

Ione students participate in "Grammarathon"



Pictured are: back row (L-R) - Dennis Schmidt, Kevin LaRue, Toffy Viwattavong, Beth Morter, Ms. Becky Wagenblast, Stefanie Medina and Tom Holland. Front row (L-R) - Mariah Bradfield, Tanner Rietmann, Yesenia Verduzco, Manon Bonier, Alex Rietmann and Kylie McElligott. —Contributed Photo

Becky Wagenblast's language arts classes have been participating in a "Grammarathon" all week. Students are divided up into five teams spanning across the four grade levels. The teams were Poseidon, Hermes, Artemis, Icarus and Aphrodite. Teams accumulate points all week to determine the winner. This is to be an annual event.

"My favorite part of this activity with working together and having fun competing," said sopho-

more, Robbi Johnston. "I never thought I'd be tested this much about grammar, it definitely helped me improve!"

Students are quizzed on adjectives, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, prepositions and prepositional phrases. Thursday was dedicated at 'Toga Thursday' in honor of the "Grammarathon." Many of high school students were dressed and ready to take on their rival teams.

NAIFA Blue Mountain announces scholarship availability

The Blue Mountain Chapter of the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors (NAIFA Blue Mountain) announces an offer of six \$1,500 scholarships to graduating high school seniors and first-year college students from Eastern Oregon counties who best represent the desire and potential to pursue a career in insurance, business, finance, accounting or agri-business.

Applications must be received by April 17. Late applications will not be considered. Applicants will be notified by May 15.

These scholarships will be awarded to students attending or planning to attend any four-year college or community college. For applications or questions, contact Beth Stewart at 541-910-8860 or email: bstewart@valleyinsurance.com.

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Nominations open for 10th annual Crystal Apple Awards

The Umatilla-Morrow Education Service District announces that nominations for the 2007-08 Crystal Apple "Excellence in Education" Awards are now being accepted through Wednesday, April 1.

This year's event will take place Wednesday, May 13, at the Pendleton Red Lion. This is the 10th year for the Crystal Apple program, which is sponsored by the UMESD, with support from Mid Columbia Bus Company, Bank of Eastern Oregon, Pendleton Red Lion, East Oregonian and the Hermiston Herald, among others.

The purpose of the awards is to recognize in-

dividuals who help to make our schools the best they can be. "Outstanding members of our community deserve recognition and praise for their hard work and dedication to educating our young people," said Casey White, Crystal Apple Awards director. "We want to be able to say a big 'thank you' to these wonderful individuals and those who want to recognize them."

The awards are open to all members of the regular classified and certificated service in Umatilla and Morrow County school districts. It is not open to administrators, though administrators are encouraged to nominate exemplary employees.

The award can be given to individuals who work full-time or part-time in any capacity other than administration. The cumulative total of regular service must be at least one year.

In addition to the Crystal Apple Awards, nominations also are being accepted for the Doug Flatt Memorial Leadership Award, which recognizes an outstanding administrator. Doug Flatt, the chief executive officer of Mid Columbia Bus, was well-known to school districts throughout Oregon, particularly those in the Eastern Oregon region. Doug lost his life in a tragic plane crash while on

business four years ago. In guiding the growth and operation of MidCo, Doug exemplified the finest qualities of leadership, attention to detail, service to his community, interpersonal relationships, and customer service. The purpose of this award is to recognize a school administrator or superintendent who exemplifies the same qualities for which Doug was legendary.

Nomination forms are available on the Crystal Apple page on the UMESD's Web site, www.umesd.k12.or.us/crystalapple. The deadline to make nominations is Wednesday, April 1, at 4 p.m.

Ione speech and debate team competes in California

The Ione Speech and Debate team traveled to Palo Alto, CA on February 6-9 to compete in the Stanford University High School Speech and Debate Tournament. Six members of the team made the trip with Coach Jim Raible.

After attending 10 tournaments in Oregon and Washington already this year, the students set their sites on Stanford. After much fund raising and preparation, they were ready. The tournament is one of the premier events on the west coast and, in fact, draws competitors from across the country. With approximately 120 schools competing, the lone team certainly had its work cut out for it.

"It's only the third year for the program," said Raible, "but a few students are ready for national competition now, and others need to see the best to help them grow. But most importantly, the students set this goal and worked hard for it."

The speech events consisted of four preliminary rounds, semis, and finals over two days of



Ronney Wilson, Mikey Raible, Matt Coleman, Mary Gates, Jeremy Coleman, and Dennis Schmidt take a break from competition to enjoy the view of Stanford University from the Hoover Tower. —Contributed Photo

competition. Freshman Jeremy Coleman competed in Humorous Interpretation, with his best round being a fourth place finish. Senior Ronney Wilson competed in Impromptu Speaking, taking first in one of his rounds. Junior Mikey Raible competed in Spontaneous Argumentation, advancing to the semi-final round and just missing finals.

Senior Matt Coleman and sophomore Dennis

Schmidt competed in Student Congress. Coleman's highest scoring speech during the four 2-hour sessions was a 5 out of 6, while Schmidt's highest was a perfect six for a speech on a resolution involving troop levels in Afghanistan.

The debate events had two divisions, junior varsity and varsity. As a sophomore, Mary Gates could have competed at the

JV level but chose to challenge herself at the varsity level instead. She had seven preliminary rounds of Lincoln Douglas Value debate over two days, ending up with a record of 3-4.

On Friday, before their events started, the team took some time to explore San Francisco. They drove through downtown and Chinatown before arriving at Fisherman's Wharf and Pier 39. The group walked around the area sightseeing, enjoying the view of Alcatraz and the Golden Gate Bridge.

"While it may be tempting to rest after a big trip like this, the team knows it's time to get right back to preparing, practicing, and fund-raising," said Coach Raible after returning from California. The team still has two more invitational tournaments before gearing up for districts, state, and the National Qualifying Tournament.

For more information about speech and debate or to support the team, call Jim Raible at Ione Schools @ 422-7131.

Oregon East Symphony to present Mahler's Epic Love Song

The Oregon East Symphony is taking on a Mahler masterpiece once again with a performance of his Symphony No. 5. The concert takes place on Sunday, March 1 at 3:15 p.m. at the Vert Auditorium.

Tickets are on sale now at the Oregon East Symphony office (lower floor of the Vert Auditorium) or at Armchair Books (39 SW

Dorion). Tickets are Adult: \$16/\$20; seniors: \$13/\$17; and students: \$3/\$8.

"Doing Mahler in a small town is no small feat," says OES Executive Director, Christina van der Kamp, who also plays in the percussion section. "This piece requires more than 70 players and hours and hours of rehearsal to make it

come together. All this work is worth it, for such a great piece of music."

The OES series of Mahler Symphony performances with maestro Woods have attracted notice and praise all over the region - Oregonian classical music critic David Stabler wrote that the "the OES gives Mahler the ride of his life."

Annual Shrove Tuesday pancake supper to be held

The annual Shrove Tuesday pancake supper will be held Tuesday, February 24, from 5-7:30 p.m. at All Saints' Episcopal Church.

Pancakes, ham, fruit, coffee, tea, milk and juice will be served. This is an all-you-can-eat meal. The cost is \$5 for adults and \$15 for families.

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