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FROM THE COEUR D'ALENE PRESS

Girl power: Panel examines leadership

Posted: Sunday, Mar 09, 2008 - 09:29:57 pm PDT

By LUCY DUKES

Staff writer

COEUR d'ALENE -- Hazel Bauman will be in a minority when she takes on the job of superintendent of the Coeur d'Alene School District next year.

There are far fewer female school district officials than male, she said.

There are many reasons for that. Women raising families must choose between evening obligations or spending time with their children. Both men and women sometimes question whether a woman can be as good in leadership as men can be. And it can be uncomfortable at first to walk into a room filled with men who have established an esprit de corps amongst themselves, Bauman said.

She will be one panel member on the Human Rights Education Institute discussion with women in leadership Tuesday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Lake Coeur d'Alene room in the North Idaho College Edminster Student Union Building. The event is free and open to the public.

"I had role models in my life and I hope that I can be one for young women in our organization," Bauman said.

Also on the panel are Coeur d'Alene Mayor Sandi Bloem, Sandpoint Mayor Gretchen Hellar, North Idaho College President Priscilla Bell, Lewis-Clark State College President Dene Thomas, and North Idaho Title Kootenai/Bonner Division President Michelle Fink. Traveling in from Virginia is Thomas Nelson Community College Vice President of Student Affairs Beverly Walker-Griffiea.

Bloem said the importance of the event was the outreach to young women today.

Women on the panel have differences of opinion and differences in the way they arrived in their positions, she said, and it is good for young women and young men to hear there is not one way to find their roles.

Bloem said she never felt the challenge was greater or lesser because she is a woman.

"If the negativity of my being a woman was around me, I chose not to see it or to disown it," she said.

The intent of the panel discussion is to celebrate women and women's history month -- March -- and also to provide a forum for young women, students and young professionals, said HREI program director Donna Cork.

The event is a precursor to the 10th annual Women's Leadership Conference of the Inland Northwest to be held March 12 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Spokane Community College Lair. For information on the conference, "From Glass Slippers to Glass Ceilings: Women Challenging Leadership Myths," go to www.gonzaga.edu/ce/wlcin08

Journeys in Leadership will also be followed locally by "A Celebration of Women" on March 12 at the Greenbriar Inn. Participants can come to the 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. dinner dressed as a notable woman from the past and present. For more information, call Kathy Beechler, 667-0648, or Cary Miller 772-7785.

Education Institute executive Director Bob Bennett said he had the idea for the women in leadership panel when he noticed that more and more women in the area were assuming positions of considerable responsibility. Then someone suggested holding the panel around the time the women's leadership conference was held in Spokane.

"The meeting is simply an opportunity for me to ask these women, what do they think about this phenomenon," he said. "It's an opportunity to have a conversation with women who all have large responsibilities."

Goedde announces bid for re-election

By SEAN GARMIRE

Staff writer

COEUR d'ALENE -- Sen. John Goedde, R-Coeur d'Alene, announced Sunday he would run again for office.

Goedde, who serves on the Idaho State Senate's Education Committee, said his primary motivation for re-election is to continue his work finding new ways to fund education.

"This year I worked with all the stakeholders involved to broker a compromise, seeking ways to recognize our best teachers," Goedde stated in a release. "We're making steady progress toward winning the public and political support we need for truly modernizing our education system for the needs of our students in the 21st century."

During the 2008 legislative session, Goedde sponsored the now-defunct iSTARS legislation, a multi-tiered teacher program that asked educators to give up contractual rights in order to attain wage increases.

Goedde said he is in support of iSTARS' "pay-for-performance" option, which raises teacher salaries based on merit.

In addition to education, Goedde also serves on the Commerce and Human Resources Committee, which reviews Idaho business legislation. He has carried reauthorization of workforce development training dollars twice since 2002, when he was first elected.

An opponent of high taxes, Goedde said he is interested in changing sales tax and liquor tax distribution formulas. He said he is interested in designing a funding system to pay for school construction without penalizing citizens.

This session he successfully carried a reauthorization of a local-option sales tax measure.

Recently created campaign disclosure laws show by February, Goedde had received nearly \$18,000 from numerous donors, including Idaho Power, Citigroup Inc. and Micron.

The 59-year-old Senator holds a bachelors from Washington State University.

