



Yelm Rotary Book Program Brings ‘Olive’ to Prairie Elementary School

Teacher Mini-Grants Allow for 150 Books as Author Visits Yelm School

BY PAUL DUNN
Nisqually Valley News

Poor Olive. The woolly miss is the center of attention but for all the wrong reasons.

First, she picked some flowers for her mom, but they wilted by the time she got them home. Then she hit her best friend in the head during a game of kickball, and the mud from her boots sprayed Grandpa’s hat. Then, to top off her misadventures, she made a beautiful card for her mom but used too much glue and inadvertently stuck the card to her own head.

Whew. But despite her unintended mishaps and funny frustrations, Olive learned in the end — that as her name Olive Ewe (I Love You) implies — she was cherished with no misinterpretation.

Olive, by the way, is a young, female lamb — and the star of a new children’s book written and illustrated by an author and artist from Buckley.

Last Friday, Feb. 28, a pair of teachers at Prairie Elementary School passed out paperback versions of the book “Olive” to about 140 kindergarten and second-grade students to keep and take home. And during a special school celebration that day, Olive’s author Michelle Wilson and illustrator Angie Penrose visited the school library that was chock full of enraptured kids.

The teachers — Jeanette Burnham, kindergarten, and Amye Kay, second grade — obtained the books after receiving the last of 12 2019 elementary school Teacher Mini-Grants from



Paul Dunn / Nisqually Valley News

Michelle Wilson, author of the children’s book “Olive,” speaks to a group of second graders on Feb. 28 at Prairie Elementary School in Yelm. Wilson read Olive to the students after introducing herself and answering a few questions. The books were purchased through a Teacher Mini-Grant awarded by the Rotary Club of Yelm, and each student was able to take a book home.

the Rotary Club of Yelm. Burnham and Kay had both requested Olive, and the resulting \$1,000 grant — \$500 for each teacher — enabled the Rotary Club to purchase 150 of the books.

Kay, who is good friends with Wilson and Penrose, learned that the author and illustrator had just published their first children’s book and that it would perfectly augment her classroom teaching.

“Their book is a character education book, and it fits beautifully into what we as teachers promote in our class meetings each day at school,” Kay wrote in an email. “I am so excited that our students were able to take home their book and share their first-hand experience with their families.”

The Rotary Club issued the grants this year for the first time, selecting 12 recipients from about 20 grant applications it received and in the process awarding

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Prairie Elementary School second-graders Tyler Nichols, 8, far left, Nataley Wimbles, 8, and Logan Romero, 8, practice drawing the lamb “Olive” from the children’s book of the same name on Feb. 28 while their teacher Amye Kay looks on. The Rotary Club of Yelm awarded a Teacher Mini-Grant to Kay and colleague Jeanette Burnham, who teaches kindergarten, to be able to buy copies of Olive for students to take home.

Nisqually Valley Happenings

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

- Hatha yoga instructor Lee Israel will lead weekly classes at the Nisqually Valley Moose Lodge for students of varied experience levels. Classes are Tuesdays (no classes on the first Tuesday of the month) at 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. and Saturdays at 9 a.m. Drop classes are priced at \$5 and there are no classes on the first Tuesday of the month. These classes are BYOM — bring your own mat! For more information, visit www.yogainyelm.com.
- Join in on Creative Playtime at 10:30 a.m. at the Yelm Timberland Library. This is a playtime opportunity for children, aged birth to 6 years old, to participate in fun activities with a participating adult. Come for the building blocks and Magna-tiles, but stay for the model trains, dollhouses and fun memories.

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

- Take part in Chair Yoga at 10:15 a.m. at the Yelm Timberland Library. Chair yoga is a gentle form of yoga that is practiced sitting on a chair, or standing using a chair for support. Come relax as Helen leads us through calming stretches and balance.

