The Walla Walla Community College Child Care Resource and Referral Office welcomes Peggy Kunz to the position of Program Assistant. Peggy began her new assignment in the Office in mid April.

Peggy was born and raised in Walla Walla and graduated from DeSales High School in 1988. She moved to Spokane to attend college and then to Olympia where she worked in State government. Her son, Rhett, was born in 2003, at which time Peggy became a stay-at-home-mom. Four years ago, she and her family returned back to Walla Walla to raise Rhett near family and friends, and in a small community that promotes the positive health and growth of its children.

It was through this goal, that Peggy and Rhett became familiar with Walla Walla Community College. They enrolled in the Parent Toddler classes offered at the Parent Child Center and later became active in the Parent Cooperative Preschool.

In Fall 2008, Rhett graduated to Kindergarten, and Peggy stayed at the Community College working as a Parent Educator in the Tuesday/Thursday Cooperative Preschool classroom. She will continue as a Parent Educator in addition to her work in the Child Care Resource and Referral Office.

Peggy is excited about partnering with providers, community stakeholders and child care professionals in the Walla Walla, Garfield and Columbia Counties to work toward the common goal of providing consistent, high quality and developmentally appropriate care for all children.
Quality child care continues to be service that is much sought after by families.

Reprinted from the UB. By MARIA P. GONZALEZ of the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

The Walla Walla Valley Early Learning Coalition recently surveyed close to 400 local parents of children ages birth to 5 to get a sense of their needs, concerns and suggestions on a variety of issues.

The questions in the survey included such topics as access and demand for mental, dental and health care; all-season activities for children; resources and locations for receiving parenting information; and assessing children’s readiness for school.

What the survey administrators found was that quality child care continues to be a much sought after service. But parents are also looking for easier ways to get information on parenting and raising children, while also seeking a better way to learn about community activities.

Building off the survey findings, the coalition is preparing to launch a series of meetings as part of a strategic plan to meet such needs. The public is welcome to participate in the discussions.

Some of the outcomes of the meetings may be more clearly defining what it means to be kindergarten ready; figuring out whether the city needs a one-stop parenting destination, or whether existing resources like the Walla Walla Public Library can be better utilized.

Samantha Bowen, project manager of the Walla Walla Valley Early Learning Coalition, said the agency hopes to start meeting as early as June with the goal of completing their study by the end of October with a specific plan in place.

The meetings will be guided by input from the survey, but shaped by the voices and opinions of the community members who want to participate.

The survey was conducted and studied between August 2008 and March 2009, and put together by Michelle Janning and Lydia Hayes of Whitman College’s sociology department. It was paid for by the Donald and Virginia Sherwood Trust.

A total of 398 surveys were returned out of 1,115 distributed.

The survey is one way the coalition is trying to reach the 3,515 children ages birth to 5 who live in Walla Walla County. The coalition was established with the goal that all area children will have a successful, healthy start to school.

About half of the parents surveyed expressed a desire to receive more parenting help and resources. About 46
percent said they didn’t use the library. And about a third said there was no obvious place to access parenting information.

More than half said they were open to receiving in-person parenting help, which could mean attending workshops, meeting with experts or coordinating home visits.

About 60 percent said affordable child care was still lacking.

The survey also gave respondents the chance to write-in concerns. One parent pointed out: “There is absolutely no place to take my very active preschooler to run off steam in the cold months.”

About a third also said that child-friendly or family-oriented places were lacking, and that family activities are not advertised well.

Survey findings and recommendations included increasing year-round family activities for families with young children; creating or identifying a central and easy-to-access location for parent resources; make resources that prepare children for kindergarten more accessible; and engage policy makers to improve conditions for local families.

The strategic plan that follows will build on those recommendations. Bowen stressed that the strategic plan meetings are meant to draw participants from throughout the community. The meetings will be open to anyone who is interested in offering a voice and direction.

“It’s a process of really identifying what outcomes we want to see,” she said.

You are invited to Provider Night Out Please join us for Dessert June 30, 2009 6:30-8 PM More details to come!
The kids are out of school and they have the long lazy days of July and August ahead. They could spend their summer days in front of the TV or your children could be using their imaginations to create projects that are a reflection of their own unique talents.

Does it matter what kids do on their summer vacation? After all, they are in school 10 months of the year and most do take some art classes. Don’t they get enough art classes in school?

Creative and artistic are not the same thing. Creativity is an approach to life. Creative thinkers know that problems have many different solutions. When they encounter an obstacle, they find a way around rather than giving up. They have to be willing to take risks as they learn new skills. These are important life skills that need to be encouraged in children.

Summer activities, children’s crafts and science projects give children the opportunity to learn and practice these skills. Even if they follow a project guide exactly, they will still make decisions about shades of colors and where to place items. Once they are familiar with the project, most children will want to make it again. That is when they get really creative. First the colors change, then the shapes, and suddenly it is a new project from their own imagination.

