

Foothills Gazette

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THIS ISSUE

Population, public outreach key committee items

Foothills Subarea Advisory Committee to meet through March 2007. *page 2*

Water district

No new district business conducted; Ahmeds file another lawsuit. *page 3*



Bear trunk brings wilderness in

A new teaching tool has students wild about bears. *page 11*

Sports update

Catch the latest recaps of Mountaineer and Pioneer games. *page 20*

The art of composting

Here's the basics of composting at home. *page 22*

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State aims to open highway by May 1

■ Tootsie Clark, 83, first to cross North Cascades route each spring; brings cinnamon rolls

by **REBECCA SCHWARZ**

NEWHALEM—Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) officials hope to have the North Cascades Highway (State Route 20) open for the season by next week.

The highway, which typically closes for the winter season by early December from milepost 134 east of Diablo, near Ross Lake, to milepost 170, 14 miles west of Mazama,

usually reopens between late March and early May. The tentative re-opening target this season is noon on Monday, May 1.

"I know this is the opening weekend of fishing season and folks would love to see a Friday reopening, but if it's not safe, we can't open it," said Twisp Maintenance Supervisor Don Becker in a written statement.

Crews first went up the pass on

snowmobiles and snowcats on February 22 to establish how soon plowing could begin, however there was so much snow, they had to return in March for a second assessment. According to WSDOT, the snow depth at the east closure gate was more than five feet; further west it was about seven feet; and at the top of Washington Pass it was more than seven feet deep. The deepest accu-

See **ROUTE 20**, *page 6*



Workers blow through the hard compact snow covering the roadway. The east-west crews met each other on Thursday, April 20. Photo courtesy of WSDOT

Carving an 18-foot masterpiece



Rand Jack details a portion of the 18-foot totem pole he is carving in his Van Zandt studio. The 300-year-old cedar wood, cut in 1982, came from the Twin Sisters area near Fish and Hayden creeks. For more about the beautiful wood carvings of Rand Jack, see page 10. Photo by Rebecca Schwarz

School Board accepts offer to sell Kendall land to county

■ Group sets Open House date for Community Resource Center

by **REBECCA SCHWARZ**

COUNTY—The Mount Baker School Board has accepted an offer from Whatcom County to sell vacant land next to the Kendall fire hall, one of the potential locations cited for the proposed Community Resource Center.

The School Board approved the offer during its April 6 meeting, according to the Mount Baker School Board Superintendent's Office. Whatcom County offered \$258,525 for the 3.83 acre parcel.

While no additional discussion or action about the sale is currently scheduled for upcoming school board meetings, Whatcom County says the sale is preliminary and no county funding has been slated for the sale. Whatcom County Council, which has to approve the purchase, is not scheduled to discuss the Resource Center until its May 9 meeting, according to Council Chair Laurie Caskey-Schreiber, when council members

See **CENTER**, *page 7*

BRIEFLY

Guys and Dolls on stage at NVHS

NOOKSACK VALLEY HIGH—Catch the student production of Guys and Dolls April 28-30 and May 5-7 at the Nooksack Valley High School Performing Arts Center. Shows start at 7 p.m., with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets cost \$7/general, and \$6/student. For more details, call 988-2641 x206.

Kendall Community Book Fair May 1-5

KENDALL ELEMENTARY—Kendall Elementary will host a Scholastic Book Fair May 1-5, to help raise funds for the school's library. The fair, open each day from 9:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., will feature hundreds of books from more than 150 publishers, including interactive education items and best sellers. Students and families are also welcome to attend "Breakfast with Books" on April 28 from 8:30-9:30 a.m., featuring free breakfast and a visit with special guest Clifford the Big Red Dog. Area businesses interested in making a donation are asked to contact Melissa McPhaden at 599-2112.

Volunteers needed for Spring Arts show

MOUNT BAKER—Volunteers are needed to help coordinate the Annual Elementary Spring Arts Show in May. Work with volunteers to judge students' art at each elementary school and then facilitate another group of volunteers to hang the selected art work at the Deming Public Library for display. Anyone interested should call Call Trina Hall or Gwen Garrett at 383-2013.

Carnival features 21 games, auction, raffle and more

KENDALL ELEMENTARY—The annual spring carnival will take place Saturday, May 6 from 4-8 p.m. at the Kendall Elementary School. There will be 21 games for kids, book fair, silent auction, hot dog dinner and a raffle drawing, including a \$500 shopping spree at Fred Meyer. Volunteers are still needed for the events. To sign up, call volunteer coordinator Gay Robinson at 383-2055.

