



# Community Connections

*For our children, our community, our world, our future*

## School Board sincerely grateful for community support

The Cheney School Board would like to express our heartfelt thanks and profound appreciation to all the patrons of the Cheney School District for the passage of the recent levy.

One of the *Essential Foundations* of the district is the responsible use of fiscal resources and district facilities for present and future use. While facility repair and maintenance may not be the most exciting part of our work, it is an essential part of it, and we are very grateful for the foresight our patrons show to allow us to maintain and improve the District facilities in a timely way. Your continuous support has allowed us to do that.

We also thank you on behalf of all children in the District for approving technology upgrades. As the first technology levy in ten years, the update to current technology will best help our children prepare for their future. We appreciate the faith and confidence shown in your approval of the levy, and we will continue to work hard to fulfill your and our obligation to support our children.

For our children, our community, our world, our future ~

The Cheney School Board

## School year will be extended with three snow make-up days

Until this winter, it had been seven years since our school district had to close school due to winter weather conditions. This winter, we had to miss eight days of school as a result of harsh weather. Five of the missed school days occurred all in the same week – January 28, 29, 30, 31, and February 1 – a week in which Governor Gregoire enacted an Emergency Proclamation for seven eastern Washington counties.

Due to this Proclamation, school districts were allowed to submit waiver requests for missed school days during that time. With required School Board approval, our district submitted such a waiver request and was informed in mid-March, by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, that our request was granted.

Thus, we still had missed three additional days (January 9, February 7, and February 8) that do need to be made up. **As a result, Friday, June 13, will NO LONGER BE THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL. OUR THREE MAKE-UP DAYS WILL BE MONDAY, JUNE 16; TUESDAY, JUNE 17; AND WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18. Please make a note of these additional days on your calendars, AND note that June 18 (NOT June 13 as originally planned) will be an early release day as the new last day of school. Further, there will be NO LATE START/COLLABORATION TIME on Friday, June 13.** Thank you for your patience and cooperation as we experienced a challenging winter, and as we have waited to complete a process in which the adjusted calendar could be announced.

**Friday Reminder:** One hour late start for all schools in our district to provide for teacher collaborative time. Your child's school day begins one hour later; the buses run one hour later.

### Our essential foundations

- ★ High Expectations and Continuous Progress
- ★ Involvement and Engagement with School District Community
- ★ Stewardship and Planning

Cheney Middle School activities line: (509) 559-4488  
Cheney High School activities line: (509) 559-4120

Go to [www.cheneydsd.org](http://www.cheneydsd.org) for more news and information about Cheney Public Schools.

### Important dates

March 31-April 4	<b>NO SCHOOL -</b> Spring Vacation
April 14-May 2	Grades 3-8 WASL Testing Window
April 22-25	High School WASL - Math/Science
May 26	<b>NO SCHOOL -</b> Memorial Day Holiday
June 6	CHS Commencement
June 18	<b>Early Dismissal 11:30 a.m. -</b> Last Day of School



## Windsor Wildcats fill Washington Air National Guard truck with food!

In December, ASB officers and room representatives organized a food drive to benefit the Great Harvest Food Bank. In a matter of three to four weeks, Windsor Wildcats managed to fill a Washington Air National Guard truck with canned and boxed goods to benefit those in need. Filling the truck with food has been a tradition at Windsor and each year is more successful than the last. Windsor Wildcats, with their big hearts, come together to help the surrounding communities throughout the year. Coming up, Windsor will support their annual sock drive, penny drive for the Spokane Guild School, and the pet food drive for all those needy pets in Spokane.