Creative projects encourage children to find the resources to make what they want, rather than opening up a box that has all the supplies in one place. Would an old sock work? How about a dish cloth? It is fun to sit back and watch children solve their own problems.

Summer Activities can encourage children to work with wide variety of materials. Picnics in your backyard can be creative and fun. For example, you can bring your own bugs that you have found around the house and garden, or bring an
ant farm to your picnic! Make-your-own frozen treats. Have popsicle molds on hand (small paper cups and popsicle sticks will work too), and a few different choices of juices, or puréed fruit. Let the children experiment with different flavor combinations. If these are made in the morning, they can be enjoyed in the afternoon.

One of the best things about summer projects is that they can be done outside. Less mess to clean up!

Call and schedule a visit to the WWCC CCR&R LENDING LIBRARY

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<tr>
<th>Free-to-use resources for providers!</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Children’s Books</td>
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<td>- Teacher Resources in Spanish and English</td>
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<td>- Curriculum Kits</td>
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<td>- Theme Bags</td>
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For an appointment to visit the library, to learn more about what is available, OR To return items

Please call Peggy at 509.529.5744 or email at ccrr@wwcc.edu

Resource List

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<th>First Aid and CPR Agencies</th>
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<tr>
<td>- American Red Cross</td>
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<td>509.525.7380</td>
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<td>- WWCC</td>
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<td>509.527.4329</td>
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<td>- Walla Walla General Hospital</td>
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<td>509.525.0480</td>
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<td>- Walla Walla County Health Dept.</td>
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<td>509.527.3290</td>
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<th>HIV/AIDS AWARENESS</th>
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<tr>
<td>- WWCC 509.527.4283</td>
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<td>- Red Cross 509.525.7380</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Walla Walla County Health Dept. (Ask for Fauna)</td>
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“No one has yet realized the wealth of sympathy, the kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child. The effort of every true education should be to unlock that treasure.” Emma Goldman
Catholic Family & Child Service
Child Care Nutrition Program

The Child and Adult Care Food Program is a federally funded nutrition program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture. It is available to all regulated family child care providers. Providers who participate in the program receive reimbursement for serving meals and snacks that meet USDA nutrition guidelines. They also receive annual (Stars approved) training in child nutrition and food safety and onsite assistance from Nutrition Program monitors.

For more information call Catholic Family and Child Service at 1-800-449-9005 or email at nutrition@cfcsyakima.org

What’s Happening at
The Walla Walla Public Library?

Storytime at the Library
Wednesday at 10:15 for Toddlers, 18 months - 3 years: Parental presence required.
Wednesday 3:00 - 4:00 Read to Rosco a registered therapy dog.
Thursday at 10:15 for Preschoolers, 3-5 years: Parents must remain in building.
Saturday 10:00 - 11:00 Play with ME! birth to age three.
Day Care groups (over 4 children) - Please call for a separate time.
No storytimes in May and in August through Labor Day.
Please call 527-4550 for more information.

Mary Ann Gilpatrick, Youth Services Librarian

Be Creative @ the Walla Walla Public Library. Sign up for Summer Reading begins June 1st. Visit the Walla Walla Public Library’s Calendar for activities all summer long.

Print a copy of the summer reading flyer at:

Summer Reading Be Creative @ the Walla Walla Public Library flyer
A dangerous form of the flu virus, know as swine flu or H1N1, continues to spread throughout the United States. As of May 4, more than 1000 confirmed or probable cases of the virus have been reported from 44 states. As parents, providers, and child care professionals, it is particularly important that we prepare and plan for a potential swine flu outbreak. Young children are particularly vulnerable to the illness and often times experience serious complications. Consequently, it is important that we protect the children in child care centers, family child care homes and schools, as they accommodate a large proportion of our young children.

### What You Can Do to Stay Healthy

- **Stay informed.** Naccrra’s website (http://www.naccrra.org/news/swine-flu) will be updated regularly as information becomes available.
- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- **Take everyday actions to stay healthy.**
  - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
  - Stay home if you get sick. CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- **Follow public health advice** regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Find healthy ways to **deal with stress and anxiety.**
- Call 1-800-CDC-INFO for more information.

Currently, there is no commercially available vaccine for the new H1N1 flu in humans. Research efforts are underway to develop seed stock of the H1N1 flu virus that could be tested, and eventually be distributed to vaccine manufacturers.
BUILDING BRIDGES

The Walla Walla Community College has once again been awarded a grant to continue offering Building Bridges classes. Building Brides is an exciting opportunity for licensed daycare providers to earn college credit and complete their STARS requirements at the same time. Classes are offered in Spanish and English. Be watching Fall 09 for the new Building Bridges schedule!