



Makaya Harris gives patient Logan Crotty a clean bill of health at the BizTown Health Clinic.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## JMS students celebrate groundbreaking of new school

A groundbreaking ceremony was held Tuesday, June 7 near the site of the replacement Jemtegaard Middle School and new Columbia River Gorge Elementary School with the entire JMS student body in attendance.

With the backdrop of several pieces of large equipment which had recently begun site work, WSD Superintendent Dr. Mike Stromme pointed out to students that clearly this was a ceremonial event. "Groundbreakings are important to commemorate milestones such as the building of these two new schools," he said. "For those of you who stay and raise families in Washougal, you may have children who attend these schools and can say that you were here for this special occasion."

Among those wielding shovels at the event was Alma Jemtegaard Ladd, niece of the middle school namesake, Gudrun Jemtegaard. "She was an excellent teacher and taught in Washougal for 42 years," Ladd told the group of students. "Because she was here so long she actually taught three generations of Washougal families." Ladd said her aunt was beloved by the whole community often buying shoes and school lunch for those students in need. The naming of the school in her honor in 1981 was the highlight of Jemtegaard's life, according to Ladd.

Construction will hit high gear this summer and plans are for doors to open to students in Fall of 2017. Groundbreaking ceremonies were held May 10 for the new Excelsior School and WSD Transportation Facilities. Work will begin on those facilities over the summer as well.

The new facilities and safety improvements to all schools is made possible by the voter-approved capital bond in February 2015. Look for construction progress on the WSD website at <http://www.washougal.k12.wa.us/>



6th graders Carson Chase and Grace DeShazer with Superintendent Stromme at the groundbreaking.

## Results of water testing show Washougal schools lead-free

This spring, the Washougal School District conducted testing of the school drinking water in all schools. In every case, the lead test results showed the water was safe based on the limits established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In fact, testing revealed non-detectable levels of lead at all Washougal schools with the exception of Excelsior1, which had a result of

one-tenth of the permissible level. According to the Washington State Department of Health, the maximum allowable limit is .015 parts per million.

Cape Horn-Skye Elementary and Canyon Creek Middle schools use water provided from a well. Both schools were tested in September 2015 for lead and copper with results well within permissible levels.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Washougal  
School District  
patrons,

I really enjoyed my first year as superintendent here in Washougal, getting to know staff and the community and working on many exciting projects.

I have especially enjoyed any opportunity to connect with students whenever possible. In addition to observing excellent teaching in the many classrooms, I've had the opportunity to join them in a variety of activities, including volleyball and cross-country practices in order to witness our sports programs firsthand. I spent a day at BizTown as elementary students participated in a mock economy where they held jobs, collected and spent paychecks, took and filled orders for goods and provided services to their classmates. It was a fun and unique learning experience! I sat in on great learning opportunities including Battle of the Books and Senior Panels. I also participated in the Job Acquisition Skills (JAS) interviews for high school sophomores to gain experience in applying for and interviewing for a job. I continue to be impressed by our students, staff and programs!

Inside this newsletter you will learn about the Class of 2016 and the impressive awards and accolades they've earned. This year, 192 students from Washougal High School and Excelsior earned their diplomas. Way to go students!

This year we say good-bye to several retirees who have made a tremendous difference in the lives of students. Two of our long-time educators and leaders, Gause Principal Rex Larson and Canyon Creek teacher Pete Forgey, are retiring after 40 years in education. They, and the other outstanding retirees leave big shoes to fill!

Have a great summer!

Sincerely,  
Dr. Mike Stromme



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Washougal welcomes new Special Education director

Rebecca Von Duering joins WSD as Special Education Director for the Washougal School District. Dr. Von Duering will assume her new role on July 1, 2016.

For the past year, Dr. Von Duering has served as a Special Services Area Manager in Vancouver Public Schools. Prior to her time in Vancouver, Rebecca worked for thirteen years in California in a variety of roles related to Special Education, including Program Specialist, School Psychologist and Behavior Consultant. Rebecca has a Ph.D. in Education with an emphasis in School Psychology and is also a Board Certified Behavior Analyst.



### Morrill named Washougal Teacher of the Year

Gause teacher Wendy Morrill has been selected as the 2016 Teacher of the Year. Morrill is a LAP (Learning Assistance Program) teacher at Gause Elementary School who has worked for WSD for 15 years and has a Masters in Teaching from Washington State University.

As a LAP teacher, Morrill provides academic support across grade levels in the area of reading. Prior to being selected to fill her current position, Morrill has taught first and second grades at Gause where she has excelled as a classroom teacher.