- Between Sisters, a well-known Yelm beauty boutique, is making a comeback! Join them and the Yelm Area Chamber of Commerce for their grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony at 11 a.m.
- OPENING NIGHT: Standing Room Only presents a production of “Calendar Girls,” a stage adaptation by Tim Firth and directed by Dawn Emilia Young. “When Annie’s husband, John, dies of Leukemia, her and her best friend Chris resolve to raise money for a new sofa in the family room where they waited while John had his chemotherapy treatments. They persuade fellow WI members to pose nude with them for an alternative calendar in John’s memory and raise money for leukemia research. The news of the women’s charitable venture spreads like wildfire, and hordes of press soon descend on the small English village of Knapeley, where hilarity ensues.” This production will be presented at SRO’s new Pop Up Black Box Theater, located upstairs of the Wellspring Wellness Center at 9144 Burnett Road S.E. in Yelm. Friday and Saturday showtimes begin at 7:30 p.m., with Sunday’s showtime at 7

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MEETINGS

MONDAYS

- **The Yelm Lions Club** meets at 6 p.m. on the first Monday of the month at the Carlson Scout Cabin.
- **TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)** meets 6:30-7:30 p.m. every Monday at Yelm Prairie Christian Center. For ages 7 and older.
- **Roy City Council** meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday of the month at Roy City Hall.
- **The Yelm Planning Commission** meets at 4 p.m. on the third Monday of each month at the Yelm Public Safety Building.
- **New Attitudes Al-Anon Family Group**, a support group for families and friends of problem drinkers, meets at 6 p.m. at the Yelm Methodist Church.

TUESDAYS

- **The Yelm Lions Club morning group** meets at 7 a.m. the third Tuesday of the month at Mr. Dougs Restaurant.
- **Friends of the Yelm Library** meets at 11 a.m. on the first Tuesday of the month at the Yelm Library.
- **Yelm City Council** meets at 6 p.m. the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. It also holds a study session at 6 p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month.
- **Rainier City Council** meets at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at Rainier City Hall.
- **Nisqually Valley Voices Toastmaster Club** meets at 6:15 p.m. every Tuesday at the Olympia Federal Savings building in Yelm.
- **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5580**

(Nisqually) meets at 7:30 p.m. every second Tuesday of the month at the Yelm Community Center.

WEDNESDAYS

- **Rainier School Board** meets at 6 p.m. on the second to last Wednesday of the month at the Rainier District Office.
- **The Southeast Thurston Fire Authority Board of Commissioners** meets at 6 p.m. the first Wednesday of the month at the fire station on Mill Road.
- **We Love Rainier Washington** meets every Wednesday before the third Thursday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at the Rainier Senior Center.

THURSDAYS

- **Rotary Club of Yelm** meets at 7:30 a.m. every Thursday at Tahoma Valley Bar and Grill.
- **Yelm Midday Lions** meet at noon on the fourth Thursday of the month at Mr. Dougs Restaurant.
- **Yelm Creative Communicators Toastmaster Club** meets at noon every Thursday at Yelm City Hall.
- **New Attitudes Al-Anon Family Group**, a support group for families and friends of problem drinkers, meets at 7 p.m. at the Yelm Methodist Church.
- **We Love Rainier Washington** meets every third Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Rainier Senior Center.

SUNDAYS

- **New Attitudes Al-Anon Family Group**, a support group for families and friends of problem drinkers, meets at 6:30 p.m. at the Yelm Methodist Church.



OLIVE:

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a total of \$4,800. The grants helped fund classroom books, wobble stools, scholastic books, library books and cushions.

The grant application from Kay and Burnham, though, especially intrigued the Rotary, said club treasurer and past president Sandi Hanson.

“We really liked the idea that the kids would be able to take the books home with them,” Hanson said. “This was the first time for that.”

Hanson said the Rotary Club would repeat the program next year with grant applications available in September.

“Our goal this year was to support literacy in the elementary schools,” Hanson said. “The Teacher Mini-Grant program was absolutely successful, and we were very pleased at the reception we received from the schools and glad that we could help out in a small way.”

