

## IN THIS ISSUE

Bond election .....	3
GRAD program .....	5
Art show winners .....	8
PHS portfolio showcase .....	10
Firgrove Co-op enrollment .....	12
Diversity poster winner .....	12

# CONNECTIONS

Volume 6:6

Published for Puyallup School District's Community Partners for a Quality Future

May 2001

## Special Education students mentor HOSTS readers

When first-grader Jesse Jacox saw his good buddy Derek Starns, a lanky sixth-grader with a big smile walk through the classroom door, he immediately pleaded with his teacher to pair them up as reading buddies. Derek looked thrilled to be in such popular demand, and the teacher complied.

As the two Firgrove Elementary students scooted close to each other at a reading table, Jesse tried his best to pronounce words like "up," "come," and "here" in a story about going to the zoo. Each time he struggled, Derek quickly came to his aid, helping him with the mmm sound and offering clues such as, "If you're not down, you're . . .?"

Derek is one of 11 fifth- and sixth-grade special education students in the school's Adjustment class who are paired up once a week with a struggling younger reader. The older students spend a half hour reading, writing, doing flashcards, and playing games like word bingo with first and second graders enrolled in the school's Helping One Student to Succeed (HOSTS) reading program. An adult is also seated at each of the reading tables to assist when necessary.

The mentoring program, which is in its second year at Firgrove, is a win-win situation for the younger and older students. "The older students get to practice their reading



**First-grader Shulaelu Mathews receives help with her reading from sixth-grader Melissa Brown, who is enrolled in the Firgrove Elementary Adjustment Class.**

skills, boost their own self esteem as tutors, and really makes them feel like they are helping," says Teresa Lockey, special education teacher.

Students also often form close bonds, which extend beyond the half-hour in the HOSTS classroom. Students can be

seen giving high fives to their partners at recess, offering words of encouragement in the hall, or giving waves or smiles of recognition during a schoolwide assembly, says HOSTS coordinator Wendy Ramsaur. "The little ones just love them," says Ramsaur. "It develops a real community feeling at Firgrove."

Adjustment students also learn how to fill out job applications and sit through interviews when they apply to be HOSTS tutors. Interview skills such as speaking clearly, being concise, and looking the interviewer in the eye are all stressed. Once accepted, student mentors have a one-hour training where they learn how to work with a HOSTS student work folder, as well as how to praise and use encouraging words. "We give them a list of phrases that are useful when working with students, teach them to use a soft voice, and tell them to focus on what the student is doing right," says Ramsaur. Each student receives a handout with positive phrases such as, "Good answer. I'm impressed!" "That's really good thinking. Tell me why you chose that answer," and "Look what you accomplished today!"

"I like helping kids and it's really fun," says Derek. "I feel good when they read a lot."

—contributed by Susan Gifford

### NEWS SHORTS

#### Free developmental screenings available

Once a month, the Puyallup School District offers free developmental screenings for children ages 3 to 5. These screenings are available to address suspected developmental delays in preschool age children in the following areas: communication, learning, physical development, social/emotional, and self-help skills. Vision and hearing

screenings are also administered.

Screenings take place at the Puyallup Special Services building at 214 West Main in Puyallup. The service is available to all families who live within the Puyallup School District boundaries. For more information call 841-8700.

#### Tour to visit sixth-grade camp

The May 9 Schoolhouse Tour will feature a visit to sixth-grade camp. The tour begins with a short program at 9:30 am at the district's Education Service Center, 302 Second Street SE in Puyallup.

Following the program, buses depart for the tour and will return at 1:30 pm. Lunch is served; cost is \$3. For reservations or more information, call 841-8703.

**PUYALLUP SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Directors**

**Gary Lent**  
President  
(253) 848-1116

**Karen Pickett**  
Vice President  
(253) 841-1080

**Kathy Afflerbaugh**  
Legislative Representative  
(253) 840-1185

**Terry Asbjornsen**  
(253) 845-3760

**Mindy Thompson**  
(253) 840-4438

**Susan Gourley, Superintendent**  
(253) 841-8769

**District Mission**

In partnership with our families and community, we provide all students the best educational opportunities necessary to reach their full potential and become responsible, productive citizens of good character.

**Connections Editorial Policy**

*Connections* is published periodically by the Puyallup School District as part of a communications link between the district and the community. Its intent and purpose is to provide the Board and district staff a venue to inform community members about programs, goals, and activities of public education in the Puyallup School District. Please direct questions or comments to Karen Hansen, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, PO Box 370, Puyallup WA 98371 or telephone (253) 841-8703 or e-mail [khansen@puyallup.k12.wa.us](mailto:khansen@puyallup.k12.wa.us). Responses, as appropriate, will be provided directly to those who contact this office.

**Coordinator:** Karen Hansen

**Editor:** Teresa Josten

**Technical Assistance:** Carrington, Ink!

**Contributing Writers:** Susan Gifford, Penny Lent, and Chris Stewart

Puyallup School District No. 3 complies with all federal rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, marital status, age, national origin, religion, or disability. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular activities. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures may be directed to the district's Title IX/RCW 28A.640 Officer (Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources) and Section 504 Coordinator (Director of Employee Relations) at 302 Second Street SE, Puyallup, WA 98372. Phone: 841-8764.

## Superintendent's message

# Our commitment to our community

As parents and citizens of our community, you have entrusted us, the Puyallup School District, with a critically important task—the education of your children. In partnership with you, we are committed to being good stewards of your trust by providing the very best education for all children in our community. I want you to know that we take your trust and our responsibility to that trust very seriously, and I'd like to share a few of the ways in which we demonstrate that each day.

■ **Academics.** Reading is one of the most important academic skills and, as a district, one of our goals is focused on reading achievement. One way we measure our progress in meeting this goal is to review standardized test scores. For example, last spring our third graders scored at the 59th percentile on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills—ahead of the state's 56th percentile. On the reading portion of the WASL (Washington Assessment of Student Learning), also administered last spring, more than 68 percent of our fourth-graders met the state's new reading standards—again ahead of the state average. Consistently, our students score above state averages in national and statewide assessments.

■ **Safety.** Students can't learn and teachers can't teach if they don't feel safe. The recent earthquake tested our responsi-



**Susan Gourley**  
Superintendent

bility in this important area. With the safety of their students foremost in their mind, our staff immediately moved them to safety under desks and in doorways as the earth shook. In a recent board update, Shaun Taylor, Business Manager, and Rudy Fyles, Director of Facilities, shared damage estimates, the district's response, lessons learned, and ways to offset the costs of damage. Information gathered from this event was collected and will be used to improve the district's response to disasters. I am very proud of the exceptional response by staff and students—their efforts in preparing for a major disaster was time well spent.

■ **Fiscal.** Carefully prioritizing the financial needs of our district, designing a financial package to support them, and then being accountable for their expenditures demonstrates fiscal responsibility and wise

use of our resources. Since September, we have been carefully monitoring our financial picture and just like everyone else, we are facing numerous cost increases. For example, the energy crisis in a district our size translates into an additional \$1.25 million expenditure. To keep our expenditures in line with our revenues, we have made a number of budget reductions throughout the year and will continue to do that as required.