### New program helps ease transition to middle school

The transition to middle school can be a scary one for elementary students who don't know what to expect. That's why Washougal teachers came up with a plan to make the transition seem less intimidating. During the month of February, fifth graders from Hathaway spent an entire school day visiting Jemtegaard, shadowing a middle school mentor and experiencing a typical day in middle school. This is a change from past years where fifth grade students may have visited for just a few hours out of a day.

Having students visit earlier in the year and shadow a middle school student for the entire day allows students to get a real sense of what middle school is like, including finding their way around, having lunch, and going from class to class.

Sixth grader Adamaris Castro-Coca chose to participate and support incoming fifth graders because she didn't have the opportunity when she entered middle school last year. "I wanted to do it for other people," she said. "It can be scary if you don't know where your classes are. Middle school shouldn't be scary, it should be fun."



### Hathaway Elementary receives state's highest honor

Hathaway Elementary was named a 2015 Washington Achievement Award winner in the category of Overall Excellence.

The Washington Achievement Award is sponsored by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the State Board of Education. Award winners are selected using the state's Accountability Index and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver.



*It's all online! Read more about these stories and check out others at:  
[www.washougal.k12.wa.us](http://www.washougal.k12.wa.us) or follow us on Facebook.*

# Thank you, retirees, for your years of service to Washougal!

## Pete Forgey, Canyon Creek Middle School

26 years with WSD;  
40 years in education



### FAVORITE WSD MEMORY:

"Being able to help with the design of Canyon Creek and then being part of the staff that opened the school. I had always wanted to work in a brand new school, and not only was I able to work in it, I helped design and be the leader of some great teachers who were the staff at CCMS."

### RETIREMENT PLANS:

"To work more with my three Newfs; Buddy, Ulla and Garner. I will be spending more time at Lewis and Clark College with Buddy who serves as their mascot when he is on campus. 20-month-old Garner is the mascot in training, and will also become a therapy dog after some training. Ulla is into dock diving, and I am also training her to get her water rescue title. Katie and I are expecting do some traveling with the dogs and will explore as much of the Pacific Northwest and Canada as possible. After umpiring high school softball for over 30 years, I am going to try to become the commissioner for our local association, who assigns the umpires to their games in the spring."

## Anthony Lorenz-Hunt, Bus Driver

17 years with WSD

## Danny Johnson, Custodian, WHS

14 years with WSD;  
15 years in education



## Rex Larson, Principal, Gause Elementary

19 years with WSD;  
40 years in education



Gause Elementary Principal Rex Larson retires June 30 after a career in education spanning four decades.

Larson has been principal at Gause for the past 19 years. Prior to working in the Washougal School District, Larson worked as a principal in the Oregon City School District for three years, as a vice principal

and teacher in the Beaverton School District for 16 years, and as a teacher in Evergreen Public Schools for two years.

"I really am sad to leave Washougal," he admits. "It is an exciting time to be here with our new district leadership, new school construction and the quality of the administrators at each of our buildings. It is an impressive group to work with."

Larson and his wife, Marian, a recently retired business teacher at Fort Vancouver High School, have four adult children. Spending more time with his family, including his golden retrievers, Cody and Jack, will be important to him in retirement.

"I am looking forward to figuring out what this next chapter is going to look like for me," Larson said. "I am excited for all the possibilities of what comes next."

## Susan Lewallen, Washougal High School

34 years with WSD;  
38 years in education



### FAVORITE WSD MEMORY:

"I will always remember the students who won the free year abroad in Germany. One year we had three winners which was really amazing since only about eleven students are selected from Washington state each year. I was proud that our students could hold their own in this national contest."

### RETIREMENT PLANS:

"Two major remodeling projects and lots of travel. When my husband retires in a few years, we plan to visit Europe in addition to the many sights we hope to explore in the U.S."

## Jim Schroeder, Gause Elementary

24 years with WSD



### FAVORITE WSD MEMORY:

"I have been truly blessed throughout my Washougal career at Gause to have been surrounded by wonderful people. The teammates and leaders I have had through my time here have all contributed to making me a better teacher, and a better person. Many of them have become some of my best friends. It is those people who have made coming to work each day a pleasure, and

those people who will always be my favorite memory of working at Gause."

### RETIREMENT PLANS:

"In my retirement I hope to travel more, some of which would include watching my daughter play softball. With her college softball experience ending in just three short years, I never want to look back and say, 'I wish I could have seen more of her games.' I think you might also find me back in the schools some, but as a substitute this time around. We'll see, it will depend on what doors open for me when this one closes. I'm not quite ready to just sit back and be completely retired."