Windsor Wildcats and the truck they filled



## We are among royalty!



Natalie Jeffers, a third grader at Home Works!, was recently crowned Jr. Miss West Plains Queen on March 8th at City Hall. Natalie was selected among four candidates in the junior category. The competition consisted of an interview, talent presentation, poise, composure, and a speech. Each contestant was also asked to help raise funds for the Sweet Social and the silent auction. They were judged on several aspects of their performance, including conversation skills, personality, and stage presence. Natalie will serve the West Plains Fair Association throughout the year assisting with fundraisers, parades, community festivals and community service projects. Natalie will also have the opportunity to travel across the state. The West Plains Fair is the second weekend of August. The Fair Board is always looking for volunteers and new members to support the fair. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month at the Cheney library. Way to go Natalie!



## When dinosaurs roamed Betz ...

Step into the Jurassic Period, the age of dinosaurs, at Betz Elementary in Room 304. The Jurassic Period was the time when the great plant-eating dinosaurs roamed the earth, feeding on lush growths of ferns and palm-like vegetation. While Bernice the Brontosaurus probably does not constitute one of the "great" dinosaurs in size, the students in Mrs. Fitzpatrick's class who created her all think she is a great addition. The students constructed this brontosaurus (a term that has been recently replaced with Apatosaurus) during a thematic unit in which they learned facts about dinosaurs by



Ethan Rogers puts some finishing touches on Bernice

reading, writing, and completing math exercises focused on the topic. Bernice is not flesh and blood, but made of paper and paste over a cardboard framework, and although she does not compete in size with the original reptiles, at 7 feet tall and 25 feet long, she is a magnificent creature to behold in a classroom.

In a multi-grade level class of students with varying abilities, constructing Bernice was an exercise in cooperation and differentiated instruction in which every student contributed to the activity with the skills he or she possessed, and all took pride in Bernice equally when she was completed. The students have brought life to Bernice by documenting their hard work in a book written by them with pictures taken by the teachers in the room. A PowerPoint of the production was played throughout conference week for all visitors to Room 304.



## ***Initiative 728 Proposed Plan 2008-09 School Year***

***Cheney Public Schools I-728 Plan provides funding to  
implement education reform and improve student learning.***



### **HISTORY**

In November of 2000, the voters of Washington passed Initiative 728 with an incredible margin of victory: 72% statewide, with landslide victories in every single county in the state. I-728 garnered more "yes" votes than any issue or candidate in state history.

The funds from I-728 can be used for the following purposes: smaller class size K-4; selected smaller class sizes for grades 5-12; extended learning opportunities for students such as summer school and after-school programs; early childhood and preschool programs; school building improvements to add classes to reduce class size; and staff development to give teachers knowledge and skills to help students succeed.

**For the 2008-09 school year, our suggested I-728 plan is consistent with past use of the funds and includes:**

- ☆ **Targeting 55% of the funds to create smaller class sizes in grades K-4; and to make selected class size reductions in grades 5-12.** Our I-728 survey data shows that class size reduction is a priority for teachers, research supports this priority, and it will maintain our commitment to reduce class size. I-728 funds will be used to create smaller class sizes at grades K-4, smaller than what the State's K-4 basic education funding ratio provides; whereas, at grades 5-12, I-728 funds will support selected class size reduction for students who have not met standard.
- ☆ **Targeting 20% of the funds to provide extended-learning programs K-12 for students.** We shall fund a full-day, full-time kindergarten option for parents who select it and are willing to pay part of the cost. Additionally, the district shall continue to provide extended-learning opportunities for students who are performing below standard. Each school will continue to submit an extended-learning program application; funds will be distributed to insure that those sites which serve a larger percentage of students performing below standard will be given priority to the financial resources needed to implement their extended-learning program(s). Staff, parents and community member survey results indicated strong support for the above extended-learning program(s).
- ☆ **Targeting 20% of the funds to provide additional professional development for educators.** Funds may provide release opportunities for our professional staff to collaborate, to administer and analyze student assessment data, and to use that data to guide the implementation of effective instructional practices. Funds will provide each school support for professional development activities outlined in the district and school's improvement plan.
- ☆ **Targeting 5% of the funds to provide early assistance for children who need pre-kindergarten support.** Funds will provide support for collaborative efforts between the school district and preschool providers in our community; in addition, funds will support a district-sponsored parent education program on kindergarten readiness.

