



# Battle Ground Public Schools

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## *Battle Ground Bits and Bites*

An occasional roundup of news you can use -- or cheer

***Daylight Saving Time ends NOT this weekend, but next, at 2 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 7.***



## *Happy Halloween!*

Amboy Middle School fifth graders, from left, Landon Homola, Riley Sarkinen and Joses Johnston pose proudly with their plump pumpkin packed with crumpled paper in preparation for Halloween.

## Thank you, crossing guards and bus drivers

**Guardian angels on Main Street:** Mrs. Lucille Erdahl, who lives north of Battle Ground, contacted Roque Mentele, supervisor of school district security and traffic control, to heap praise and gratitude on two of our crossing guards. Linda Potter and Traci Neis were stationed on Main Street near BGHS on Sept. 27 when Mrs. Erdahl stumbled while carrying mail from the post office to her car.

“I recently found out I have osteoporosis real bad,” she said. “I was terrified. “These two ladies saw me fall and hurried over to me. They said not to get up yet, to just wait a bit. Then my husband got out of car and came over. I’m OK now. I was sore for three days, but didn’t break anything. If I had requested two guardian angels from God, I’d have picked these two ladies. They were absolutely wonderful.” Her husband, Gordon Erdahl, retired several years ago as a school district deliveryman working out of the warehouse, she said.

**Petermann personnel protect their precious passengers:** When a Tukes Valley first grader got off his regular bus at his regular stop Oct. 20, everything seemed fine. And it

would have been, except that the family's house was being remodeled and the family was staying elsewhere that night and no note had been sent to the school explaining that the youngster was to ride a different bus that day. A few minutes after the youngster was dropped off, another Petermann school bus, driven by Kimber Kahler, went past. Kahler realized a boy that young and alone on the side of a rural road wasn't right. Already well past the scene, Kahler radioed afternoon dispatcher Irene Gilbert about the boy tromping along in the ditch next to the road. (As it turned out, the lad had decided to walk to the place he was supposed to have ridden the bus.) Gilbert promptly radioed another Petermann driver in the area, Beth Weston, and told her to pick up the boy. In the meantime, Gilbert tracked down the mother by cell phone. The mom had by then realized her son must have taken the wrong bus and she was en route to the regular bus stop to look for him. All ended well, with a reunion of son, tearful mom and rightfully proud Petermann employees.

## WatchDOGS start 3rd year at Glenwood

Approximately 100 dads, grandpas and uncles and about 200 Glenwood Heights Primary students enjoyed a pizza dinner Oct. 14 at the kickoff of the school's 2010-11 WatchDOGS (Dads of Great Students) program, the creation of the National Center for Fathering ([www.fathers.com](http://www.fathers.com)). It started at Glenwood in February 2009, with Jim Fairchild, father of two students, as the driving force. The WatchDOGS signed up the men as class room mentors. **Photo:** Principal David Kennedy, left, and Jim Fairchild, with, from left, Jordan Berberian, Zachary Berberian, Jillian Warner, London Fairchild, Emrie Elliott and Madyson Fairchild.



## School psychologist: 'A whirlwind position'

Nov. 8-12 is National School Psychology Awareness Week, in acknowledgement of the job done by more than 26,000 school psychologists in education settings nationwide. In the words of Tukes Valley Primary's school psychologist Joy Bronkhorst, nine years in the profession, school psychologists "are advocates for students. We work closely with teachers and staff to identify concerns early so we can intervene and remove barriers to learning, so they can be successful academically, emotionally and behaviorally." School psychologists respond to questions or concerns from teachers, school counselors, students themselves and parents.

Two of the most frequent reasons parents seek out the school psychologist are to discuss concerns about potential negative effects of family discord or economic hardship on their child's emotional or behavioral functioning.

