

## Artwork created at White Pass Elementary



PHOTO BY BUDDY ROSE/*The East County Journal*

A colorful three-dimensional art is being installed on the outside wall of the White Pass Elementary School multi-purpose room. Tim Watkins, an artist from Brooklyn, New York, designed the piece in the upper right. In the center is Watkins' assistant, John Franzen from Albany, New York. Below is Drew Rowland from Randle, who is observing the installation.

By BUDDY ROSE  
*The East County Journal*

Two artists from New York State are in the process of fabricating a colorful and eye-catching piece of artwork at the White Pass Elementary School in Randle. The artwork is associated with recent construction of the new junior high/high school and reconstruction of the elementary school.

The oval-sized project — 15-feet high by 25-feet wide — is being installed on the north-facing outside wall of the elementary school multi-purpose room.

The three-dimensional artwork depicts a somewhat whimsical overhead view down through a forest canopy to the forest floor. Included in the project are branches, leaves, mushrooms and other features made from stainless steel finished with various colors of powder coating.

Artists Tim Watkins and Carol May (Watkins and May Design, Brooklyn, New York) were selected by a community committee including former White Pass School

Superintendent Rebecca Miner, former Elementary Principal Karen Tollefson and maintenance supervisor John Kelly, along with community members Mary Proffit, Eileen Kelly and Jane Turner and Barb West, former White Pass School board member. The committee first convened last year after Miner was successful in acquiring two grants for \$50,000 each to commission artworks at the elementary and high school.

The grants supplemented funds for artwork included in the State matching funds for construction and reconstruction of the school buildings. State regulations require one-half of one percent of its share of construction costs for schools and other public buildings go toward artwork to be displayed at the schools. The program is overseen by the Washington State Arts Commission. Watkins is one of 105 artists on the arts commission roster for the projects.

Lynda Rockwood, a former White Pass graduate and well-known metal sculptor from Seattle, is

a conservator for the arts commission and has been a consultant during the artist selection process and continuing during fabrication of the piece.

"I was planning to retire from the commission this year but wanted to be a part of the White Pass project, so I won't be calling it quits until November, after it's done," said Rockwood, who was in Randle last week to view the project.

An assembly to dedicate the elementary art piece will take place tomorrow (Thursday) at 8:30 a.m. in the multi-purpose room and continuing outside. All work on the project is expected to be completed.

The companion artwork at the high school is expected to be finished in 2015.

White Pass superintendent Chuck Wyborne said the high school project will consist of five large murals in the high school commons area on the wall above the entrances to the gymnasium. He said themes for the murals will include farming, logging and early settlers in the Big Bottom valley.