### **PUBLIC MEETING**

Cheney Public Schools will hold a public meeting on April 23, 2008 at Windsor Elementary School, 5504 W. Hallett Rd., Spokane, beginning at 6:30 p.m. (connected to the regularly-scheduled School Board meeting on that date and at the same location). All staff, parents, and community members are welcome to attend the meeting to provide comments on the suggested 2008-09 I-728 plan. Feedback or suggestions can also be provided in writing to Michael Dunn, Superintendent, Cheney Public Schools, 520 Fourth Street, Cheney, WA 99004.



## CMS students attend Hina Matsuri at Mukogawa Fort Wright

By Sarah Oakes, CMS 7th grader

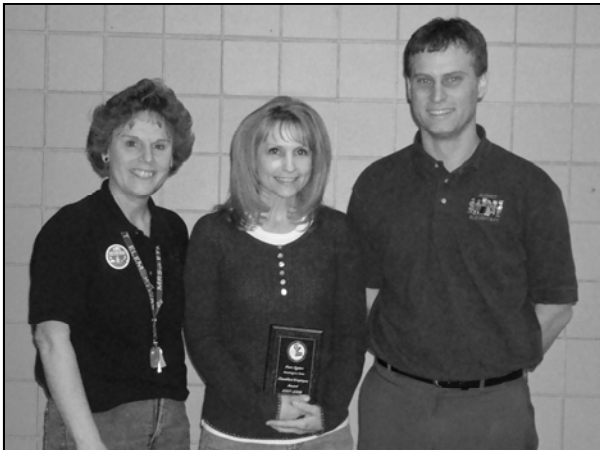
The trip to Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute for the Hina Matsuri (Doll Festival) was a brilliant experience for 30 Cheney Middle School Eagle Core students. Mitsunori Namba, General Consul of Japan from Seattle, kindly welcomed us, and Spokane Mayor Mary Verner proclaimed it Hina Matsuri Day. All listened with curious ears as the Mukogawa students sang beautiful Japanese songs. One of these was the actual Hina Matsuri song. Among the displays in the commons room was Spokane’s original Hina doll, Miss Tokushima, given to the United States by Japan in 1927 as a gift of friendship between our two countries. Towards the end of the morning CMS, along with other guest schools, sang songs. We sang “Make New Friends” and, with the help of Mrs. Hays, it didn’t sound too bad! Then we accepted two friendship dolls. These dolls will be permanently displayed at CMS.



Hina Matsuri held at Mukogawa Fort Wright

At lunch, we were paired with at least two Japanese students. For lunch we ate teriyaki chicken, rice, and green beans. During lunch, I had fun discussions with my new friends and was happy to find that they do indeed have Starbucks in Japan. I learned the word “maji” means “just kidding.” I am sure that all the other CMS students had just as much fun as I did. We did origami, took lots of pictures, and even exchanged e-mail addresses. Overall, the Hina Matsuri was even more fun and interesting than many students would have expected.

## Pam Ogden receives Classified Employee Excellence Award



Pam Ogden (middle) is shown with Jeani Struss, who nominated her, and Principal Sean Dotson

On March 12<sup>th</sup>, Sunset Elementary students and staff gathered for a surprise assembly to honor Pam Ogden, a paraeducator at Sunset who has been awarded the Washington State Classified Employee Excellence Award. Mrs. Ogden is one of 36 classified staff members across the state to receive this honor bestowed by the Washington Legislature and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The award is designed to recognize and honor the work of school classified staff who have made a positive difference in their profession through their passion and dedication to their work.