FROM THE IDAHO SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

No new education news stories today.

FROM THE MOSCOW PULLMAN DAILY NEWS (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

No new education news stories today.

FROM THE LEWISTON TRIBUNE (PASSWORD REQUIRED)

Some Moscow High seniors find fault with scholarship idea

Legislation giving college grants to students who agree to drug testing seen as privacy issue

By Dean A. Ferguson

Saturday, March 8, 2008

BOISE - Some Moscow High School seniors don't agree with Idaho lawmakers about a proposal to give scholarships to students who pass drug tests, their teacher says.

Two lawmakers from Moscow - both of whom will be among the first people the 18-year-olds will ever vote for, or against - split on the issue.

The bill, to give two years of \$1,000 college grants to students who shun drugs, tobacco and alcohol, passed the House 55-14 and will be considered by the Senate Education Committee on Monday.

"They had no problem with the money," said Connie Hall, who teaches U.S. government classes at MHS. But, "It appeared to be kind of a back-door approach to controlling their lives."

She didn't poll them, but most students in Hall's three 12th-grade classes opposed the idea.

"To tie it to their personal lives truly bothered their sense of privacy," Hall said, noting this new crop of voters is very concerned about privacy rights.

Rep. Tom Trail, R-Moscow, has kept in contact with Hall's classes. Hall has let him know her students give the scholarships a thumbs-down because of the drug testing.

"It causes the students a lot of heartburn, and maybe their parents," Trail said.

But the disapproval doesn't sway Trail, a co-sponsor of the bill, which has a \$4.4 million price tag.

He backs scholarships, and that's that. He notes the money doesn't come from state revenue.

The scholarships would be funded by the Millenium Fund, which comes from a tobacco lawsuit settlement. The grants would go to students with at least 2.5 grade point averages who agree to random drug testing. The pilot program would run in three schools until 2017.

Rep. Shirley Ringo, D-Moscow, aligned herself with a handful of Republicans who opposed the bill. The other 18 House Democrats supported the bill. The Republicans chafed at rewarding students for doing something they ought to be doing anyway - not taking drugs. Ringo opposed it because of the drug testing.

"I don't think anybody ought to submit to a drug test to get a scholarship," Ringo said. She also said the drug testing could short circuit students who get into trouble and are in the process of mending their ways.

Hall is certain the vast majority of her students don't use drugs. Their opposition is strictly to losing privacy, and the insult of having the government ask them to prove their innocence.

That's not to say all students oppose the scholarship.

During testimony in the House, Rep. Liz Chavez, D-Lewiston, said she supported the bill because students told her they want to be rewarded for doing well.

Hall's classes have been following the Idaho Legislature since January. They perk up at discussions about prison reform and teacher pay. They're "big believers" in global warming and they're watching the debate on proposals to regulate stun guns, Hall said.

They are also watching the presidential election play out.

"They are very eager to participate in their first election," Hall said. "By and large, they are very political."

Grangeville High closes following bomb threat

No classes held Friday; search yields nothing

By Jodi Walker of The Tribune

Saturday, March 8, 2008

Grangeville High School students were sent home upon arriving at school Friday because of a bomb threat.

Greg Bailey, director of supervision and instruction for the Mountain View School District, said a written threat was posted early Friday.

"We just took precautionary measures," he said about closing the school for the day.

He said the threat was received prior to the 8:13 a.m. start of school.

"They don't believe anyone made entrance," said Nida of the investigating officers. The note was taped to the front door, he said.

"(It) did say they were going to blow up the school today," said Chief Deputy John Nida of the Idaho County Sheriff's Office.

The Idaho County Sheriff's Office and the Grangeville Police Department assisted in a search, and the police department is leading the investigation. Grangeville Police Chief Wayne Sedam was unavailable for comment Friday afternoon.

A dog was brought in by Lewis County to search inside and outside the school.

Nothing was found, Bailey said.

The building continued to be closed Friday afternoon. Classes are scheduled to resume Monday morning.

The school serves 230 students.

Nida said no there were no suspects Friday afternoon but asked that anyone with information contact either the city police at (208) 983-1351 or the sheriff's office at (208) 983-1100.

Falsely making a threat of an explosive device in a public place is a felony and carries a maximum prison sentence of five years and a \$5,000 fine, Nida said.

