



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Hermiston's Sam Colbray pins Hood River's Max Lane recently at a dual meet in Hermiston.

COLBRAY:

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should," social sciences teacher John Christy said. "You hear only primarily about athletics. But he's a top-notch student."

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Colbray became interested in science at an early age. The consistency and uniformity appeals to him. He said every human body is the same, every person's biology is the same. A heart is a heart, an elbow an elbow. From there, it was only a small jump to consider medicine as a career. Delta said suddenly one day he wanted to be an orthopedic surgeon.

"It's athletically related," Colbray said. "Knee replacements, hip replacements, shoulders, elbows, anything like that. The reason I wanted to be a doctor was because — besides the money — that's what my parents said: doctors and lawyers. I don't feel like arguing with people and being in a suit and an office."

He felt that doing anything less than law or medicine was selling himself short.

"I could never think of going to a four-year university and not getting the most out of it," he said. "Why would I go to a four-year university (to do anything less)? To lay around and work in an insurance office? Why would I do that? Why would I waste potential?"

Colbray doesn't want to be a doctor simply because it pays well, though that is a consideration.

"Since he was little he's always excelled (at science)," Delta said. "Not that this says you're not good at science, or that you like science. But he's always had good grades in his science classes. And I thought that that's where it came from. The love of learning about science."

Colbray is not anxious about the challenges of collegiate academics or the rigors of medical school.

"I know that if I weren't prepared and I'm messing around, then I'd be nervous," he said. "I don't stress over things too much. I don't really stress over school."

Perhaps Colbray's academic confidence comes from athletic success. It has taken hard work and determination to become a state and national champion wrestler.

"I know that it's been done before," he said. "It's hard. Wrestling is a job in itself."

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Colbray takes all of his endeavors seriously, including academics.

In his advanced placement English class with Kasia Hoover, Colbray is active in classroom discussions and thinks critically about the material.

Recently, Hoover's class read and discussed George

Orwell's classic dystopian novel "1984," and Colbray was as active a member in the class as anyone.

"He's never afraid to say his opinion," Hoover said.

She said Colbray can dig deep into the content and not offer superficial analysis. While discussing "1984," Colbray explored the issue in depth. At the time, they were discussing the parallels between slave-like and anti-individualistic nature of the world in the novel with contemporary events.

"He will pose questions everyone is able to give an opinion on," Hoover said of Colbray acting as a gatekeeper in these discussions. "Sometimes that causes strife or a heated discussion, something I really encourage because it means they're thinking."

Civics teacher John Christy was impressed by the way Colbray conducted himself in the classroom.

"Sam as a student is very intellectual," he said. "He has a very good ability to go deep in the issues. For Sam overall, (he) is an excellent student. He has a high expectation in himself in the work that he does and that's portrayed in class as well."

"His ability to articulate his opinion on issues without stepping on people's toes and just stating, 'This is my opinion and this is why' and just being able to go further. Thinking about the higher-level thinking, he's able to analyze and evaluate, and that's a little surprising."

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Colbray is quiet and reserved, but he speaks his mind and is honest and sometimes that rubs people the wrong way. He knows exactly who he is, is comfortable with it and unashamedly likes what he likes.

He and his friends compete in video games on their phones. Colbray doesn't watch TV — a family rule,

if you can call it that — so he grew up spending time outside, watching, listening and observing. He appreciates a variety of activities like fishing and hunting trips with his father Leroy, road trips with Delta, sitting on the porch in the summertime and talking.

Sometimes, he gets lost in wrestling. He loves it so much, Delta said, that sometimes he forgets how much he loves, say, fishing.

"He forgets those things unless he's doing them because of his passion," she said. "He forgets about science and what called his attention to being a doctor, to being a surgeon. Everything in the house is about wrestling. Everything in his room is about wrestling. I think we've instilled in him there's a way to get there. And one way to get there was to get a scholarship."

As much as Colbray enjoys wrestling, as much work as he's put in to the sport, it's just another activity for him, though important. At the state tournament this Saturday between the morning session and finals, Colbray rode a small skateboard across the plaza to where his family was sitting. When asked why he's riding a skateboard hours before he's set to try and win his fourth title, he smiled and said sarcastically, "Trying to get hurt."

Leroy and Delta view wrestling as a means to an end, an opportunity for an education. Leroy knows what happens when athletics are put before academics.

Leroy's experience in college provides the cautionary tale. Leroy, an accomplished high school wrestler in his own right, attended Oregon State with the intention of wrestling. Without giving many details, Leroy said his college career ended with him dropping out because the wrestling thing didn't work out.

