Summer Spotlight

Clovis Point Teachers Keep Students Well Fed, Well Read

By NHAHN PHAM

Rock Island - Often during summer break, many students find themselves looking for something to pass the time. But two Clovis Point Intermediate School teachers wanted to address this issue through a summer library program.

Sixth-grade teachers Carmen Johnson and Carol Mooney wanted to provide a safe, fun and educational environment for students. For the second summer in a row, they opened the school libraries at Clovis Point and Rock Island Elementary on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, respectively.

In total, this program took place for eight weeks during the summer with sessions lasting from noon to 2 p.m. “We have parents and grandparents plan their week around this program for their kids,” Johnson said.

Johnson and Mooney volunteer their time to make this all possible. Eastmont students of all ages are welcome at these sessions at no charge. Students can check out books, play board games, participate in art activities, have access to computers with internet and more. There are even prize drawings at each event. Students can also receive reading goals with incentives for extra prize drawings to encourage checking out books during the summertime.

Also, students get free lunch provided by Small Miracles - a local, nonprofit organization that provides meals and assistance to hungry children and families in need.

In fact, while volunteering with Small Miracles a few years ago at Rock Island Elementary, Johnson realized students were in need of some sort of book program. Mooney said Johnson would even bring some of her own books for students to read.

“What really inspired all of this was how all of the Rock Island students had no public access to the library.” – Mrs. Carmen Johnson

Cont. on page 3
Eastmont Alum, Longtime Educator Named Finalist for Major Award

Mrs. Veronique Paquette, a state leader in technology in education, is among a small group of finalists for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

By Nihan Pham

Olympia – This summer, Veronique Paquette can say she got to hang out at the Governor’s Mansion with her husband and youngest daughter to meet with First Lady Trudi and Governor Jay Inslee.

As a state finalist for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, Paquette was one of four finalists (out of a pool of about 300 teachers across the state) for this prestigious honor.

The Governor’s Mansion also hosted other teachers and nominees/winners at the reception.

“I was pretty surprised and overwhelmed …” she said in regards to becoming a finalist. “… It’s an honor to be recognized.”

Executive Director of Elementary Education Spencer Taylor nominated Paquette for the award. Eventually, Paquette could win the award for the entire state. The announcement should be in the upcoming months. There is one award for each of the 50 states throughout the nation.

An alumna of the Eastmont School District since kindergarten to high school in 1983, Paquette studied at Wenatchee Valley College until 1985 and then transferred to Central Washington University in 1987 to complete her bachelor’s degree in elementary education. Then in 1992, she returned to CWU to finish her master’s degree in reading.

As the Washington State Teacher of the Year in 2003, Paquette attended Space Camp the same year in Huntsville, Alabama. There, she participated in the International Space Camp at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. Afterward, Paquette received further invitations to return many summers as a presenter for International Space Camp, Honeywell and Boeing camps.

“I taught and worked with teachers from all over the country and abroad,” she said. “Each summer when I worked at camp, I took students from the valley.”

Paquette also created a scholarship for Eastmont and Wenatchee students to attend camp with all expenses covered.

Unfortunately, it grew too challenging to continue raising funds, and the scholarship had to end after seven years.

This will be Paquette’s 30th year teaching at Kenroy Elementary. She taught kindergarten for nine years and then second grade for the rest.

“Kenroy is my home …” she said. “My heart is there, and I can’t imagine being anywhere but there.”

When it comes to teaching style, Paquette said she integrates various subjects with technology and blends them all together. She makes a point of trying to incorporate math, science, social studies and other concepts into the students’ studies.

The technology, of course, is a big emphasis in Paquette’s classroom. She is a major advocate for the students, even as second graders, knowing how to use their Chromebooks well.

For example, the students could be studying insects. Paquette would make sure the students have an appropriate reading curriculum for the subject matter. She would then expect her students to search for relevant literature stories to comprehend the science component.

Using their Chromebooks, the students gradually learn how to research and look for information. They expand their critical reading skills. The students have to understand the difference between fact or fiction. They focus on grabbing images that are royalty free and legal to use for their school assignments.

