

**The East County Journal
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**PHOTOGRAPHY DIVISION
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White Pass 2022 School Board positions finalized

BY CATHY KANE
East County Journal

Re-elected Board members were installed and Board position elections took place during the White Pass School (WPS) Board meeting on Monday, Dec. 20 on Zoom. Ricky Emerson was unanimously approved to serve as board chair with Joel McMahan as vice chair and Sandra Freitas as legislative representative. Heather Muir and Darla Mullins will continue as board members.

Board members received a report on

the elementary school library and physical education programs, which were featured in this month's school spotlight.

The library, under the direction of Dorinda Guy who assumed the position in 2007, was noted to have a catalog of 9,797 books and other materials, not including references and teachers' resources.

"What I enjoy about being the librarian is still being able to read to the younger grades, but also find it thrilling when the older grades ask for a suggestion to read, and they end up really liking it," Guy said. Beginning his 14th year as physical

education teacher, Bryan DeLong noted he enjoys giving students an outlet to play and learn.

"My favorite part is to see students come out of their shell with physical activity," he said.

Elementary school Principal Gregory Teel noted that each student has the opportunity to participate in both programs several times a week. Teel reviewed the "learning made fun" programs highlighting planetary science by teacher Erin Shook and fine motor skills by teacher Nori Kruger.

Non-academic special elementary school events included the canned and non-perishable food drive, "spirit days" featuring ugly sweaters, holiday socks and pajamas and decking the halls with holiday door décor. Teel noted preparation is also underway for i-Ready Diagnostic assessment in January.

In this report, Junior/Senior High School Principal Chris Schumaker noted Cispus Learning Center staff conducted a leadership rope course for seventh and eighth

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Snow fun for the dog

Snow arrived just in time for Christmas and winter break and had children heading for the hills for some snow fun. From left, Landon and Casey Fleming, and their dog, Molly, fly off their sled at the bottom of Snoopy's Hill near Morton Elementary School on Sunday afternoon. None of the sledders were injured and made multiple treks up and down the hill taking advantage of the fresh snow.



Chris Johnson | East County Journal

Cowlitz River Fisheries quarterly meeting includes hatchery returns

BY BUDDY ROSE
East County Journal

Members of the Cowlitz River Fisheries Technical Committee (FTC) hosted their quarterly public meeting recently. The meeting took place online and included representatives of Tacoma Power, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Department of Ecology, Lewis County Public Utility District (PUD) and other related agencies along with a number of public participants.

The FTC was formed as a result of the court-ordered settlement agreement that was part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's relicensing

of Tacoma Power's dams and other facilities on the Cowlitz River in 2002. The FTC discusses and makes recommendations for management of fisheries and operations of the dams, fish hatcheries and other facilities on the Cowlitz River in Lewis County.

The FTC meets monthly and is not subject to all of the provisions of the Open Public Meetings rules in Washington but, as a result of public concerns about transparency, opens a meeting each quarter to the public.

Eric Shoblom, fish facilities manager for Tacoma Power, provided an update on Cowlitz River hatchery returns. He said

the returns of coho for 2020 and 2021 are trending above the 10-year averages, particularly the natural origin fish from above the dams. Total spring chinook returns are lagging behind the 10-year averages for the last two years except for the natural origin fish, which returned in record numbers, Shoblom said.

Due to recent poor returns of hatchery spring chinook, Kalamia River smolts were added this year and released from the hatchery at a large size (five/pound) in an effort to increase survival. Fall chinook returns continue to be disappointing, he noted, but brood stock goals

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White Pass ski resort opens to fresh powder

BY CATHY KANE
East County Journal

Winter's arrival in East Lewis County with a fresh gust of snow has county snow plow drivers out in full force clearing the way along Highway 12 to the White Pass Ski area, where 100 percent of all runs are open as well as Ribeye and Progression terrain parks.

Open daily from 8:45 a.m. to 4 p.m., including New Year's Day, lift tickets are required for skiers ages 9 to 72 and must be purchased online in advance at shop.skiwhitepass.com/online-lift-tickets. According to information provided by White Pass Washington, lift tickets are expected to sell out during the holiday period.

Reservations for New Year's Eve are not required for the "Throwback Dance Party" featuring DJ Josh Denney. The event is scheduled to coincide with New York New Year's Eve activities broadcasted live. Night skiing will be available from 2 to 8 p.m. Regular menu items in the bistro and café will also be available. The arrival of the New Year will be celebrated at 9 p.m. Tickets for the

event will be available at the ticket booth at 2 p.m.

A New Year's Eve guided twilight snowshoe tour through the Nordic Center will also take place at 4:30 p.m. The cost of \$59 includes snow shoes (please wear your own snow boots) and poles, guided tour and refreshments. All participants are requested to meet at 4:15 p.m. at the Nordic yurt to be fitted with snow shoes. The event will be guided by Sara Lasha Washburn, who will also guide twilight snowshoe tours from 4:15 to 6:30 p.m. on Saturdays through Feb. 26.

More information about the White Pass skiing area, including daily temperature and weather reports on the mountain, snow level, avalanche conditions and policy conditions can be found at skiwhitepass.com. The website also contains travel directions and useful tips, as well as information for family activities and childcare services, lessons and equipment rental, lodging and dining, shopping and other services.

Direct access to the snowline is available at 509-672-3100 and the business office at 509-672-3101.

Morton SD places old bus garage in surplus to sell

BY BOBBI BARNES
East County Journal

At the Morton School District board meeting Dec. 20, the board-declared property at 310 Second Street as surplus. The property, currently the site of the district's old bus garage, will be sold after the process outlined by the state is completed.

The board chose to keep its current leadership positions: Pat Saldaña, Chair; Chase Buffington, Vice Chair and Legislative Chair; and Clint Scoggins, WIAA Representative.

Saldaña announced there was a vacancy for the Washington School Directors Association District 5 representative seat. She encouraged her

fellow board members to consider applying, citing the importance for East Lewis County to be represented on the board.

The board approved Payton Dunlap as a high school girls' basketball volunteer coach and Brad Peters as assistant high school baseball coach. They also approved Candi Diamond and Kristi Smith as paraprofessionals. Tiffany Coleman will be teaching second grade beginning second semester.

The board went into executive session at 6:30 p.m., where no decisions were made. They came out at 6:46 p.m., and the meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, Jan. 17, in the high school library.



Up on the roof

Ric Hallock | East County Journal

Work crews made quick work of removing two aging HVAC units from the roof of the Roxy Theater in Morton on Dec. 15. The work is part of the renovation project that also includes a new roof and adding backstage space.