The possibility of making up the day will be discussed by the school board, Bailey said. The district is already making up three of the six days it was closed due to bad weather this winter.

Two of those days, Bailey said, are being made up by discontinuing early release of Fridays for teacher collaborative time. The students are instead going to school full days on Fridays. A third day has been added to the end of the school year, extending the year to June 6.

School districts look at co-op efforts

Highland, Culdesac boards to explore collaborative options for dealing with low enrollments

By Jodi Walker

Monday, March 10, 2008

Declining enrollments and a desire to offer more programs has brought Highland and Culdesac school districts together to discuss collaboration.

The respective school boards will meet separately this week to hear a report from Mike Friend, executive director of the Idaho School District Council. He will give the boards information about collaborative efforts, what is legal and offer suggestions about how to move forward.

"He was willing to come and help Highland and Culdesac school districts come and get some background on what kinds of things can be co-oped," said Culdesac Superintendent Darrell Olsen.

The Highland School District board meets at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the school library at Craigmont. The Culdesac School District board meets at 7 p.m. Wednesday in the school library. No decisions about collaboration are planned at these meetings.

"I always use the term 'casual conversation.' We are heavy into the casual conversation," said Highland Superintendent Clair Garrick.

A public meeting is tentatively set for 7 p.m. Friday in Culdesac to provide information and answer questions.

The superintendents of both districts are quick to note that consolidation, or combining the two districts, is not a part of the discussion.

"When you consolidate two districts one loses its identity," Olsen said. "In a cooperative, both school districts maintain their identity and their control."

The Culdesac School District is anticipating 43 students in the high school next fall. That's down from a historical average of 80, Olsen said.

"How do you maintain comprehensive high school programming for the benefit of the kids?" he asked.

Highland is serving less than 200 students in kindergarten through 12th grade, Garrick said.

He said increasing graduation requirements from the state will affect the electives the school offers.

"When they take those (requirements) they take less music and shop."

How the two districts might work together is still unknown, he said.

"We are still in the nebulous, shapeless stage and are looking for a compass," Garrick said.

He envisions collaboration on staff and sports as a place to start.

"I don't see immediately busing kids all over the place."

Idaho has state code dealing specifically with cooperative school agreements, Olsen said. "It was originally designed in the state of Idaho because of the vocational cooperatives in the south where four or five districts went together," he said.

How it applies to academics is unknown by the two local districts.

Cooperative arrangements are more common in Washington. The Garfield and Palouse school districts have a cooperative agreement as do the schools in Elmira, Heartline and Coulee.

Olsen said he believes the boards will want to look further into collaboration after this week's presentations.

"I think they will want to pursue that venture with the administrators getting together to see what can be set up for a pilot for next year."

Both superintendents said they plan to hear public comment.

"One thing we don't want to leave out is the sentiment of the communities," Garrick said.

Garrick has been the joint superintendent for the Highland and Nezperce school districts for the last two years. He is leaving the Nezperce district and plans to work next year at Highland. He said the Nezperce school, also one of the smallest in the region, is not a part of the collaborative discussion.

"I don't think the community is wanting to do that right now," he said.

Olsen said any changes are not going to happen immediately. "It is going to be a major thing right here in this area for the next couple of months and probably for the next year."

Let Luna invite teachers to help write pay plan (Commentary)

Jim Fisher

Monday, March 10, 2008

Tom Luna tried imposing a merit-pay plan on public school teachers with neither their agreement nor participation, and failed. Next time, why doesn't Idaho's state school superintendent try something new?

Something like collaboration.

Luna, the Republican elected in 2006 to replace Democratic Superintendent Marilyn Howard, must have counted on the Legislature's big Republican majority to approve the pay plan the teachers union opposed. But his bill didn't make it past the first chamber it reached. The 19 senators from both parties who voted to kill it included some budget hawks as well as allies of the Idaho Education Association.

That should tell Luna, as well as others who recognize that some kind of merit-pay plan for teachers is as inevitable as it is desirable, that enacting one from the top down won't work. It needs to be hammered out among all the parties involved, including teachers as well as administrators and politicians.

That might mean harder work than what led to Luna's plan, but the result should be easier for all the constituencies to swallow.

It should also be easier for others to comprehend. Luna's original plan, for example, sought to make it easier for school districts to fire weak teachers. But the means it used for doing that - offering higher pay to teachers who voluntarily surrendered their job security - appeared a strange way to get there.