Mary Ferguson at Glenwood Heights Primary, in her second year as a school psychologist, said she and others among her colleagues like to start the year by visiting every classroom “to explain who we are and what our job is. Otherwise, we only meet students when they are struggling or something bad happens. This way, they will at least have met us under better circumstances. It makes them more willing to approach us and makes us less scary and easier for them to approach.”

Bronkhorst and Ferguson stress that while they might meet with a student one-on-one in a given situation, they notify parents and get permission for additional visits or the child’s participation in small-group meetings, etc.

“This is a whirlwind position; it is nonstop,” Bronkhorst said. “Every day on this job is different,” adds Ferguson.

## Penmanship and history merge at Yacolt primary



**Quillmanship** -- Suzanne Gries' Yacolt 4th graders, from left: Charley Matson, Lanser Hersey, Donny Kulla and Aubrey Kysar.

Some Yacolt Primary students honored Constitution Day, Sept. 17, by writing the Preamble to the Constitution with genuine quills made from the feathers of school teacher-librarian Emily Meek’s peacocks. There are no erasers on pens, Meek notes, and so “I ask the students to be slow and careful. Research has shown that good penmanship helps their brains to think.” Of course, the exercise also helps them “become familiar with the founding documents of our country.”

## Quick-kudos corner (and ‘time-flies’ award)

**Tukes Valley Primary** is the first school in the district to be up and running with a new Website employing the same Drupal content management system used on the new district Website. Congratulations to Cheryl O’Dell at TVP and others involved in the make-over.

**Maple Grove Primary** has received a \$1,000 “Making a Difference to Our Kids” grant from **Wells Fargo**, based on free-and-reduced-price lunch numbers.

**The North County Community Food Bank** auction Oct. 16 cleared \$12,372.64. Donations of gift baskets and other auction items came in from around the district. Julie Backous at **CASEE** says employees in that building alone donated or procured enough to fill 55 baskets. “Many people will receive help from the food bank thanks to their generosity,” she said.

**Amboy Middle School** is one of 94 schools in the state (and only four in the six-county Educational Service District 112), named last week as a 2010 “School of Distinction,” based on improvement in reading and math test scores. The announcement was made by Superintendent Shonny Bria and Deputy Superintendent Diana Gilsinger during the School Board meeting last

Saturday, Oct. 23, which, by happenstance, was at Amboy Middle School.

Congratulations and thank yous to students throughout the school district who are **peer mediators** at their schools. After they are chosen for these roles by teachers, principals and students they are trained to help fellow students find peaceful resolution to conflicts. Peer mediators at Daybreak and Chief Umtuch middle schools had a special guest at their training session Oct. 14 at Battle Ground City Hall. Mayor Mike Ciraulo talked to them and gave them a tour of City Hall. While he was at it, Ciraulo, who is in the fire service, also demonstrated how to get an injured person out of a burning building.

**The unofficial “How time flies” award** for this edition of Bits and Bites goes to **Eric Liljedahl**, BGHS golf coach for 30 years. In the mid-1980s he coached **Randy Hall**. This year, two of his golfers are Randy’s children, **Kassidy Hall**, a junior, and her brother **Chad**, a sophomore. That’s not all, folks. Their older sister, **Whitney**, also golfed for Liljedahl, graduating in 2007.

## BGHS’s Sheryl Piper named cross country coach of the year



Sheryl Piper, right, checks on BGHS cross country aspirants at start of the 2010 season. Piper has been honored by fellow coaches as the Greater St. Helens League’s class 4A cross country coach of the year. A counselor on the BGHS faculty, Piper has been head cross country coach there for 20 years. Her boys’ and girls’ teams finished second in last week’s district 4A meet at Lewisville Park, where the Prairie High girls, coached by Phil Phimister, were first in 3A competition. Both schools will compete this weekend at the bi-district meet in Lakewood.

## Speaking of running, congratulations to . . .

At least six rain-soaked Battle Ground Public Schools employees completed the Portland Marathon Sunday, Oct. 10, and at least four more – all from Maple Grove Middle School -- ran the half-marathon over much of the same course that day. Runners in the full marathon (26.2 miles) began in downtown Portland, wound their way north to the St. Johns Bridge where they crossed the Willamette River and headed back south to the Broadway Bridge and into downtown again to the finish line.