■ **Learning Environment.** To meet the district's growing needs and based on recommendations from more than 60 citizens and staff members who served on two facility and technology committees, we will be asking you to consider funding a bond proposal on May 15. This bond proposal—the first of four bond requests to be submitted over the course of the next 12 years—will fund the construction and modernization of schools throughout the district. If passed, this bond proposal will provide a stable, level tax rate over the long term (see page 3 for more details).

These are challenging times. We are faced with multiple responsibilities and tasks for which there are no easy solutions. Together, however, we can meet these challenges. Together, we can provide the very best education for all the children in our community. This is our commitment to you—a commitment we do not take lightly.

### Upcoming School Board Meetings

**May 14, 4:30 pm**  
(Study Session)  
Senior Recognition at 7 pm  
Rogers High School

**May 29, 4:30 pm**  
Senior Recognition at 7 pm  
Puyallup High School

**June 11, 4:30 pm**  
(Study Session)  
Rogers High School



## District, City proclaim partnership

Puyallup Mayor Don Malloy presents Superintendent Susan Gourley with a proclamation declaring the week of March 5, 2001 as Puyallup School District Week in the City of Puyallup.

## A message from the board

# Volunteers make a difference in children's lives

In the country of Africa there is a universal greeting spoken throughout the community villages. That greeting is "and how are the children?" When the response from the villagers is "the children are well," then the community is whole. What we know from research is that if a child has more than three adults who care about them in their lives, their chances are much greater to be successful community members. It is the volunteers that make this happen in the Puyallup School District.



**Kathy Afflerbaugh**  
Puyallup School Board Member

Volunteers, whether they be parents, grandparents, senior citizens, business owners, or community leaders, provide a foundation as partners in the educational process that is vital to the success of our students. We rely on this partnership to show our young people that adults do care about them and want them to be successful. Volunteers in our schools provide support for the student and school community, help promote positive values in youth, provide opportunities for social skill development, and communication

with other adults. Our volunteers also provide a partnership that builds bridges between the community and the school and bring resources that students might not have access to.

Perhaps the most important gift our volunteers bring to the school is the gift of time. I remember back on my PTA days of volunteering countless hours in my sons' elementary school. I fondly remember not only my own boys' happy faces when seeing me at school but also

many of the other children's, as they saw an adult giving time to be with kids, helping in school. There were many of us at the school during the day, to work on projects or get ready for the school play or carnival that students observed. If you multiply this one example times the many elementary schools that we have, you can see that there is a multitude of adults within the school walls. Outside of PTA volunteering, there are parents who come to school to help in a variety of ways: eating lunch in the cafeteria with a group of young people, reading a tongue-twisting story by Dr. Seuss to a class of seventh graders, organizing a guest speaker for an assembly with the leadership class, or helping to chaperone an after school junior high dance. These are just a few of the ways we see our volunteers give of their time to show they care for our young people.

I think my favorite idea of volunteering is the multi-generational approach. Have you observed the grandparent lunches that

have taken place throughout our school district? If you have, you probably witnessed enthusiasm and excitement from both students and adults. What you probably didn't see was the pride the students felt for having older adults come to school and care about them and how they spent their day . . . and the stories they told that night at home! This is even true for those who did not have a grandparent at school. Our senior citizens have a lot to give and share!

As we celebrate the gifts that our volunteers bring to our students and schools, I would like to acknowledge what a huge role they play. Volunteers pull together the school, the community, teachers, and parents to build a better neighborhood, a better home, and a better town for our children. Thank you for caring and connecting with the students in Puyallup schools so that we can truly answer the question with, "The children are well!"

# Bond election proposes school improvements

Voters are being asked this month to consider a district bond proposal that would fund projects including building new schools, adding classrooms and gymnasiums to existing schools, improving the technology infrastructure to add more student computers, and meeting other school utility needs.

The May 15 bond election is the first of four to be submitted to voters over the next 12 years. Future elections will be held in 2005, 2009, and 2013 to address the shortage of permanent classrooms, modernize schools, and build new schools for future enrollment growth.

If the bond is passed in this election, it would pay for the following projects:

- Build a new elementary school and junior high school on South Hill - More information is available on the district's web site at <http://www.puyallup.k12.wa.us/elem/22> and <http://www.puyallup.k12.wa.us/junior/jrhigh7>
- Add 36 permanent classrooms among Fruitland, Meeker, Spinning, and Wildwood elementaries, as well as Kalles and

Aylen junior highs

- Build the technology infrastructure at all project sites to add more student computers
- Modernize Meeker Elementary School and Karshner Museum
- Add second gymnasiums at Puyallup and Rogers high schools and Kalles and Aylen junior highs
- Make improvements to schools that need new heating systems, electrical outlets, circuits, and electrical power upgrades for technology

The needs addressed in this year's bond issue, as well as those in upcoming years, are based on a 12-year facilities plan developed by two committees made up of nearly 60 citizens. The Citizens Facility Advisory Committee and the Technology Advisory Committee studied current and future facility needs, integrating technology and regular maintenance requirements.

The committees focused their work on the district's need to plan for new school construction as a response to

enrollment growth. More than 217 portable classrooms are in use throughout the district today. The committees also considered the need to modernize some schools to keep the curriculums equitable districtwide, improve programs to respond to changing curriculum and teaching methods, and maintain current facilities. Funding of the 12-year facilities plan includes all current local school tax obligations, assumes the passage of future maintenance and operations levies, and is based on a funding timeline extending beyond the current decade. This package offers voters a projected flat tax rate of \$6.73 per \$1,000 assessed valuation during the next 12 years.

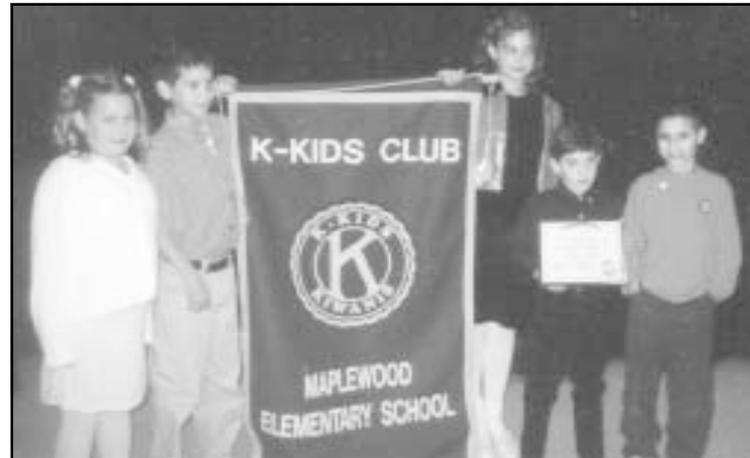
For a complete listing of the projects contained within the 2005 and 2009 bond proposals, see page 9. Proposed projects for the 2013 bond election are still to be determined. For more information, contact Tony Apostle, Director of Administrative Services, at 840-8811 or email [tapostle@puyallup.k12.wa.us](mailto:tapostle@puyallup.k12.wa.us).

