



FOCUS ON EDUCATION

YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

Entire community benefits from Murr Sports Park

Community jogging track and park-like setting enhance area

With colorful flowers in bloom, meticulously manicured lawns and the gentle sounds of the Yellowhawk Creek flowing by, the recently opened Murr Sports Park more closely resembles a vacation destination than a community use sports facility.

The Murr Sports Park consists of a boys' baseball field, a girls' softball field, soccer fields and a community jogging track.

The project developed thanks to a partnership with the school district, philanthropist Michael Murr, the Sherwood Trust and the Walla Walla High School Big Blue Boosters.

Discussions to build the park began in 1994 when the Murr Family Foundation donated 17 acres of land at the corner of Fern and Abbott near Wa-Hi.

The project further evolved in the late 1990s once the Sherwood Trust, Big Blue Boosters and Walla Walla Public Schools

committed to joining the Murr Family Foundation in funding the park.

"Walla Walla's commitment to supporting kids continues to amaze me," Superintendent **Rich Carter** said. "The completion of this project further demonstrates how community partnerships help us build upon our proud tradition of excellence. Walla Walla is a healthy community and we all should feel proud to live here."

District sports programs will have first priority for use of the park during the school year. Community sports leagues will have access to the park when it is not in use by scheduling with the district's athletic office. The jogging track and open areas are open to the public all year.

"Murr Sports Park is a community asset," Carter said. "We hope to see it used year round to promote and support positive activities for Walla Walla youth."

I wanted a sports facility in a park-like setting for the student athletes of Wa-Hi, but had little idea beyond the concept and the gift of the land how to bring about this dream. With the help of Jock Edwards and the school district, the concept, of course, evolved to encompass the entire community. We now have an absolutely beautiful park and top notch athletic facility, funded by a unique partnership between the school district and the private sector, available to all of the valley.

Michael Murr



Modern grandstand seating allows sports fans to catch all the action.

Initiative 728 dollars support Teachers on Special Assignment

Education majors have long been pressed by their professors to remain flexible upon entering the teaching profession. This advice proved valuable for several new teachers here this year as the district implemented its *Initiative 728* plan.

Upon receiving approximately \$1 million in I-728 funds this school year, the district used a portion of the funds to start a new program dubbed *Teachers on Special Assignment* or

TOSA. Most TOSA staff don't have their own classrooms. You'll often find them in hallways, libraries or learning labs working with students to enhance achievement.

One element of the TOSA program calls for teachers to work in small groups with students who are having difficulty in math or reading. This offers more instruction for challenged

See **I-728** - page 5

We'll Miss You Abe!



Legendary Walla Walla High School Principal **Abe Roberts** will say good-bye to the school district at the conclusion of the school year after serving our community for nearly 40 years. Look inside to learn more about this special man.

See **Abe Roberts** - page 4

Take me out to the ball park!

Murr Sports Park Unveiled



High energy activities abound at the corner of Fern and Abbott with the recent opening of the new **Murr Sports Park**. Former Wa-Hi standout student-athlete Michael Murr's generous contribution helped fund the new baseball, softball, soccer and community jogging track sports complex.

See **Murr Sports Park** - back page

Walla Walla sets pace for school improvement plans

District already meets recent strict mandates

When the State Board of Education recently mandated all 2,144 public schools to have a plan for school improvement, staff here didn't wrinkle a brow.

Walla Walla Public Schools had the foresight two years ago to create School Improvement Plans to enhance achievement and student offerings.

"Once we started analyzing current programs to assess degrees of challenge per requirements of our Strategic Plan, we knew focused School Improvement Plans were the way to go," **Dr. Judy Reault** said. "Our plans are concise, comprehensive



Judy Reault

See **Plans** - page 5



Walla Walla Public Schools 2001-2002

'Focus on Education'

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Our **CORE VALUES** are more than mere words; they're our business!

QUALITY • INTEGRITY • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPECT • COURTESY



From the Superintendent's Desk...



Dr. Richard Carter

It always amazes me how quickly time passes in our business, but a quick glance at the calendar reminds me that graduation is nearly upon us. This has been an exceptional school year for our district. Strong voter support in February reinforces what we have always known; Walla Walla is committed to quality public education. We realize the expectations are high here and we are meeting the challenges. This year we successfully reopened Sharpstein Elementary School, reconvened our Community Facilities Review Task Force to assess facilities needs, further aligned school goals with our strategic plan, and hired qualified and competent employees. It's an exciting time to be in education and we're going to do what it takes to ensure all Walla Walla children have an opportunity to be successful learners. Thanks for your continued support!

