Putnam City’s Fight Against Cancer Continues

For 42 years, Putnam City has helped in the fight against cancer and the search for cures. Putnam City students, staff, parents and the community last year raised $90,000 for cancer research, Stephanie Treadway, chair of the district’s Cancer Fund Drive committee and the principal at Western Oaks Elementary School, told board members Monday night.

Treadway presented a check to the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF) at Monday night’s meeting. The check brings the total contributions from students, staff and families for cancer research to about $3.55 million since the district’s cancer fund drive was started in 1975 by Lois Thomas, a teacher at Putnam City High School.

Donations from students, staff, parents and the community as part of the district cancer drive have purchased a vast array of sophisticated laboratory equipment at Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, including centrifuges, microscopes and incubators. Donations have also established an endowed chair at OMRF, the Putnam City Schools Chair in Cancer Research, held by OMRF scientist Linda Thompson, Ph.D.

Treadway awarded trophies to schools at each level that raised the most money per student during last year’s cancer fund drive.

For the fifth year in a row, leading the way in fundraising among district schools was Will Rogers Elementary. Will Rogers led all elementary schools, all five middle schools and one high school in dollars raised by bringing in $7,856. The school’s average of $16.13 per student was well higher than any school in the district.

“The Will Rogers community has been very generous in their giving to the Putnam City Cancer Drive. Students, parents and staff have all worked together to make giving part of our school’s culture,” says John Lunn, principal.

Capps Middle School out-raised all middle schools by bringing in $6,756 for cancer research, and its average of $7.25 per student was also highest among middle schools.

At the high school level, Putnam City High School topped other high schools by raising $20,520, an average of $11.71 per student.

Because OMRF administrative costs are paid for by grants, 100 percent of funds raised go to cancer research.

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SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT by Dr. Fred Rhodes

Oct. 1-7 is National 4-H Week and Western Oaks Middle School science teacher Connie Copenhaver is featured on the OSU Cooperative Extension 4-H website for her implementation of the Ag in the Classroom program. In the article, she says that she utilizes Ag in the Classroom resources because they provide inquiry-based, hands-on experiences for her students. Her lessons create great interest from her students while they learn because the topics range from a study of the changes that occur when popcorn is popped to the path of monarchs from the U.S. to Mexico.

We are very proud of all of the accomplishments of the JROTC programs at Putnam City West and Putnam City High since they have been established. One of the goals of the program is to build a sense of character and teamwork through service projects and volunteerism. This year, the Air Force JROTC cadets from Putnam City High are raising funds to travel to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. The cadets will be able to experience firsthand the life at a service academy and see how their hard work in high school can pay off in the future. The cadets are hosting car washes, working concession stands at four University of Oklahoma home football games and selling merchandise to help pay for their trip to the Academy.

This Friday, Oct. 6, you can see both the Air Force JROTC from Putnam City High and Army JROTC from Putnam City West as they compete in the 3rd annual “March to PC” event prior to the evening football game. The Putnam City West Army cadets will run the game ball from Putnam City West to the Bethany fire station at 3919 N. Rockwell, where they will meet up with the Putnam City High Air Force cadets and compete in a push-up contest before they exchange the game ball. Then the Putnam City High cadets will run the football the rest of the way to the stadium. This will be a huge event with flags, buses, a police escort and even the University of Oklahoma Air Force ROTC cadets who are coming to show their support. We appreciate the work of both Lieutenant Colonel (ret) Dane Christensen and Lieutenant Colonel Jimmy Thomas as they lead these outstanding programs.

Congratulations to Putnam City North softball coach Rick Scott for collecting his 500th win as a coach on Sept. 16th. Scott, just one of a handful of Oklahoma coaches to achieve that milestone, says it’s a tribute to the players he’s had.