# Maplewood students charter K-Kids club

In early March, 66 students at Maplewood Elementary were recognized as being charter K-Kids members. K-Kids is a Kiwanis sponsored service club for elementary school students. The Maplewood K-Kids Club is sponsored by the Puyallup Sunrisers Kiwanis Club. This is the first club of its kind in Puyallup and one of only 243 in the nation!

On March 6, the club was presented with a charter from Kiwanis International, making it an official club. Members received certificates and official K-Kids pins. Dan Drake, retired Puyallup teacher and Lt. Governor for Kiwanis, installed the officers of the K-Kids Club. Kiwanis president Stefani Fersch, advisor Laurie Patoff and principal Beth Millie spoke about the importance of K-Kids. The event was attended by parents, many Kiwanians and Vince Pecchia, Director of Elementary Education.

The club has already participated in many service projects this year. Some members helped to collect food at a food drive in November. Students made birthday cards and Christmas stockings for the residents of



**K-Kids officers (left to right) Jordy Harmes, Blake Cowan, Ellie McPherson, Nicholas Pasqual, and Shawn Soto stand around their new K-Kids banner. Not pictured is officer Addison Banhead.**

Linden Grove, a local nursing home. During the holidays, toys were donated to the Family Renewal Shelter, a local shelter for women and children fleeing domestic abuse. Some members have hung public

service announcements at school.

Their most recent project has been the Jonathan Carrido Bake Sale which was organized to help Jonathan Carrido, a Hunt

Elementary second-grader who has brain cancer. The family is trying to save \$40,000 to take him to Texas for a surgery. The K-Kids club wanted to help a very sick child. When they learned about Jonathan's situation, the students decided to have a bake sale at the school carnival. Many K-Kids members brought baked goods and worked at the booth. Through their efforts, they were able to raise more than \$237. They spent \$53 on things "for him to do on the plane and in the hospital." The remaining \$184 will be deposited in "The Jonathan Carrido Fund" at Columbia Bank. Community members who wish to help can also donate to this fund by making deposits at any Columbia Bank branch.

Their next service project will be a litter patrol around the Maplewood neighborhood. K-Kids members would like to make the community a cleaner and better place.

Another K-Kids Club is starting at Firgrove Elementary. For more information, contact Stefani Fersch at 841-8733 or Laurie Patoff at 841-8737.

—contributed by Laurie Patoff,  
Maplewood teacher

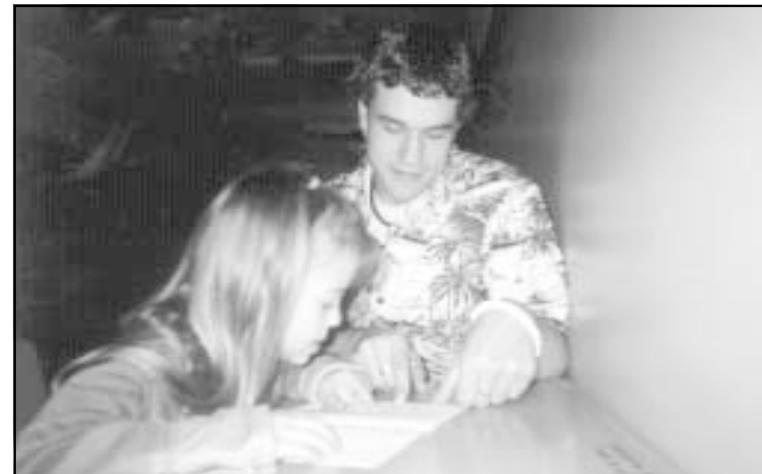
## Waller Road volunteer

Sometimes, approaching academics from a different viewpoint can really enhance the learning that takes place. Kyle Franklin, a senior at Puyallup High School, has been volunteering in Karen Kendall's Waller Road Elementary afternoon Kindergarten class, and the time he spends with the children certainly encourages their acquisition of reading skills. Kyle is positive, affirming, and enthusiastic, and the kids love him! He reads with each student at least twice a week, and is meticulous in reporting back to Mrs. Kendall regarding their progress and areas of difficulty. He spends extra time with those who are struggling and enables them to feel successful too. He is attentive to detail, warm and caring, and provides an excellent role model for the smaller learners.

They are especially thrilled when he gets a day "off" to share center time with them, as he shows them new ways to build with familiar materials and gives them incentive to keep trying when something is difficult. He is appreciative of their young efforts and encouraging to each one. Kyle is especially aware of quieter children, and his presence enables more creativity and risk-taking from them.

When Kyle needs to cut back on his volunteer time in order to take care of other senior activities, the Kindergarten students certainly miss his daily help in their class. He exhibits the very best of what a community partnership can provide to children.

—contributed by Karen Kendall,  
Waller Road teacher



**Puyallup High School senior Kyle Franklin works with Waller Road student Hailey Ferguson.**

# Students learn skills, teamwork in repairing skis, bikes

Mike Rice has a new appreciation for snow skiing and the hard work that goes into preparing for a speedy run downhill. The 17-year-old Puyallup High junior took his first swooshes down a slippery slope at Snoqualmie Pass recently as a reward for having helped repair skis and snowboards in the school's new repair and tune-up shop.

Rice is one of eight students in the school's Graduation Requires Academics and Dedication (GRAD) program, formerly known as KITE. Students have been working since October to repair and maintain skis, snowboards, and most recently bicycles for school and district staff. In return, they learn skills in math, technology, English, and how to work together as a team. GRAD offers a unique blend of academic, vocational, and outdoor education.

GRAD helps students who qualify for special services to use alternative learning strategies to complete their high school graduation requirements. The program is designed around a hands-on curriculum, teaching students essential academics with a focus on how the information is relevant to their lives. "We're training these students in all kinds of skills, and it gives them a reason and an incentive to come to school," says Philip Thiessen, special education teacher. "We're seeing good, positive results with these students as they become empowered to realize their potential."

Students spend part of their time working on computers and out of books, then hover around workbenches set up in the portable classroom learning basics of repairing and tuning skis and bikes. They must attend school at least 80 percent of the time and be passing all classes, however, to qualify to help with maintenance projects and participate in some of the reward incentives, including occasional ski trips.

Skills learned include edge sharpening, base repair, and



**Puyallup student Mike Rice waxes skis as a part of the district's GRAD program.**

waxing of skis and snowboards, and aligning wheels, lubing drive trains, fixing flat tires, and tuning gears on bicycles. With this knowledge, Thiessen says students are marketable

for jobs at sporting goods and other similar work places. Each student also keeps a portfolio recording classroom progress and skills mastered.

