

District Priorities:

Scholarship

Citizenship

Leadership

Sportsmanship

*Preparing Your Student For The Future*

# Mt. Adams School News

November 2009

Volume 4, Issue 3

Editor: Linda King



## Important Dates

**Elementary Book Fair** November 2-5

**WS Booster Club**, November 3

6:00 pm, White Swan

**Parent Teacher and Student-Led**

**Conferences**, both campuses, November 4-5

No School—**Veteran's Day**, November 11

**Board of Director Meeting**,

November 16, 6:00 pm, Harrah

**IPEC Meeting**, November 17

6:00 pm, White Swan

**Thanksgiving Break**, November 26-27

**Early Release Days**

November 4,5,6 and 25—(*Lunch served on all early release days*)

White Swan 11:30 am

Harrah 12:00 pm

## SUMMIT Training Sessions For Staff Enhance Teaching Strategies

This past October 8 and 9, while your children enjoyed two days away from school, the teaching and educational assistant staff gathered to take a very serious look at the results of last spring's classroom walk-through data. This data focused on how teachers are interacting with their students and what can be done to improve that interaction and the students' ability to learn.

The data clearly showed that teachers do most of the talking while students are listening, which places the student in a passive learning situation. To most of us, that is what we expect to see in a classroom. However, teachers are learning that they need to draw their students into more active learning situations in order to bring about the kind of learning that results in education that "sticks," becomes useful, builds self-confidence in the student and results in higher test scores.

In short, teachers will be focusing on getting their students to talk. Again, while most of us think of classrooms as quiet places, the plan is to bring them to life with more student-to-teacher and student-to-student discussions of the lessons. Teachers will be asking students to talk about the work they are doing (self-evaluation of work) with the teaching staff and with their classmates (peer evaluation of work). The result will be that students will learn to communicate to others what they are learning and justify to the listener the thinking and problem solving approaches they are applying to their class work.

The two day training sessions, where staff collaborated in both large and small groups, allowed teachers to develop themes and ideas for bringing more "student-talk" into their daily lesson plans. The grade-level groups on the second day of training also worked to insure that every classroom will be on the same page when it comes to delivering the newly focused lessons.

When your students come home at the end of the day, the hope is that you will ask "what did you learn today?" and, rather than getting a shrug or an off-hand "nothing" comment, they will be able to give you a conversational picture of their day's work. At first look this may appear to be a small thing, but in today's world, cluttered with TV, iPod, cell-phone and video game noise, students rarely have an opportunity to share the excitement of learning and accomplishment.



## Yakima County Health District Teaches *Germ Busting* At Harrah

Every student who attended school on two days in October was given soap-and-water hand washing instruction by the Yakima County Health District. A portable facility was brought to the campus and a health district nurse traveled from classroom to classroom delivering the germ busting message. Each student was given a bag of enjoyable hand washing instructional activities, reminders and tips, plus bars of soap. Then the students moved to the parking lot where they washed their hands and took the test—a trip through a black-light room in the trailer where they could see just how well they had learned to wash their hands. Most found they really need to wash longer and get the soap between their fingers.



## D Is For Dad And Donuts

October 7 was D Day in the Harrah kindergarten classrooms. Students celebrated their growing knowledge of the alphabet by hosting a “Donuts for Dad” event. They honored dads, granddads, uncles and other male role models with a donut and by reading stories with their “dads,” and sharing the letter D place mats they had created using pictures of items that begin with the letter D. The turn-out was great and students beamed with pride as they showed off their classrooms and accomplishments.

## Weather Line/School Closure Info

Once again we are moving into the time of the year when weather might affect the school day. Recognizing the impact schedule changes can have on families, the district has made every possible effort to keep parents and students aware of any changes in the regular schedule.

If a decision is made to delay the start or close the school for the day, it will be done before 6:00 am, and will be posted on:

### District Weather Line: 848-5780

The district will also notify local radio and TV stations such as **KATS**, 94.5 FM, **KDNA**, 91.9 FM, **KIT**, 1280 AM, **KUTI**, 1460 AM, **KIMA-TV**, channel 29, **KNDU/KNDU-TV**, channel 23 and **KAPP-TV**, channel 35.