Which teachers, after all, would be most willing to give up the continuing contracts that protect them from arbitrary dismissals: the ones with the poorest evaluations from their supervisors or the ones rated most highly? This page never heard a satisfactory answer to that question.

Even after Luna dropped that part of the plan, and the amount of money going into teacher bonuses, he reserved the bonuses for teachers at schools with higher standardized test scores. Higher pay, in other words, would go to schools, not to individual teachers.

Even if standardized test scores were the best way to determine performance, and that is highly doubtful, why should all teachers in one school benefit regardless of individual contributions, while all teachers in another are shut out?

Luna should not be expected to work these problems out on his own. No matter how dedicated he might be, he has no experience in teaching or school administration. His single degree beyond a high school diploma is a bachelor's degree he earned online.

He should be the first to recognize he needs help, and he should be the first to ask for it. - J.F.

FROM THE IDAHO-PRESS TRIBUNE, NAMPA

Junior brings music, leadership to community

NEIGHBORS: Multitalented Caldwell High student revels in service to community, school activities

By Bryan Dooley
bdooley@idahopress.com

CALDWELL — Jordan Ozuna is a singer, an actress, a leader and an active citizen, as well as an honors student at Caldwell High School.

Last year she played Annie Oakley in “Annie Get Your Gun,” and she will play Belle in this spring’s musical presentation of “Beauty and the Beast.” She has participated in choir for her entire high school career.

She has also participated in the Caldwell Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council for the last two years, and was recently nominated to participate in a national Youth Leadership Council.

In November, she attended a national conference in New Orleans with Mayor Garret Nancolas and two other members of the Youth Advisory Council. “It was one of the best experiences I’ve ever had,” she said.

One night, the group passed some singing street performers while walking the city’s streets, Nancolas recalled.

“She just walked right up and started singing with them,” the mayor said. “They asked her to stay and sing the next song. That’s just the kind of person she is, she’s just fun to be around.” The young people participated

in conferences discussing meth, education and immigration, as well as general issues affecting communities and disaster planning.

Locally, Jordan is active with the council, participating in a number of community service projects including reading to children, helping out at the YMCA and organizing community clean-up events.

“If there’s something going on, she’s involved with it,” Nancolas said. “She does it because she’s genuinely interested in the community.”

She has also helped arrange for the Madrigals, Caldwell High's varsity choir, to sing at community events, he said. "She is one of those shining stars of the youth."

Jordan serves as junior class president, and was sophomore class president last year. This year her duties include planning prom. She also manages statistics for the Caldwell High boys varsity basketball team.

All the added responsibility can make it tough to manage her school work, she said, but she knew getting into it she would have to plan and manage her time carefully.

After she graduates, Jordan hopes to attend The College of Idaho, University of Idaho, Washington State University or Oregon State University to study psychology, public relations or journalism. She said those careers appeal to her because she loves to write — English is her favorite subject — and interact with people.

FROM THE IDAHO STATESMAN

School for teen parents faces funding shortfall

Support services threatened at Boise district's Marian Pritchett School, which also provides resources for young moms-to-be

BY KATY MOELLER - kmoeller@idahostatesman.com

Edition Date: 03/10/08

All high school seniors face distractions, but Ashley Buchanan has had more than most in the past few months.

The 18-year-old moved twice, broke three toes and lost her job. Through it all, she has tried to stay in school and be a good mother to her 2-year-old son, Ethan, who has been sick and has an abscessed tooth.

"The last two months have been terrible. I've had to have a lot of support," said Buchanan, a student at the Marian Pritchett School in Boise's North End. "I'm trying to graduate in June."

Now there is a \$125,000 shortfall in public and private funding for support services at the public school for pregnant and parenting teens. Officials say that threatens the unique educational opportunity afforded Buchanan and the other 41 girls and young women who attend.

Deborah Hedden-Nicely, head teacher at Marian Prichett, blanched when asked if the school could function without support services.

"That is what makes it (successful) - the case management," she said.

Just a few minutes earlier, she had a student in her office who was going into labor.

One of Buchanan's biggest supporters at the school has been Rhonda Murray, a full-time school employee who is licensed and has a master's degree in social work.