Basic ski, snowboard, and bicycle tune-ups start at \$15, and additional charges are made depending on materials used. Money generated from maintenance work helps pay for materials and supplies used in the repairs, as well as occasional rewards such as lift tickets for a day of skiing or snowboarding. Steve DuBay, school behavior specialist who dreamed up the idea of the repair and tune-up shop, and Thiessen, both ex-collegiate ski racers, accompany students to the slopes along with some of the students' parents or guardians and district staff.

A business partnership with Swix Sport U.S.A. has also been integral to the program's success, says Thiessen. The company, based in Massachusetts with a local office in Woodinville, donated various waxes and equipment for students to use to file skis and boards. "This sounded like a well thought out program for the students," says Dane Stephenson, company sales rep. "We try to help where we can."

Several Puyallup High teachers have also helped this year by donating ski clothes and equipment for students, several of whom have never skied. Using the Internet as a tool for communicating with the ski community, the group has also received clothing and equipment donations from as far away as Long Beach, CA. "This has been a team effort," says Thiessen.

As the GRAD program grows, there will be a need for additional support, which can be gained through partnerships between the school district and the community, says DuBay.

—contributed by Susan Gifford

## Rogers High School students show cooperative spirit

In schools today, students have many choices in the classes they take. From music to construction classes, business to drama classes, every student has an opportunity to choose areas of interest to them.

While each department at Rogers High School is unique, the students are learning to work together in unity to create a departmental cohesiveness. For example, students in the Business and Marketing II and Construction classes are working together to market and sell tool

sheds. According to Marketing teacher Therese Tipton and Construction teacher Connie Saari, this partnership provides many opportunities for the students. "This project allows students to utilize the tools they are learning about promotion and marketing in a real-life scenario," said Tipton. The construction class, supervised by Saari, started production of the tool sheds in late January. The project was developed by Saari to help her students understand the work which goes into the production of a small-scale house. Although the tool sheds are not houses,

the construction concepts are similar. The students put in windows and roofing which "allows the students a more realistic opportunity to put their knowledge of construction to use," said Saari.

Students in the Business and Marketing II class are also putting their knowledge to the test as they work to advertise and promote the sale of the sheds. The class promotes the tool sheds by creating flyers, researching the competition, and producing an advertisement which will be aired on RAM TV, the Rogers television

station.

"Not only are the students at Rogers trying to promote and sell the tool sheds, but I hope this will be an ongoing, student-based enterprise where students in all areas will experience what it takes to create and run a small business," said Saari. The 10' x 12' sheds are being sold at Rogers, and special orders may be placed by contacting Tipton or Saari at Rogers High School (841-8717). The production rate of one shed is about four weeks.

# Business Week partners students, local employers

A group of Emerald Ridge High School students have developed technology that allows parents to translate baby talk into English, pet owners to understand what is being communicated when birds chirp or dogs bark, and people in foreign countries to easily relate with one another, even if they don't speak the same language.

With a Universal Translator, one flick of the switch next to a crying baby will tell a parent what the child really needs. Or what a dog wants when he barks uncontrollably. Or how to understand directions to the Eiffel Tower.

The group of 20 student entrepreneurs convinced a panel of business people from Puyallup recently that their lives would be transformed if they invested in the translators, which retail for \$250 each. The student-run company, Sycho-Delic Sounds, wowed business investors with a high-powered sales pitch presentation, color brochures, press packets, and a stunning trade show booth that ultimately won them "venture capital" and top honors during the school's recent Washington Business Week In-School Pathways to Success program.

While the translator is still just in the teens' dream stage, and the investments they earned were merely slips of paper play money, it didn't stop these students from taking their role as marketers, financiers, public relations representatives, and chief of operations seriously.

During a mock trade show in the school commons, the 1,100 students who split up into 49 company teams appeared in high-powered business suits and even some creative costumes to aggressively pursue investors. They handed out business cards and fliers, advertised products on sandwich boards they wore around their necks, waved signs, shouted slogans, and worked the crowd with handshakes to win venture capital.

About 50 local business people volunteered to take time off work during the week to help advise student companies,



**Ken Nickel presents his product to Christine Roth, Washington Mutual Bank.**

which were made up of 20-member school advisory groups created at the start of the school year. Employers also delivered speeches throughout the week, and more than 100 agreed to judge projects and attend the trade show on the final day.

"This is an excellent opportunity for us in the business community to spend an entire week in the classroom," says Wayne Haesel, manager of quality assurance organization with The Boeing Co. "I am impressed with the kids themselves and their desire to learn."

Ruby Kelley, financial center manager with Washington Mutual Bank, was one of a number of business people who invested her play money in "Imagine," a company that manufactures Holographic Digital Video. Kelley handed over \$100 after hearing a sales pitch from Sophomore

Solomon Ellis, designer of this cutting edge technology. "He had a well-rounded presentation and knows a lot about his company," says Kelley. "Also, their stocks are doing well."

While Washington Business Week has been teaching high school students economic education for the past 25 years in the form of a summer program, this is the second year it has moved into the schools and involved the entire student body. Goals of the program include teaching students about business and economic concepts such as free enterprise, marketing and advertising, professionalism, customer service, finances including cash flow and income statements, and team building, says James Lupori, Washington Business Week student coordinator.

Lupori says the partnership with the business community brings relevance and reality to high school learning as students develop relationships with people operating businesses in their community, understand why businesses need employees with different skills, and gain an appreciation for the challenges businesses face on a daily basis.

Principal Linda Quinn noted students' enthusiasm and dedication was witnessed by the fact many skipped breaks and ate lunch in their classrooms during Business Week so they could work on their projects. Attendance also was better than usual, and not one of the 49 companies failed to complete an assignment or project during the five days.

In a survey asking students to share the most important things they learned during the week, comments included: "knowing for sure that I want to be in sales and marketing when I get older;" "a better understanding of business in general. I also discovered I am an energetic public speaker;" "I learned how to give a professional handshake;" and "I learned that the most important things in business are not only money and finances. Teamwork, cooperation, hard work, and time are also big factors in a company's success or failure."

## Community Inclusion program

The Community Inclusion program has been meeting in southeast Pierce County for eight years. The purpose of the program is to empower individuals with a disability and their families to access community services, resources, and activities. The program leadership team, composed of parents, self-advocates, and community members, coordinate and plan the Inclusion meetings.

This current school year, the team has partnered with

Puyallup School District to offer two meetings in the Puyallup area. On February 8, a meeting was held at Kalles Junior High where eighty individuals with a disability, parents, school staff, neighbors and friends came together for an evening of arts and crafts activities.

Pierce County Human Services and Puyallup and White River School Districts fund the program. For more information, please call Betty Johnston at 253-565-2266.



**Danny Allred and Brandon Brennstahl participate in a Bingo/ Pizza night at a companion-ship community night.**

# Parent volunteers are partners at Aylen

She's there behind the scenes to help fill hundreds of helium balloons for holidays and school dances. She's also a regular with a plate of homemade cookies on spirit days and other PTA functions. And she can always be counted on for a hug in the halls.