Richard B. Carter

Community supports 2002 replacement M&O Levy

District tallies 70% yes vote

Walla Walla community members want Walla Walla Public Schools to remain strong as evidenced by huge support at the polls February 5 where nearly 70 percent of the voters said yes to the district's 2002 M&O Levy.

More than 4,300 Walla Walla voters were in support of the \$5,878,000 for 2003 and \$6,078,000 for 2004. The approved levy represents a \$200,000 increase to help keep pace with inflation for each of the two years.

This funding helps provide dollars to maintain safe and clean learning environments for our students. Levy dollars also help pay for elementary music and physical education specialists, school health clinicians, custodians, librarians, and home visitors.

Our fine arts programs, including music and drama, receive levy funding. Interscholastic athletics, Future Farmers of America, Explorers Highly Capable program, Special Education, and other student activities all utilize levy funding.

Superintendent **Rich Carter** makes congratulatory calls to school board members to report the good news after receiving official word the district tallied a near 70 percent yes vote in the 2002 replacement M&O Levy.



"I want to thank our community for its continued support of public education in Walla Walla and commitment to providing endless learning opportunities and positive experiences for our students."

Superintendent Rich Carter



Citizens for Schools co-chairs **Gayl Ruff** and **Cindy Meyer** celebrate voter results with school board member **Dr. Richard Jacks**.

Strong Schools = A Strong Community

Spring & Summer Goals

By Rich Carter

- Successfully graduate Class of 2002
- Hire and welcome new Wa-Hi principal
- Prepare fiscally responsible budget
- Implement Phase II of Sharpstein matching funds summer building maintenance plan
- Coordinate *School Year Plus* program
- Hire highly skilled employees for 2002-2003 school year

District Calendar Highlights

May

- 7 School board meeting • District Office • 7:30 p.m.
- 8 Wa-Hi Delayed start
- 8 Wa-Hi Mother/Daughter banquet
- 9 Green Park Volunteer Appreciation Celebration
- 13 Wa-Hi Boosters Meeting • Wa-Hi Music Bldg. • 7:00 p.m.
- 15 29th District Band Festival • Wa-Hi Large gym • 7:30 p.m.
- 21 School board meeting • District Office • 7:30 p.m.
- 22 Abe Roberts Retirement @ Wa-Hi Commons 3:00 p.m.
- 22 Wa-Hi Delayed start
- 22 Wa-Hi Spring Concert • Wa-Hi Auditorium • 7:00 p.m.
- 24 Student Early Dismissal for Teacher Training/Planning
- 27 NO SCHOOL • Memorial Day Holiday
- 29 Wa-Hi Music Department Awards • Commons • 6:30 p.m.

June

- 4 School board meeting • District Office • 7:30 p.m.
- 6 Paine Campus Senior Celebration • Paine gym • 7:00 p.m.
- 7 Graduates of Distinction reception • District Office • 2 p.m.
- 7 Wa-Hi Commencement • Wa-Hi Commons area • 7:30 p.m.
- 11 Pioneer 8th Grade Recognition • Cordiner Hall • 7:30 p.m.
- 12 Garrison 8th Grade Recognition • Cordiner Hall • 7:00 p.m.
- 13 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL • Student Early Dismissal
- 14 All-Staff breakfast • Wa-Hi Commons • 7:00 a.m.
- 18 School board meeting • District Office • 7:30 p.m.
- 24 *School Year Plus* summer school program begins

July

- 26 *School Year Plus* summer school program ends

Visit us online
www.wwps.org

**Thank you for supporting
WALLA WALLA Youth!**

School Board Members

Tim Donaldson: 522-3103
Term expires - 2003

Mary Jo Geidl: 529-4184
Term expires - 2005

Anne Golden: 525-3067
Term expires - 2003

Dr. Richard N. Jacks: 529-5377
Term expires - 2005

Toni Rudnick: 522-2404
Term expires - 2003

• **Leadership**

• **Values**

• **Dedication**

Need to Contact Us?

District Directory

ADMINISTRATION

364 South Park Street,
Walla Walla, WA 99362
General Information - 527-3000
email - mhiggins@wwps.org
web site - www.wwps.org

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

BERNEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (K-5)

1718 Pleasant 527-3060

• David Talley - Principal

BLUE RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (P-5)

1150 W. Chestnut 527-3066

• Linda Boggs - Principal

EDISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (K-5)

1315 E. Alder 527-3072

• Bill Eyestone - Principal

GREEN PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (K-5)

1105 E. Isaacs Ave. 527-3077

• Irene Gonzales - Principal

PROSPECT POINT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (K-5)

55 Reser Road 527-3088

• Rick Nebeker - Principal

SHARPSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (K-5)