One week from tomorrow our patrons will go to the polls to vote on Putnam City’s 2017 Momentum Bond Proposal. This interim bond will not raise taxes, but will keep the momentum going by providing funding in four areas: Technology for Learning, Technology for Health & Safety, Completion of Capps Middle School and Transportation. Remember the election date: Tuesday, Oct. 10

The Silver Strings of Putnam City, in partnership with Hogan Properties and the City of Oklahoma City, performed a benefit concert at the Lower Bricktown Centennial Fountains on Friday, Sept. 29. The two-hour event was to raise money for the orchestra program at Kingwood High School, a Houston-area school devastated by Hurricane Harvey. Flooding destroyed all of the school’s instruments, music, music stands, chairs, and technology. During the concert Friday evening, bystanders and concertgoers were encouraged to give what they could to help the orchestra program at Kingwood to get back on its feet. Thanks to the overwhelming support of the community, teachers and students, $1,218 was raised to benefit the Kingwood orchestra. Donations are still being accepted until Oct. 6.

Putnam City’s Fight Against Cancer
(continued from page 1)

OMRF President Stephen Prescott, M.D., says his organization is pleased to have Putnam City as a partner.

“Cancer is not a problem that will be solved easily. It will take consistency and determination and we are fortunate to have a partner who has chosen to take on this challenge in Putnam City Schools,” says Prescott. “We admire the students, faculty and parents who have given unselfishly for more than four decades to help us make progress in this fight. Year after year, the districtwide effort continues to be remarkable and make a significant impact.”

Board Highlights is not a comprehensive review of every item that takes place at board of education meetings. Its purpose is merely to provide information about items that seem of most interest to district employees and patrons. Complete board meeting minutes may be found at http://www.putnamcityschools.org/BoardofEducation/BoardMeetingMinutes/tabid/565/Default.aspx
“A Total Reset”
Board Updated on State Standards, Tests

The percentage of Oklahoma students scoring at advanced or proficient levels on tests used by the state is expected to drop significantly this year after a three-year process that has resulted in new and more comprehensive standards, new tests requiring greater student depth of knowledge and new cut scores, Dr. Melani Mouse told board members Monday night.

Mouse says the State Department of Education (SDE) is proactively sharing information with educators, parents and the media to make sure the state’s new assessment system is widely understood. The state is especially making the point that a decrease in students rated advanced or proficient does not mean students are less skilled than last year or that a school is less effective. It means Oklahoma’s scores have been recalibrated to align with the knowledge and skills students need to be ready for college and career. The biggest difference in standards and assessment is that both reflect greater expectations for depth of knowledge, Mouse said.

Mouse said changes began in 2014 with the implementation of more comprehensive state science standards. That was followed in 2016 with the implementation of more comprehensive state standards for math and English language arts. Teaching more comprehensive academic standards required new, more complex Oklahoma School Testing Program assessments to measure them. The new assessments were given to students in spring 2017, and results are expected be released to school districts in mid to late October, Mouse said.

According to Mouse, Oklahoma can probably expect a drop in scores similar to that experienced in Utah and Arizona when they went through a process similar to one Oklahoma is going through now. In 2013 in Utah, 83 percent of students in grades 3 through 8 were proficient in English language arts and 79 percent were proficient in math. In 2014, after changes in standards, tests and expectations, 42 percent of students were proficient in each subject area. In 2014 in Arizona, 81 percent of students in grades 3 through 8 were proficient in English language arts and 65 percent were proficient in math. In 2015, after changes to standards and tests, 37 percent were rated proficient in each subject area.

Mouse says the SDE makes it clear that because of changes, evaluation of student learning this school year represents a new beginning and “a total reset.” According to the SDE, no comparison is possible between spring 2017 test results and test results in past years. The 2017 test scores will, however, become the baseline for student and school performance in future years, Mouse says.

Pool Rental Gets OK

The board on Monday night approved an agreement that will allow high school swim teams to use the King Marlin Swim Club pool in the Lighthouse Sports, Fitness and Health Center on Hefner Rd. for practice and swim meets.

The $9,576 cost of renting the pool for the 2017-2018 school year will be paid for out of the district’s General Fund.

Board Briefed on Building Improvements

The board on Monday night heard a report from Chief Operations Officer Cecil Bowles about recent improvements to district schools.

At Northridge Elementary, Bowles said, the district finished several major projects, including heating and air improvements, new roofing over part of the school, the installation of a new walk-in freezer and refrigerator and construction of a new service drive. Tulakes Elementary also received heating and air upgrades and new roofing.

