



On the Bright Side: Students to reap reading's rewards

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By Patricia Breakey

Delhi News Bureau

WALTON _ Traditionally, children bring an apple for the teacher, but the Walton PTA has switched things up and is asking people to buy apples for the students.

In connection with "Read-A-Rama" at the Townsend Elementary School, the Walton Parent Teacher Association is asking parents and community members to purchase paper pledge "apples" at Walton stores to help fund the reading program and other PTA activities.

The \$1 apples will be available Monday at Big M, The Pit Stop, Hess, McDonald's, Dollar General, The Country Store and the school, according to Angela Sargent, Walton PTA vice president.

Read-A-Rama will begin Tuesday and run for five weeks, ending March 5. During the event, students in kindergarten through second grade will receive a credit for each book they read, and students in third through fifth grades will get points for every chapter they read.

For every five books read, each student will get a sticker. Prizes will be awarded each week based on the stickers students have earned. As the contest continues, children can earn larger prizes at higher reading levels.

Students who read at least 125 books will be eligible for a drawing for the secret grand prizes in March, Sargent said.

"The children read what they want to read to encourage them to read for pleasure," school secretary Patty Wood said Friday. "Reading is the foundation for all other school work, and this also encourages families to read together."

Wood said books read at school will also count in each child's total.

Sargent said she came up with the apple idea after noticing other organizations using a similar technique to raise funds.

"Hess was selling pumpkins to raise money for something," Sargent said. "I counted 50 in one small section of a window, and the store was covered everywhere with pumpkins. Most people can afford to give \$1."

Sargent said the PTA officers, including President Misty Phoenix, Treasurer Theresa Manginelli and secretaries Jennifer Phoenix and Alisa Juhl, worked hard on the Read-A-Rama program to make it fun and easy to understand.

The children and classrooms that read the most books will also earn pizza parties and movies with popcorn events.

"We think when the children see the grand prizes we will have a lot of kids reading a lot of books next year," Sargent said. "I think it's going to be a wonderful program."

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