410 Howard 527-3098

• Laure Quaresma - Principal

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

(Located at Blue Ridge Elementary School)

1150 W. Chestnut 527-3066

• Gail Anderson - Director

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

GARRISON MIDDLE SCHOOL (6-8)

906 Chase Ave. 527-3040

• Jim Sporleder - Principal

PIONEER MIDDLE SCHOOL (6-8)

450 Bridge Street 527-3050

• Lyla Reibel - Principal

SECONDARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION CENTER (MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL)

Paine Campus
421 South Fourth Ave. 527-3083

• Nancy Withycombe - Principal

OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM

919 South Second Ave. 527-3052

• Nancy Withycombe - Principal

WALLA WALLA HIGH SCHOOL (9-12)

800 Abbott Road 527-3020

• Albert Roberts - Principal

Hi-Tech Community Service Project



District Technology Director **Janis Barton** explains computer set up requirements to Wa-Hi senior **James Neal** for the new lab at the recently modernized Sharpstein Elementary School

Wa-Hi students **Andre Aichele, Zach Nostdal, James Neal, Aaron Eisenbarth, and Travis Parker** from **Dennis DeBroeck's** Computer Technology class volunteered to install computers and software as part of a community service project.

Sharpstein students are now using the computer lab to enhance their technology skills.

Budding Broadcaster



Berney 1st grader **Jonathan Williams** voices a radio announcement to be played on *Seattle Mariners* games throughout the 2002 season. A new partnership with KGDC 1320 AM allows district students to talk about their favorite class, teacher or activity.

Wa-Hi students land leadership roles in history mentoring program

Green Park students make new friends and receive valuable learning materials through partnership

American leaders who have been featured in Pacific Northwest history books for generations recently came back to life in the form of children's books for Green Park students, thanks to a dynamic teen mentoring program.

This mentoring program teams Wa-Hi freshmen from **Gary Peasley's** Northwest History class and **Mindy Meyer's** Wa-Hi English class with 4th grade Green Park students from **Missy Johnson's** class.

Earlier this school year Green Park students visited Wa-Hi to meet their new *buddies* and talk about what they find most interesting about Northwest History.

Wa-Hi students then took the information they gathered and set out to create children's books for their Green Park *buddies*. Earlier this

spring the students reunited to exchange books and rekindle their friendships.

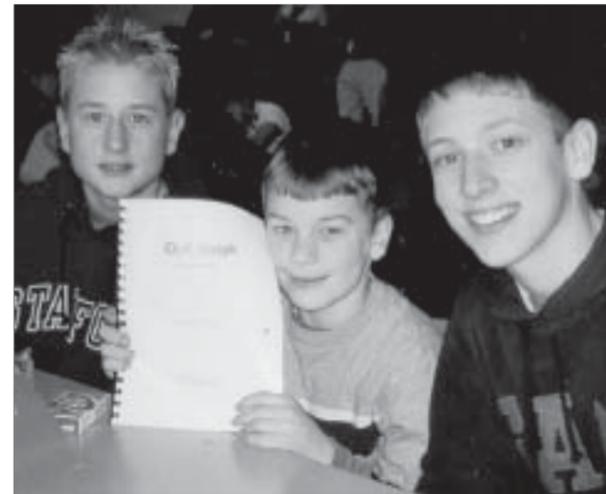
"This activity motivates high school students to do their very best work because their audience is someone besides the teacher or their parents," Peasley said. "They are not doing it for me, they are doing it for their special *buddy*. They care what their buddy thinks and they want to impress them with their work."

Fourth grade students are required to study Washington State History and the new Wa-Hi children's books will be linked to their curriculum.

"I wish I had a project like this for every unit I teach," Peasley said.

I love the joy on both sets of our students' faces when they read their books. To see our students work with and play with their fourth grade buddies shows how kind hearted and wonderful they are.

Mindy Meyer - Wa-Hi English Teacher



Green Park 4th grade student Phillip Somers shows off the Northwest History book Wa-Hi Freshmen Tim Davis (L) and David Gonzales (R) created for him.

Getting results! Program makes a difference!

- Many of my students have been reading their *buddy books* by choice during the day whenever they have a free moment.
- A couple of students asked me if they could take their books to recess.
- My students spent more time on their thank you letters than they usually do because they wanted to write a good letter for their buddies.
- My students used the thesaurus while writing to their buddies so they could "use better words."

Missy Johnson - Green Park 4th Grade Teacher

Community members earn *Volunteer of Year* honors

Art Regier Award recipients committed to helping Walla Walla children achieve

To help celebrate *Volunteer Appreciation Month* in April, Walla Walla Public Schools named **Carl Tyler, Terri Hanson, and Bill Harris** its Art Regier *Volunteer of the Year* recipients.