Bowles said that roofing projects were also carried out over the east wing of Putnam City West, the Science Building at Putnam City High School, the kitchen at Hefner Middle School and the auxiliary gym at Western Oaks Middle School. Heating and air improvements took place at Windsor Hills Elementary, Mayfield Middle School and the Hefner Middle School Kitchen.

Three schools – Overholser Elementary, Windsor Hills Elementary and Hefner Middle School – had their cafeterias improved, Bowles said.

Improvements to athletic facilities were made at each high school, Bowles said. At Putnam City High, a digital scoreboard was installed at the football field and work on renovation of the old gym at the school is getting ready to start. At Putnam City North, the new baseball field is finished and work on the new football field is beginning. Work on the football field at Putnam City West is about to begin.

Most of the projects above were paid for by bond funds approved by voters. A few were paid for through district Building Funds.
A little more than 10 years ago, Jason Hasty, then the physical education teacher at Western Oaks Elementary School, was a dedicated runner. If he wasn’t running in local races, he was running in preparation for those races.

He wondered. Why couldn’t Putnam City host a race?

Flash forward to today, and it’s now almost time for the 10th running of the Putnam City Cancer Classic, a 5k and fun run. The event will be held the morning of Saturday, Nov. 11, at Wheeler Park, 1120 S. Western.

Runners in the 5k race will take off from the start line at 8:30 a.m. while Fun Run participants will begin at 10 a.m.

Last year’s event drew about 1,100 participants. People who wish to register for this year’s event can visit http://www.pccancerclassic.com or use registration forms available at all schools and in the district’s administration building.

Proceeds from the Cancer Classic go to cancer research at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation. Last year’s event raised about $9,700 for cancer research.

“That first year of the Putnam City Cancer Classic I was nervous. I didn’t know a great deal about hosting a race. But it worked, and it’s gotten better and better every year. The Putnam City community shows up and has a good time. Everyone knows it’s a great event which benefits a great cause, cancer research at OMRF,” says Hasty, now the PEP Grant Manager and Physical Education and Health coordinator for the district.

For more information on the Putnam City Cancer Classic, contact Hasty at jhasty@putnamcityschools.org
Gifted Committees Named

The board on Monday night appointed 15 people to serve on the Districtwide Gifted Committee for the 2017-2018 school year. Six of the members of the Districtwide Gifted Committee will also serve on the Local Advisory Committee.

The Districtwide Gifted Committee and the Local Advisory Committee assist in the formulation of district goals for gifted education and in development of district plans for gifted child educational programs.

Serving on the Districtwide Gifted Committee will be:

School Board Curriculum Member
- Bill Wetmore

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Department
- Keely Frayser, executive director
- Brandy Sitts Gifted and Talented coordinator

High School Representation
- Kristin Battaliou, Putnam City North parent
- Jennifer Bryant, Putnam City North High School gifted specialist/advanced placement coordinator
- Daniel Smith, Putnam City High School teacher
- Jarel Miles, Putnam City High School assistant principal and gifted parent

Middle School Representation
- Cristy Gosset, Western Oaks Middle School parent
- Emily Meek, Cooper Middle School gifted specialist
- Shane Austin, Cooper Middle School teacher
- Scott Graham, Cooper Middle School assistant principal

Elementary Representation
- Dawn Dilley, Apollo Elementary parent
- Randy Utt, James L. Dennis Elementary gifted specialist
- Shera Steinhoff, James L. Dennis Elementary teacher
- Lori Freeman, Lake Park Elementary principal

Construction Manager Hired

The board on Monday night approved the hiring of Lingo Construction Services to serve as construction manager for a new Capps Middle School. The school is currently early in the design phase.

Lingo’s fee for serving as construction manager is 4.6 percent of the project cost. The total cost of the work will be covered by bond funds approved by voters.

Tell us About Your Memorable Moments in Teaching

The district is looking for stories about teaching. We want to know about moments in your teaching career that have left you in awe, left you laughing or left you in tears of joy or sadness. We want to know about moments of challenge as well as moments that have moved you.

The stories you share with us may be used in future convocations. They may also be used on our website or elsewhere to help our community understand the role and value of teachers and the good things that happen in schools.

Send your memorable moments to Steve Lindley, the district’s communication chief, at slindley@putnamcityschools.org

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