



The ROSALIA SENTINEL



Summer 2016

Honoring the past; building a dynamic future

Home and around the world: Rosalia students leave their mark

Third-graders affect change 8,000 miles away, in Borneo

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” – Margaret Mead



Molly Turner and her students proudly display adoption papers and photos of Bayat, Krista and Lear.

Yes, by almost any measure, they are about as far apart as two places could be.

Yet they’re not. Visit Molly Turner’s third-grade class at Rosalia Elementary and her students can tell you all about Borneo because of the special creatures who live there – orangutans. They can also tell you about the three special orangutans they adopted – Bayat, Krista and Lear.

Earlier this year, Turner’s students were moved by a story they read about vanishing orangutan habitat. Surging world demand for palm oil has fueled massive deforestation that has destroyed their treetop homes and food supplies. In the last 20 years, 55 percent of Borneo’s orangutan habitat has disappeared, according to the World Wildlife Fund.

Then, at the urging of classmate Sadie Lazcano, who said, “Let’s do something about it,” the third-graders took action. Learning of an orangutan adoption program, they set a goal of raising money to become “foster parents.”

Working with Orangutan Foundation International, a non-profit organization involved in rescue and rehabilitation, the students set a goal of raising \$100 – enough to adopt one animal for a year.

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High school students see a local need; take action

“Let us not be content to wait and see what will happen, but give us the determination to make the right things happen.” – Horace Mann

Just a few blocks down the street from Rosalia High School, lies a narrow, vacant piece of ground, sandwiched between two brick buildings.

There, near the corner of Fifth and Whitman, lies what used to be a community eyesore -- a patch of weeds behind a gate.

Then something amazing happened. The weeds were gone; the ground was cleared; new life appeared. Drivers down the main street of Rosalia saw a veritable resurrection take place in the months of April and May.

What they witnessed was the vision of a few – and the hands of many – turning an ugly vacant lot into a beautiful community garden.



Ground preparation; then edging.



Teacher Sean Moss saw a golden learning opportunity.

The vision began with Rosalia High School art teacher Sean Moss and several students, who saw a two-for-one opportunity – a chance for students to exercise their creative talents while simultaneously building a community asset.

The project required immense teamwork. The property owner had to agree to lease the property to the city for \$1 per year; the city had to agree to the project; Moss and his students had to design a garden, rustle up more than \$5,000 in donations and then serve as general contractors for the project.

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From the superintendent
Looking forward to my fourth year



Larry Keller

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As we close the book on my third year as your superintendent, it is a good time to reflect on year three and provide a few thoughts on our future.

This year has been one of great accomplishments – and financial challenges. Our test scores across all grade levels have remained high this year, but perhaps more importantly, our kids are gaining the skills to compete successfully in the 21st century.

In addition to our core courses, our students have the opportunity to broaden themselves and gain an appreciation through our fine arts programs. Our band had a fantastic year and the attendance and applause at our concerts says you as a community value our music program.

The quality of our art programs under Sean Moss’ direction has been superb. This year we created a community art class (cover story), where our students selected a project to support the community. The results of their efforts can be seen downtown, just to the north of the coffee shop.

Our challenge this year was dealing with an unexpected decline in enrollment. Our budget was based on 185 students and our enrollment averaged only 174. Since our funding from the state is based on the number of students, we have had to deal with an \$80,000 funding shortfall.

Looking to next year, we have adjusted our budget by spreading the reductions and deferring capital projects. This fall I will begin a conversation with our communities and Board on how to sustain programs and staffing, while still maintaining and enhancing facilities to meet the needs of our children.

Also looking ahead, “the rubber must meet the road” in terms of state school funding. The Legislature has delayed the tough decisions to the point of no return. The McCleary state Supreme Court case mandates a decision before 2018. I will continue to advocate for our kids, and we must make sure our legislators find solutions that don’t increase the financial burden on local communities.

In closing, I would like to thank the communities of Rosalia, Malden and Thornton and the surrounding areas for their continued support. I am looking forward to continuing my service as your superintendent.

Sincerely,

Larry Keller

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Mystery question

Coming soon to
Rosalia Elementary:
PBIS.

What is PBIS?
Stay tuned. The answer will be
revealed this fall.

District welcomes new staff member

The Rosalia School District is pleased to welcome Janet Morgan as its new special education teacher. She will take the reins this fall, succeeding Kaleb Madison, who is moving to the Central Valley School District. Welcome Janet. Thank you and best of luck, Kaleb.