This award is presented in recognition of the volunteers in our schools and their important contributions to our students and educational program. The award is named in honor of Art Regier who as a volunteer exemplified the awardees' dedication. The Art Regier *Volunteer of the Year* award is a thank you for the hundreds of hours and tireless dedication these outstanding citizens have given to the district over the years on behalf of students, staff and the community.

"Everyone can be great because anyone can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't even have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve... You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love..."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Simply put, Walla Walla Public Schools programs and activities wouldn't be where they are today without the outstanding support we continually receive from our dedicated volunteers."

Rich Carter - Superintendent



Carl Tyler *Citizens for Schools Advertising Director*

Volunteer Highlights

- advertising and marketing director for *Citizens for Schools* (M&O Levies and Sharpstein project)
- designs brochures, ads and other materials to inform community about school elections
- sets advertising schedule for *Citizens for Schools* informational campaign
- writes and voices radio and television scripts to inform community about school election issues

What do you love most about volunteering?

"It's pay back for all the things the school district does for the community and my kids. Schools are one of the most important elements of a community, so we have to make them work."



Terri Hanson *Sharpstein Bond Committee Co-Chair*

Volunteer Highlights

- co-chair *Citizens for Schools* during successful Sharpstein Modernization project proposal
- coordinated successful Sharpstein Modernization project fund raising event
- co-chaired successful Sharpstein PTSA Brick Sale for modernized Sharpstein
- coordinated Sharpstein Dedication decoration and refreshments efforts
- serves as a PTSA officer and is a "daily face" at Sharpstein

What do you love most about volunteering?

"I love enriching my child's school. I enjoy helping other volunteers realize their importance in schools."



Bill Harris *Science Materials Center Inventory Coordinator*

Volunteer Highlights

- elementary school *Science Materials Center* volunteer specialist (approximately 20 hours per week)
- pre-packs consumable materials for the science kits
- takes inventory of materials in the *Science Materials Center*
- repairs broken science materials, cleans the items and ships the kits to teachers
- also served as volunteer Treasurer for school levies for many years
- at 91 years young, still rides his bike to Green Park every time he volunteers

What do you love most about volunteering?

"I like the dedication and friendliness of the administration and teachers with whom a volunteer works and the fact that it is gratifying personally to be of use in one's later years."

Abe Roberts

My business is helping kids

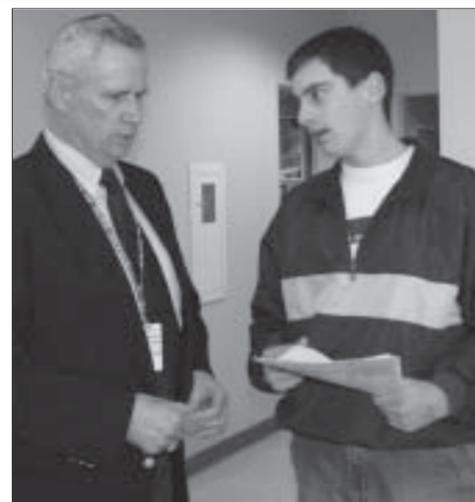
Wa-Hi Principal Abe Roberts to retire

After serving Walla Walla youth for 37 years, Wa-Hi Principal **Abe Roberts** announced earlier this year that this would be his last.

Roberts' successful career began in 1962 in Riverside, WA. He moved his family to Walla Walla in the mid-60s and has since called the Walla Walla Valley his home.

During his 40 year career in education he's held several teaching, coaching, counseling and administrative positions, including Assistant Principal and Principal at Pioneer Junior High. Abe plans to remain in Walla Walla and spend more time with his wife, Gail and their children.

"I will miss this wonderful place, but don't worry, I'll be around," Roberts said. "I want to thank our staff, parents and students for making my experiences here truly memorable."

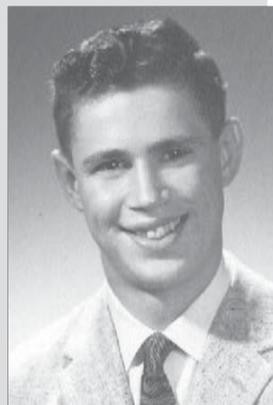


"I've been blessed. I can't think of any job that is more rewarding than educating kids and working to help them achieve their hopes and dreams."

