

# WATER

Continued from Page A1

characterized the current low flow situation as one of the worst in decades.

"It's bad," said Castagnoli regarding Hood River Valley's low snow pack and river levels. "It's the worst in quite a while, compared to other years."

However, Castagnoli remembered several other years with comparable, even worse droughts in the Hood River Valley during his 15

years at the extension office, namely 2005 and 2001.

According to a story in the April 11, 2001 edition of the News, the Hood River was running at 60 percent below normal that year, with local reservoir levels varying from 70 to 90 percent below average. That puts the Hood River's water levels at 20 percent higher this year than its dire days in 2001.

Castagnoli said local agriculture has the biggest "consumptive" use of water, and would be impacted the most by the drought. "Particularly for orchards, the irriga-

tion supply is highly dependent on snowpack (and) the snowpack is extremely low."

Castagnoli said local residential water use was "pretty minor" compared to agricultural use. However, he said it could still play a role. "Any water that is conserved will improve the local situation this year," he said.

"We will all need to do our part to help fish and agriculture survive," said Anne Saxby, director of Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District. "This is the year to let your lawn go dormant. It would make a more profound change if everyone did."

Saxby explained that, while homeowners can choose whether or not to water their lawns, orchardists don't have the same option. "Orchard trees can't go dormant ... you can't not water those," she said.

The conservation district is coordinating a campaign to urge local residents to conserve water. Megan Saunders, watershed technician, is designing a new sign to encourage conservation.



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea.

SIGN PICTURED ABOVE was part of a 2001 water conservation initiative, set to return this summer.



Photo by Patrick Mulvihill

## ODELL CELEBRATION

Kids dance at Mid Valley School in Odell Thursday evening, honoring staff who are retiring—including Principal Dennis McCauley, center right. The school teamed up with the Odell Hispanic Prevention Coalition to honor educators and community members who made a positive impact in the Latino community. Dancers were led by Mid Valley teacher Sandy Salazar, who was also recognized at the event.

# JOANNE

Continued from Page A1

Jane's retirement; she then became head cook. At first, she prepared meals for Westside students only. Several years ago, she also began cooking for Hood River Middle School, and has since added Cascade Locks. She estimates that she serves 300 daily at Westside, 190 at HRMS, and 50 at Cascade Locks — for lunch. She also makes breakfast.

It's a challenge she enjoys.

"I keep a production record for each school, and each day write down notes for prep the next day — this school gets this much, this school gets this much," she said.

Each school has a designated storage area in the refrigerator, and breakfast and lunch are prepared accordingly. Two of her staff transports and serves the food at HRMS, while Cascade Locks' meals are delivered daily and served by instructional assistant Debi Fischer.

Portions are planned, with an emphasis on fruits and vegetables. Recent USDA mandates state that every child who goes through the cafeteria line must receive a half a cup of fruit or vegetable, and all breads must be 100 percent whole grain.

"They have to take it," she said. "They're learning to eat it more."

She serves fresh fruit, ranging from apples to grapes to cantaloupe, every day for breakfast, and at lunch, students choose items from a salad bar.

Because students have to take the fruits and vegetables, she tries to provide options like bagged carrots or sealed applesauce cups that can be "re-served" on the cafeteria sharing table,



Photo by Trisha Walker

FIRST AND SECOND GRADERS at Westside Elementary choose fruit and vegetables at the cafeteria's salad bar. Thursday's choices included fresh orange and apple slices, and bagged cut carrots. Once through the salad bar line, they'll hit the kitchen for their entrées.

where students who are still hungry can choose from unwanted items. It's one way to cut down on food waste — although waste still happens, and there's not much they can do about it.

While cooks used to make lunches from scratch, the trend now is more frozen or prepared foods. She often hears that there's a need to go back to homemade, but the kids' tastes have changed and they often won't eat those meals when they are prepared.

"More and more parents are so busy, they do a lot of box cooking, frozen food or take out and kids are just used to that," Franz said.

Another change: "We used to do desserts more often,"

Franz said. "We took away a lot of the snacky foods, like chips and desserts. It's more fruit and vegetables and a variety of choices for an entrée, but the kids don't like the idea that they don't get the desserts, they don't get the chips."

On Wednesday, Franz and other district head cooks visited Nature's Finest in Parkdale as part of the Farm to School initiative, where local farmers sell produce directly to schools for their lunch programs. Next year, the district will purchase a variety of vegetables from the farm — carrots, cucumbers, cabbage, lettuce, broccoli, and, Franz hopes, snap peas.

"The kids love (snap peas,) but they're usually too ex-

pensive," she said.

Her job isn't just about cooking; there is a lot of paperwork involved for both her and her staff: First Cook Veronica Jimenez, Assistant Cooks Jennifer Cox and Cindy Sparks, and Kitchen Helpers Susana Hernandez and Charmaine Wampler.

"We do a whole lot of counting and a whole lot of

bookwork," she said. "With the regulations that we have now, we have to count everything we put out and count what's left to make sure we put out what we're supposed to."

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## Athlete of the Week



**Jestena Mattson**  
HRV track and field

Jestena Mattson won both the 100- and 200-meter dashes at the OSAA 5A State Championship, setting new school records in both, as well as placing second in high jump.

The Athlete of the Week will receive a large pizza with 2 toppings from Papa Murphy's. Congratulations to our winner 5-30-15.



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# TCC wireless opens in HR

TCC, the largest Verizon Premium Wireless Retailer in the U.S., announced May 28 the opening of its newest location in Hood River.

Located at 2149 W. Cascade Ave., Suite 104, the new store offers interactivity while shopping for wireless devices, accessories and home solutions, and is designed as a destination for guests to get hands-on with the latest wireless devices.

On May 30, TCC will hold a grand opening event for the Hood River community, preceded by a ribbon cutting ceremony at noon on May 29. Local radio station KHR (98.3 FM) will host a live remote from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday. Bro-Dogs and Burgers will be on-site, providing guests with free hand-crafted burgers and gourmet sausage sandwiches. In celebration of the new store, TCC will make a charitable donation to The Next Door, Inc., a nonprofit organization that works with community programs to strengthen children and families and improve communities.

TCC will be giving away gift bags to the first 25 guests who attend the event.

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