—compiled by Rebecca Schwarz

Trunk tools teaching kids all about bears

■ GBOP program to be launched in other North Cascades schools

by **REBECCA SCHWARZ**

KENDALL—The subjects of bears is gaging a lot of interest from local students, care of a "bear trunk," a teaching tool created by the North Cascades Grizzly Bear Outreach Project (GBOP) about the bears of the world, with a special focus on grizzly bears, black bears and their habitat.

The trunk, first launched at the Kendall Elementary School on March 20, features all kinds of photographs, maps and books, as well as a grizzly bear hide, skull, claws, track casts and a bear resistant food container. The curriculum allows students to participate in the exploration of bear ecology, behavior, recovery and human values toward bears and their habitat.

"Trunks have been put to good use as classroom resources elsewhere so we thought it would be a good way to introduce GBOP to school children in the Cascades," said Chris Morgan, co-director of GBOP. Defenders of Wildlife provided funding, and the trunk curriculum was developed by Kari Anderson, an environmental education Masters student with Huxley/North Cascades Institute, Kelly Morgan, a Bellingham elementary school teacher, and Erin Divine, a Bellingham educator.

Kendall Elementary was an ideal choice for implementing the trunk, since GBOP previously worked with the school.

"In 2005, Nan Laney (field coordinator) and I took around 150 Kendall students into the field to learn about bears and being a bear detective (how to track and learn about bears in the woods)," Morgan said. "It was a hit with kids, teachers, and parents, so Kendall became the natural choice when it came time to work with a Cascades school on piloting the trunk."

Morgan, who presented to 500 kids at Kendall Elementary a few weeks ago, said he was absolutely buzzing afterwards. "Humans of all ages seem to have an innate



Students in Diane Arrigoni's class at Kendall Elementary School all say the bear trunk is welcome in the classroom. Favorite pieces of the trunk include the grizzly bear skull, fur, books, claw and foot prints, and teddy bears. Photo by Rebecca Schwarz

fascination with bears. It's always amazing to me to see just how early on in life this becomes the case," he said. "Kids love to share their bear stories, and they are always completed transfixed by my descriptions of capturing bears for research."

Diane Arrigoni's classroom (which is currently learning about Canada) just received the bear trunk, and the students are all taking an interest in its contents.

So which items do the students seem to enjoy the most? "I like all the pictures because it's really hard to find a good photo of a bear in the wild," Alex Andrukov said. "I look through the books."

Students Travis Ferris and Steven Crook both enjoy looking at the fur. "If I see a black bear, I don't mess with them," Ferris said. "But I'd like to see a grizzly in Canada."

"My favorite part is the skull," Tiffany Orne said. "I find it fascinating how much bigger a bear skull is than a human's."

Other students said they enjoy playing with the puppet and teddy bears or placing their hands with-

in the life-size bear track casts. And others simply enjoy learning more about bears on a global level. "There's 11 different species," Eric Krishtall said, naming them all.

Teacher Diane Arrigoni agrees the tool is a big hit. "This is hands on, not words," she said. "Once you do that it changes everything—it's another intelligence."

Teacher Paul Spring, who first used the bear trunk in his Kendall classroom, said, "Any time you can combine science, hands-on materials, and content that is meaningful to our students, the interest level will be sky high."

Spring added the bear trunk adds to another school program. "Tim Shepard and Judy Davis head up a program that raises salmon in the school so it will be exciting to add a land based mammal (grizzlies) that is also part of the same food web."

GBOP plans to take the bear trunk to other schools in the North Cascades, but is excited with its reception at Kendall Elementary. "We are so thrilled... our hope is the GBOP Bear Trunk will provide



WHAT THE TRUNK CONTAINS

- Visuals such as photographs, slides, posters, and maps.
- Exciting manipulatives including a grizzly bear hide, skull, claws, teeth, puppets, track casts, bear resistant food container, food cache kit, etc.
- DVDs, brochures, PowerPoint presentations, 29 books, and suggested web sites to broaden knowledge.
- Hands-on, field-based experiences and recommended field trip activities.

some wonderful opportunities for their students to learn even more about the incredible North Cascades environment in which they live—through the eyes of a bear!" Morgan said.

For more information about GBOP, visit www.bearinfo.org.