Eventually, the students become so proficient with the technology that they can put together reports and presentations, Paquette said.

“They become experts,” she said. “It is no surprise why Paquette was a natural choice for the nomination. Her push for the use of technology and other modern teaching methods will ensure all of her students have a learning advantage for the rest of their education. “This is really fun to do. I love what I get to do,” she said. “I am consumed with it. It’s a hobby for me.”

In my own words: Why I nominated Mrs. Paquette for this award

I nominated Mrs. Paquette because she is an outstanding teacher of science for her 2nd grade students and a leader of teachers in science across our district, region and country.

Students love being in Mrs. Paquette’s classroom because they get to experience learning not as a student, but as a scientist. Students are deeply engaged in hands-on activities where they analyze, collaborate, make predictions and discuss findings. They gain a solid understanding of science concepts as they participate in activities that pique their curiosity and desire to want to know how and why. Just like scientists, students use technology as a tool to record and present findings to others.

Through her passion for science instruction, Mrs. Paquette has become a widely recognized leader in effective science instruction. In her school, she has led the Science Fair and Pacific Science Center Day and has attained several state, regional and national science instruction. In her school, she has been a key member of science adoption committees as well as a leader of professional development with her colleagues. Across the state, she has participated in the Science Fellows program and the Science Leadership Network. She is also involved in leadership across the nation as a Master Science Teacher for Better Lessons, Staff Member and PD Trainer for the U.S. Space and Rocket Center (Huntsville, AL), and a NASA NEWMAST graduate.
In a few weeks, the 2017-18 school year will get started. Throughout the District, parents will be making decisions about transporting their students to school. Some families will have their children walk to school if they live within the one-mile distance where we do not bus students, others will drive their children to and from school, and some have them ride a bus.

If it is an option, I urge parents to have their students walk, ride their bike, or ride the bus to school if at all possible. My reasons are:

1. Reduced traffic around schools is safer for both students and drivers. Schools are generally not designed to accommodate large numbers of parents to drive their children to school. Most designs and planning guides allow for staff parking and visitors, and know that event parking will overflow into adjacent neighborhoods and roads. Plans assume most students will walk, bike, or ride a bus.
2. Lifelong friendships develop as students mingle and get to know each other coming and going from school on buses, as walkers, or if they ride a bike with others. Students will also learn of other students who may live a block away, down the street, or somewhere along their path. One of my best friends growing up was a student who I first met on a bus and another was a boy who rode his bike on the same route I used when the weather was good.
3. Eastmont is reimbursed over 90% by the state of Washington for busing students. We do not generate any extra funds for this service, but our costs are reimbursed including fuel, employee wages, and parts and supplies. This helps return tax dollars to our community, keeps parents employed, and leaves more money in parents' accounts.
4. Buses are considered the safest means of transporting a student to and from school. Though accidents are rare and do happen, mile for mile those multi-ton yellow beasts are designed with safety as a number one priority, go through extensive annual inspections, are almost always on time, and do better than most vehicles on snow and ice.
5. There will be those who say students are bullied on buses. Yes, students are sometimes bothered by other students on buses, just as they are in other places. However, Eastmont has cameras on all buses and drivers, and administrators do not hesitate to take disciplinary action when these incidents are reported.

Regardless of how you choose to transport your students, please drive slow and safely around our schools. I do wish everyone the best start possible for the 2017-18 school year.

Gam Christensen
Superintendent
The Eastmont School District morning pick-up times and locations are printed on the next two pages. Locate the school your child is attending. Find the bus stop that is nearest to your home. This is the assigned stop where your child will be picked up and dropped off.

School bus stop information can also be retrieved on Versatrans at shor-tn.us/esdversatrans:

Follow these four steps:
1. Type in "guest" for both
2. Select your grade level.
3. Put in your street address.
4. Find transportation info.

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Q & A with Eastmont Drama Club Adviser

EHS’ relatively small drama program made big waves last season, earning nominations for statewide awards.