Congratulations to the employees we know about who completed the marathon: **Mark**

**Clements**, River HomeLink; **Christy Sloan**, Prairie High School; **Julie Drimmel**, Daybreak Primary; **Lea Nyseth**, Pleasant Valley Middle; **Mike Walsh**, Daybreak Middle and **Marina Schwartz**, Amboy Middle.

At least five employees completed the 13.-1-mile half marathon that rainy Sunday morning, including **Nikole Mills**, a desktop support tech who works out of CASEE, and four Maple Grove Middle School staffers: **Sarah Belokonny**, **Darcy Hurst**, **Penny Leneaus** and **Laurie Kuykendall**.

Another finisher was **Jessica Hamilton**, Battle Ground High 1996 valedictorian and the daughter of George (Daybreak Primary faculty) and Kim (Daybreak Middle) Hamilton. . . . The winner of the wheelchair marathon that day was **Craig Blanchett** of Battle Ground, father of Alexander, a ninth grader at CAM, and Quincy, a junior at BGHS.

## Amboy runners and walkers accept ‘challenge’



More than 600 Amboy Middle School students, faculty, staff and students’ family members participated in a 90-minute Eagle Fun Run/Walk on a half-mile, varied-terrain course at the school Oct. 15. The intent is to promote health and physical fitness as part of the “Governor’s Health Bowl Challenge,” in which the school participates annually. Principal Shayla Ebner said, “This event has brought our community together in a very positive way.”

## Mark your calendar

**Saturday, Oct. 30 Maple Grove Primary Fall Carnival** – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., sponsored by PTA, with games, prizes, bake sale, cake walk, costume contest, staff mummy wrap contest,

pumpkin and veggie carving contests. Free admission, but donations for North County Community Food Bank welcome. Concession will benefit Science Olympiad.

**Nov. 6, Celebrate Freedom Veterans Parade** -- 11 a.m. in and around the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, east of Interstate 5 on East Evergreen Boulevard (a.k.a. Officers Row), through the Barracks area and on East Fifth Street along the north side of Pearson Air Park.

**Nov. 10, Pleasant Valley Middle School assembly, all veterans invited** – 9 a.m., PV Middle School, 14320 N.E. 50<sup>th</sup> Ave., in honor of Veterans Day, Nov. 11, a national holiday. All veterans of all conflicts are invited and will be acknowledged.

**Nov. 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, “Bye Bye Birdie”** -- Musical by Battle Ground and Prairie high schools. Curtain at 7 p.m. each day. Tickets at the doors beginning at 6:30, or in advance at [www.seatyourself.biz/prairiehighschool](http://www.seatyourself.biz/prairiehighschool)

## Clamor for grammar

**Apostrophes are your friend:** Think about those signs we often see on houses, cabins and mobile homes (“The Johnson’s” “The Nerdley’s”) and on reader boards and posters (“Girl’s Night Out,” “Fire Fighter’s Pancake Breakfast” and “Boy’s Soccer”.) Those are all wrong. In these examples, the intent is to name something belonging to more than one person. But these are all singular possessives. Avoid confusion by first writing the plural (Johnsons, Fire Fighters, Boys, etc.) Then, if the plural ends in “s” just put an apostrophe after it. (The Johnsons’ House, Girls’ Night Out, Boys’ Soccer, etc.) And if the plural ends in something other than an “s” (firemen, women, etc.) add an apostrophe and an “s,” as in firemen’s breakfast and women’s rights.

There’s another entirely different use for apostrophes: contractions. They indicate where a letter is purposely missing (doesn’t, wouldn’t, I’ve, we’re, etc.) Wouldn’t it have been great if the mark used in contractions were different than an apostrophe and called a doohickey?

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