Patty Hanson, best known on campus as "Zach's mom," is a well-known figure at Aylen Junior High, where she volunteers regularly. While she insists she is just another volunteer and is even embarrassed to be recognized, the people she works for say she is a good example of the commitment all parent and community volunteers give to the school. "There are more parents involved this year than ever before, and the staff recognizes how important that can be," says Principal Michael Prato. "Our kids at this age are making choices and testing parent values, and it's important for them to see adults in their lives, whether they are welcoming them in the morning before school or selling balloons at lunch."

Most recently Hanson helped for a full day with the ninth-grader scoliosis screening. Hansen, whose son, Zachery, is in ninth grade, described her job as "the runner." She went from classroom to classroom to get small groups of students, bring them to the screening area, monitor their noise level in the halls, then escorted them back to class after the exams. "I couldn't have done it without her help," says school nurse Nancy Jackson. "She helped tremendously."



**Aylen volunteer Patty Hanson fills a helium balloon.**

There are 20 volunteers like Hanson registered in the Partners in Education program at Aylen this year, and another 30 who help when called upon, says Beth Bestrom, volunteer coordinator. Most of the other junior high and high schools in the district have similar organized volunteer

programs, as well as active booster clubs that help with fundraisers.

When school started in fall, Aylen volunteers showed up early every morning for the first week to greet students as they arrived. They also strolled the halls to help new seventh-graders find classes and unlock lockers, and took cups of water and throat lozenges to classroom teachers in the afternoon.

Hanson, who attended Aylen herself as a young teenager, also spent a full day at school recently helping serve soup and sandwiches for teacher and staff on appreciation day.

To celebrate the only ninth-grade evening football game at Sparks Stadium, Hanson and other parent helpers hosted a tailgate party during lunch. Volunteers drove three pickup trucks into the courtyard and served cookies for dessert. District grills were also brought in and staff members and volunteers flipped burgers and turned hot dogs while music blasted and students played volleyball.

All too often at the junior high level, Bestrom says parents take a step back and hesitate to volunteer. "This is not the time to lose speed," she says. "Our children need us just as much now as they did in elementary school. And there is always much to be done."

—contributed by Susan Gifford

## Puyallup Valley Bank partners with schools to train youth

Brandee Davis, who has excelled in business classes at Rogers High, thinks she might be interested in a career in banking. A new partnership between Puyallup Valley Bank and the school district this year is giving her the opportunity to try her hand at the job professionally.

Every weekday after school, Davis heads downtown for a four- to five-hour shift at the bank's main office on East Main Avenue. The 17-year-old senior works as a teller inside and at the drive-up window, files financial documents, and does other clerical duties as needed.

"I enjoy interacting with the customers and the people who work there," says Davis, adding she has learned to greet by name several customers who come to the bank on a weekly basis. "The bank is all about customer service. It's a lot of fun."

Davis has been working at Puyallup Valley Bank since October and plans to continue through summer and into next year while she begins her post-secondary education at Pierce College in Puyallup.

David Brown, president and CEO, says the bank and its board of directors has a high interest in the community's youth. In addition to the partnership with Puyallup, the bank offers scholarships to four area high schools each spring and is willing to send representatives to speak to school business classes.

"It's nice to teach young people what is required in business, including arriving on

time and dressing appropriately," says Brown. "Brandee is a good example of how a partnership like this can work. She has a good personality, learns fast, and displays a good team effort."

Having students work part-time during the school year helps the bank, he says, because they fill vacancies left when people take vacations or time off. The bank employs about 70 people at its seven Puyallup locations. Because the bank is local, students like Davis can continue working either during the school year or in summer to help pay for college costs, says Brown, or learn skills here that could easily adapt to other banks in the college towns of their choice.

Lowell Johnson, work-based learning coordinator at Rogers High, says he plans to refer students from all three high



**Rogers senior Brandee Davis assists customers at Puyallup Valley Bank.**

schools to the bank next year. "This is a fantastic opportunity for students," he says.

—contributed by Susan Gifford

## District receives grant to boost AP involvement

Puyallup School District was one of forty schools and school districts across the state to receive one of the first-ever Advanced Placement Incentive Program Grants by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Paul Dugger, Student Learning Coordinator, coordinated the writing of the grant which awarded the district \$14,000.

The grants are part of a three-year \$2.1 million initiative by the US Department of Education to increase the number of underrepresented and low-income high school students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses. A total of \$396,200 was awarded to districts in Washington State.

The US Department of Education required that each district submitting a grant application meet one or more of a variety of goals. Puyallup's grant is designed to achieve the following:

- Increase the numbers of low-income and underrepresented students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses and taking AP exams;
- Increase the number of teachers prepared to teach advanced placement; or
- Increase student, teacher, administrator, parent and community awareness and support of advanced placement opportunities for students.

For more information, contact Paul Dugger at 840-8876.

## School calendars

The Board has approved PSD school calendars for the next three years, 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04. Copies of these calendars are available on the PSD web site at [www.puyallup.k12.wa.us](http://www.puyallup.k12.wa.us) or through any school office.

# Zeiger named AP Scholar of the Year

Geoffrey Zeiger, a 1999 Puyallup High School graduate, has been named the Washington State AP Scholar of the Year. He received a certificate of award from the National Advanced Placement Board and the Washington State Superintendents of Schools in April.

The National Advanced Placement Board recognizes one male and one female student in each state with the highest average grade on all AP exams taken and grades of 3 or higher on the greatest number of exams. Zeiger took a total of 13 AP exams, scoring 5's on tests in Calculus, Chemistry, Biology, Physics B, US History, Comparative Governments, US Government, Micro Economics, Macro-Economics, and English Literature; 4s on English Composition and Physics C; and a 3 in Spanish. AP Exams are scored 0-5, with a score of 4 or 5 earning college credit at most universities in the United States. Some schools will grant credit for a score of 3.

PHS offered AP preparatory classes in Calculus, Chemistry, US History, US Government, Comparative Governments, and English. Geoffrey prepared for other tests on his own. He read the texts for the Micro- and Macro-Economics exams while traveling with the PHS Chess Team to national competition in Sioux Falls, South Dakota during spring break. (The Chess Team placed 8th in the nation.)

"The AP and Honors classes' teachers at PHS were phenomenal," said Zeiger. "Mrs. Clifton, Mrs. Low, Mrs. Kusche, and Mrs. Kastama put tremendous amounts of time and energy into their classes. Mr. Segers gave up his own time outside of classes to help me prepare for the physics exams. "I am grateful both to PHS and to these fantastic teachers for the opportunity to study and learn in such an in-depth manner. I felt all of these teachers truly love teaching and were enthusiastic in their desire to share their intellect



Geoffrey Zeiger

and knowledge with us. They encouraged us, as students, to interact intellectually in the classroom. As a result, I have felt well-prepared for my college classes. The AP system has saved me thousands of dollars in college tuition and allowed room in my schedule to take a wider variety of classes at the college level." Zeiger is currently a student at the University of Puget Sound where he is majoring in physics.