## Mindy Smith, Secretary, Hathaway Elementary

29 years with WSD;  
32 years in education



### FAVORITE WSD MEMORY:

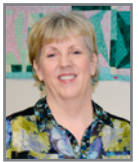
"I remember CLEARLY the first day I walked into the office at Hathaway for my first day on the job. I remember what I was wearing (high heels), being greeted by the principal (then Dorothy Kovanen), looking at all the papers and notes and folders, and thinking....'This is going to be a great job!' - and on the heels of that, 'Look at all those PAPERS - I'll eventually have to know what they're all for!' I'm not sure (all these years later) that I've done that!"

### RETIREMENT PLANS:

"To become the person my grandchildren think I am. Also - spending time with family, volunteering, gardening, camping, traveling, reading, adventuring and spending time with my patient husband who has waited all these years to have his wife back."

## Mary Walker, Washougal High School

38 years with Washougal

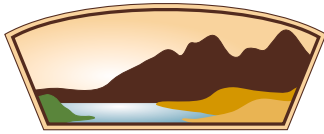


### FAVORITE WSD MEMORY:

"When a student does well and is happy about what they have accomplished."

### RETIREMENT PLANS:

"Some travel and being able to visit my daughter more often."



WASHOUGAL  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## Class of 2016 earns awards & scholarships totaling \$409,280

### RaeAnn Allen

*Pacific University Oregon Presidential Scholarship, Pacific University Oregon- Washington Student Achievement Scholarship, Rotary Club of Camas-Washougal Scholarship, University of Puget Sound President's Scholarship*

### Maryam Atto

*Camas Washougal Business Alliance Scholarship*

### Rebecca Bennett

*Camas Washougal Business Alliance Scholarship, Camas Washougal Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club of Camas-Washougal Scholarship, Tzu Chi Scholars 2016*

### Alyssa Blankenship

*Walla Walla Athletic Scholarship, Walla Walla Academic Scholarship, Washougal Educators Scholarship*

### Taylor Brown

*University of Washington Undergrad University Grant, University of Washington University Scholarship-Seattle, VFW Voice of Democracy Essay Contest*

### Sierah Cain

*The Evergreen State College Scholastic Achievement Award*

### Sierra Carroll

*Red Cross Scholarship*

### Riley Coffman

*Montana State University Western Undergraduate Exchange Scholarship, Rotary Club of Camas-Washougal Scholarship, North*

*Bank Masonic Lodge Ward Hoxsie-John Sinden Scholarship*

### Nick Costa-Stange

*Camas Washougal Business Alliance Scholarship, Experience WSU Scholarship, Rotary Club of Camas-Washougal Scholarship, Washington State University Achievement Award*

### Katie Desimone

*University of Idaho Honors Program Western Undergraduate Exchange Award*

### Hannah Gutkind

*Rotary Club of Camas-Washougal Scholarship*

### Kylie Helton

*The Evergreen State College Scholastic Achievement Award*

### Mikayla Johnson

*Odd Fellows Lonnie Belz Scholarship*

### Austin Kleha

*Skills Center General Advisory Council Scholarship*

### Aisha Marcos

*Building Industry Association of Clark County Building Futures Scholarship, Washougal Lions Scholarship*

### Avery McEntire

*North Bank Masonic Lodge Ward Hoxsie-John Sinden Scholarship*

### Christian Mishler

*The Evergreen State College Scholastic Achievement Award*

### Dakota Payne

*The Rotary Club of Camas/Washougal Student of the Month Scholarship for 2014, Washougal Schools Foundation Scholarship*

### Courtney Shelley

*Mt. Hood Community College Athletic Scholarship*

### Keira Stogin

*Governor of Girl's State Scholarship*

### Alex Tilton

*College Bound Scholarship, St. Martin's University President's Scholarship, Washington State Opportunity Scholarship*

### Sydney Valaer

*Oklahoma City University Music Scholarship Award, Oklahoma City University Opportunity Scholarship*

### Chase Warren

*Clark College Dorothy Bray Scholarship*

### Bailey Watts

*Camas Washougal Business Alliance Scholarship, Kaiser Permanente Health Care Scholarship*

### Courtney Webb

*Camas Washougal Business Alliance Scholarship, The Lions Tom Hays Memorial Scholarship, Washougal Schools Foundation Scholarship*

### McKenzie West

*Odd Fellows Lonnie Belz Scholarship*

#### WASHOUGAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

[www.washougal.k12.wa.us](http://www.washougal.k12.wa.us)

#### SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Mike Stromme

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ron Dinius, President

Elaine Pfeifer, Vice President

Karen Rubino, Legislative Rep.

Teresa Lees

Jaron Barney

## Upcoming Washougal School Board Meetings

**August 9**, District Board Room

**August 23**, District Board Room

Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. in the District Board Room, 4855 Evergreen Way, unless otherwise noted. All are invited!

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