Mrs. Ogden’s primary role at Sunset is assisting students in the classroom. She has been teaching Sunset students to be better readers, writers, and citizens for ten years. She is a leader in our building assessment efforts, organizes programs and materials to help students learn, meets with teachers to study test data and discuss how to best teach students, trains other paraprofessionals, and does countless other things to make Sunset great.

What really makes Mrs. Ogden special is her attitude. She always has a smile on her face and always does more than she is expected to do. Aristotle, a famous Greek philosopher, once said, “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit.” Mrs. Ogden makes a habit of doing great work. She truly cares about Sunset children—her positive attitude and work ethic make a positive difference in our school, and we are very lucky to have her.

We have many great educators, classified and certified, who deserve this honor. Everyone at Sunset had a great time celebrating Mrs. Ogden’s contribution to our school. Mrs. Ogden will travel to Olympia on April 4<sup>th</sup> to receive the award and a \$1000 check at a ceremony on the Senate floor at the State Capitol Building.



## Best Blackhawk Program

The Health and Fitness Department has had the Fitness Center and Personal Fitness classes participating in a new program this year. At the beginning of each trimester, students create personal fitness portfolios that contain the results of assessments in the areas of cardio respiratory endurance, muscular strength, and flexibility. The portfolio also contains a self evaluation questionnaire where students have the opportunity to evaluate their own fitness levels and how motivated they are to get or to stay fit. At that time, students can volunteer to be a team captain. If they volunteer, they are asked the qualities they possess that would make them a great captain. Teams are then split up equally and assigned team colors.

The week is divided into five different fitness opportunities: On Monday, students complete a core workout for half of the period and work out in the fitness center for the other half of the period. On Tuesday, students complete a fitness circuit that focuses on improving cardio respiratory endurance, muscular strength, and flexibility. On Wednesday, student coaches have planned a work-out for their team. Student coaches have been very creative in making sure to address



the fitness components they are working on, and have incorporated some fun games like capture the flag or freeze tag. On Thursday, a sport specific circuit challenge takes place where students can earn points for their team while completing the circuit. The most exciting day is on Friday, where students compete in a physical challenge. Students earn points for the physical challenge and, in addition, get points for their team by dressing in their team colors.

The physical challenges have included loading sod into a dump truck, flipping a monster truck tire weighing 500 pounds, carrying 80 pounds around the track for a strong man challenge, loading bales of straw onto a cart while completing an obstacle course on the football field, obstacle courses within the gym, and even going out and completing the six-mile corn maze. A couple of weeks ago students even went outside to have their own version of the Iditarod, with students taking turns pulling sleds through a designated course.

Students have worked amazingly hard at getting fit and building team spirit and cooperation as they complete the challenges every week. Students have learned how to work with people they do not know and to motivate students of various fitness levels on their teams. They are absolutely excited about fitness and want to come to P.E. The Spokesman-Review ran an article featuring the Best Blackhawk Program on the front page Saturday, October 27, 2007. You can also watch a video blog at [spokesmanreview.com](http://spokesmanreview.com), with the students competing in the straw bales physical challenge. At [spokesmanreview.com](http://spokesmanreview.com), just enter "Cheney High School fitness video."



## COMMUNITY FORUMS TO OBTAIN INPUT CONCERNING SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH SCHEDULED BY SCHOOL BOARD

The Board of Directors of the district is desirous of obtaining community members' input to aid them in their search for a new superintendent of schools.

Michael Dunn, who leaves the district on July 1st to become superintendent of Educational Service District 101, has guided the district extremely well over the past five years, and the School Board is seeking district patrons' guidance concerning the attributes they wish his successor to bring to this position.