Hudkins named AD

Fifth-grade teacher Rob Hudkins will wear a second hat next year. Hudkins has been named the district’s new athletic director. He has held the position before and looks forward to taking an active role in Timberwolves athletics.



Rob Hudkins

Leadership conference a huge success

*“You see things; and you say ‘Why?’
But I dream things that never were;
and I say ‘Why not?’”*

– **George Bernard Shaw**

Rosalia senior Ayva Bryan saw a need and said “Why not?”

Why couldn’t Rosalia host a regional leadership conference for schools across Whitman County and beyond?

After consulting leadership adviser and teacher Jennifer Olson, she concluded there was no reason they couldn’t pull it off. So, back in February, she began organizing a first-of-its-kind summit for student leaders.

Two months later, 50 students from Rosalia, Colton, Oakesdale, St. John and Pomeroy took part in a half-day conference focusing on a wide range of leadership skills including community organization, fund-raising and governmental affairs.

Guest speakers and multiple break-out sessions allowed students to hear a variety of perspectives and ideas. All left with new knowledge, new leadership skills and gratitude to Rosalia for dreaming big things that never were and asking, “Why not?”

Jennifer Olson and Ayva Bryan



The tradition continues

The high school greenhouse has been awash in color leading up to the annual plant sale benefiting the FFA program. Roughly \$4,000 in inventory, including bedding and hanging plants, has been sold this spring. Kudos to teacher Dee Peterschick and his dedicated students for another successful sale.

*Ayva Bryan, Jessica Ford and
Gensen Merritt show off greenhouse inventory.*

Robotics program expands in middle grades

*“Do not go where the path may
lead, go instead where there is no
path and leave a trail.”*

– **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

The robots are coming. They have become very small and they are headed to Rosalia.

No, it’s not a line from a movie trailer. It’s the truth. As robots get smaller, the Rosalia robotics program gets bigger.

Prior issues of this newsletter have focused on the robotics project taking place in the district, particularly at the elementary and high school level. Now, the middle school level is about to expand.

Students in Clif Marr’s middle and high school science classes have been testing

Ozobots – small computerized devices equipped with lights, sensors and logic boards. The inexpensive devices, priced at around \$50, teach robotics and coding through social and competitive games.

After testing this spring, Marr will deploy the devices in classes next fall.

Simple games involve programming the devices to travel a path around a tabletop race course. The more important path, however, is the one they introduce regarding career paths in computer science, engineering and technology.

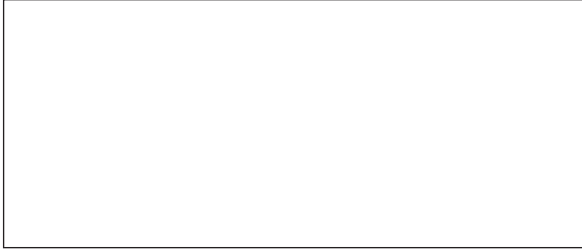
Get ready – Rosalia is about to blaze a new trail.

*The Ozobot easily fits in the hand
of student William Boyce.*



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Third-graders *continued from page 1*

Students solicited help from friends and family and donations were accepted at the school office. Within a month, the goal had been reached three times over and three orangutans were adopted.

“The project got our students thinking beyond their own worlds,” said Turner. Indeed, time and distance could not deter nine youngsters committed to making a difference. This small group of thoughtful, committed students already has changed the world.

High School *continued from page 1*

Donations poured in from Linda Pritchett/Rosalia Coffee and More, Warren Stroll, Gifted Grannies, Creative Edge, Hy-Mark Wood Products, Plants of the Wild and the Washington Education Association.

Students performed much of the labor, including the talented wood-working crew of Hunter Fulton, Nathan Jeske and Cody Thornton, who built the new picnic tables.

From day one, the goal was to have the project finished for the start of the annual Rosalia Battle Days celebration. Visitors can now enjoy a cup of coffee and admire the beauty of native plants in a serene garden setting in the middle of town.

Our school community salutes the staff and students who were not content to see what might happen. Instead, they had the determination to make the right thing happen.



Student work crew included woodworkers Cody Thornton, Nathan Jeske and Hunter Fulton.

Congratulations Class of 2016



Valedictorian McKenzie Dempsey and Salutatorian Sarah Billings, lead the Class of 2016.