Burnham credited the Rotary with “recognizing the importance of getting books into the hands of young children.”

“Being read to and then reading themselves helps children build language skills, expand their imaginations, increase their vocabulary, and helps children understand that the written word carries a message,” she said.

And what, exactly, was Olive’s message?

Ian Codina, 8, one of Kay’s students, praised Olive for keep-



Paul Dunn / Nisqually Valley News

Prairie Elementary School second-graders Hattie Curry, 7, and Ian Codina, 8, were among students at Prairie Elementary School who were able to take home a soft-cover version of the children's book "Olive."

ing her cool.

“She was able to solve her problems without getting mad at anyone or hurting anyone,” he

said. “I really liked the story and the illustrations.”

Codina’s classmate Hattie Curry, 7, had a similar take.

“I really liked how Olive figured out how to make things better,” she said. “I also like the pictures in the book because they’re

cute.”

And with that, Olive’s no good, rotten, terrible day seems to have gotten a lot brighter.

EVENTS:

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p.m. General admission is \$20, military is \$17.50 and student tickets are \$15. Group rates are available.

- The Phoenix, a high-energy dynamic rock cover group, will take the stage at 9 p.m. at the Nisqually Red Wind Casino for a four-hour set. With members from around the Seattle-Tacoma area, this group is a regional hit and offer a number of Top-40 and R&B covers that are sure to impress.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

- Join the Friends of the Yelm Timberland Library at their monthly book sale from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- Hatha yoga instructor Lee Israel will lead weekly classes at the Nisqually Valley Moose Lodge for students of varied experience levels. Classes are Tuesdays (no classes on the first Tuesday of the month) at 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. and Saturdays at 9 a.m. Drop classes are priced at \$5 and there are no classes on the first Tuesday of the month. These classes are BYOM — bring your own mat! For more information, visit www.yogainyelm.com.

- Mat Yoga will be offered from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Yelm Timberland Library. Wear comfortable clothing, bring your mat, and be ready to stretch in this floor yoga program.

- Restorative Yoga will take place at noon following Mat Yoga at the Yelm Timberland Library. Participants will need to bring supportive props to allow for deep stretching as this yoga provides both mental and physical restoration through full-body exercises. Suggested props include mats, yoga blocks, blankets and bolsters.

- From 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., staff at the Yelm Timberland Library will host free one-on-one tech coaching for those that need help with basic computer skills, tablets, internet, streaming, and other services. Seats for “Tech Basics” are limited. For more information and to register, visit www.trl.org.

- Yelm Timberland Library will host “Gamers & Gamers,” an hour and a half of video games

and socialization for teenagers. The event begins at 2 p.m. and no registration is required.

- Yelm Dollars for Scholars will host a silent and live auction at 5 p.m., with doors opening at 4 p.m. Proceeds from the night’s event go to merit-based scholarships for Yelm High School’s class of 2020. The silent auction will start promptly at 5 p.m. and the live auction will begin at 6:45 p.m. Have something of value that you’d like to donate? Contact Yelm Dollars for Scholars through its Facebook page.

- Standing Room Only presents a production of “Calendar Girls,” a stage adaptation by Tim Firth and directed by Dawn Emilia Young. “When Annie’s husband, John, dies of leukemia, her and her best friend Chris resolve to raise money for a new sofa in the family room where they waited while John had his chemotherapy treatments. They persuade fellow WI members to pose nude with them for an alternative calendar in John’s memory and raise money for leukemia research. The news of the women’s charitable venture spreads like wildfire, and hordes of press soon descend on the small English village of Knapeley, where hilarity ensues.” This production will be presented at SRO’s new Pop Up Black Box Theater, located upstairs of the Wellspring Wellness Center at 9144 Burnett Road S.E. in Yelm. Friday and Saturday showtimes begin at 7:30 p.m., with Sunday’s showtime at 7 p.m. General admission is \$20, military is \$17.50 and student tickets are \$15. Group rates are available.

