross Tsunami Relief Fund.

Numerous Walla Walla Public Schools staff and students contributed to this cause through similar efforts.

Sharpstein students help each other learn two languages



(L-R) Sharpstein first grade students **Alyssa Alvarado**, **Madeline Redman** and **Alexia Miller** practice their writing skills as part of Sharpstein's Two-Way Language Enrichment Program.

This program, now in its second year, is designed to help students build fluency in both Spanish and English. Dual language classes are offered to students who qualify in kindergarten and first grade. Each year a new grade will be added at Sharpstein until it is eventually offered K-5.

In this program, Native Spanish and English speaking children have an opportunity to develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in both languages.

Spanish and English instruction is always kept separate, allowing for maximizing concentration of both languages.

The Two-Way Language Enrichment Program is an "additive bilingual" program meaning that all students learn a second language without compromising their first language.

Contact district Bilingual Coordinator **Cindy Gregoire** at 526-1691 for more information.

Listen to exciting
Blue Devil Sports
KTEL 1490 AM

Winter schedules now in
schools and online!



Bluewood Blazers Buff

School board member Rich Jacks shares passion for skiing with kids



Dr. Rich Jacks

For nearly 40 years snow skiing has been a passion of School Board President Dr. Rich Jacks.

Rich started teaching skiing at Snoqualmie Summit in the late 1960s and the bug followed him to California where he taught at Alpine Meadows for a decade while he was working at Stanford.

When Rich moved back to Washington state in the late 1970s, his skills eventually led him to coaching youth ski race teams and working with kids 10 and under. His most current gig has him coaching for the Bluewood Blazers Ski Team.

"If a child starts training with the Blazers by age 8 or 9, by the time they are 12, they will be able to go up any lift and ski down any run that is open at any ski area in the country," Jacks said. "It's truly a life skill."

The 30 to 50 Bluewood Blazers team members practice weekends and participate in a ski camp during the winter holiday break. The ski race season spans December to April. Team competitions are held at Bluewood, Anthony Lakes, McCall, and Mission Ridge ski areas. Rich says this year will be his last season of coaching.

Jacks was elected to the school board in 1993. He holds a Ph.D in Counseling Psychology from Stanford University and is presently director of counseling at Whitman College.

"I do remember one young man from when I was teaching at Alpine Meadows. He was 15 and blind, his sister was 17 and sighted. He wanted to ski better than she did. I had him in private lessons over Christmas week and by the end of the week, she couldn't keep up with us!"

Dr. Rich Jacks

- Reflecting on his most memorable coaching experience -

Q & A with Dr. Rich Jacks

Q - Why did you get started in coaching?

A - As a young man I fell in love with skiing and decided I needed to find a way to afford to do it a LOT. I was already a teacher, so I decided I would get good enough to teach.

Q - What do you like most about coaching?

A - Sharing my love of the sport with them and seeing their joy when they get better.

Q - What is your most memorable experience?

A - This is hard. My memories span years. I think of what the young racers were like at 5, 6, or 7 and then as a teenager. The growth in skill and confidence is tremendous.

Q - Did you coach your children?

A - Yes, until I couldn't keep up with them :-)

School Closure Announcements

Winter weather is here!

During winter months, parents and community members are encouraged to tune to local radio and television stations, or go **ONLINE** at www.wwps.org, to receive current information regarding school closures or delays.

Assume school will operate on time if you have not heard about a delay or closure by 6:30 a.m. Calls to local media outlets from the school district are made **ONLY** if there are delays or closures.

How do I get school closure information?

- Tune to local radio stations
- Check KNDU, KVEW, KEPR morning TV reports
- Online - www.wwps.org (see - School Closures)



For more information...

- Contact Communications Director Mark Higgins
- 526-6716 / e-mail: mhiggins@wwps.org

District schools earn academic improvement awards

In an era of increased focus on accountability, Walla Walla Public Schools is meeting the challenge as noted by its recent Washington State Academic Improvement Award.

Five Walla Walla schools earned this annual award by reducing by

10 percent the number of students who missed meeting the reading, math and writing goals from one school year to the next.

"This award was made possible thanks to the hard work of our staff and students," Superintendent **Rich Carter** said. "I'm so proud of them."

Schools Honored

- Berney Elementary
- Sharpstein Elementary
- Garrison Middle
- Pioneer Middle
- Walla Walla High School

"Educators and administrators are working together in smart and savvy ways to make sure the educational needs of students come first."

Dr. Terry Bergeson
State Superintendent

Keep Connected!

Education Related Online Links

- **Walla Walla Public Schools**
www.wwps.org
- **Superintendent of Public Instruction - OSPI**
www.k12.wa.us
- **State Board of Education**
www.sbe.wa.gov
- **No Child Left Behind Act**
<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>
- **Washington State PTA**
<http://wastatepta.org/>