By Nhan Pham

The Eastmont High School drama club achieved a program first with its multiple nominations to the 5th Avenue Awards show in Seattle. The 5th Avenue Awards show shines the spotlight on high school musical productions for their outstanding achievement.

With the club’s rendition of “The Addams Family,” EHS received nominations in multiple categories like “Best Overall High School Musical” (in Washington), Outstanding Director, Supporting Actress (Téa Ning LaFleur), Lighting Design and more.

Not only that, the club was invited to Benaroya Hall in Seattle to perform a number in full costume on June 12.

Theater Adviser Cynthia Brown had a lot to say about the strides this club has taken since she took over years ago.

Q: How are the 5th Avenue Awards nominations selected?
A: They have volunteer adjudicators [who go around and see the shows throughout the state].

Q: Do these adjudicators announce ahead of time?
A: [The 5th Avenue Awards] tell me when to have the tickets aside. So I know, but I am not allowed to let any of the students know.

The kids are just desperate to know which nights, especially when it’s a rough night. “Please tell me the judges weren’t here.” And I cannot just tell them. It always works out because even the roughest nights are the nights they aren’t there.

Q: What was it like representing Eastmont at the show?
A: When we got there, they said, “Oh, we’re going to put you right in front because your group is so small.” Gee whiz, this is the biggest group I ever had. I can’t imagine. And then, when we watch the other schools perform their pieces, they would have more than 60 kids on stage. We had 18.

And it was amazing. But the other schools, when you put 60 kids up there, it’s impressive. But for our little school and our little show, I think we really held our own when it came to the performances.

Q: What is the big takeaway you want the students to remember from this Seattle experience?
A: Just going and seeing the awards was so inspirational for the kids that it was so worth it. It didn’t matter if we ever won, or if we were ever nominated. We still wanted to be part of it.

Q: How proud are you of the theater program?
A: So proud! But one of the most successful things I have done is to not do as much. I am not responsible for the stage crew. I have a student responsible for the stage crew. I am not responsible for the light crew. I have a student responsible for that.

They have a lot of ownership. And when they have ownership, they’ve got pride. It’s not mine. It’s theirs. And I think they come away with a lot more that way.

Q: Why are you and the students so excited about the nominations?
A: It was 5 p.m. at the night of the announcement. On that website, just watching. The list was posted, and immediately online everyone started sharing it and shouting. “Woohoo!” Me? I screamed and holed. And my husband thought there was something wrong and came in from the other room. I was just shaking. All of us were like that. We were pretty excited.

Q: What was a memorable moment in Seattle?
A: So there’s 20 costumed kids in full costumes that got onto the monorail with all of the tourists to take the ride back downtown. And that was hysterical.

The tourists wouldn’t come anywhere near us. They all passed us and went into the other car. I looked around and nobody would ride in the same car with us. So the kids started singing songs from the show on the monorail. And all of the tourists started applauding. And that was really fun.

Q: What is the biggest group you’ve ever won, or if we were ever nominated.
A: [The 5th Avenue Awards] tell me when to have the tickets aside. So I know, but I am not allowed to let any of the students know.

Q: What is the big takeaway you want the students to remember from this Seattle experience?
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They have a lot of ownership. And when they have ownership, they’ve got pride. It’s not mine. It’s theirs. And I think they come away with a lot more that way. And it makes it easier for me too.

Q: What are your plans for the next show?
A: We’re kind of swapping things. Next year, we’re probably going to do a scripted show in the fall. I have a royalty-free, really old script that is a lot of fun.

Q: Do you have a message to the Eastmont community?
A: We need more people to come see our shows. And I was not humble about our nominations. I wasn’t humble. I wanted everybody to know how big of a deal it was because I want people to know that we have theater worth seeing.

Come see it. I don’t want any empty seats in that little, 300-seat auditorium anymore!

“They have a lot of ownership. And when they have ownership, they’ve got pride. It’s not mine. It’s theirs. And I think they come away with a lot more that way.”