On a delay-start day, classes will begin as stated in the announcement. Please be aware that breakfast will NOT be served on delay-start days at either campus.

If bad weather or other emergencies force an early dismissal of the students, all effort will be made to contact you. Local radio and TV stations will be contacted and asked to announce the information. The district will use its automated call line to contact your home number. Please be sure your student’s emergency contact records have the correct working phone number and address.

## Heads Up Drivers, School Zone Coming

*White Swan will soon have a 20 mph school zone, marked by flashing yellow lights in front of the school buildings on Signal Peak Road—from the bus garage to Walnut Street.*



## Guest Brings West African Rhythms To White Swan Campus

Last year district Band Director Jeff Chang brought professional jazz musicians to the campus in an effort to expose middle and high school students to unfamiliar music. This year his guest was Michael Wimberly, a drummer, percussionist and composer. With two assistants, he introduced the students to the sounds of the djembe (pronounced jim-BAY), a West African drum. Wimberly, who has a master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music and is a faculty member of the Drummer's Collective in New York City, spent the morning teaching band members djembe playing techniques and various rhythmic patterns. In the afternoon, Wimberly and his student drummers entertained the student body with a loud and lively concert that Wimberly spiced with a little geography, comments on West African culture and a description of the make-up of the djembe drum. You can read more about Michael Wimberly, view an instructional djembe video and enjoy his music at [www.tocapercussion.com/artists/wimberly.html](http://www.tocapercussion.com/artists/wimberly.html)



## Students Move Into Weight Room

After delays caused by everything from weather to the county permit process, students from the weight lifting class finally got the word to put their muscle to work moving equipment from the old weight room to the new, much larger facility. The red padded floor, white walls with narrow black and wide red striping, brought positive comments as the students made quick work of the moving-in and set-up process.



## First Of Two Blood Draws Held

White Swan High School's Leadership class recently held the first of two planned Red Cross Blood Drawings. Thirty students and staff participated in the event, which is designed to give students an opportunity to work with a major community organization and teach them the importance of contributing to the local blood bank. The public is invited to contribute blood at the next scheduled drawing, February 10, 2010.



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**District Web Site**

www.mtadams.wednet.edu

**Superintendent's Office**

509-874-2611

**White Swan High School**

509-874-8601

**Mt. Adams Middle School**

509-874-8626

**Harrah Elementary School**

509-848-2935, 848-2591

# Postal Patron

*Together with you, building a strong foundation for student learning.*

Harrah Holiday Bazaar

December 3, 5-8:00 pm

Table space available: Contact JoAnn Wood or Sandi Whitefoot, event organizers, at 848-2935 for information and space reservations.

FFA will be selling chili and hotdogs.

Holiday crafts, foods and other gift items.

## Has Your Elementary Student Lost A Jacket, Coat, Sweatshirt, or Hoodie?

**The elementary Lost and Found is over-loaded! We're out of storage space and will have to send un-claimed items to a charitable organization. Please re-claim this clothing!**

### Panther T-Shirts On Sale

#### Great Gift Item for Proud Panthers

This is a high quality T-shirt, grey in color with a black and red Panther Cub design and *Harrah Elementary Panthers* wording, youth sizes small to large, priced right at just \$10 each. They can be purchased at the elementary office.

**Thank you for supporting alcohol free kids.**



Mark your Calendar:

November 3, **WS Park Planning Committee**  
6:00 pm, Nancy Fiander's Office

November 9, **Dream Maker's Marketing Committee**  
11:00 am, Cougar Den

November 9, **Law Enforcement Work Group**  
4:00 pm, Nancy Fiander's Office

November 9, **WS Arts & Rec Committee**  
5:30 pm, Nancy Fiander's Office

November 18, **WS Community Fund (United Way)**  
4:00 pm Nancy Fiander's Office

November 18, **Dream Makers Youth Group**  
5:30 pm, WS Cafeteria