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SUNDAY, MARCH 8

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to raise money for a new sofa in the family room where they waited while John had his chemotherapy treatments. They persuade fellow WI members to pose nude with them for an alternative calendar in John’s memory and raise money for leukemia research. The news of the women’s charitable venture spreads like wildfire, and hordes of press soon descend on the small English village of Knapeley, where hilarity ensues.” This production will be presented at SRO’s new Pop Up Black Box Theater, located upstairs of the Wellspring Wellness Center at 9144 Burnett Road S.E. in Yelm. Friday and Saturday showtimes begin at 7:30 p.m., with Sunday’s showtime at 7 p.m. General admission is \$20, military is \$17.50 and student tickets are \$15. Group rates are available.

TUESDAY, MARCH 10

- Hatha yoga instructor Lee Israel will lead weekly classes at the Nisqually Valley Moose Lodge for students of varied experience levels. Classes are Tuesdays (no classes on the first Tuesday of the month) at 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. and Saturdays at 9 a.m. Drop classes are priced at \$5 and there are no classes on the first Tuesday of the month. These classes are BYOM — bring your own mat! For more information, visit www.yogainyelm.com.

- The Yelm Area Chamber of Commerce will host its monthly chamber forum and luncheon at noon. This month’s topic is on social media marketing. This event is for chamber members.

- Volunteers from AARP Tax Aide will be present, from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the Yelm Timberland Library to assist patrons with appointments in preparing and filing federal tax returns. To make an appointment, stop by the reference desk or call 360-559-1349.

- The Pageturners Book Club will meet at 7 p.m. at Yelm Timberland Library for their monthly discussion and book talk. This month, the club will ruminate on the book “Becoming” by Former-First Lady Michelle Obama. This event is for adults, aged 18 and

older, and is free to the public.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

- From 10:15 to 11 a.m., attend Family Storytime at the Tenino Timberland Library. Babies and toddlers (ages 0-2) and kids in preschool (ages 3-6) are invited. Music, movement and books for the whole family will be offered. Children must be accompanied by participating caregivers.

- Join in on Creative Playtime at 10:30 a.m. at the Yelm Timberland Library. This is a playtime opportunity for children, aged birth to 6 years old, to participate in fun activities with a participating adult. Come for the building blocks and Magna-tiles, but stay for the model trains, dollhouses and fun memories.

- Teenagers of all experiences and backgrounds are welcomed to the Yelm Timberland Library’s winter campaign of “Dungeons and Dragons: City of Waterdeep.” All materials needed will be provided. Adventure begins promptly at 3:15 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

- Hatha yoga instructor Lee Israel will lead weekly classes at the Nisqually Valley Moose Lodge for students of varied experience levels. Classes are Tuesdays (no classes on the first Tuesday of the month) at 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. and Saturdays at 9 a.m. Drop classes are priced at \$5 and there are no classes on the first Tuesday of the month. These classes are BYOM — bring your own mat! For more information, visit www.yogainyelm.com.

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- The Tenino Timberland Library will host an afternoon of arts and crafts — Crafternoon. At each session, staff will present a new project for attendees to learn and create. All supplies provided and you’ll

get to take home your creation. The fun starts at 1 p.m. and will run until 2:30 p.m.

- Volunteers from AARP Tax Aide will be present, from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the Yelm Timberland Library to assist patrons with appointments in preparing and filing federal tax returns. To make an appointment, stop by the reference desk or call 360-559-1349.

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

- Take part in Chair Yoga at 10:15 a.m. at the Yelm Timberland Library. Chair yoga is a gentle form of yoga that is practiced sitting on a chair, or standing using a chair for support. Come relax as Helen leads us through calming stretches and balance.

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- Stir Crazy, a staple in the Washington state cover band scene, will perform a four-hour set starting 9 p.m. at the Nisqually Red Wind Casino. This five-piece band loves to mix things up, shifting between modern, classic, dance rock, soul, R&B and pop music.