Abe Roberts, Wa-Hi Principal

Abe's Retirement To-Do List

- Spend time with children and grandchildren
- Work around the house and yard
- Drive to Alaska
- Stay active in the Pioneer United Methodist Church
- Travel using his 5th wheel trailer
- Help his wife's parents with their home and cabin
- Attend Wa-Hi games and activities
- Enjoy life in Walla Walla
- Do carpentry work
- Avoid educational related work



Thanks Abe

You Made a Difference!

Albert L. Roberts 'A Look Back'

Birth Place Deer Park, WA
High School Deer Park High School • 1958
College Career Whitworth College - BA • 1962
(Major - Education / Minor - History)
 Whitworth College - MA • 1966
(Major - School Administration)

Family Life Married his wife *Gail* in 1962
 Children: *Richele & Lonnie*
 Grandchildren: *Spencer, Kyndal, Crystal*

Professional Experience

- 1962-1965 Lands first teaching job, Riverside, WA
- 1965 Moves to Walla Walla
- 1965-1968 Counselor/teacher/coach, Pioneer Jr. High
- 1968-1970 Assistant Principal, Garrison Jr. High
- 1970-1988 Assistant Principal, Wa-Hi
- 1988-1990 Principal, Pioneer Jr. High
- 1990-2002 Principal, Wa-Hi
- January 2002 Abe announces retirement

Retirement Celebration
 May 22, 2002
 Wa-Hi Commons 3:00 to 4:30 p.m.

Local teachers first in Walla Walla to earn prestigious national board certification

Cindy Nass and Gayle See have touched the lives of thousands of students over the years as teachers for Walla Walla Public Schools.

This year they used their many years of experience to help them become the first teachers in the district to earn certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Nass, a special education teacher at Prospect Point, has been an educator for 15 years, while See, a Physical Education teacher at Wa-Hi, has been a teacher for 17 years. Nass and See logged hundreds of hours to meet the rigorous standards.



Cindy Nass
Prospect Point



Gayle See
Wa-Hi

"I know I'm a better teacher today than I was a year ago because of what I learned pursuing my National Certificate."

Gayle See - Wa-Hi

Requirements included authoring a detailed portfolio, video taping classroom instruction and passing a challenging assessment to test subject knowledge. Both Nass and See say it's worth all the hard work and hope more Walla Walla teachers will give it a try.

I-728 - continued from front page

students and lowers class size for the regular classroom teacher. Edison Elementary school is using its TOSA for an all day kindergarten program.

"What makes I-728 so beneficial is having the flexibility to choose programs that work best for our school district," Assistant Superintendent **Judy Reault** said. "We're able to assess our needs and then put a plan in place to improve student achievement."

Walla Walla Public schools also used I-728 dollars to provide students extended learning opportunities, professional development for educators, and building improvements related to class size reduction. More than 70 percent of Washington state voters said yes to I-728 in 2000.



Prospect Point teacher Alice MacDonald is one of the district's new Teachers on Special Assignment. She works with students in small groups to provide additional math instruction.

I-728 directs a portion of state property tax, state lottery, and emergency reserve fund revenues into a new student achievement fund.

Retired educators bequeath \$2.7 million to Blue Mountain Area Foundation

Longtime Walla Walla Public Schools educators **Earl** and **Lucille Blake** spent most of their lives giving back to their community.

The Blakes always put others, especially children, ahead of themselves. They continued this legacy by donating \$2,684,880 to the Blue Mountain Area Foundation. This invaluable contribution will be used to support Walla Walla children and other community needs.

"It's a testament to their foresight, thriftiness, and love for the community," Blue Mountain Area Foundation Board Member **Michael W. Gillespie**, M.D., P.S. said. "We're proud to use this money in their names to offer scholarships and programs to help Walla Walla children."

Earl's career in Walla Walla spanned from 1935 to 1969. He served as a teacher and principal at Pioneer Junior High School. He later moved on to central administration and retired as the Business Manager in 1969. Lucille began teaching at Green Park Elementary School in 1939 before eventually becoming the Pioneer Junior High School librarian.

The Blakes enjoyed watching professional baseball and taking annual vacations to Hawaii and Mexico. They both attended Eastern Washington University and were active in the community.

Plans - continued from front page

and aligned with our Strategic Plan. They've been a great tool in charting our course."

The State Board of Education in April formally called on districts to develop and implement School Improvement Plans (SIP) for basic education approval for the 2003-04 school year. Basic education approval is the driver for a district to receive its state education dollars.

"Our district is being looked upon as a model for other districts who are just now developing School Improvement Plans," Reault said. "It's nice to be in a leadership role and not having to play catch up."

Mandated School Improvement Plans must include:

- Characteristics of high performing schools
- Educational equity factors as related to having a positive impact on student learning
- Implementation of instructional technology
- Parent and community involvement