## Winners selected for Dan Vesey Art Show

The following student artists had their work selected as the finalists from the 2001 Dan Vesey Art Show. The reception for the student artists was on March 27 at the Karshner Museum. Thirty-eight student artists, their families, and teachers were on hand to receive recognition for their award-winning work.

Valley Arts United presented two first place purchase awards to Alyssa Morley, fourth-grade student of Karen Rushton at Ridgecrest Elementary School, and Charolette Smith, ninth-grade pottery student of Mary Bova at Kalles Junior High.

Second place honors were given to Natalie Jerome a second-grade student in Katie

Fralick's class at Hunt Elementary School.

Two third place awards were given to Kevin Hiroo, a junior at Emerald Ridge High School in Candace Loring's painting class and Maria Perez, a sophomore artist from Puyallup High School in Mrs. Lathrop's art class.

The following students received honorable mention awards for their work: Valerie Bartels, ninth-grader at Ferrucci Junior High; Hannah Clark, second-grader at Stewart Elementary School; Brayton Dennis, fifth-grader at Fruitland Elementary School; Melanie Eckert, senior at Rogers High School; Ashley Fent, eighth-grader at Aylen

Junior High; Cheryl Hudson, senior at Rogers High School; Paul Josephson, senior at Puyallup High School; Dustin Miller, sophomore at Emerald Ridge High School; Alyssa Morely, fourth-grader at Ridgecrest Elementary School; Amanda Nyland, fifth-grader at Ridgecrest Elementary School; Tiffany O'Kroy, ninth-grader at Edgemont Junior High; Felischa Pacheco, second-grader at Fruitland Elementary School; Jessica Shideler, ninth-grader at Edgemont Junior High.

The 65 student artists were presented with certificates of participation.

—contributed by Debbie Munson,  
District Art Specialist

# Stahl teacher attempts to summit Everest

If all goes as planned, Stahl Junior High teacher Jason Edwards will reach the summit of Mount Everest this month, fulfilling a personal dream and at the same time encouraging youth to challenge themselves and set goals.

This is Edwards' second attempt at climbing to the top of the 29,035-foot mountain peak in the Himalayas of southern Asia, and his fourth expedition to the area.

The keyboarding teacher took a leave of absence this semester to lead a five-member climbing team from Canada and the United States up the world's tallest mountain. Edwards developed an Internet site for his students and others around the world to track his progress and learn about the expedition and the culture and religion of Nepal. He plans to post weekly updates and photos during his ascent and respond to two student emails each week.

The Web site also features lesson plans for teachers to use when discussing this trip or mountain climbing in general. Teachers, for example, can tie in social studies and geography lessons about the location of

Mount Everest and what is involved in getting permission and permits to climb. They also can have students read the poem



**Jason Edwards**

"Dreams, after all, I believe, are the fabric that gives us all the motivation to pursue many of our daily tasks with gusto and commitment—which someday leads us to greater things (like teaching!)," wrote Edwards in an outgoing letter to fellow Stahl Junior High staff at the end of last semester.

Edwards, who has been scaling mountains since he was a teenager, has climbed the highest peaks on all continents except Australia and Antarctica, where he has expeditions planned next year, says Mark Vetter, his principal the past four years.

"Dreams," by Langston Hughes, analyze it for rhyme, scheme, theme, metaphor, and imagery, then apply the message to their own lives by writing a poem or an essay on the topic of dreams.

On the first two of his four trips to Mount Everest, Vetter says Edwards was a hired guide and not programmed to go to the summit. His first attempt to climb to the top was in 1997.

The teacher was expected to reach base camp last month, then spend about a month there to acclimate to the altitude and weather and prepare the high level camps. If weather and other conditions are on his side, he is expected to reach the summit between May 10 and 20, then return to Puyallup in early June to a school celebration, says Vetter.

Ninth grader Renee Ewer, who has Edwards for keyboarding class, says the trip is the most exciting thing she has ever been involved with. "He has really high goals for himself, and I'm trying to prepare myself for my goals," says Ewer. The 14-year-old says she is interested in pursuing a career as a psychologist.

To follow Edward's progress on the Internet, go to [www.puyallup.k12.wa.us](http://www.puyallup.k12.wa.us), then click on 2001 Mt. Everest Expedition: An Educational DreamQuest.

—contributed by Susan Gifford



**Andy Hafer (left) and Crystal Natario share a moment at the tournament with the Seahawk Mascot.**

## Roadrunners play in local tournament

The Puyallup Roadrunner's Special Olympics teams competed in February at the Metro Parks Invitational Basketball Tournament. The team had three athletes compete in Individual Skills: Andy Hafer and Crystal Natario from Firgrove, and Cameron McElroy from Ridgecrest. The students placed first, second, and fourth in their events.

Also competing were two junior teams. They placed first and second in their division. On the first-place team were: Amanda Patterson and Michelle Gugger from Ferrucci, Koko Johnson, Brian Moon, and Joshua Wilson-Johnson from Kalles, Brad Goodman, Caleb Cornyn, and Ron Bailey from Ballou. On the second-place team were: Rachel Brown, Elizabeth Polosky, Melissa Brown, Dustin Moore, Michael Tibbetts, Brandon Gordon, Sam Allen, and Zachary Padgett from Firgrove. The teams are coached by Karrie Osborne, Teresa Lockey, Gary Osborne, and Pat Kelley.

## Projects planned for future bonds

Passage of the 2005 Bond Election, if approved by voters, would fund the following projects:

- Build a new Puyallup High School Science Lab, Walker High School, and an elementary school on South Hill
- Add six classrooms to Riverside Elementary
- Make additions to Rogers High School
- Build a new pool for Emerald Ridge High School
- Modernize the Rogers High School Performing Arts building and Sunrise Elementary School
- Move Quest into the old Walker High School building and remodel
- Make field improvements to Kalles and Ferrucci junior high schools
- Make improvements to Ayles and Kalles technical education facilities
- Purchase new Walker High School property

Passage of the 2009 Bond Election, if approved by voters, would fund the following projects:

- Add four classrooms and a multi-purpose room to Mountain View Elementary
- Replacement of the Puyallup High School auto shop and visual arts building
- Replacement of Firgrove and Northwood elementary schools
- Modernization of the Rogers High School pool, Ferrucci Junior High, and Ridgecrest and Pope elementary schools
- Add two baseball fields and two tennis courts to Emerald Ridge High School
- Field Improvements to Ballou and Stahl junior high schools
- Build a district training center and satellite maintenance shop

Proposed projects for the 2013 Bond Election are yet to be determined.

## PHS seniors to display portfolios

Puyallup High School's 527 graduating seniors will showcase accomplishments from their high school careers this month when they display their student portfolios during the Viking Experience Portfolio Exhibition.

The community is invited to view the portfolios, which include the students' senior projects, from 6:30 to 8:30 pm Wednesday, May 23 in the high school commons. The portfolios have several required pieces: letter of introduction, resume, community experience verification form, senior research paper, eight student work selections from grades 10 through 12, and an explanation of how each of the eight selections have helped the students prepare for the challenges after high school. Students assemble their portfolios during the second semester of their senior year, but the work itself represents their entire high school careers, said Alison Stephan, senior boards coordinator.