The Maine native, who has retained some of her Northeast twang despite nearly 15 years in Idaho, is a sounding board and safety net for students experiencing all manner of life crises, including the basic need for food and shelter.

Many of the students - including six refugees from African countries - rely on Murray's daily help and guidance.

"I talk to her every day," Buchanan said.

Part of the Boise School District, Marian Pritchett has five full-time teachers and one part-time teacher. Support services for the young moms and moms-to-be are managed and funded through the Salvation Army.

The \$335,000-a-year program is supported mostly through private donations and fundraisers, though it previously received state money.

School officials say they no longer receive money from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, which provided up to \$50,000 a year for support services - an amount department spokesman Tom Shanahan was unable to confirm.

The school is having trouble raising money from private sources as well.

Micki Hempsmyer of the Salvation Army said two private foundations that had hoped to help make up this year's shortfall couldn't because of tough economic times. She's hoping a third will come through.

"With the coming recession, I feel a sense of really being on my knees," she said. "I don't know how we're going to get the resources we need for everybody."

In addition to seeking foundation support, Hempsmyer is trying to establish an alumni association for graduates of Marian Pritchett - in part to tell the school's many success stories.

"We need the community to care about this program again," Hempsmyer said.

Students describe the small school as very nurturing.

"It's like a family here," said Alyssa Gilmore, an 18-year-old high school senior who had a son, Desmond Jack Martinez, on Feb. 21.

Murray, the social worker, supervises the school's day care, which has a staff of three. Volunteers and student interns help out as well.

Many of the young moms lack money and family support, so Murray makes sure they get things they need - winter coats, baby clothes, hygiene products, diapers, formula and food. She's no stranger to the 60-hour work week.

"She's crazy busy and has so much work to do, but she somehow fits us all in," Gilmore said.

"I would never have worked up the courage to go to Health and Welfare without her," Gilmore said. "It's overwhelming."

FROM THE TWIN FALLS TIMES-NEWS

T.F. School District election Tuesday

By Andrea Gates
Times-News writer

The Twin Falls School District has one day left to campaign for its proposed 10-year plant facilities levy.

Voters will decide Tuesday if they want to approve a 10-year plant facilities levy for up to \$3.3 million every year for 10 years. Taxes from the levy could be used to construct, furnish and equip schools, buy school sites, make improvements to existing buildings, buy school buses, pay lease agreements or pay off construction loans for new buildings, according to a sample ballot.

A tax rate is not promised on the ballot.

Voting is set for 7 a.m. until 9 p.m. Tuesday at all schools in the school district except the Bridge Academy. Voters can register on site, and only residents who have lived in the school district for at least 30 days can vote. Ballots may be cast at the most convenient school to voters. Absentee ballots may be picked up at 201 Main Ave. W., and must be returned there by 5 p.m. today.

Sixty percent of votes need to be in favor for the levy to pass.

The school district is campaigning to the last minute.

"We have a recorded message being auto-phoned to all parents reminding them to vote," said Twin Falls School District Superintendent Wiley Dobbs on Friday in an e-mail.

A judge at each election site will count and certify votes and they will bring those tallies to the school district office where they will be totaled by Michelle Lucas, the school district's clerk, on a smart board using an excel spreadsheet, Dobbs said.

The school board will canvas the vote Wednesday at 7 p.m. during its meeting.

Dobbs said Friday that 53 absentee ballots have been received, and they will be counted by the election judge at Magic Valley High School.

For additional information: 733-6900.

In related news, Buhl voters will also decide Tuesday whether to pass a one-year, \$600,000 supplemental levy.

The district has estimated \$50,000 will be needed for upgrading district technology equipment and \$480,000 for elementary and middle school improvements. The bulk of the levy would go to Popplewell Elementary School to replace tables and benches in the lunchroom, playground asphalt and cement work around a special education modular.

Money would also be spent on upgrading the school's restrooms. The district wants to replace all toilets in the elementary school, install new sinks and cabinets in classrooms, retrofit building lighting and paint classrooms, hallways and offices. The levy would also upgrade the middle school's front parking lot and pay for engineering and architect fees.

The levy rate would increase homeowners' property tax an estimated \$101.40 for one year, based on a home valued at \$150,000.

Buhl School Board chairman to face recall

Petition against Clemens has enough signatures

By Blair Koch

Times-News correspondent

BUHL - Buhl School Board Chairman Gene Clemens will face a recall election.