"Wrestling is a vehicle,

for me, to getting an education (for Sam)," Leroy said. "I failed completing my education at Oregon State because I wanted to be a wrestler."

"Sam is an athlete, but he can figure anything out. You leave Sam alone to figure something out, he figures it out better than me without getting frustrated. Just his ability to figure stuff out is uncanny to me. I don't know, I just love him."

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As he sat at his dining table flanked by his parents, Colbray is confident and introspective. He's not nervous about what comes next.

He's also humble. After winning his fourth state title at Veteran's Memorial Coliseum in Portland, he didn't raise four fingers or let out a roar. He shook his opponents' hand, shook the opposing coaches hands, and walked quietly off the mat.

"It's just another match, another day, another wrestling tournament, another consecutive year," he said.

He's made difficult decisions regarding his future. He decided to forgo his senior football season because of head injury concerns, which could have jeopardized his wrestling career.

He knows he's worked hard for what he has already achieved and knows he has to more hard work to come.

"If I put my effort into it and it's hard for me and I use all my resources and it doesn't turn out, that's what's meant to be," he said.

READ:

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teens to read. The signature event is Read Across America Day — March 2 — in honor of the birthday of Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known by his pen name, Dr. Seuss.

Schools across Umatilla County are participating in the annual event. Here is a snapshot of what some local schools will be tackling:

Hermiston

Desert View Elementary will have a Dr. Seuss Family Night from 6-7 p.m. Tuesday, March 8. Staff will offer snacks, games and literacy rewards for students who attend. The school will also have dress-up days during the week of March 7-10th.

Highland Hills Elementary will have dress-up days this week as well as a family night from 5-6 p.m. Thursday, March 3. Students and their families are invited to participate in readings, activities and treats during the evening. Each designated classroom will have a different book read by student readers and activities to accompany the book.

At Rocky Heights Elementary, students were working toward reading goals through the Accelerated Reader program and participating in a "Guess My Book" challenge. A Dr. Seuss book is partially read over the announcements, and those who guess correctly have a chance to win a free book. The school also hosted a "Gallery Walk" to deter-

mine the best Dr. Seuss book theme decorating a classroom door and had a family night on Tuesday. Wednesday, the week continues with guest readers — including superintendent Dr. Fred Maiocco — and pajama day.

Sunset Elementary will be wearing Seuss hats on Wednesday in honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday. Because of testing, most of the school's activities will be next week, March 7-10. The school will have a used book exchange, theme days and a family night on Thursday, March 10, the school will have "Inside Out" day and will be having a family night and showing the film, "Inside Out."

At West Park, family read-ins and theme days will also make an appearance, and the students are "visiting" national landmarks with every 1 mil words read.

Stanfield

Stanfield Elementary will have theme days each day this week, culminating in "Hooray for Diffendoofer Day" on Thursday. The school will have an all-school assembly, a reading competition, and a door decorating content. In the library, each grade has a different activity from turtle stacking to Sneeze Ball.

Umatilla

In addition to dress-up days, guest readers and daily trivia, McNary Heights Elementary is again presenting a "Book Parade" on Thursday. All classes will create a float based on a book of the class' choosing.



STAFF PHOTO BY JENNIFER COLTON

Stanfield Elementary School students vote on Tuesday to determine if they collectively liked or disliked green eggs and ham, based on the menu featured in a famed Dr.

STUDENT OF THE WEEK

Kaleigh Waggoner
PENDLETON HIGH SCHOOL

Kaleigh Waggoner is a senior at Pendleton High School who currently manages a 4.00 unweighted GPA while involved in a multitude of extracurricular activities and community service events. Throughout her high school career, she has had numerous leadership roles with FFA, ASTRA, FLICC, and 4-H. She is the present Pendleton FFA President and ASTRA Service Club Secretary. Kaleigh is a Varsity Cross Country and Track athlete. She is also a Link Crew Leader, member of National Honor Society, and was a Princess on the 2015 Umatilla County Fair Court. Amid her other involvement, Kaleigh serves the community frequently as a Pendleton Round-Up and Happy Canyon volunteer, nursery volunteer for her church, Round-Up City Racer coach, student tutor for her school, and countless other service events. She is attending George Fox University in the fall of 2016, majoring in Nursing and minoring in Spanish. Kaleigh has a huge heart for children and is going to pursue a career as a Pediatric Nurse specializing in surgery.

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