In order to provide the opportunity to hear from **YOU**, the Board has scheduled the following community forums:

- Tuesday, April 8      6:30-7:30 p.m.   Cheney High School Little Theatre, 460 N. Sixth, Cheney**
- Tuesday, April 8      6:30-7:30 p.m.   Windsor Elementary Community Room, 5504 W. Hallett, Spokane**
- Wednesday, April 9   5:00-6:00 p.m.   Sunset Elementary School, 12824 W. 12th, Airway Heights**

The Board is hopeful that many community members will be able to attend one of these forums. A survey document will be distributed at each forum, or can be obtained through the district's website, [www.cheneyisd.org](http://www.cheneyisd.org). This survey must be returned following the forum, or submitted to the Superintendent's office at 520 Fourth St., Cheney, WA 99004 by no later than Tuesday, April 8, 2008. Your input will be highly valued!

## Salnave Buddies and Books



Mrs. Smith's students at Salnave Elementary have had the opportunity each week to choose a "just right" book and read it to their preschool buddies in Mrs. Melhus's preschool class. They spend a few days reading their books and practicing how to read to an audience in preparation for Tuesdays and Wednesdays when they meet with their buddies. Mrs. Smith's students enjoy being good role models, and the preschoolers love having a friend read to them. This has been a wonderful way for the two classes to build a community of readers and, in turn, form meaningful relationships.

In the picture at the left, Zoe is reading as preschoolers Shilo and Tristan, along with Ms. Miller and Mathew, listen and look at the pictures.



## Three Springs participates in Relay for Life

Three Springs High School students Robin Albright and Austin Hicks recently finished a beautiful quilt to be raffled off as part of a sewing class taught by Lisa Staub. The quilt is titled "Leaves of Hope" and is one of four quilts that will be won by lucky ticket holders on May 17 as part of the 2008 Cheney Relay for Life fundraiser to be held at Woodward Stadium on the EWU campus.

The quilt may be seen at a variety of businesses in Cheney as part of a travelling exhibit of four quilts to be raffled. Owl Pharmacy, Curves, Spokane Teachers Credit Union and Rockwood Clinic are a few of the places the quilts may be seen, among others. The quilts will travel until the event on May 17. Raffle tickets may be purchased for one dollar each at any of the businesses showing the quilts, as well as from Three Springs High School, located next door to the Fisher Administration Building. Relay for Life team members will also be selling tickets. The proceeds from the raffle will benefit the American Cancer Society.



## Get READY! to Register for READY! for Kindergarten Classes

Send in your form today! Free READY! for Kindergarten classes will be offered three times this spring:

Saturday, April 12	Windsor Elementary, 5504 W. Hallett, Spokane	9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
Saturday, April 19	Sunset Elementary, 12824 W. 12th, Airway Heights	9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
Saturday, April 26	Salnave Elementary, 1015 Salnave Rd., Cheney	9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

Parents are encouraged to attend classes based on the age of their child. Classes are offered to parents of infants; parents of children age one to two; parents of children age two to three; parents of children age three to four, and parents of children age four to five. Each class is packed with new information on how your child discovers early a love for learning, and developmentally appropriate learning materials to "play with a purpose" with your child. Childcare will be provided during the parent classes for free. Registration forms are available on the Cheney Public Schools website and in the offices at Betz, Reid, Salnave, Sunset or Windsor Elementary Schools. You may also register by calling C.J. Johnson at 559-4200 or email [cjohnson@cheneysd.org](mailto:cjohnson@cheneysd.org).

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Cheney Public Schools complies with all state and federal rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, familial status, marital status, or age. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the school district's Title IX/RCW 28A.640 Officer and/or ADA Coordinator or Section 504 Coordinator. Or inquiries may be directed to the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of HEW, Washington, D.C.

Title IX/Chapter 28A.640 Officer/ADA Coordinator  
Dr. Debra Clemens, Assistant Superintendent  
Cheney School District, 520 Fourth Street  
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4550

Section 504 Coordinator  
Marilyn Larson, Director, Student Support Services  
Cheney School District, 520 Fourth Street  
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4507



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Requests for Disclosure of Public Records  
Sharon Throop, Public Records Officer  
Cheney School District, 520 Fourth Street  
Cheney, WA 99004 Phone: (509) 559-4502

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