A petition calling for the recall of Clemens has been canvassed and certified as having the 20 signatures needed under state law. The school district must schedule the special election by April 15.

"I'm working on the date and will notify the petitioner and trustee as soon as it is set," said Lynn Busmann, the district clerk.

This is the second time the petition faced canvassing. The first time, the petition was returned to organizers Feb. 26 because some signatures were disqualified.

"There were a few questions about a couple of signatures, so we ended up having to go collect a few more," said Linda Billingsley, petition witness. "One lady put her address down wrong and another signature was thrown out because the lady, who is legally blind, had her husband sign the petition for her. It was decided that three signatures were needed, so we went and got four more."

During the second canvassing, each signature passed legal muster. "We did it," Billingsley said. "And next, this issue will go to vote."

Clemens, who has come under fire from some Buhl residents not satisfied with his work on the board, said the district is doing everything it can to make sure the petition and recall process is followed correctly. He also said that he plans to fight for his seat on the board.

"I have no intentions of resigning. We'll go to the election and see what happens," he said.

FROM THE IDAHO STATE JOURNAL

Local student gets Spirit of Idaho Award

BY JOURNAL STAFF

CHUBBUCK — Idaho Sen. Mike Crapo honored a Pocatello middle school student Saturday with a Spirit of Idaho Award for her tribute to two local Iraqi war veterans who died in service to their country.

Crapo presented Brontee Dominique Sherer, 13, with a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol, in honor of her organization of the "Spice up the Night" event held last Sept. 11, honoring Sgt. Nick Gummersall and Sgt. Blake Stephens.

Sherer said that she organized the event to show that people care about the troops in combat, and as a remembrance of the 9/11 tragedy.

"Some people don't really think about the war anymore," she said.

Sherer, an eighth-grade Franklin Middle School student, said her award shows that kids can do things in their communities which can make a difference.

Math counts results told

BOISE - Southeast Idaho students were shut out of the top spots in the state MATHCOUNTS competition Saturday, with Boise teams and individuals garnering a majority of the awards.

Sam Faucher, Adam Jiang, Nick Davey and Kevin Hou, all from Boise, placed first through fourth in the individual competition.

They will represent Idaho at the Lockheed Martin MATHCOUNTS National Competition in Denver, May 8-11.

Boise middle school students also grabbed first and second in the team competition, with Lewiston finishing third.

The team from Mountain View Middle School in Blackfoot, coached by Ken Maroney, placed sixth.

The following individuals from Southeast Idaho also placed: Moriah Horner, of Madison Junior High, seventh place; Bryan Grigg, of Hawthorne Middle School, 11th place; and Jennifer Motley, of Marsh Valley Middle School, 12th place.

Fifteen teams competed in the event, with 90 participants in total. More than 7 million students across the U.S. have participated in the MATHCOUNTS program in the past 25 years.

local teams take part in math counts contest

BOISE — Teams from several local schools are in Boise today for the statewide MATHCOUNTS competition. The teams sent to the state's capital won their trip based on their performance during a district competition hosted by Idaho State University on Feb. 9.

The rankings for teams from Eastern Idaho were:

- First: Madison Junior High in Rexburg
- Second: Malad Middle School
- Third: Hawthorne Middle School in Pocatello
- Fourth: Grace Lutheran School in Pocatello
- Fifth: Mountain View Middle School in Blackfoot

Aaron Christensen of Irving Middle School in Pocatello won a \$1,500 scholarship to ISU's College of Engineering, and Cole Finder of Malad Middle School received a \$1,200 scholarship.

In addition to the five teams, the top 14 individuals from the Feb. 9 competition at ISU are competing in Boise today. Some of the individuals may also be part of a team competing today.

Senator to honor local student today.

Idaho Sen. Mike Crapo will honor a Pocatello middle school student today with the Spirit of Idaho Award for her tribute to local veterans Nick Gummersall and Blake Stephens, who were killed in Iraq.

Crapo will join with family members of the servicemen to present the award to 13-year old Brontee Dominique Sherer, who organized an program called "Spice Up The Night."

The event, which was held last Sept. 11, honored the service of Sgt. Gummersall and Sgt. Stephens, both of Pocatello, and provided a remembrance tribute for the community about the 9/11 tragedy.