Stephan encourages the community to attend the exhibition. "The work displayed at the exhibition can be a real source of pride for students, staff, and community members," she said. The exhibition also gives community members who have volunteered to evaluate senior presentations the opportunity to familiarize themselves with their assigned seniors. Future Puyallup High students and parents can also take advantage of this opportunity to become acquainted with the school and senior projects, said Stephan.

Earlier this month, seniors at Rogers High School presented their senior projects in the form of speeches before a panel of community volunteers. Parents or community members interested in evaluating senior presentations next year at the three high schools are encouraged to call Stephan at Puyallup High School, 841-8711 ext. 7021; Lowell Johnson at Rogers High School, 841-8659, or Michaele Sein-Ryan at Emerald Ridge High School, 435-6312.

# Computer class teaches repair skills

If Leslie Neutzman's home computer breaks down, the 17-year-old wants to know how to fix it herself. By the end of this year, the Puyallup High junior will not only be skilled in computer repair, but she will also know how to assemble a computer, install and test software, and troubleshoot hardware and software problems.

Neutzman is one of 50 students enrolled in the high school's Computer Support class, a full year course in the Engineering and Technology career pathway. While Puyallup High has offered the class since 1996, it debuted this year at Rogers and Emerald Ridge high schools.

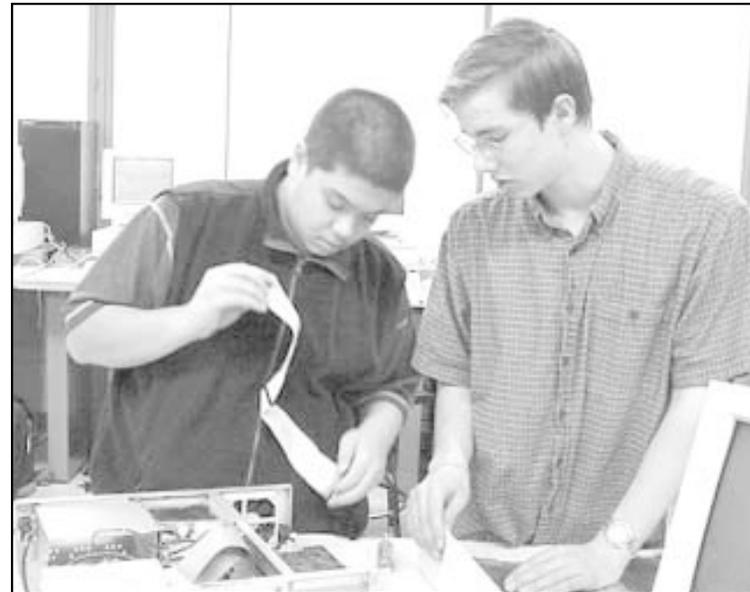
The program is possible in large part thanks to a partnership with Puget Sound Works, which gathers donations of new and used computer equipment from businesses, individuals, and government and distributes them to secondary schools in the area. Students, in turn, refurbish the computers, then send them throughout the school district for classroom and staff use.

Since the program started at Puyallup High five years ago, more than 500 donated computers have been rebuilt or upgraded for use in the district, says teacher Jerry Miller. It costs the district about \$200 to load the educational software, district network card, and CD Rom drive in each computer, he says, compared to in excess of \$1,000 to purchase a new one.



**Jerry Miller**

Intel has been a generous supplier to Puget Sound Works, not only donating equipment to support school districts including Puyallup that are contracted to receive the items, but also donating more than \$150,000 over three years to run the operation, says Dan Poole, planner with the Tacoma-Pierce County Employment and Training Consortium. Poole is



**Abdul Mai (left) and Owen Gerdes install a part in a computer.**

contracted part-time with Puget Sound Works to run the refurbishment program, which also contracts with the Tacoma, Sumner, and Peninsula school districts and the New Market Vocational Skills Center in Tumwater.

Items donated include new and used Pentium computers, monitors, motherboards, network cards and cables, hard drives, and memory. This district also received about 100 used computers last year from The Boeing Co., and about 200 this year from the Social Security Administration, says Miller.

While many students are interested in the class to repair their own home computers, they also have a chance to see if working with computers is something they might enjoy as a career. After successfully completing the class, students can easily qualify for jobs at computer repair shops, says Miller.

Junior Abdul Mai spent a recent afternoon learning to disassemble a computer and

install new parts. "I'm interested in computer and graphic design, including web page design," he says. "This will help knowing how to repair them myself."

The classroom focuses on hands-on learning, along with some reading, tests, and lab exercises. About 25 computers are running at all times in the spacious area that used to house the high school's woodshop. Two storage units hold shelves full of donated parts, and walls are lined with power cords, cables, tools, and soldering irons.

"Puyallup High School has a beautiful facility for its program and it's gratifying to visit the class and see what Jerry's students are doing," says Poole. "He obviously knows his stuff, knows how to teach it, and the students respond. It's a great benefit for the businesses that donate. Their equipment is helping students learn across all levels. In some ways, they're helping grow their future workforce."

# Edgemont students provide community service

Edgemont Junior High's Life Issues students impact many people and organizations throughout the Puyallup Valley as they do a minimum of ten hours of community service during the semester class.

Life Issues is an elective class offered to ninth graders at Edgemont and in junior high schools throughout the district. In addition, students enrolled in Life Issues as well as any other Family and Consumer Science class at Edgemont have an opportunity to gain leadership skills through FCCLA (Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America).

Under the direction of Chapter Advisor and Edgemont teacher, Idona Kellogg, Edgemont students practice leadership skills by doing community outreach projects.

For example, Maria Baker and Whendy Schmidt, FCCLA Board members, enlisted other students to help tape new Hilltop library books to help young readers learn to read.

In October, 22 students participated in Puyallup's



**Melissa Umpstead (left) and Jessica Shideler (right) share some special time with Olivia Barry during Child's Day in January.**

"Community Fest 2000" held at the Fairgrounds. Students used "Baby-Think-It-Over" dolls and the

"empathy belly" to present a teen pregnancy prevention message.

During the winter holidays, Puyallup Giftmakers received 143 holiday stockings and 101 snowmen "stuffers" made by Edgemont Life Issues, Culinary Arts, and Family and Consumer Science classes.

As an on-going project, Life Issues students help 45-50 disabled adults play Bingo at the Adult Day Health Care Center in Tacoma. Two Child's Days (January and June) bring a number of small tots to Edgemont for a choice of activities assisted by Family and Consumer Science students.

Another FCCLA project is the Life Issues Career Connections which involves a job interview. FCCLA cookies prepared by Family and Consumer Sciences were served to parents and teachers during PTSA Conference night and PTSA Back-to-School night.

FCCLA Board members attended the Fall Leadership Conference and spring Star Events Competitions.