– Mrs. Cynthia Brown

Scan the code to follow the link and see more photos and updates from the Eastmont Drama Club’s Facebook page.
### Attendance Policy

**Did you know?**

- Your children can suffer academically if they miss 10 percent of school days in a year, or about 18 days. That can be just one day every two weeks and can happen before you know it.
- It doesn’t matter if these absences are excused or unexcused. They all represent lost time in the classroom and lost opportunities to learn.
- Attendance matters as early as kindergarten. Studies show many children who miss too many days in kindergarten and first grade can struggle academically in later years. They often have trouble mastering reading by the end of third grade.
- Preschool is a great time to start building a habit of good attendance. Studies show that poor attendance in preschool can predict absenteeism in later grades.
- By middle and high school, chronic absence is a leading warning sign that a student will drop out.

**School hours**

All students between the ages of 8 and under 18 years are required by Washington state law to attend school regularly. If a parent or guardian enrolls a child at 6 or 7 years of age, the child is required by law to attend the full school session. To ensure compliance, each school takes regular attendance and the district has set a policy for excused and unexcused absences.

Parents or guardians must provide the school with an excuse for any absence, late arrival or early departure in the form of a note or personal contact with school officials. (Please refer to your child’s individual school student handbook.) Any absence not properly explained within three days of the student returning to school will not be excused without approval from an administrator.

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**¿Sabías Que?**

- Sus hijos pueden sufrir académicamente si pierden el 10 por ciento de los días escolares en un año, o aproximadamente 18 días. Eso puede ser un día cada dos semanas y puede suceder antes de que usted se dé cuenta.
- No importa si estas ausencias son excusadas o injustificadas. Todas representan tiempo perdido en el salón y la pérdida de oportunidades para aprender.
- La asistencia es importante desde el kinder. Estudios demuestran que muchos niños que faltan demasiados días en el kinder y el primer grado pueden tener dificultades académicas en los últimos años. A menudo tienen problemas para dominar la lectura al final del tercer grado.
- La Preescolar es un buen momento para empezar a construir un hábito de buena asistencia. Los estudios demuestran que la mala asistencia en preescolar puede predecir el ausentismo en grados posteriores.
- En la escuela intermedia y secundaria, la ausencia crónica es una señal de advertencia de que un estudiante abandonará los estudios.

**Horas de escuela**

Todos los estudiantes entre la edad de 8 y menores de 18 años son requeridos por la ley del estado de Washington asistir a la escuela regularmente. Si un padre o tutor matricula a un niño a los 6 o 7 años de edad, la ley requiere que el niño asista a la sesión completa de la escuela. Para asegurar el cumplimiento, cada escuela toma lista regularmente y el distrito ha establecido una política para ausencias excusadas y sin excusa.

Los padres o tutores deben proporcionar a la escuela la razón para cada ausencia, llegada tardía o salida anticipada en forma de una nota o contacto personal con los oficiales de la escuela. (Por favor refiérase al manual del estudiante de su hijo.) Cualquier ausencia sin explicación apropiada dentro de los tres días de que el estudiante regrese a la escuela, no será excusada sin la aprobación de un administrador.
Wildcat Athletes Spent Summer Preparing Their Minds, Bodies

For student-athletes, summer break is not always about rest and relaxation. In fact, numerous Eastmont High School sports incorporate practices, camps and other team events during the summer. “I think it’s a great opportunity for kids to get better,” said Assistant Principal/Athletic Director Russ Waterman.

Waterman said EHS preaches about compelling its athletes to create the culture and commitment to succeed - not just in sports but life as well. This is why summer leagues and camps are crucial for student-athletes who want that extra edge during the regular season.

EHS also tries to make the cost of camps and events as affordable as possible (if not free) for families. Also, the EHS weight room is open during the summer weekdays. There are four different sessions throughout the day. Waterman said, during peak hours, more than 150 student-athletes from multiple sports are in there working out at the same time.

“I love seeing the kids so committed in preparing the best they can [for the upcoming season],” he said.”

School Calendar

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30 - School Starts

4 - Labor Day, No School

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13 - Professional Development Day

10 - Veterans Day

16 & 27 - Parent Conferences

22, 23 & 24 - Thanksgiving Break

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