Crapo will also present an IMAGE of Southwest Idaho scholarship to Rexburg native Neida Mendoza, a student at Idaho State University, during a reception hosted by IMAGE of Southeast Idaho and the Hispanic Awareness and Leadership Organization.

IMAGE raises funding and awards scholarships for students who contribute and provide service to the Hispanic community.

The Pocatello-based organization has donated \$27,000 to students since 1994.

Later in the day, Crapo will travel to Malad to present

a Spirit of Idaho Award to Scott Danielson, past president of the Malad Valley Theater Guild/The Iron Door Playhouse.

Through his behind-the-scenes activities, Danielson has helped hundreds of students gain an appreciation for the arts and theater, and volunteering for the community.

Today:

n Noon-Pocatello: Participates in ribbon-cutting ceremony and the opening festivities for the Dodge National Circuit Finals Rodeo. It's at the Park Ridge Mall Center Court, 4155 Yellowstone Highway.

n 12:30 p.m.-Pocatello: Presents Spirit of Idaho Award to Brontee Dominique Sherer at the Park Ridge Mall Center Court.

n 3 p.m.-Pocatello: Presents \$500 IMAGE of Southeast Idaho scholarship to ISU student Neida Mendoza of Rexburg. It's at the IMAGE of Southeast Idaho and Hispanic Awareness and Leadership Organization event, Idaho State University, Pond Student Union Building Heritage Room, 921 South 8th Avenue.

n 5:30 p.m. Malad, presents Spirit of Idaho Award to Scott Danielson at the Malad Valley Theater's Iron Door Playhouse, 59 North Main Street.

Reviewing status of education bills (Commentary).

As I proceed through this legislative session I am aware of the fiscal woes facing our nation and our state. We as legislators have been entrusted by everyone in this state with the obligation to meet the important issues facing our constituents with the fiscal resources that are available. This imparts on us the sometimes hard and grueling task of prioritizing legislation.

As a Legislature we have reviewed numerous bills associated with education ranging in scope from pre-kindergarten programming to state universities. Education should always be a priority in Idaho. New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer said it well when he stated, "Without world class education, we cannot have a world class economy."

I have been extremely involved and sympathetic to the concerns that are facing our elementary schools in Idaho. I introduced a bill this week that would have provided alternative classrooms and programming for elementary students that fall outside the realm of special education, but clearly have behavior and emotional needs that are barriers to their success in school. Further, this bill would have benefited other children in the classroom who too commonly have interruption to their individual learning from the chaos associated with addressing the behavioral and emotional problems of young children in a traditional classroom setting.

In providing a thorough education, elementary students should have access to and receive the benefit from programs designed to support their various academic, social and emotional needs. This legislation recognized that there is an increasing emphasis on standards, accountability and excellence, demanding better outcomes for students in classrooms and schools. It further recognized that a significant number of students struggle with traditional school organization and culture. Early childhood behavioral and emotional issues have been proven to be indicative of future delinquency in children. The elementary period is critical in setting a foundation for preventing the development of disruptive behavior and eventually, child delinquency.

It is unfortunate that Senate Bill 1409, which would have provided funding for alternative classroom settings and programming, was defeated 19-14 on revenue grounds. This legislation was a policy bill and had no funding requirements until the revenue picture improves.

It appears to me that the failure of this bill indicates that as a policy we would rather pay city, county and state costs related to lost learning time, vandalism and other more egregious forms of criminal activity with their associated societal costs, than invest in educational programs designed to prevent or remediate the causative behavioral problems at an early age. Based upon the vote totals, there are at least seven Republican senators and every Senate Democrat who understand the need for a change in thinking about how we spend the people's money. I believe the rest is up to the will of the people.

Although this bill has been effectively killed for this legislative session, I think the need is on the table and it will stay there until it is satisfied. I urge everyone who is concerned with the level and effectiveness of the education of Idaho's children and the future of Idaho's economy, to write to their respective legislators and urge them to take the steps necessary to assure our children have access to a quality public school education that accounts for their respective individual needs.

It should be pointed out that three days after Senate Bill 1409 was defeated, the Senate approved over \$50 million to be allocated to the juvenile corrections budget and the House is now considering a bill that would appropriate almost \$200 million to the Department of Corrections.

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