## Hoopsters carry teams to tournaments

Puyallup's student athletes were well represented at the state's recent basketball tournaments by the Puyallup High School Boys team and the Rogers High School Boys and Girls teams.

At Puyallup High School, Boys Basketball team members dedicated their season to returning to the state tournament this year as their predecessors had. A 17 - 3 regular season record produced a SPSL South Division title. Led by seniors R. J. Barsh, Nate Jennings, Zach McCorkle, Austin Miller, and Tyler Wasson, the Vikings took their first two games at the district level to gain entry to the state tournament.

At state, however, the combination of tough competition and early foul troubles led to a couple of losses and the end of their season. "I couldn't be more proud of all these kids," Coach John Wetterauer said. R. J. Barsh was voted to the First Team All-SPSL and *The News Tribune's* All-Area team. Zach McCorkle was voted to the All-SPSL Second Team. Nate Jennings and Tyler Wasson made All-SPSL Honorable Mention.

At Rogers, the Boys' team took third place in the SPSL South Division, and fifth place in the district tournament. That record gained the team entry into the state tourna-

ment. "Getting here was a big plus," Coach Rod Iverson said. "There was a need to prove . . . that we belonged." Honors accorded team members were: Andrew Gard, ALL SPSL First Team for the second consecutive year; Isaac Finch, ALL SPSL Second Team for the second time; Nick Stephans was the Most Inspirational Player; and Tyler Johnson was voted the Most Improved Player. The team was honored with a WIAA Academic Award.

On the other side of the gym, Coach Beth Wing really delivered in her second year at the helm of the Rogers Rams Girls team. Riding a "never-say-die" attitude, the Rams girls delivered at crunch time all the way to the state tournament. "The girls and I were thrilled to be there," Wing said. "It was a huge accomplishment."

Improving throughout the season, the Rams girls won a playoff game to get into the district tournament and then beat two schools to get into the state tournament. At state, foul trouble and injuries contributed to losses for the girls in their first two games. "The girls had a great season and I was very proud of them," Coach Wing said. "They did an incredible job."

—contributed by Chris Stewart



### Books presented to district

**Pierce County Executive John Ladenburg presented copies of "Tacoma & Pierce County: Window to Northwest Grandeur" to the Puyallup School Board on March 12. The book, which will be available later this year for retail sale, was published by Wyndham Publications of Seattle under county sponsorship.**

## Emerald Ridge junior wins diversity poster contest

To embrace diversity, one must get beyond thinking about it as a race issue and realize it applies to religious and sexual preferences, social status, and gender. That's the message 17-year-old Jaime Tung wants to convey in her winning artwork in the district's first diversity poster contest.

The junior from Emerald Ridge High School was named overall winner of the contest, sponsored by members of the school district's Diversity Committee. Nearly 100 entries from kindergarten through grade 12 were submitted, and judges had "an extremely difficult" task narrowing down winners at the



**Jennifer Pennell**

elementary, junior high, and high school levels, said Jennifer Pennell, contest coordinator and a teacher and principal intern at Stahl Junior High.

Brianna Dalien, a sixth grader from Waller Road Elementary, and Ryan Mairs, an eighth grader from Stahl Junior High, won for their grade levels. Dalien and Mairs each received \$50 for their winning art, and Tung received \$200. A member of the Diversity Committee donated the cash prizes. The Diversity Committee held the contest to promote respect and reflection and celebrate differences in the school community, says Pennell. "We looked for anything that honors people in general and their differences."

In addition to having the winning art travel throughout district schools, Tung's poster was displayed for two weeks in March on a 12 x 24 foot billboard at the corner of Meridian and 152nd Street. Lamar Advertising Company in Tacoma, a sponsor of school programs across the country, donated the \$500 cost for the billboard space, production, layout sizing, and installation.

Tung used colored pencils to design her 11 x 17 inch poster, which features a line of



**Jaime Tung displays her winning poster.**

brightly colored figures in greens, blues, and purples outlined with black marker. The teen took about seven hours to complete her poster, including a striking orange background featuring hundreds of

tiny red and green dots. She offset her figures with a quote from former India Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, "You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist." Beneath her figures, Tung includes her own message, "Celebrate Diversity, Open Your Mind."

Tung says both quotes "convey open-mindedness and acceptance. Diversity isn't about tolerance, but acceptance."

The junior, who plans a career in pediatric medicine, entered the contest as part of her studio art class at Emerald Ridge. This is the teen's first year of art class, and she says she never expected to win. Her teacher, however, was much more optimistic. "When I saw it, I said, that's going to win the contest," says art teacher Candace Loring. "It is so striking and universal."

While she is new to art classes, Tung has been active for years in performing arts. The Edgewood resident plays violin with the Tacoma Youth Symphony, plays piano competitively, and danced for 14 years with Tacoma City Ballet.

## Firgrove Co-op enrolling students for 2001-02 school year

The Puyallup Family Co-op, a choice program sponsored by the Puyallup School District, is currently enrolling students from throughout the district. The program, which is housed at Firgrove Elementary School, serves students and their families in first through sixth grades. Questions regarding the Puyallup Family Co-op can be answered by calling Diane Gilcrease at 841-8733.

What's it like in a co-op classroom? The following are two answers given by parents Kevin Smyth and Linda Bahr.

"That means different things to the different coop classrooms at Firgrove. Mine is the fifth/sixth class. Students are a little older, more passionate, very social, becoming less awed by school authority. They have lots of interests, lots of questions—and sometimes are too impatient to look for the answers. All of them are incredibly lucky because their parents are able to spend time helping in the classroom. Parents help me more effectively manage my three math groups, or simultaneously give two different spelling tests. They help my students with their computer problems while I am working with the rest of the classroom. Parents provide our class the opportunity to take additional field trips. Most importantly, however, they are full-time players

in discussions about their child's progress. Because we are in regular contact, there are few surprises. I rarely have to approach a parent about a problem, they seek me out. My students, especially as they approach adolescence, don't realize how fortunate they are, or how lucky I am."

—contributed by Kevin Smyth.

"In a co-op classroom, teachers, parents, and students are partners in education. As a parent of a fifth grader and a second grader in co-op, I am in each of their classrooms one morning a week. Several other co-op parents also help in the classroom during the time I am there. Most mornings or afternoons at least one parent is helping in the classroom. The students are used to parents helping in their classes and, from what I've observed, they like having their own parent in the classroom. When I'm in my sons' classes, I work with small groups of students or with individual students in language centers. I also chaperone field trips, do prep work for the teacher, correct papers, and help students with computer projects. I list these "jobs" only as one example of a parent's role in a co-op class. Many parents contribute in a wide variety of ways, supporting the co-op and Firgrove Elementary. There are many benefits to being a co-op



**Parent Kevin Smyth reads to students in the Puyallup Family Coop class.**

parent. I value the communication between the teachers and parents reinforcing the connection between home and school. I value knowing the other students and their families. Most of all, I value being welcomed into my children's school and classrooms to be a partner in their education."

—contributed by Linda Bahr.